

May it not wither...

(Illustrated explanation of atonement of life)



P. Panyas Shree Nirvaanbhooshan V. Gani M

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Since P. Muniraj Shri Nirvaanbhooshan Vijayji has a good command over English language, even before this book, the English books written by him have been welcomed. In the same style and words, Mayanasundari's life events have been illustrated in English language. The pictures are stunning. English speaking readers will find such English publications useful. The most popular talks of Jain Ramayana are included with exclusive pictures. ‘Bhadrabahu’ is also too good. Pradyumna & Shamba with exclusive pictures is also best. Each book will inspire new generation, to walk on the path of humanity and Jainism

(Kalyan Magazine – Top magazine of Jainism) Yr.- 79/81. Volume -12/12

Guide: H.H.P.A.D.S.V. Purnachandra S.M.

This is the experience of years that the children learning in English medium don't have full understanding of Gujarati language. Gujarati discourses pass over their heads; even they feel Gujarati books boring. This is the condition of whole new generation. The age of cultivating moral values is being wasted in education and entertainment. This is the great matter of concern for the well-wishers of Shri Jain Sangh. All of them are concerned about how to make children virtuous, cultured, pious and afraid of sin .

Among many solutions, one solution, perhaps most simple and successful, is : tell the children the stories of Tirthankars, ascetics, great men and great women of virtue. All like stories; children like the most. In addition, it is a matter of experience that an inspiring life-character is more effective example than an inspiring preaching. The horrible results of sins and the sweet fruits of *dharma* can be explained in a simple way through stories.

The learned Muniraj Shri Nirvaanbhooshan Vijay understood this thing years ago and started right efforts in this direction. As a result, today 32 books compiled by him have been published. As these stories of Jain history is reaching to people, their demand is ever increasing. New editions of many books are being published.

It is a matter of delight that Munishri is making his contributions in this great *yagna* for familiarizing lakhs of children of Jain families with the best conduct, thinking, philosophy and history of Jain religion. May Munipravarshri continue to get more and more success in this challenging task – this is my heartfelt greetings!

Vijay Mokshrati Suri

V.S.2081 Mahasud 10, Akota, Vadodara

Thanks for Appreciable Letters / Opinions/ Guidance
which will give us the most potent force.

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Flowers that withered without atonement...

1. Rukmini's one lakh lives...

Rukmini, the daughter of the king of the city of Kshitipratishthit, had just stepped into her youth when the king married her to a suitable prince; however, her husband passed away immediately after the wedding. She was terrified at becoming a child widow. Yet, the sorrow she felt at being left without support was far outweighed by the anguish of realizing her inability to observe lifelong celibacy. She began preparing to immolate herself in fire. It was then that her father counselled her, explaining that burning oneself to death constitutes the sin of suicide. Suicide leads to a wretched state of existence in the afterlife. While those who commit a murder can seek atonement during their lifetime, there is no scope for atonement in the hereafter for one who commits suicide, nor is a reunion with one's husband possible. Therefore, abandon the thought of immolating yourself and dedicate your life to religious observances. The state will make full arrangements for this. By remaining occupied with religious practices, you will be able to easily observe the vow of celibacy; your mind will become imbued with the spirit of these sacred rituals.

Rukmini accepted her father's words and changed her mindset. Day by day, she devoted herself increasingly to spiritual practices. The virtues associated with celibacy began to develop within her. Through the power of this virtue, the story of her renown spread from village to village. Meanwhile, her father passed away. At that time, some ministers reflected on the fact that the king had no son, so who should be crowned? Some ministers suggested that although Rukmini is a daughter, she is a pure soul, and therefore, it is appropriate to place her on the throne. Everyone agreed. As Rukmini observed strict celibacy even after ascending the throne, her fame spread in all directions.

Drawn by the renown of Rukmini's virtue of celibacy, an intelligent young man named Sheelsannah—who held celibacy in high regard—came seeking the position of minister. He reasoned that the role would provide him with a livelihood while also allowing him to serve a virtuous soul. Fortunately, he secured the ministerial position.



Rukmini's gaze fixed upon the minister Sheelsannah in the royal court.

One day, the minister Sheelsannah was seated in the royal court. Rukmini, sitting on the royal throne, was casting her gaze around the assembly. Suddenly, her eyes fell upon Sheelsannah—a man in whom youth and grace were radiantly manifest—and her gaze became transfixed. "Oh! What striking beauty this man possesses! Look, how his youth overflows!" Thoughts of an improper nature began to swirl in her mind, and a corrupting desire clouded her vision.



Just as King Vicharsar was about to take the morsel in the presence of Minister Sheelsannah, the Commander-in-Chief came rushing in and stopped him.

It did not take long for Sheelsannah to grasp the reality of the situation. He began to reflect: "Alas! I had come to serve a Brahmacharini renowned in all directions. Oh! A fire has ignited amidst the waters. Where shall I go? Curse this carnal desire! Am I, too, to be consumed by this fire of lust? No, no—I must leave this place. It is not right to stay here. Who knows when this fire of lust might incinerate my very being? I must depart for

another kingdom before it seizes my soul in its clutches!"

After reflecting on this, he left the kingdom.

He—the minister named Sheelsannah—went to another king named Vicharsar and sought the position of a minister. After subjecting him to various tests, King Vicharsar said, "Having tested your intellect, I am confident that you are capable of adorning the office of minister. However, to be absolutely certain, I must ask: have you served any king previously? If so, please name him." He replied, "Forgive me! I will not reveal his name, for merely uttering it compels one to abandon even a morsel of food already in hand." The king exclaimed, "What are you saying? Does merely speaking a name force one to drop a morsel? You are surely spinning a yarn. Here! I shall have a meal brought immediately." Saying this, the king ordered a platter of food. Holding a morsel in his hand, he asked Sheelsannah to speak the name of that king. Sheelsannah then said, "Rukmini." No sooner had he uttered the name than a messenger arrived and said to the king, "Come, we must leave at once! Enemies have invaded the kingdom. A dire situation has arisen; our army is retreating. The outcome of the war hangs in the balance. Please proceed immediately." The king instantly dropped the morsel back onto the platter and set out for battle. Sheelsannah accompanied him. Upon reaching the battlefield, Sheelsannah entered the field of combat, and immediately enemy soldiers advanced to strike him down. However, the moment he entered the battlefield, the Shasan-Devi (guardian deity) immobilized those soldiers due to Sheelsannah's devotion to Brahmacharya (celibacy) and proclaimed from the sky, "Salutations to Sheelsannah, who is steadfast in Brahmacharya." Having made this proclamation, the deities showered flowers upon him.



Sheelsannah Accepts Initiation

Upon hearing this, Sheelsannah began to ponder deeply. While contemplating, he attained Avadhi-gyan (clairvoyance). He reflected: "If devotion to celibacy alone can elevate the soul to such a lofty state, what a magnificent spiritual ascent I could achieve by practicing lifelong celibacy and self-restraint!" Filled with such sentiments of renunciation, he accepted initiation right then and there.

In the course of his wanderings, the ascetic Sheelsannah once arrived at the city of Kshitipratishthit. There,

Rukmini came to pay her respects and listened to his sermon in the garden. Hearing the discourse stirred a profound sense of detachment within her; the waters of renunciation began to surge in the reservoir of her heart. She renounced the worldly life and embraced the path of ascetic conduct.

Many years later, Sheelsannah became an Acharya. Subsequently, the ascetic Rukmini arrived at Acharya Sheelsannah's place after her Vihar (travel) and expressed her desire to undertake Anshan (a vow of fasting unto death). The Acharya advised her that, prior to the fast, she should perform Alochana (confession and atonement of transgressions) to unburden her soul, thereby paving the way for a favorable rebirth and ultimate liberation. She began her confession, acknowledging various acts of violence, falsehood, theft, and other transgressions. However, she didn't confess the sin committed by her eyes that happened in the royal court. Acharyashree tried to remind and criticize that sin in many ways. But remembering other new sins of violence, she confessed those sins. At last, Acharya Bhagwant told Sadhviji that if someone in the royal court has committed a sin by casting an evil glance, then that sin should also be confessed. Rukmini Sadhvi understood that Acharyashree knows her sin. Now if I confess before him, I would be viewed as lowly or undignified. Yet, how could I preserve my dignity? Driven by the rising influence of Mohaniya Karma (deluding karma) and a desire to uphold her self-importance and ego, she diverted the conversation, claiming she had merely cast a glance to test the minister's mettle. Thus, she concealed her sin and failed to perform a pure confession and atonement (Alochana). Consequently, she was destined to undergo one lakh (100,000) future births.

Consider this: if, while confessing various sins, we withhold the confession of even a single one, our confession—like Rukmini's—will not be pure. Indeed, if a sin does not come to mind despite our efforts to recall it, one should conclude by saying: "I have committed sins far beyond these. Oh, revered Guru! There are some I simply cannot recall; therefore, for any sins committed unknowingly, I am ready to perform penance. Micchami Dukkadam (May all evil deeds be forgiven)."

Chhaumattho mudhamano kittiyamattam sambharai jeevo; jam cha na sambharami micchami dukkadam tass. ||1||

Oh Savior Guru! I am a being of ignorance and a clouded mind. How much can I possibly remember? For whatever I do not recall—Micchami Dukkadam.



2. A farmer killed a louse...

The gravity of a sin does not depend on the act itself, but rather on the inner intent (Parinam) of the soul. A young man, driven by intense, harmful intent, killed a louse using the thorn of an Acacia (Babool) tree. Because he failed to confess this act, that farmer had to face execution by impalement (or hanging) seven times.



3. Sadhvi Rajja drank sachitt water



Sadhvi Guru Rajja and the other Sadhvis drink sachitt water (water containing living organisms), whereas only one Sadhvi drinks achitt water (water free from living organisms).

Sadhvi Rajja had contracted leprosy. When another Sadhvi asked her how she had developed the disease, she replied that it was caused by the heat resulting from drinking achitta (boiled) water. She thus spoke an untruth with intense intent and concealed the actual cause; in reality, the disease had arisen due to the fruition of ashata-vedaniya karma (pain-inducing karma) and indigestion caused by the consumption of excessively heavy food.

Upon hearing this explanation regarding achitta water from Gurudev, the other Sadhvis also gave up the practice of drinking it.

One of the Sadhvis remained steadfast in her resolve. She reflected that the path of restraint taught by Lord Arihant is such that, by following it, disease does not even arise. Disease is a cause of mental and spiritual disquiet (samadhi). If illness strikes or worsens, it inevitably leads to such disquiet. Why, then, would the Lord ever tell something that fosters such disquiet? In every single drop of that Sadhvi's blood, the

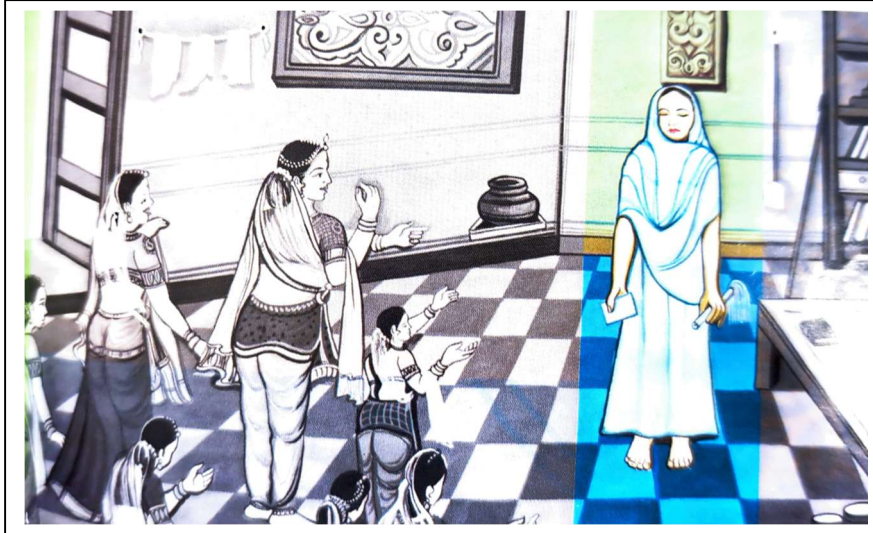
Lord's devotion was overflowing. She tried in various ways to make the other Sadhvis understand, but due to the fear of leprosy, they would not listen. Consequently, the young Sadhvi felt deep remorse. "Oh Lord! What inauspicious karmas—such as

Anadeya-nama-karma—have I bound, that even when I explain the truth, these Sadhvis fail to comprehend it?" Amidst such repentance, self-reproach, and the practice of Kayotsarga (meditative stillness), she attained Keval-gyan (Omniscience).

Gods and goddesses arrived to honor the Omniscient one. The other Sadhvis realized, "Alas! We have made a grave mistake." They

approached the Omniscient Sadhvi, confessed their mistake (Alochna), undertook penance (Prayashchit), and purified their souls. However, the Sadhvi named Rajja passed away without making such a confession, thereby condemning herself to wander through infinite cycles of birth and death.

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The Sadhvi who abstained from consuming Sachitt water attained Keval-gyan, and Gods and goddesses arrived to pay her homage)

4. Marichi, ego, and deviation from the sutra...

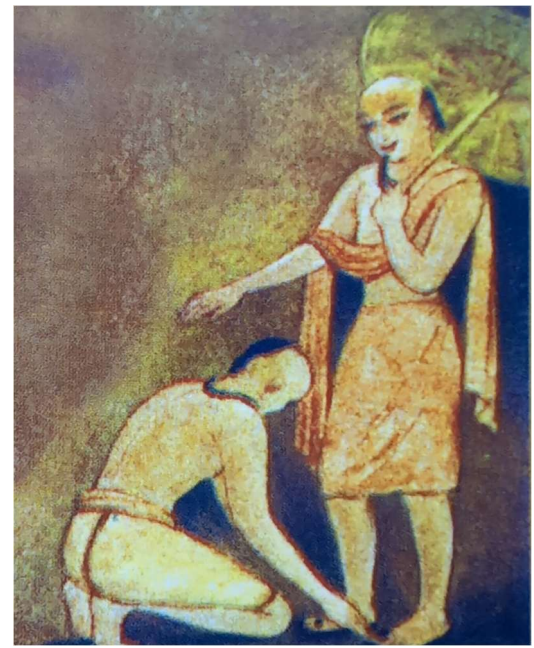


Tridandik Marichi is dancing in a state of ecstatic

Marichi, the son of Chakravarti Bharat, received initiation from Lord Rishabhdev. Later, finding himself unable to endure the hardships of the ascetic life, he adopted the guise of a Tridandik. Thus, he abandoned the strict code of conduct (Charitra) and began practicing partial vows (Desh-virati). He engaged in practices

such as bathing with minimal water, applying unguents, wearing wooden sandals, and carrying a ceremonial umbrella. Once, in the Samavasaran (divine assembly), King Bharat asked Lord Rishabhdev, "Oh Lord! Is there any soul present today who will become a Tirthankar in the future?" The Lord replied, "Oh Bharat! Your son Marichi will become the first Vasudev in this Bharat Kshetra, a Chakravarti in Mahavideh, and the last Tirthankar in this Bharat Kshetra."

Hearing this, Chakravarti Bharat went to pay obeisance to Marichi. After bowing, Bharat said, "Oh ascetic bearing the Tridand! I have not bowed to you; rather, you are destined to become a Tirthankar in Bharat Kshetra, a Chakravarti in Mahavideh, and the first Vasudev in Bharat Kshetra. Therefore, I bowed to you recognizing you as a future Tirthankar." Chakravarti Bharat then



Kapil is paying obeisance, having become a disciple of Marichi.

departed, but a sense of arrogance arose in Marichi's mind. He thought, "How noble is my lineage! The first Tirthankar, Rishabhdev, belonged to my lineage; the first Chakravarti, my father Bharat, also belonged to my lineage; and I, too, shall become the first Vasudev." Filled with such pride regarding his lineage, Marichi began to dance; through this act, he bound the Nich-gotra Karma (karma resulting in a low-status birth). He did not seek atonement for this. Consequently, the burden of this Nich-gotra Karma

persisted for a vast period—approximately one Kodakodi Sagaropam—lasting until the last life as Lord Mahavir.

Once, when Prince Kapil was prepared to take initiation following Marichi's teachings, Marichi told him, "Go to the sages and receive initiation." At that moment, Kapil asked, "Does righteousness reside only with the sages, and not with you?" Marichi reflected that he had found a worthy disciple—and a disciple is indeed needed during times of illness—so he uttered a falsehood: "Oh Kapila! Righteousness exists there as well as here." This false statement was an utsutra (a statement contrary to the scriptures), because the Tridandi lifestyle did not embody true righteousness. Since he did not perform confession and repentance for this false utsutra statement, his cycle of worldly existence was extended by a kodakodi sagaropama (an immense span of time), even though he possessed the soul of a future Tirthankar. Jain philosophy shows no partiality regarding anyone's sins; the book of everyone's life lies open. Therefore, we should free ourselves from sin by making a sincere confession (shuddha alochana).



5. The parable of Ardrakumar



Abhaykumar had sent an idol of the Tirthankar to Ardrakumar out of friendship. Contemplating this idol awakened the knowledge of recalling past lives (Jatismaran-jnana), and a vision of a mistake committed during his life as an ascetic appeared before him.

In his previous life, Ardrakumar was a Brahmin named Somaditya; his wife was named Bandhumati. Moved by a spirit of renunciation, he and his wife received initiation from Acharyadev Shri Susthitasurishwarji M.S. Later, upon seeing the Sadhvi—who was his former wife—memories of their past conjugal life were rekindled. Alas! How powerful is the force of carnal desire? Even after embracing the ascetic life, that desire began to flare up. As the days passed, his attachment grew.

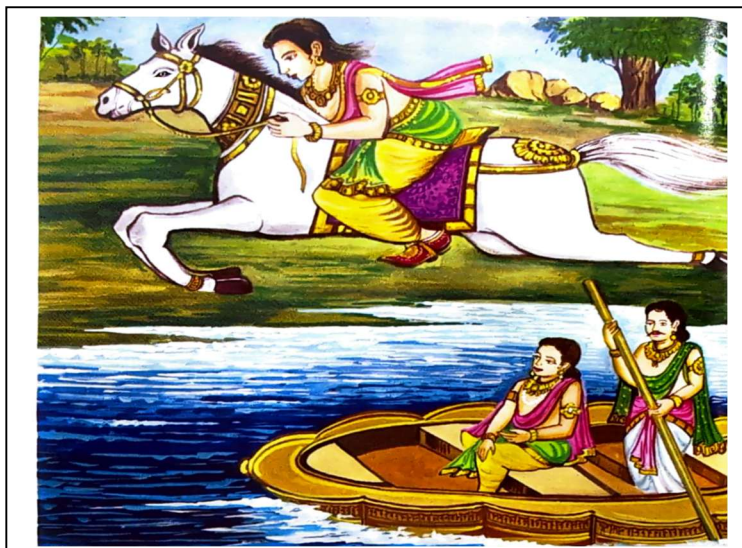
Sadhvi Bandhumati realized that the Munirajshri (the sage) was accumulating sin daily because of her presence. She decided to end her life through Anshan (fasting unto death) so that he would no longer incur sin on her account. Motivated by such compassionate thoughts, she obtained permission from the Gurudev, undertook the fast, and passed away with a pure state of mind, ascending to the celestial realm (Devalok). Great souls often endure immense suffering themselves to save others from sin; for instance, Baldev Muni decided to live in the forest for the rest of his life after witnessing the thoughtless behavior of a water-carrying woman. When Muni Somaditya learned that the Sadhvi had given up her body through fasting because of him, he was deeply devastated. "Oh! What immense courage and extraordinary valor marked her self-sacrifice! And what a wretched person am I, who mentally violated my vows and became the cause of a Sadhvi's death. What right does a sinner like me have to live? I, too, shall undertake a fast to expiate my sins." With this resolve, he undertook the fast, passed away, and ascended to the celestial realm. However, due to the rise of Mohaniya Karma (deluding karma), he died without undergoing the necessary Alochna (confession) and Prayashchit (penance). Consequently, after completing his celestial lifespan, he was born in Anarya land—a place where one could not hear even a single syllable of Dharma.

King Shrenik and Ardrakumar's father were close friends. For this reason, they used to exchange valuable gifts. Observing this, Ardrakumar sent a gift to Abhaykumar to forge a friendship. Recognizing it as a magnificent offering, Abhaykumar—in a reciprocal gesture of friendship—sent back a casket containing an idol of Lord Adishwar, with a message instructing that it be opened in private. Upon beholding the gem-studded idol, Ardrakumar recalled his past life as an ascetic—during which he had transgressed the ascetic code—and was filled with a sense of detachment from the worldly life.

Ardrakumar resolved to take initiation. He sought his parents' permission to travel to Arya land (the land of the noble/civilized). Driven by attachment, his parents adamantly refused; to prevent him from fleeing, the king ordered five hundred soldiers to keep a close watch on him. Ardrakumar began to feel as though he were imprisoned. Gradually, through his gentle demeanor and sweet speech, he won the trust of the five hundred soldiers. One day, seizing an opportunity, he mounted a horse and departed from the Anarya land. He then traveled by ship to Arya land and received initiation. At that moment, a celestial voice proclaimed, "Oh Ardrakumar!"

You still have Bhogavali Karma (karmas related to worldly enjoyment) yet to be experienced." However, swept up in a surge of spiritual fervor, he disregarded the celestial message.

Having embraced the path of asceticism, the sage began wandering from village to village. Once, Sage Ardra arrived in the city of Vasantpur and engaged in Kausagga meditation (a posture of motionless meditation) within a garden. Young girls came there



To receive initiation, Ardrakumar fled from the non-Aryan land and then traveled to the Arya land via both land and water routes.

to play. While playing, they would hold onto a pillar in the garden and playfully declare, "This is my husband." A girl named Shrimati—who was his wife from a past life, having descended from the celestial realm to be born as the daughter of the merchant Dhanashri—touched the sage, who stood motionless like a pillar, and unknowingly declared, "This is my husband." She later realized that he was a sage; yet, driven by the deep-seated impressions of her past life, she vowed that if she were ever to marry, she would marry only this sage—

otherwise, she would remain unmarried. The celestial beings showered 12.5 lakh gold coins.

Her father, Dhanashri, returned to his village with daughter Shrimati and the wealth. The Muni moved on to another region.

As the girl (Shrimati) grew up, her father began searching for a suitable groom. However, she firmly declared that she would marry no one but that sage. Consequently, her father asked her to offer alms-food (gochari) to the ascetics visiting the village. Twelve years later, that sage arrived there. She recognized him by his footprints and clasped his feet. The merchant and the king exerted great pressure on him; recalling a divine prophecy, the sage consented to the marriage. The wedding took place, yet his heart remained heavy with sadness, for he harbored an intense longing for the ascetic life. A son was born to them. Twelve years later, having resolved with great determination and effort—announced her intention to take initiation. Saddened, she began spinning cotton. Her son returned home from play and asked, "Mother, why are you spinning cotton?" Mother Shrimati replied, "Your father is about to take initiation." The boy wrapped the cotton thread around his father's feet twelve times and lisped, "How will you go for initiation now? I have tied you up." Ardra Muni's heart melted at

the child's words; he counted the windings of the thread and found there were twelve. Consequently, he remained in household life for another twelve years.

Thus, after living the householder's life for twenty-four years—and once his son had come of age—he embraced the ascetic path once more, becoming Ardra Muni. Meanwhile, the five hundred soldiers who had set out in search of Ardrakumar did not return to the Anarya land for fear of the king; instead, they stayed where they were and turned to theft. One day, they encountered Ardra Muni during his travels. He imparted spiritual teachings to them and initiated them into the ascetic order. Subsequently, Ardra Muni arrived in the kingdom of Magadh accompanied by these five hundred ascetics; there, he engaged in supreme spiritual practice and attained Moksha (liberation). Although Ardrakumar had not committed any physical sins in his previous life—having committed only mental ones—his failure to seek Alochana (confession and repentance) caused those sins to multiply manifold. Consequently, he was born in an Anarya land and, even after taking initiation, was compelled to live the householder's life for twenty-four years. While it is true that he ultimately attained spiritual purity and achieved Moksha in that same life, he had to endure immense suffering along the way. Therefore, we should perform Alochana with a pure heart.



6. Sage Metaraj, low-status birth, and the lack of spiritual awakening...

A king named Munichandra ruled over the city of Ujjayini. Both his son and the son of the priest, Sauvastik, became extremely unruly. Whenever an ascetic monk visited the city, they would take him to the royal palace and torment him, forcing him to dance by striking him with a whip. The Shri-Sangh (community of devotees) complained to the king, but he paid no heed. The monks then reported the matter to Sage Sagarchandra. Upon hearing this, Sage Sagarchandra reflected that if the movement of monks into Ujjayini were to cease, the people would turn away from the path of righteousness and fall into a state of spiritual degradation; therefore, a solution had to be found. With this thought in mind, he arrived in Ujjayini. He went to the royal court to seek alms (gochari). The prince and the priest's son forcefully insisted that he dance, boasting that they had already made many others dance by whipping them. Thus, both youths showed a disregard for the Dharma. Realizing this, and intending to reform them, Sage Sagarchandra told them, "To dance, I need musicians; if the musicians make a mistake, I will lose my temper. Whatever punishment I inflict at that moment must be accepted

by them." Then, the two said they did not know how to play the instrument and told the sage that he would have to engage in a wrestling match. Both began to wrestle with the sage. In the course of the wrestling, Sage Sagarachandra dislocated the bones at the joints of both princes and then departed from the spot. Upon returning to his own place, he stood in the Kausagga posture. Meanwhile, both princes began screaming in agony. The king ordered his soldiers to search for the holy sage. The soldiers reported that the sage was standing in meditation outside the village. The king went there and, upon arriving, saw that it was his own brother standing there. The king exclaimed, "Oh Gurudev! What have you done?" The sage replied, "Oh King! Could such an injustice—harming a sage—ever occur in our lineage? For so long, you disregarded the words of the Sangh, yet now you come here pleading to have your sons set right. King, you have insulted and mocked such great sages; you have committed a grave error." The king said, "Gurudev! These princes are mere boys. Please forgive their offense! It shall not happen again." The sage said, "By tormenting souls who observe the vows of ascetic conduct (Charitra), they have bound themselves with terrible Karma. Therefore, if both of them accept the path of ascetic conduct, I shall restore their bones to their proper places; otherwise, let them continue to suffer the consequences of their own sins."

After paying obeisance to the sage, the king approached his sons and said, "O Princes! That sage is your uncle in this worldly life. You had greatly tormented the ascetics; hence, you were punished. If you accept initiation, your bones will be made fit; otherwise, you will die in agony, for the revered sage will not fit the bones ." Hearing this, the princes reluctantly agreed to the king's words, saying, "We will accept initiation." The sage set the bones at their place, and both embraced the ascetic life, practicing it with purity. However, the monk who was formerly the priest's son harbored an aversion to filth and soiled garments due to his Brahmin lineage. By harboring such loathing, he fell into the Mithyatva Gunasthanak (stage of wrong belief) and bound Neech Gotra (low-status lineage karma). Once that same monk thought in his mind: "Gurumaharaj forced initiation upon me; he did not act rightly." Thus, he found fault with his benevolent Guru. This thought led to the binding of Durlabh-bodhi karma (karma making the attainment of right enlightenment difficult). Subsequently, the monk did not seek atonement for these two faults; the sin remained embedded in his soul. Both observed their ascetic vows and were reborn in the celestial realm (Devlok). Because the former priest's son had harbored aversion toward soiled



- 1) Sage Sagarchandra dislocated the bones from the joints of the prince and the priest's son and departed.
- 2) The king went to visit the sage outside the village.

garments, he had bound Neech Gotra karma; consequently, upon the completion of his celestial lifespan, he was conceived in the womb of a Chandal woman.

Meanwhile, at the home of a wealthy merchant (Seth), the merchant's wife repeatedly gave birth to stillborn children, leaving her deeply distressed. When the Chandal woman asked the reason for her sorrow, she replied, "My children are born dead; to this day, I have never been able to experience the joy of motherly affection for a son." The Chandal woman said, "My sons are born alive." Consequently, the merchant's wife said, "I will give you gold coins; upon the birth of the sons, we shall exchange the infants." Having agreed to this, the two women swapped their sons at birth, and the child was named Metaraj. A single moment of aversion had caused Metarya's soul to be born into the household of a Chandal.

If he had confessed and repented for both the defects in his previous life, his soul would have been purified, and the situation of being born into a Chandal's family would not have arisen. Now, he started growing up blissfully in the house of Metarya Seth. His soul had made a friend deity promise in the heavenly realm that he would get him initiated even by beating him with a stick. Gradually, Metaraj grew into a young man. He was engaged to eight girls who were daughters of merchants. When the wedding preparations were underway, the deity, through his divine knowledge, learned everything and came to explain to friend Metaraj. But due to his Durlabhbodhi (lack of spiritual awakening), he did not understand. Then, during the wedding procession, the deity took the guise of a Chandal and disrupted the marriage. After that, due to Metaraj's insistence, the deity got him married with eight daughters of merchants and the ninth princess, the daughter of King Shrenik. But due to the rise of Durlabhbodhi karma, he remained unawakened. 12 years later, the deity came to awaken him, but even then, due to the rise of the same karma, he obtained permission through his wives to spend a period of 12 more years.



(The sage spotted the hawk pecking at the grains of barley .)

Subsequently, as his karmic burden lightened, he attained spiritual awakening and embraced the ascetic path; as the monk Metaraj, he went to a goldsmith's house for gochari (alms) on the day he was to break his month-long fast (Masakashaman).

Upon hearing the monk's greeting of "Dharma-labh" (may you attain Dharma), the goldsmith immediately set aside his work and stood up. He was making 108 grains of gold for King Shrenik. He led the sage into the kitchen to offer alms. Moments later, a hawk swooped in and devoured all the gold grains. The sage witnessed the bird pecking at the grains; the bird then flew up and perched at a height. The sage stepped outside with the alms he had received.

When the goldsmith returned to his work, he found that the gold grains were missing.

Soni suspected that the sage would have taken it. So he came to the sage.

Despite repeated inquiries, the sage did not answer him out of compassion for living beings. The sage remained silent. Had he told the truth, Soni would have torn the hawk apart and taken out the grains. Soni, in anger, tied a moist leather on the sage's head and made him sit in the sun. Due to the drying of the leather in the sun, the nerves of the sage's head started getting stretched. His eyes gouged out, blood began to flow, and his bones started shattering. Yet, the sage did not give in to anger; maintaining equanimity, he attained Kevalgyan and subsequently attained liberation. At that moment, startled by the noise of a falling bundle of wood, the hawk defecated; within the droppings, the goldsmith spotted grains of barley. Realizing that the sage was innocent—and indeed the King's former son-in-law—the goldsmith was overcome with panic at the thought that he had killed an innocent ascetic. Fearing the King's severe punishment, he went to Lord Mahavir Swami, took initiation (Diksha), performed Alochana (confession and repentance), and attained a blissful state (Sadgati).

One should reflect on this: had Metaraj sought atonement in his previous life for the fault of screening his Guru's shortcomings, he would not have suffered the misfortune of Durlabh-bodhi (difficulty in attaining spiritual enlightenment) or endured such ordeals. Understanding this, we should promptly seek atonement for the fault of finding flaws in our Guru. Even the sage's killer, the goldsmith, became a sage himself, sought atonement, and attained a blissful state. Therefore, let us never neglect to seek atonement.

(Metaraj Muni, bearing the hardships, attained Kevalgyan and finally liberation.)

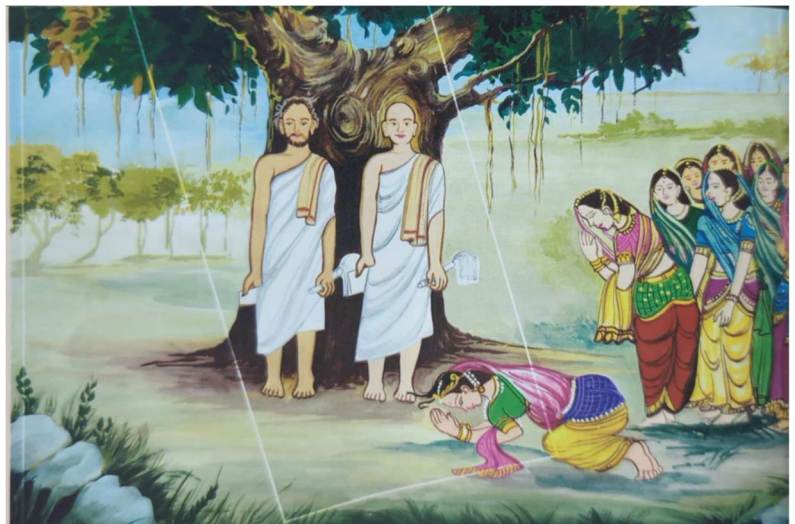


7. Chitrak and Sambhuti became Chandal...

A sage was passing through a forest. Having lost his way, he fainted and collapsed on the ground in the heat of the afternoon. Four cowherds, who had come to graze their cattle, witnessed this scene from a distance. They approached him. The sage was unconscious; his lips were parched, and his face looked withered. Sensing his thirst, they milked a cow and poured the milk into his mouth. This revived the sage. After a while, the sage tried to enlighten the four men, explaining that their souls were wandering in the forest of worldly existence and that the practice of righteous conduct (Charitra Dharma) was the only means to overcome this suffering. Upon receiving this spiritual awakening, all four adopted the path of righteous conduct. Two of these souls attained Kevalgyan in that very lifetime and proceeded to Moksha (liberation).

However, the remaining two were struck by a thought: "How can one be pure without bathing? Should one wear such soiled clothes?" Harboring such feelings of aversion, they bound Neech Gotra karma (the karma of a low lineage). They passed away without having sought atonement for this thought. Consequently, due to the fruition of the low-lineage karma bound in their previous life, they were born into a Chandal family as Chitrak and Sambhuti.

In their youth, people would become captivated by their melodious and sweet voices. Groups of women who were aficionados of music would flock to hear them sing. Perceiving them as the cause of a disaster, the king banished them from the kingdom. The two were contemplating suicide by jumping off a mountain. Just then, a sage explained the greatness of human life to them; consequently, both brothers took initiation and began traveling from village to village.



While paying obeisance to one of the two sages – Sage Sambhuti–Chakravarti Sanatkumar’s queen’s delicate hair brushed against the sage, prompting him to make a Niyana.

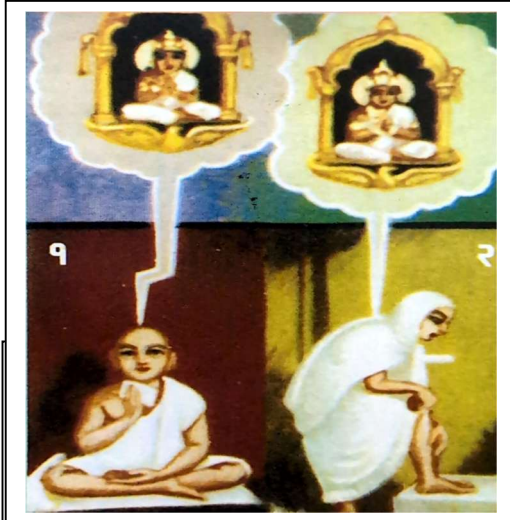
Once, both sages visited Hastinapur. While there, they went out for alms (gochari) upon the conclusion of a month-long fast (masakshaman). Recalling an enmity from a past life, Namuchi—a minister to the Chakravarti Sanatkumar—had the soldiers expel both sages from the town to protect his own prestige. Enraged, sage Sambhuti prepared to unleash Tejoleshya (a fiery psychic power) upon him; smoke began to billow from his mouth, causing panic among the people. Sanatkumar Chakravarti approached the sage to apologize and also compelled the minister to offer an apology. Although sage Sambhuti forgave everyone after sage Chitrak persuaded him, both sages reflected that this physical body compels one to harbor passions (kashaya); thus, they resolved to undertake a fast unto death (Anshan). They began their Anshan in the forest. People began to praise the two sages highly. Hearing this, Sanatkumar's wife Sunanda—the Striratna (Jewel-like Woman)—came with an entourage of 192,000 people to pay homage to the sages. While bowing in reverence, Sunanda's hair brushed against Sage Sambhuti's feet. That touch stirred an intense attachment within him, and he made a Niyana (a solemn vow or aspiration for a specific future reward), wishing to attain the Striratna as the fruit of his asceticism in a future life. Sage Chitrak tried hard to dissuade him, but Sambhuti refused to perform Alochana (confession and repentance). Instead, he declared, "I have made this vow with firm resolve; it cannot be undone. Therefore, say nothing more to me." Hearing this, Sage Chitrak remained silent. Eventually, both sages passed away and ascended to the celestial realm (Devlok). Subsequently, the soul of Chitrak was reborn as a merchant's son in the city of Purimtal, while the soul of Sage Sambhuti was reborn as Brahmadatt Chakravarti in Kampilyapur, and descended into the seventh hell after death.

Had he performed Alochana, he would not have bound the karma that led to the seventh hell. Therefore, we must certainly perform Alochana.



8. In his previous life, Ilachikumar did not seek atonement...

A Brahmin youth named Agnisharma lived in the city of Vasantpur. He embraced Charitra (righteous conduct) with his wife. But their mutual attachment remained unbroken.



His former wife, Sadhvi, once took pride in her Brahmin lineage. Without seeking its atonement, she died and went to heaven. Munishri also passed away after death. After dying there, Agnisharma's soul was born in the city of Ilavardhan as Ilachikumar, son of Dhanyadatt Seth. His wife's soul from her previous life was born as daughter of a Nat

1) Sage Agnisharma passed away and ascended to the celestial realm without having performed Alochana (confession and atonement).

2) Sadhviji passed away and ascended to the celestial realm without having performed Alochana for the pride of her Brahmin lineage and the act of having her feet washed.

(acrobatic dancer) in a low-born family because she had not atoned for her pride of high-lineage.

In his previous life, Ilachikumar had been attached to his wife—who was a Sadhvi—and had failed to seek atonement for this attachment. Consequently, despite being born into a noble family, he cast aside social propriety; captivated by the performance of a Natini (female acrobatic dancer), he ran off with her.



Ilachiputra became captivated by the Natini upon seeing her dancing on the rope.

One day, Ilachikumar said to the leader of the Nat group, "Now that I have become a Nat myself, please arrange for the Natini to marry me." The leader replied, "If you can secure a reward from the king, I will marry her to you." Subsequently, the king was invited to the port of Benatat to witness their artistry. The Natini began playing the drum, while Ilachikumar started dancing on the tightrope. The crowd applauded upon seeing the Nat's feats and cheered with delight. But the king's eyes fell on the Natini and he got attracted to her. Due to which the king did not give reward to the Nat. He was asked to perform again for the second and third time. The fourth time he climbed the rope, but the king wanted the death of Elachikumar as he was attracted to the Natini. That is why he did not give the reward to the Nat. While climbing the rope, he saw in a palace, a royal woman was requesting the sage to accept her offering of sweets and



While dancing on the tightrope, Ilachikumar saw the sage in the palace; as his sense of reverence deepened, he attained Kevalgyan.

Jitendriya sage was saying no without even raising his eyelids. Seeing this, Elachikumar felt a sense of self-reproach regarding his lust and a profound reverence for the sage.

As this reverence deepened, Ilachikumar—while still suspended on the rope—attained Kevalgyan. Deities offered him the robes of

an ascetic and paid him homage. Ilachiputra Kevali then delivered a sermon; he recounted how, in his third previous life, neither he nor the soul of the Natini had sought Alochana (confession and repentance for transgressions), which had led to all these tribulations. Upon hearing this, the Natini also attained Jati-smarana-gyan (recollection of past lives) and filled with intense remorse, she too attained Kevalgyan.

9. Kamalshree became a bitch and a monkey...

Shivabhuti and Vasubhuti were brothers. Shivabhuti's wife, Kamalshree, developed a romantic attachment to her brother-in-law, Vasubhuti, and, driven by infatuation, made an improper proposal to him. Upon hearing such inappropriate words from his sister-in-law, Vasubhuti reflected: "Oh! Shame upon carnal desire, which compels one to make such improper advances. I must not, under any circumstances, succumb to lust." With this sense of detachment arising within him, he renounced the worldly life and took initiation. This news reached Kamalshree. Consumed by Arta-dhyan (distressed contemplation) born of her infatuation—and without ever seeking atonement for her mental and verbal transgressions—she was reborn as a female dog (bitch).

Once, the ascetic Vasubhuti was going out for his daily alms round (gochari). A bitch caught sight of him. Driven by an attachment stemming from a past life, she began to follow him, staying close like his shadow. Seeing the bitch constantly with the ascetic, people began calling him "Shunipati" (Master of the bitch) wherever he went. Hearing such remarks made the ascetic feel embarrassed. One day, he managed to slip away unnoticed by the bitch and went elsewhere. Unable to see the ascetic, the bitch died in a state of intense mental anguish (arta-dhyan) and was reborn as a female monkey in the forest.

Just as before, the female monkey saw the ascetic and began wandering alongside him. People started calling him "Bandaripati" (Master of the Monkey). Whenever people said this, the monkey would feel delighted and display amorous behavior. Once, the ascetic managed to escape the monkey's gaze and moved elsewhere. The monkey died in a state of anguish and was reborn as a female swan in a pond.

By chance, the ascetic was practicing Kayotsarga (meditative stillness of the body) on the bank of that pond to endure the Sheet Parishah (hardship of cold). Upon seeing him, the swan began making sweet, plaintive sounds expressing the agony of



1) Kamalshree developed an infatuation for her brother-in-law, Vasubhuti. Due to her failure to seek atonement for this, she was reborn successively as:
2) A female dog, 3) A female monkey, 4) A female swan, and 5) Finally, a Vyantar Devi.

separation and approached him, attempting to embrace him. The ascetic, however, remained steadfast in auspicious meditation. Evading the swan's gaze, he moved on to another place. Unable to see the ascetic, the swan died and was reborn as a deity (Devi) in the Vyantar realm.

Realizing her past connection with the ascetic through her clairvoyant knowledge (Vibhang gyan), the Devi reflected, "My brother-in-law did not heed my words; that is why I suffered such a wretched fate." Consumed by rage, she came to kill the ascetic.

However, she was unable to harm him due to the power of his penance. She then subjected him to various other tribulations, but the ascetic remained firm in his vows and attained Keval gyan through the power of auspicious meditation. In the presence of the people, the Kevali recounted the story of the Devi's past lives. Hearing this, the Devi attained Samyaktva (Right Faith). Sanctifying the earth with his presence, the ascetic eventually attained Moksha (Liberation).

Consider the dire consequences that arose from harboring a malicious attitude within the same household and failing to seek Alochana (confession and repentance), one was compelled to take birth in the animal realm (Tiryanch-gati) for three successive lifetimes. If we do not purify ourselves of the sins committed in our lives, what will be our own fate? Therefore, one must not be negligent in seeking Alochana.



10. Rupsen's seven lives got spoiled...

In the city of Prithvibhushan, King Kanakdhvaj had a daughter named Sunanda. The princess had just blossomed into the bloom of youth; her beauty and grace were extraordinary. One day, Rupsen – the handsome fourth son of King Vasudatt of Bangladesh – came to a betel-leaf shop located in front of the royal palace. He was glancing around casually.

Just then, Sunanda's gaze fell upon Rupsen. The moment she saw him, the fire of passion ignited within her very being. Through a maidservant, Sunanda drew



1) Prince Rupsen and Princess Sunanda viewed each other with lustful gaze.

2) Prince Rupsen died after being crushed beneath the wall of a house when it collapsed.

Rupsen's attention toward herself; a silent exchange of glances took place. She sent a message through the maid asking him to come to the rear section of the royal palace during the Kaumudi Festival.

On the day of the Kaumudi Festival, Sunanda resorted to a ruse; feigning a headache, she stayed back at the palace with her maid, while the King, Queen, and the rest of the family went outside the city to witness the festivities. How terrible is the nature of lust! It drove Sunanda to lie and engage in deception. Similarly, Rupsen also concocted a false excuse to stay home, while the rest of his family went to the festival.

Locking his house, Rupsen set out with the intention of meeting Sunanda. Driven by the allure of what he had seen and consumed by the desire for physical intimacy, he

walked along, filled with joy as he fantasized about Sunanda's beauty and their union. Suddenly, the wall of a dilapidated house collapsed upon him. He was crushed to death beneath the rubble. What a dreadful state of mind he was in at the moment of his death! He gained nothing; instead, he met his end having intensified his worldly attachments and accumulated the karma of sin.

Meanwhile, noticing the silence in the city at night, a gambler named Mahabal set out to commit theft. While wandering, he spotted a rope ladder hanging at the rear of the royal palace. Thinking this was an excellent way to enter, he began to climb. Hearing the sound of the rope, Sunanda's maid assumed that Rupsen – to whom a signal had been sent – had arrived. Just then, the Queen sent her own maids to inquire about the



1) Sunanda underwent an abortion.

2) Sunanda's husband, the king, killed the serpent

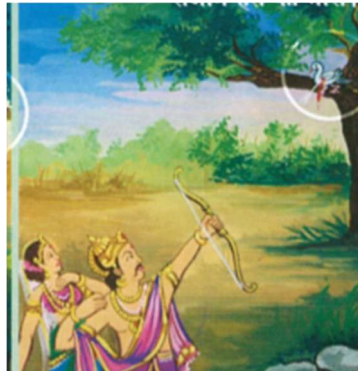
princess's health; they were approaching the building. Sunanda's maid extinguished the lamp. She then lied to the Queen's maids, telling them the princess had fallen asleep, and sent them back. As Mahabal climbed up the rope ladder and entered the palace, the maid welcomed him in the darkness, whispering, "Please come in, Rupsen! Do not make a sound – come in, come in!" The gambler, recalling the

nine virtues of silence, approached Sunanda without speaking, committed the illicit act in the dark, and left. By a strange twist of fate, the soul of Rupsen – who had died crushed by a wall – was reborn in Sunanda's womb.

After some time, the maids noticed signs of pregnancy on Sunanda. They administered medicines for abortion (such as alkaline preparations) to her; consequently, Rupsen's soul suffered excruciating pain and was expelled from the womb. Upon dying there, he was reborn in the womb of a female serpent and, in due course, became a snake. Meanwhile, Sunanda was married to the king of the city of Kshitipratishthit. One day, the king and queen went for a stroll in the garden. The snake (Rupsen's soul) arrived there. Upon seeing Sunanda, the snake's gaze became fixed on her, driven by affection. Sunanda was terrified to see the snake staring at her so intently. Her husband killed the serpent with a weapon. The serpent died while in a state of anguished contemplation (arta-dhyan).



(The king killed the crow.)



(The king killed the swan.)

After dying, Rupsen's soul was reborn as a crow. One

day, while the king and queen were enjoying music in the garden, the crow – overcome by emotion upon seeing Sunanda – began cawing loudly in delight. Despite being shooed away repeatedly, it kept returning to the same spot. Enraged, the king killed it with a weapon.

Upon dying, the crow was reborn as a swan. This swan befriended a crow. One day, the king and his queen, Sunanda, were sitting beneath a tree. As soon as the swan's gaze fell upon



(The king hunted the deer).

Sunanda, it became captivated by her beauty. Meanwhile, the crow defecated on the king and flew away. Upon spotting the swan above, the king shot it dead with an arrow. During his life as Rupsen, his soul had sown the seeds of attachment through the sin of lustful gazing; these tendencies resurfaced in subsequent lives, ultimately leading to a tragic death.

After dying, the swan was reborn in his sixth life as a deer in the womb of a doe. Once, the king went hunting in the forest with his wife. Mounted on horses, the king and queen chased after a deer. The deer was running at high speed when its gaze fell upon Sunanda's face; it froze instantly upon seeing her. The king shot an arrow at its fleshy body, and the deer's soul died and passed into the womb of a female elephant.

The king's cook had prepared meat of the deer. The king and queen were enjoying the meat and praising it. Just then, two sages passed by. One wise sage remarked to the other on the strange nature of karma: "Look at the peculiar workings of karma! Because of Sunanda, the unfortunate Rupsen—who had merely harbored sinful thoughts and desires in his mind and eyes—incurred karma that condemned him to

suffer terrible agony across seven successive lifetimes. Yet, here is Sunanda herself, eating the very flesh of that being." Saying this in a low voice, he shook his head.

Observing this, the king and queen asked the sage why he had shaken his head. The sage explained—asking Sunanda to take the vow of Abhay-daan (granting safety/fearlessness)—that “she was consuming the flesh of the very soul for whom she had once felt affection. That is why we shook our heads in astonishment,” he said. Hearing this truth from the sage came as a profound shock to Sunanda. "Oh, Gurudev! If the person who sinned against me merely through his eyes and mind suffered such a wretched fate for seven lifetimes, what will become of me? I have gone even further and am deeply stained by the mire of physical sins." The sage replied that by confessing and repenting for one's transgressions and embracing a life of righteous conduct (Charitra), the soul becomes pure and can attain liberation (Moksha). Hearing this profound spiritual counsel, Sunanda took initiation. Through repentance and the observance of strict self-restraint, she eventually attained Avadhi-gyan (clairvoyance).



(The king and queen were eating the cooked meat. Seeing this, both sages shook their heads).

Once, using her Avadhi-gyan, Sadhvi Sunanda realized that the soul of Rupsen had been reborn as an elephant; she set out for the forest to offer him spiritual enlightenment. Although villagers tried to stop her, she proceeded into the forest without heeding them, intent on enlightening that soul. As soon as the frenzied elephant laid eyes on Sunanda, he stood motionless, as if frozen in a painting. The Sadhvi then spoke: "Awaken, awaken, Rupsen! Oh Rupsen! Attain enlightenment, attain enlightenment. Why do you not let go of your affection for me, even while suffering such immense pain because of it?" Hearing these words, the elephant regained the memory of his past lives (jati-smaran-gyan). He beheld the sorrowful chain of his seven previous incarnations and was filled with deep remorse. "Alas! What have I done? Driven by ignorance and attachment, I died in a state of anguished contemplation (arta-dhyan) and fell into a miserable state of existence. I do not wish to face such a fate again." Reflecting thus, the elephant experienced a spiritual awakening. The Sadhvi told the king, "This elephant is now your fellow practitioner of the faith (sadharmik); take good care of him." The elephant performed austerities—such as Bela-Tela (fasting for two or three days at a time)—and eventually ascended to the celestial realm (Devlok).



Sadhvi Sunanda is imparting spiritual enlightenment to the elephant.

This story illustrates the terrible consequences of sinful thoughts and a sinful gaze. As Rupsen had not sought alochana (confession and repentance for sins), his seven successive lives were ruined. The power of alochana is truly remarkable; Sadhvi Sunanda purified herself of her sins before her Guru, became a Sadhvi, practiced pure restraint free from spiritual thorns (shalya), attained omniscience (Kevalgyan), and ultimately achieved liberation (Moksha). Therefore, we should

internalize this lesson, seek alochana, and purify ourselves.



11. Chandra and Sarg didn't confess and atone for anger...

In the city of Vardhaman, there lived a man of good lineage named Sughad. He had a wife named Chandra and a son named Sarg. Due to poverty, the couple made a living by doing manual labor. Sughad passed away while still in the prime of his youth. One day, Chandra had gone to work at someone's house; a heavy workload caused her to return late. Meanwhile, her son arrived from the forest carrying a bundle of firewood. Finding no food anywhere, he became extremely agitated. Just then, Chandra—exhausted and tormented by hunger and thirst after finishing her work—was returning home. A furious Sarg lashed out at her, asking, "Had you gone to be impaled on a stake? What took you so long?" Stung by these harsh and scornful words, Chandra retorted in a fit of rage, "Was your wrist severed, making it too much of an effort for you to take food from the rack?" Having uttered such angry words, they failed to perform Alochana (confession and repentance). The scriptures state, "Due to ignorance, they did not confess their transgression." After passing away, the soul of Sarg was reborn as Arundev, the son of a wealthy merchant in the city of Tamralipta,

while Chandra's soul was born as the daughter of Jasaditya in Pataliputra. She was named Devani. In their youth age, circumstances aligned, and Arundev and Devani were married to each other. How strange are the workings of Karma! Once, they shared the bond of mother and son; now, that bond had dissolved, replaced by the relationship of husband and wife.

One day, Arundev set sail across the ocean with a friend. However, due to the fruition of inauspicious Karma, the ship was wrecked. Fortunately, both of them managed to find a wooden plank. Supported by it, they both swam to the bank. Moving on from there, they reached the city of Pataliputra.



In the subsequent life, Arundev had to face execution by impalement, and Devani had to suffer the amputation of her wrist.

In a fit of rage, the son asked his own mother, "Did you go to be impaled on a stake?" and Chanda retorted to her son, "Did your wrist get cut off?"

The friend said, "Arundev! Your in-laws live in this village. We are exhausted and distressed; let us go to your father-in-law's house." Arundev replied, "How can I go there in this state of destitution?" The friend said, "You sit here; I will go there and return." The friend went into the village, while Arundev fell asleep in a temple. Exhausted from swimming in the ocean, he soon began to snore. Meanwhile, Devani, adorned with jewelry, arrived in the garden. A thief severed her wrist with a sword, stole her bracelet, and fled. Devani raised an alarm, and soldiers gave chase. Finding nowhere to hide or escape, the thief ran into the temple, left the blood-stained sword and the bracelet near Arundev, and fled. The pursuing soldiers found Arundev, saw the stolen goods beside him, and beat him before taking him to the king. Believing him to be the one who had severed the wrist in broad daylight, the king ordered Arundev to be executed by impalement, and the executioners carried out the order.

Meanwhile, the friend returned with food. Upon inquiry, he learned that Arundev had already been executed. When Jasaditya heard the news, he too arrived at the scene. Realizing the full extent of the tragedy—that his son-in-law had been executed in this manner—he felt a great calamity had occurred. He went to the king and said, "O King! This man is my son-in-law. He survived the ocean by clinging to a plank. Therefore, it must have been some other rogue who severed my daughter's wrist." Upon hearing this from Jasaditya, the king had Arundev taken down from the stake and restored him to health through various treatments. Eventually, both Arundev and Devani attained the Devlok after observing Ansan (a fast unto death). Thus, because the soul of Chandra had failed to seek atonement for angry words, she had to suffer the amputation of a wrist in a subsequent life, and Arundev had to face execution. Therefore, one should seek atonement for Kashayas (passions) such as anger as well.



12. Sadhvi Lakshmana did not seek atonement



In the era of the last Tirthankar of the 80th Chauvishi, there lived a princess named Lakshmana. She became a widow right within the wedding pavilion at the time of her marriage. Practicing the Shravak (lay follower's) code of conduct, she eventually embraced initiation on an auspicious day. Later, after guiding many souls onto the spiritual path, she became the preceptor (Guruni) to numerous female disciples. One day, upon witnessing the mating act of a pair of birds, Sadhvi Lakshmana began to wonder why Lord Arihant had not permitted sexual intercourse.

She briefly developed the thought that perhaps, since the Lord was devoid of Ved (anguish), he could not comprehend the anguish experienced by beings who possess it. However, she immediately felt remorse for harboring such a thought, realizing that Lord Arihant is Sarvagya (Omniscient) and is, therefore, capable of understanding the anguish of all living beings.

She felt she ought to seek alochana (confession/atonement) for this terrible thought. With this intention, she set out to seek atonement, but a thorn pricked her foot right as she started. At that moment, the thought arose in Sadhviji's mind: "This is an ill omen; if I seek atonement now, I will be considered vile. How impure Gurudev will think me to be! Yet, remaining burdened with this spiritual thorn (shalya) is also improper." Contemplating this, she decided to seek atonement as if on behalf of someone else. She approached Gurudev and asked, "Oh Gurudev! If someone were to harbor such a thought, what penance would be prescribed?" She concealed the fact that she herself had harbored such a thought. Subsequently, for ten years, she performed Chhath-Atham, four fasts and five fasts and performed Parana by 'Nivi'. For two years, she consumed only roasted grains; for sixteen years, she performed Masakshaman (month-long fasts); for twenty years, she performed Ayambil (a specific austere diet); and for two years, she ate only roasted Cheena millet. Thus, she performed severe penance for fifty years, yet her sins were not cleansed. Consequently, she died in a state of Arta-dhyan and underwent countless cycles of birth and death. She will attain liberation only during the reign of the first Tirthankar of the future Chauvishi (cycle of twenty-four Tirthankaras). Because she resorted to deceit and did not seek a sincere confession, her cycle of worldly existence was prolonged. Had she sincerely confessed the mental transgression, she would neither have needed to undergo such extreme penance nor suffered a miserable destiny. By concealing the sin, her penance failed to yield the desired result. Therefore, one must seek mental atonement to become pure.

Nowadays, some souls seek atonement for verbal and physical transgressions—such as using abusive language or causing the death of living beings—but very few seek atonement for mental transgressions, such as harboring thoughts driven by passions (Kashayas) and lustful desires. True purification is impossible without mental atonement. Therefore, one should seek atonement for transgressions committed mentally, verbally, and physically. If mental atonement was omitted—whether inadvertently or intentionally—one should seek it again.



13. Once there was a princess... Rishidatta

The Princess Becomes Devout... There was a city named Gangapur, ruled by King Gangadatt. He and his wife, Queen Ganga, had a daughter named Gangsena. Princess Gangsena became deeply religious after receiving spiritual enlightenment from a Sadhviji Maharaj. Grasping the essence of Jainism, she embraced the vow of celibacy (Brahmacharya) in her youth and dedicated her life to austerities such as Ayambil.

Refusing to Atone for Slandering... There was a poor Shravika named Sanga. Inspired by the Sadhviji, she too took initiation. After becoming a Sadhvi, she engaged in rigorous penance. Absorbed in spiritual knowledge, meditation, and austerity, she attained such spiritual heights that her fame spread far and wide, earning her public admiration. Witnessing this, Princess Gangsena could not tolerate the fame due to jealousy. She viewed the Sadhvi as a rival who had usurped the praise she once enjoyed. "People used to praise me, but now they praise her! No... this cannot go on. I must bring her down in the eyes of the public." Driven by this envy, she slandered Sadhvi Sangashriji, claiming she was a Rakshasi (demoness)—that she performed penance by day but feasted on corpses by night. She repeatedly told this to people. It is said that if a lie is told a hundred times, people begin to accept it as truth.

As a princess, she held sway over society and wore the guise of a devout woman; thus, it was easy for her to win people's trust, and they began to believe her words: "Sanga Sadhvi is a demoness...!!"

An elephant has one set of tusks for eating and another for show... an ascetic on the outside, yet harboring such base instincts within... Shame! Disgrace! "God on the lips, a dagger in the side" (hypocrisy). Sadhviji Sanga, who embodied the serene flow of equanimity... silently endured this slander and thought that this was the consequence of her own past deeds. Thinking thus, she harbored no ill will toward the princess. After casting that malicious slur out of jealousy, the princess did not seek atonement; upon her death, she wandered through many cycles of rebirth. Later, she was reborn as a princess in this very city of Gangapur. Eventually, she developed a sense of detachment from worldly life and took initiation. Upon the completion of her lifespan, she was reborn as a deity in the second Devlok. After completing her life there, she was conceived in the womb of Priyamati, the queen of King Harishen of the city of Mritikapada. The king and queen embraced the ascetic way of life.

Once, being detached of worldly existence, King Harishen told his wife, "I shall relinquish the affairs of the kingdom, retire to the forest hermitage, and devote myself to spiritual practice. You should remain here." The devoted Queen Priyamati replied, "Your path is my path; I, too, shall accompany you to the hermitage and engage in spiritual practice."

The king was unaware that she was pregnant, so he granted his permission. They both approached the ascetic Vishvabhuti and adopted the ascetic vows, becoming ascetics themselves. They sustained themselves in the forest on a diet of fruits and the like. However, after some time had passed, signs of pregnancy became visible on Priyamati's body. Observing this situation, the head of the hermitage wondered, "What has happened? This will bring disgrace upon us." Fearing this, he abandoned King Harishen and Priyamati and departed for another place.

Rishidatta began to possess the power of invisibility... As time passed, the ascetic Priyamati gave birth to a daughter. Immediately after the birth, she passed away. Believing the daughter to be a gift of the sage's grace, her father, Harishen, named her Rishidatta. She grew up and entered the bloom of youth. Her father, Harishen, grew concerned upon seeing her beauty and grace. To safeguard her virtue while in the forest, he bestowed upon her the art of invisibility, enabling her to vanish from sight at will.

Kanakrath's Journey for the Wedding... Once, King Sundarpani of Kaberipuri invited Kanakrath—the son of King Hemrath of Rathmardan Nagar, a prince endowed with good looks, grace, artistic talent, and virtues—to marry his daughter, Rukmini. Accepting the invitation, King Hemrath dispatched his son Kanakrath, accompanied by an army, toward Kaberipuri.

During the journey, the prince arrived at the very forest where Rishidatta lived. Overcome by thirst, his soldiers began searching for water. After a long time, the soldiers returned with water; the prince quenched his thirst and asked, "Why did it take so long?"

With folded hands, the soldiers replied, "O Master! You might be surprised, but it is true that we were wandering the forest in search of water. We eventually found a lake about four kosh (13 kilometers) away. On its bank stood a temple, beside which grew a banyan tree. There, we saw an ascetic. Near him, a maiden—radiant with beauty and youth—would appear at times, only to vanish in an instant. She kept appearing and disappearing repeatedly. Was it an optical illusion? A figment of our imagination, like a mirage? We stood there, captivated by this surprise; that is why we were delayed in returning."

Rishidatta's Marriage... The next day, the prince felt a strong urge to uncover the mystery behind this phenomenon. Consequently, he set out for that area. There, the prince too witnessed the maiden appearing and vanishing in an instant. He entered the temple and saw an elderly ascetic. The prince greeted him respectfully. The ascetic asked the prince for his identity. After introducing himself, the prince sought permission to stay there, which the ascetic gladly granted.

One day, the prince asked the ascetic about the girl who could vanish in an instant. Realizing the prince desired his daughter, the ascetic recounted her entire backstory in detail; hearing this, the prince was overcome with immense joy. Deeming him a worthy match, the ascetic married his daughter, Rishidatta, to Prince Kanakrath. After the wedding, Kanakrath found contentment and abandoned the idea of marrying anyone else. He returned towards his own city and made a grand, celebratory entry. When Rukmini learned that Kanakrath had returned after marrying someone else along the way, she was consumed by anxiety and resolved to exact revenge, much like a venomous cobra. She vowed to somehow turn Kanakrath against Rishidatta so that he would agree to marry her instead. Such is the storm of lust—driving one to fulfill personal desires even at the cost of harming another. What a sordid ambition this is!

Human ego... One day, an ascetic named Salsa visited Rukmini and asked the cause of her distress. Rukmini poured out her innermost feelings; hearing this, Salsa, driven by ego, told her not to worry, vowing that she would certainly accomplish the task.

Salsa arrived at Rathmardan. Upon seeing Rishidatta, however, her confidence wavered. "Alas! Who would desire another woman after finding such a virtuous wife? Does anyone crave poison after tasting nectar? The prince made the right choice. Yet, I have pledged to Rukmini that I would see this task through. How can this vow go unfulfilled? I must anyhow ruin Rishidatta." How terrifying is the human ego—driving one to contemplate the destruction of another.



Using the power of dark arts, the ascetic killed a prominent man and, under the cover of night, smeared Rishidatta's hands, face, and bedding with flesh and blood.

The accusation of consuming flesh... Using dark arts, the ascetic woman killed a prominent man and stained the innocent Rishidatta's hands and face with flesh and blood. Gradually, this matter came to light. People began to talk, "Rishidatta is a Rakshasi (demoness); she kills people at night and eats their flesh."

The prince asked Rishidatta, "What is this that you are doing?" She humbly replied, "I know nothing about this. Someone has cast this slur upon me due to the fruition of karma from a past life; truly, I have no idea." Hearing this, the prince's doubts were dispelled.

Sulsa persisted in her efforts. The next day, she placed a piece of flesh in the bedding. On the third day, she placed a blood-stained knife there as well. Due to her magical powers, the Prince remained unaware of Sulsa's movements. Now, the Prince's faith began to waver. He asked Rishidatta again, "If you truly desire to consume human flesh, I will arrange for you to eat it secretly; just tell me the truth."

Realizing that her own past deeds were to blame, Rishidatta wept. "My Lord! I have cherished non-violence as my very life since birth; I could not harbor such a desire even in a dream." She replied humbly, "Have I ever hidden anything from you until now? Yet, if you do not believe me, I blame no one but myself; it is the fault of my own karma." As she spoke these words, tears streamed down her face.

Kanakrath was left bewildered, caught in an unbearable dilemma. He was in such a wretched state that he lacked the courage to witness such gruesome scenes, yet he was equally unable to bear the thought of losing his virtuous wife. Consequently, whenever anyone asked him about it, he would evade the question, claiming he knew nothing of the matter.

King Hemrath's wrath and decree... One day, in a fit of anger, King Hemrath addressed his ministers: "Human beings are being killed every day, yet you do nothing. Have you all completely lost your wits?"

Hearing the King's words – fueled by his love for his subjects, his deep devotion to non-violence, and his righteous anger – the ministers trembled and began searching for a solution. Despite their strenuous efforts, they met with failure at every turn. Finally, in desperation, they approached the ascetic Sulsa and asked her the reason behind the killings. Skilled in the art of deception, she made an excuse, saying, "The question is complex. I will consult the deity tonight and give you an answer." The purpose behind fabricating this pretext was to ensure that people would place their complete trust in the name of the deity.

At night, the ascetic woman Sulsa smeared Rishidatta's mouth with blood and cast a spell of deep slumber upon her; she then approached the king and his ministers to plant this idea firmly in their minds. To make her story more convincing, the cunning woman told the king, "If you grant me immunity from harm, I will reveal the whole truth." When the king agreed, she urged him to go and see for himself. The king went there and witnessed the scene exactly as described. Upon seeing it, the king's mind flew into a rage.

"Alas! This is entirely Rishidatta's conspiracy. She stabs victims with a knife and drinks their blood daily; today, I have seen it with my own eyes. That is enough; I need not ask the prince anything further." Consequently, he immediately handed her over to the Chandals (executioners), ordering them to relieve the earth of the burden of this sin. They took her to the cremation ground, where they fiercely intimidated the helpless Rishidatta. Tears streamed continuously from the eyes of the defenseless woman.

The Chandals felt pity for the virtuous woman... By a stroke of her good fortune, one of the Chandals remarked, "Such an innocent and compassionate woman could never commit such an act—but what can be done now?"

Moved by compassion, the Chandals told her to flee to a distant land so that the king would not accuse them of collusion or blame them for sparing her life.

Reflecting on the fruits of karma, she set out for her father's ashram. The Chandals beheaded someone else and presented the head to the king. Other texts mention that the executioners beat her so severely that she lost consciousness; believing her to be dead, they left. When she regained consciousness, she continued towards her father's ashram, contemplating the nature of karma. Upon her arrival, she discovered that her father had already passed away. She possessed a miraculous medicinal herb. Thus, to safeguard her virtue, she assumed the guise of a man through the power of a special herb and began living as a young ascetic (Tapas Kumar).

Kanakrath's marriage to Rukmini... Meanwhile, Prince Kanakrath was writhing in anguish over his separation from Rishidatta, much like a fish out of water. He remained deeply distressed by her absence. Just then, an envoy from King Sundarpani of Kaberi arrived with a proposal for his marriage to Rukmini. King Hemrath persuaded his son Kanakrath, explaining that since Rishidatta had passed away, it was appropriate to accept the proposal. Yielding to his father's request, Kanakrath agreed and set out for Kaberi. Along the way, he came upon the very ashram where Rishidatta was living as an ascetic. There, the prince's right eye began to twitch. He thought that he would surely gain something today. Just then, he spotted the young ascetic there. The moment he saw him, the prince became utterly captivated by him. He offered his salutations and asked the young ascetic, "How did you come to be here?" Concealing his true identity, the young ascetic replied, "An ascetic named Harishen used to live here. He had a daughter named Rishidatta. After marrying her off to a prince, the ascetic passed away. Wandering about, I arrived here, and finding the region desolate, I decided to stay."

The prince was overjoyed upon seeing him and hearing his humble words, as if he had found Rishidatta herself.

He earnestly urged the young ascetic, "Seeing you fills me with great happiness; therefore, please stay with me." The young ascetic initially demurred, asking, "What business does an ascetic have with householders?" However, when the prince insisted, the young ascetic agreed to stay.

One day, wandering Sulsa arrived at the same hermitage. The young ascetic guessed that she must be the very ascetic who had caused my expulsion from home. He told her, "Despite performing penance as instructed by my guru, I have not yet attained the Vidya (mystical knowledge)." Hearing this, Sulsa became covetous, thinking, "He is an ascetic devoted to his guru; if I maintain a good relationship with him, I too might acquire the knowledge once he obtains it." She told the young ascetic, "I possess mystical arts like Avasvapini [the art of inducing sleep], and I successfully used it on Rishidatta." After hearing the full account, the young ascetic curtly replied, "I have no need for such sinful arts." Yet, inwardly, he realized that it was this wicked Sulsa who had landed him in trouble; deciding to deal with the matter when the right moment arose, he composed himself.

The friendship between the young ascetic and the prince... Once, when the young ascetic did not return even after a long time, the prince went to him personally and insistently brought him to his own pavilion. They slept side by side throughout the night, conversing with each other. Noticing the prince's distress, the young ascetic asked, "What kind of person was Rishidatta that your heart remains so tormented, and why do you find no peace?" Then, the prince, with a voice filled with deep emotion, described her beauty and virtues, saying, "Oh friend! A single tongue could never fully describe her."

The night passed in conversation—praising her humility, describing her beauty, and so on. In the morning, the minister arrived from Kaberi and requested the Prince to set out for the journey. The Prince declared, "I will come only if my friend the young ascetic accompanies me; otherwise, I will not." The young ascetic was heavily persuaded. Finally, the Prince said to him, "Just come with me this once; after the wedding, I will personally escort you back here." After much discussion, the young ascetic agreed to go.

They all set out on the journey. Upon reaching Kaberi, Prince Kanakrath married Princess Rukmini with great pomp and ceremony. Kanakrath stayed at his in-laws' home for a long time. However, he remained restless, constantly thinking of Princess Rishidatta and spending his days in a state of melancholy.

Eventually, the truth came out... One day, as the Prince sat in a despondent mood, Rukmini asked him, "Why do you remain so gloomy? What kind of woman was this Rishidatta that you cannot forget her, even after finding a beautiful wife like me?" The Prince replied, "You are nothing compared to her beauty and grace. Alas, you are like a mere mustard seed beside the Himalayas! There is no comparison between her beauty, her charm, her virtues, and yours... My father insisted after her death; that is why I came to marry you—otherwise, I would never have come to marry you."

Upon hearing this, Rukmini's ego was stung, and she spoke out sharply. "It was all my doing that your father asked you to come here; otherwise, he would never have suggested it." She then recounted the entire incident—revealing how she had cleverly orchestrated the plan through the ascetic woman, Sulsa. The conspiracy was exposed;

as the saying goes, "Sin cannot remain hidden... like fire wrapped in cotton, it cannot be suppressed."

Hearing this, the prince was deeply distressed. Alas! For the sake of her own selfishness, this wicked woman had cast such a terrible slur upon a truly virtuous woman (Mahasati). A sense of intense scorn for Rukmini arose in the prince's heart, and he began to reproach himself, thinking, "I could not save someone who relied on me, and because of the sin born of my helplessness, a virtuous woman has departed from this world." The prince prepared to immolate himself in the fire... Meanwhile, Rishidatta—disguised as the young ascetic—was filled with bliss, for the stigma against her had truly been lifted.

She rejoiced inwardly. Prince Kanakrath seethed with rage. He felt nothing but scorn for Rukmini, who had slandered an innocent, virtuous woman. Moreover, he felt scorn for himself: "Alas! I have proven utterly useless. I failed to protect even my innocent, virtuous wife. Therefore, I have no right to live; for a man who fails to protect those dependent on him, fire is the only refuge, and this is the only atonement for one who causes suffering to a virtuous woman." With this thought, he lit a funeral pyre and prepared to leap into it to end his life. It was then that the truth was revealed to others as well.

News of the prince's decision spread through the city like the wind, carrying with it the fragrance of Rishidatta's virtue and the stench of Rukmini's infamy... The talk on everyone's lips was threefold: "Blessed is the virtuous Rishidatta," "Shame upon Rukmini," and "The prince must be saved at all costs."

This was the topic of conversation in every household. King Sundarpani scorned the ascetic Salsa and banished her from his kingdom. yet, The resolve of the man of iron too was like iron.



The young ascetic stepped behind the curtain, and when Rishidatta emerged from behind it, the people were astonished at her appearance.

When the prince refused to abandon his resolve to immolate himself despite numerous attempts to dissuade him, Sundarpani approached the young ascetic and requested him to save the prince.

In truth, the young ascetic found himself in a moral dilemma; he knew that if he did not handle the situation wisely, things would inevitably go wrong. According to the king's request, he approached the prince and tried to persuade him. "Oh friend! What are

you doing? Suicide is a terrible act. How will your parents ever be able to show their faces to the world? And what will become of you in the afterlife? If you stay alive, you might well be reunited with Rishidatta, but if you burn yourself to death, you will never see her again. Do the birds that stay together on a tree at night and fly off in different directions at dawn, ever meet again? No; so consider this situation in the same light."

Even when presented with sound reasoning, a person often latches onto the one point that serves their own interests. The prince seized upon the idea that staying alive might make a reunion with Rishidatta possible. "Oh friend!" he exclaimed. "If you can bring Rishidatta back, I can stay alive. I will grant you whatever boon you ask for in return. Tell me the truth—have you seen Rishidatta anywhere?" "I certainly have seen her—in the abode of the Creator," the young ascetic replied gravely. The Prince said, "Go there and bring her back." The young ascetic replied, "If I go there, I will have to stay there, and Rishidatta will come here." "No matter; if you return, well and good, but otherwise, you must ensure Rishidatta is sent." Hearing this, the young ascetic said, "Keep the boon for yourself now and have a curtain drawn. I will send her to you through the power of meditation, but I shall not return." Kanakrath said, "Very well, no matter; just send her."

How adept humans are at pursuing their own self-interest! This is proven by the fact that the very Prince who could not bear to be apart from his friend for even a moment was now ready to abandon that friend for the sake of Rishidatta.

The appearance of Rishidatta... The young ascetic stepped behind the curtain and, removing the gutika (disguise), emerged in the form of Rishidatta. Rishidatta appeared before everyone. The people were left astounded, realizing that the Prince had been captivated by his affection for Rishidatta, forsaking Rukmini. It was only natural—who would choose to drink poison when they could have nectar? Now, the Prince developed an even greater aversion towards Rukmini, to the point where he stopped even looking at her. Witnessing this, the discerning Rishidatta became deeply distressed.

The magnanimity of Rishidatta's heart... One day, seeing the Prince in a cheerful mood, Rishidatta revealed the whole truth of the past, explaining that she was the very person who had disguised herself as the young ascetic. This revelation relieved Kanakrath of the anguish he had felt over the loss of his friend. However, reminding him of the boon he had promised, Rishidatta said, "Now, please grant me that boon." The Prince replied, "I am ready to give you whatever you ask for."

The benevolent Rishidatta said to the Prince, "Treat Rukmini with the same affection and regard that you show towards me; that is the boon I desire." The Prince was struck with wonder at such generosity of a woman's heart; inwardly, he bowed in reverence to her magnanimity. What an extraordinary woman! She harbored feelings of love and compassion even for the person who had committed such a terrible crime against her. Tears of joy welled up in the Prince's eyes. "Oh! Far from holding a grudge, she has

forgiven every offense and offered this gift! Rishidatta, you have truly done something remarkable!" the Prince exclaimed. He accepted her request and, from then on, began to treat Rukmini with equal affection. Some time later, he set out for the city of Rathmardan with both his wives. Upon arrival, he paid his respects at the feet of King Hemrath.

King Hemrath's remorse and initiation... Hearing the entire account, the King was filled with deep remorse. "Alas! I subjected an innocent, virtuous woman to such terrible suffering. Shame on my arrogance and ignorance!" He begged Rishidatta for forgiveness. The King was so deeply affected that his heart melted like water. A sense of detachment from the material world arose within him. "This world is truly dreadful, for worldly humans inflict cruelty upon innocent living beings." Just then, Acharyadev Shri Yashodharsurishwarji M.S.– who possessed the knowledge of the four Gyans (types of knowledge) – arrived there. King Hemrath, his heart imbued with a spirit of renunciation, handed over the kingdom to Kanakrath and took initiation under the Acharya's guidance.

The initiation of Kanakrath and Rishidatta... Kanakrath now became the king. As time passed, Rishidatta dreamt of a lion and subsequently gave birth to a son who resembled a lion; he was named Sinhrath.

One day, the King and Queen, engrossed in the natural scenery, were gazing intently at the sky through a window. At twilight, a cluster of clouds, illuminated by the sun's halo and adorned with myriad hues, seemed to dance in various shapes and forms. "Look here, Queen... how beautiful these varied colors of the clouds appear!"... Yet, moments later, the evening clouds scattered and vanished. This triggered a train of thought in the King's mind: "Alas... will my life, too, perish just like this one day?" A powerful storm of contemplation shook the Maharaja's heart. "What certainty is there in human life? It is as unstable as the wind. Deprived of spiritual devotion, where shall I be reborn?" Such fountains of renunciation began to spring forth in the garden of the King's heart. Just then, Acharyadev Shri Yashodharsurishwarji M.S. arrived in the garden, accompanied by Muni Hemrath.

After listening to the discourse, Rishidatta asked, "What sin did I commit in a past life that caused me – an innocent person – to suffer such agony in this life?" Revealing her past life, Acharyadev Shri said, "In a previous life, driven by jealousy, you cast a false accusation upon Sanga Sadhviji and failed to seek atonement (Alochna) for it. That is why you have had to endure such suffering. Had you sought atonement and performed penance, you would not have faced this ordeal."

Upon hearing this, she attained Jatismaran Gyan (the knowledge of remembering past lives). Kanakrath handed over the reins of the kingdom to his son, and both the king and queen embraced the path of asceticism. Through the practice of pure self-restraint and the attainment of Kevalgyan, both attained liberation.

Reflect upon the mysterious workings of Karma! Even a tiny spark can transform into a raging wildfire. Similarly, because she did not seek atonement (Alochana), she had to endure immense suffering stemming from a single harsh, slanderous remark. Had Rishidatta –in her previous life as Princess Gangasena – sought atonement for the sin of calling Sadhvi Sanga a Rakshasi (demoness), she would not have fallen victim to such tribulations and could have swiftly attained spiritual well-being. Therefore, we should purify our souls by seeking atonement.



14. Why was a stigma cast upon innocent Sitaji?

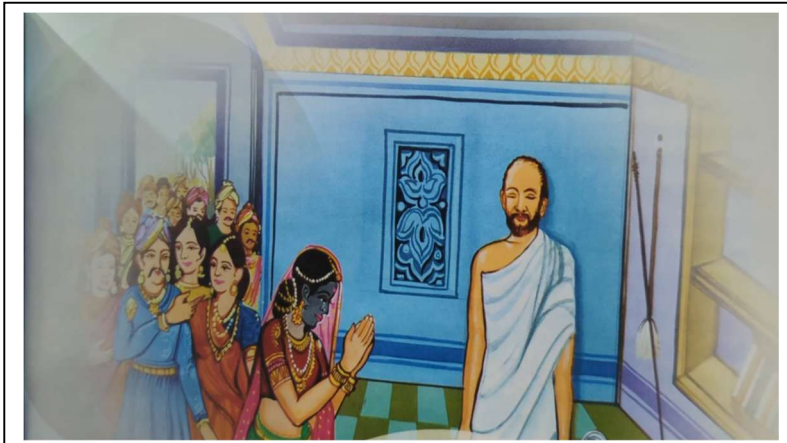
The general public leveled a false accusation against the supremely pure soul, Sati Sitaji, causing her to endure great suffering. Jain philosophy upholds the theory of cause and effect – nothing happens without a cause, and such events are often linked to past lives. Because her soul had failed to undergo Alochana (confession and atonement) in a previous life, even this great Sati (virtuous woman) had to bear a dark stigma.

Saraswati, the wife of the priest Shribhuti, gave birth to a daughter who was named Vegvati. As she grew into young womanhood, she maintained a keen interest in religious activities. One day, she saw Sage Sudarshan standing in Kayotsarga (a posture of deep meditative stillness); he was a revered renunciate and ascetic whom many worshipped. In a spirit of mockery, Vegvati asked the onlookers, "Why do you bow to him? What is so special about him? I have seen him engaging in amorous play with a woman, after which he sent her away." Upon hearing this, public opinion shifted instantly.

Such a claim – coming from Vegvati, our own village girl considered a trustworthy source – convinced everyone. Although she was a great and pure soul, the maiden Vegvati had made the accusation merely in jest; yet, the moment people heard the allegation, they turned hostile toward the monk.

Witnessing this, the monk Sudarshan harbored no ill will toward Vegvati. Instead, reflecting on his own karma, he took a solemn vow: he would not break his Kayotsarga posture until the stigma was cleared. Through the power of his meditation, a deity transformed Vegvati's face, making it dark and distorted – black as coal and twisted out of shape. Her father was astonished to see this: "What disease has afflicted my beautiful daughter?" "Daughter, what have you done? Did you apply some medicine? Did you do something foolish?" Shribhuti asked in amazement.

Vegvati replied humbly, "Father, I did nothing else, but out of a playful impulse, I jokingly told people that I had seen Sage Sudarshan with a woman." Upon hearing this, Shribhuti became furious and exclaimed, "Oh no... what have you done? Go, go right now and apologize to that great sage." Terrified by her father's anger, Vegvati began to tremble visibly. She begged the sage for forgiveness in front of everyone, admitting, "I cast a slur upon you by making a false accusation in jest. You are innocent."



(Vegvati, the maiden with the black face, apologized to Sage Sudarshan in the presence of everyone.)

Hearing this, the people resumed paying their respects to the sage. However, after offering this public apology, she did not seek atonement.

Later, she took initiation into the ascetic life. After living a beautiful, virtuous life and passing away, she

was reborn in the fifth Devlok. From there, she was reborn as Sitaji, the daughter of King Janak and Queen Videha. After becoming the wife of Ramchandraji, she was abducted by Ravan from the forest during their exile. A fierce battle ensued, resulting in Ravan's tragic death and Ram's victory. Subsequently, the people of Ayodhya welcomed Ram, Lakshman, and Sitaji back into the city with great joy.

However, people began to level false accusations against the great virtuous Sitaji, questioning: "How she could remain chaste after living alone in Ravan's abode for so long. How did Ramchandraji accepted her back to home without any test of purity? She had cast a blemish on the Suryavansh." Thus, a false stigma fell upon the innocent and pure-souled Sitaji – a consequence of her failure to seek atonement during her previous life as Vegvati.

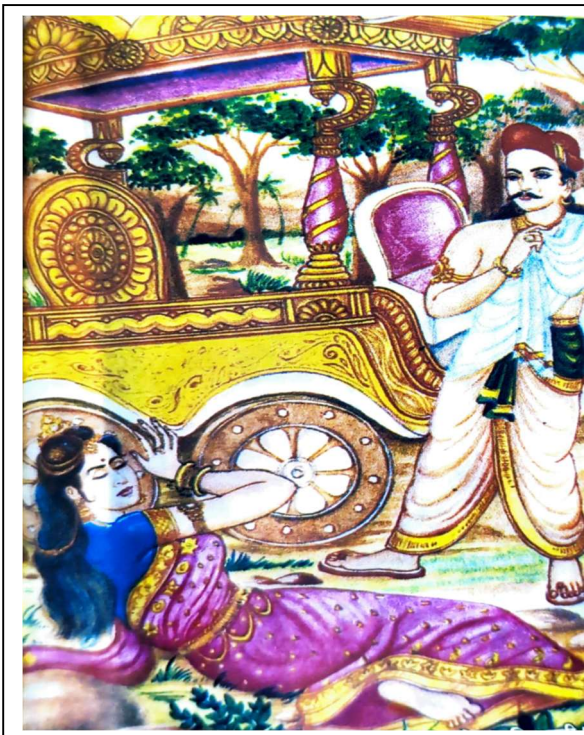
Ramchandraji himself knew that Sitaji was a woman of impeccable virtue and entirely blameless. Yet, yielding to public censure, he summoned the charioteer Kritantavadan and ordered him to abandon the pregnant Sitaji in the forest under the pretext of a pilgrimage.

Upon reaching the terrifying forest known as Sinhninad, Kritantavadan alighted from the chariot. His face fell, and tears streamed from his eyes like the heavy rains of the

monsoon season. Sitaji asked him, "Why are you so overcome with grief?" He replied, "Driven by the need to sustain this wretched life, I am compelled to utter these cruel words: please step down from the chariot, because Ramchandraji has commanded me to leave you here, alone and unsupported, and return. Because you stayed at Ravan's abode, people have begun to speak ill of you; to avoid this public criticism, Ramchandra has sent me to abandon you in the forest, despite your virtue."

Upon hearing this, Sitaji fainted and collapsed; her eyes closed, and her body became motionless. The charioteer wept bitterly, lamenting, "Alas! Have my words caused the death of a virtuous woman?" Kritantavadan stood there, helpless. Just then, the cool forest breeze acted like a life-restoring elixir, reviving the unconscious Sitaji. She then sent a message to Ramchandraji through the charioteer: "Just as you abandoned me because of what people said – an act that will cause you no harm, for I am a woman of ill-fated destiny – do not, in the same manner, abandon Dharma simply because of public opinion. Otherwise, your future lives will be ruined."

Hearing this, tears welled up in the charioteer's eyes; his heart overflowed with emotion, and he hailed the noble Sitaji, marveling at her steadfast devotion to truth.



(Sitaji fainted and fell from the chariot.)

The charioteer left Sitaji behind and departed. King Vajrajangh, accompanied by his minister Subuddhi and others, had come to that dense forest in search of elephants. Spotting alone, helpless woman from a distance, the king arrived there with his soldiers to offer assistance. Mistaking them for bandits, Sitaji began throwing her jewelry at them. King Vajrajangh reassured her, saying, "Do not worry; we have come to help you. We are like brothers to you." Sitaji then recounted the entire situation, after which King Vajrajangh respectfully took her to the city of Pundarik for her safety. There, she gave birth to two sons, Lav and Kush. When they grew up, they engaged in battle with Ram and Lakshman. During the conflict, Ram and Lakshman were overwhelmed and distressed. Just then,

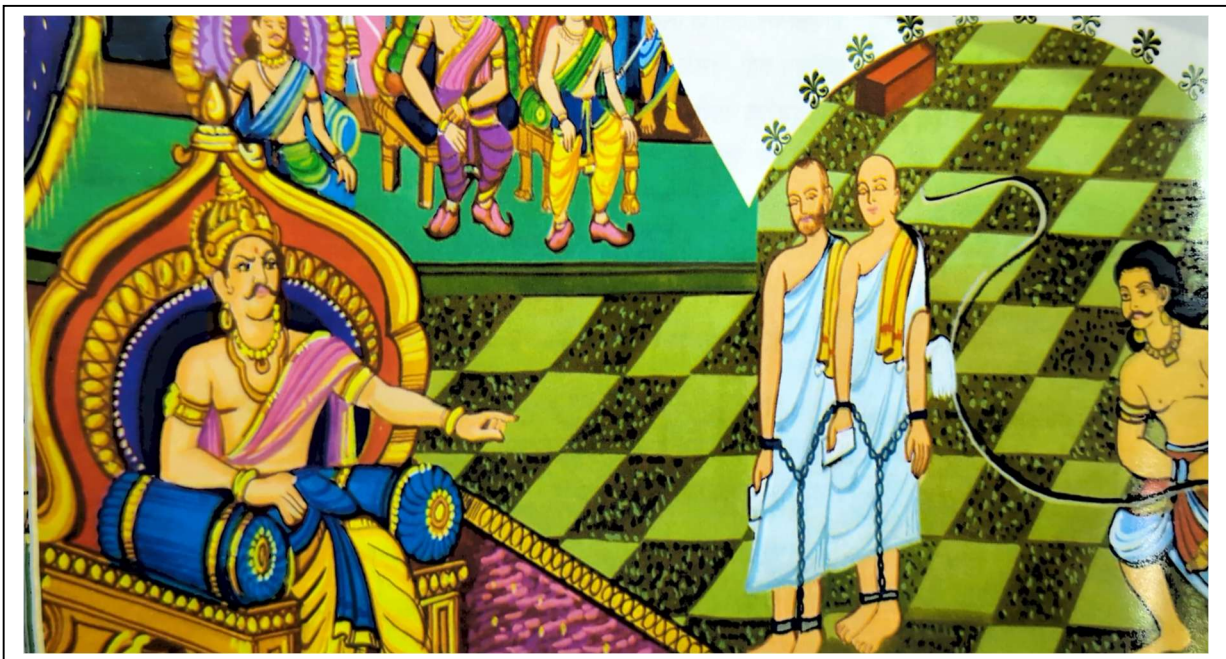
Naradji arrived; he revealed the father-son relationship, and the battle was halted. A joyous reunion ensued, and Lav and Kush were brought into Ayodhya with great honor. Later, out of respect for Ramachandraji's command, Sitaji underwent the ordeal by fire (Agni-pariksha).

Ramachandraji asked Sitaji to enter Ayodhya with honor. However, at that very moment, seeking her own spiritual well-being, Sitaji chose to renounce the worldly life and embrace asceticism – these are the events we are familiar with.

In a past life, a false accusation had been leveled against a sage in jest; because atonement was not sought for that act, a virtuous woman (Mahasati) later faced a similar stigma and had to endure immense suffering. Therefore, we must certainly seek atonement for our transgressions.



15. Why did Harishchandra have to live in the cremation ground?



In a past life, King Harishchandra had the innocent sages flogged.

In a past life, too, Harishchandra and Tara were a king and queen. One day, upon seeing two noble sages, the queen was overcome by lust. She had a maidservant summon the sages and began making seductive advances. However, all her attempts proved futile against the sages, who remained as steadfast as Mount Meru.

Rejecting her advances, the sages tried to counsel her, explaining that just as it is ignorance to be infatuated with an attractive bag filled with excrement, it is equally

ignorant to be infatuated with the human body, which is filled with waste matter. Despite their various attempts to reason with her, she remained unmoved. After all, how can the truth be accepted by someone intoxicated by attachment and viewing the world through the distorted lens of delusion? Frustrated and enraged, the queen – like a provoked female serpent – raised a hue and cry, vowing revenge. "These depraved ascetics have assaulted my chastity! Help! Help!" Soldiers caught the sages and brought them before the king.

Flames of fury blazed in the king's eyes. "Oh! So, these ascetics possess such a vile nature? Go... flog them until they are half-dead... and throw them into prison! Lash them a hundred times every day."

A month later, upon learning the true facts of the situation, the king released them from prison. Both the king and queen apologized, yet they failed to perform the Alochna-Prayashchit (confession and atonement). Consequently, in his life as King Harishchandra, he was forced to live in the home of a Chandal and work at a cremation ground for twelve years, while Queen Tara was stigmatized as a demoness and suffered the separation from her son, Rohit.

All these hardships befell them because they had not performed confession and atonement for the sins committed in their past life. Realizing this, we too should undertake confession and atonement.



16. King Shripal suffers for failing to seek atonement

In a past life, Shripalji was a king named Shrikant. One day, upon seeing a monk dressed in soiled robes, he scornfully rebuked him, calling him a leper.

On another occasion, King Shrikant treated a monk – who was standing in Kayotsarga meditation by the riverbank – with contempt and forced him to be submerged in the water. The monk endured this ordeal with equanimity, recognizing it as a tribulation, but Shrikant incurred the bondage of karma.

Because King Shrikant did not seek Alochna (confession and repentance) for these two sinful acts, Shripalji was afflicted with leprosy in his subsequent life. After enduring the consequences of that karma, and when the karma regarding the submersion in water came to fruition, Dhaval Seth threw him into the ocean; however, through the power of meditating on the Navpad, he survived by landing on the back of a crocodile.

The consequences of failing to undertake atonement are extremely painful. Therefore, one should sincerely seek atonement even for a minor sin.



17. The punishment for theft and Mother Devaki

In a past life, the soul of Vasudev's wife, Devaki, had stolen seven precious gems belonging to a co-wife. However, seeing the co-wife in deep distress, she was moved by compassion and managed to return one of the gems. The soul did not undergo the atonement for this act of theft. Subsequently, that very soul was born as Devaki.

A merchant named Nagil Seth lived in Bhaddil village; his wife was named Sulsa. An astrologer had prophesied that she would only give birth to stillborn children. Consequently, she worshipped the deity Harinaigameshi. The deity clearly told her, "You do not possess the virtue required to give birth to a living child; therefore, using my divine power, I will entrust another's child to you. You may raise them and consider yourself a mother." Accepting the proverb "A one-eyed uncle is better than no uncle", Sulsa agreed to the deity's proposal.

During the event of Devaki's marriage, the sage Aimutta Muni told Kans's wife, Jivyasha, that Devaki's seventh child would kill Kans. Terrified of his own demise, Kans took permission from Vasudev to take the first seven children born to Devaki and resolved to kill them. However, due to the immense virtue accumulated by the souls being born, whenever a son was born to Devaki, the deity Harinaigameshi would secretly exchange him with a stillborn infant from Sulsa; the stillborn child would be placed with Devaki, while the living son was entrusted to Sulsa.



In a past life, the soul that became Devaki had stolen seven precious gems belonging to a co-wife.

She had returned one of those gems.

teachings of Lord Neminath and accepted initiation. When Devaki gave birth to her seventh child, Krishnaji, Vasudev entrusted him to Yashoda and brought her daughter

to Devaki; Kans cut off the infant girl's nose. Thus, because she had not atoned for the theft of the six gems, Devaki endured separation from six sons. Since she had returned one gem, her separation from Krishna was only temporary, and she was eventually able to raise him herself for a time.

From this, we should learn that if we have ever committed any act of theft in our lives—whether driven by envy or greed—we must cleanse ourselves in the pure waters of atonement, thereby becoming purified and unburdened.



18. Dhandhan Kumar and Antaraya

In a past life, the soul of Dhandhan Kumar was a supervisor of farmers. Whenever it was time for the farmers' meal break, he would ask them: "make one round of ploughing in my field first, so that I don't have to plough it myself." By extracting free labor in this manner, he caused an obstruction (antaraya) to their meal and failed to seek atonement (alochana) for it. Consequently, in a later life, after taking initiation from Lord Neminath and becoming the ascetic Dhandhan Muni, he took a solemn vow (abhigraha) that he would break his fast only if he received alms (gochari) through his own spiritual power or influence (labdhi), and not otherwise. Here, the Antaraya Karma—bound earlier by obstructing others' meals—manifested. The scriptures state: "Reflect upon your state of mind at the time of binding karma; for when it bears fruit, there is only suffering." Oh soul! One should reflect while binding karma; what is the use of weeping when the time of fruition arrives? Karma bound with a smile cannot be shed even with tears. He wandered for six months but did not receive alms through his own spiritual power. One day, Lord Neminath praised Dhandhan Muni as supreme; hearing this, Krishnaji bowed to him on the path. Witnessing this, a virtuous person offered alms to Dhandhan Muni. Lord Neminath then said to him, "Oh Dhandhan! King Krishna was bowing to you, and moved by that sentiment, the person offered you alms. Thus, the alms were offered due to the influence (labdhi) of Shri Krishna; you did not receive this food through your own spiritual power. Your vow remains unfulfilled.



Dhandhankumar's soul, supervisor of farmers in a past life, tells the farmers to make a round of his field before having their meal.

" Realizing this, he went to respectfully dispose of the alms (parathvana). While doing so, he ascended to Shukla Dhyan (pure contemplation) and attained Kevalgyan. Because he had not sought atonement for the obstruction caused to others' meals, he had to endure so much hardship. Therefore, O seekers of liberation, one must unfailingly seek atonement.

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19. Draupadi got five husbands...



Despite scriptures' prohibition against practicing Atapana, Sukumalika performed it outside the village.

Sukumalika, a Sadhvi, used to practice Atapana—enduring the harsh heat of the sun—in the forest during the month of Vaishakh. Meanwhile, five men arrived there with a courtesan and began to engage in amorous play, touching various parts of her body. Alas! Those blinded by lust cast aside all shame

and modesty. Sadhviji's gaze fell upon this scene, and she lost her composure. In that moment, Sukumalika made a Niyana (a solemn vow) to obtain five husbands in her next life in exchange for the spiritual merit of her religious practice. She did not seek Alochana (confession and repentance) for this act.

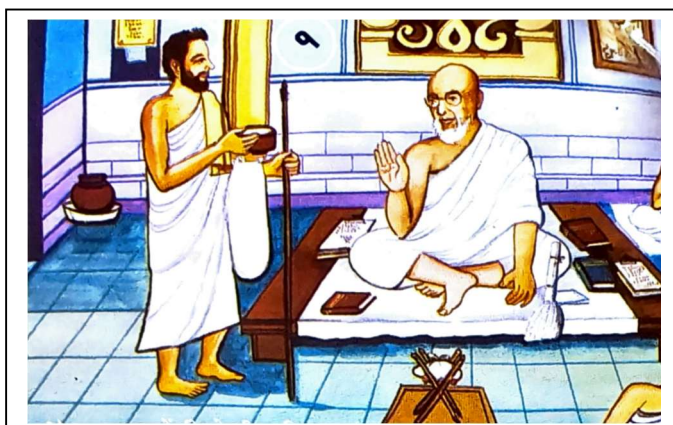
After her death, Sukumalika was reborn as Draupadi, the daughter of King Drupad. She placed the wedding garland around the neck of Arjuna—who had successfully accomplished the Radhavedh feat—yet, through a divine phenomenon, the garland appeared around the necks of all five Pandavas. King Drupad was astonished. "Oh! What is this?" Just then, a celestial voice proclaimed that what had occurred was indeed correct. Subsequently, Charan sages arrived and resolved the dilemma by stipulating a condition: she would not even mentally desire anyone other than the husband whose turn it was on a given day—a vow considered extremely difficult to uphold.

This extraordinary event—becoming the wife of all five Pandavas—occurred because Sukumalika had failed to seek Alochana. Had she done so, she would not have had to undergo the severe penance of Masakshaman (a month-long fast) to atone for those thoughts; however, living beings often avoid confession and atonement due to ego. This leads to terrible, unforeseen tragedies in future lives, where one's existence is reduced to dust amidst a saga of suffering and sorrow—leaving behind nothing but anguished screams and tears of agony. Therefore, enlightened sages urge us: "Oh brother, wake up... the game is still in your hands. Cleanse the dark book of your life through the act of repentance."



20. Failure to atone for envy...

Envy is a fire that cannot harm the person being envied; instead, the envious person themselves is consumed and reduced to ashes by that very fire. Gurudevshri once praised the virtues of Vaiyavach (devoted service to ascetics) demonstrated by the monks Bahu and Subahu—sons of a Chakravarti—who performed true devotion and service for all ascetics, whether high or low, poor or rich. This praise sparked envy in the minds of the monks Pith and Mahapith. They thought, "These two perform physical labor—like fetching water, bringing alms, massaging feet and other tasks akin to labourer's work—and Gurudevshri praises them. We put immense intellectual labor into studying the scriptures; that seems to hold no value at all." Thus, a sense of envy arose in the minds of those two monks. They failed to realize—"Oh brother! Everything has its own value at the right time"—but who was there to understand this? Their minds were consumed by the fire of envy.



1) Monk Bahu, who served 500 ascetics by bringing them Gochari (alms food), is presenting Gochari to Gurudevshri.

2) Monk Subahu, who served (attended to the needs of) 500 ascetics by massaging the feet of the monks.

Because they did not seek atonement for this envy, they were reborn as women—Brahmi and Sundari—in their next life, while Bahu and Subahu were reborn as Bharat and Bahubali. Therefore, everyone should practice Alochana-Shuddhi (purification through the confession and atonement of faults).



21. Why did Anjanasundari become distressed?



Kanakodari placed the idol of the Lord into an unclean place.

A king had two wives: Lakshmivati and Kanakodari. Queen Lakshmivati got made a gem-studded idol of the Supreme Lord Arihant and installed it in her home-temple. She became deeply engrossed in worshipping and revering it. Her devotion began to be praised everywhere. "Blessed is Queen Lakshmivati! People usually remember the Lord only in times of sorrow, not in times of happiness; yet,

this queen remembers the Lord even in prosperity—truly blessed is she!" Children, the elderly, and the youth alike spoke only one thing: "Blessed is Queen Lakshmivati; blessed is her devotion to the Lord." It is commonly said that when a person is stricken with fever, even the finest food tastes bitter to them; if offered a Rasgulla, they would simply spit it out in disgust. Such is the state of a jealous person. The fever of jealousy had permeated throughout queen Kanakodari's being. She could not bear the praise her co-wife received. "Why do people not praise me?" she would constantly wonder. "You, too, could practice religion and worship the Divine; people would praise you even more than they praise her." "Whether I do it or not, Lakshmivati simply must not be praised." A storm of such thoughts began to rage wildly within Kanakodari's heart and mind. Observe how the fire and obsession of jealousy can give rise to such terrible calamities. Kanakodari resolved, "If the root does not exist, how can there be branches?" If the bamboo itself is gone, how can the flute play? Why do people praise her, after all? Simply because she has the idol! The idol is there, so she worships; people praise it, and I am left burning with envy. If the root were just cut away—well, that would be the end of it! And so, she sprang into action. Blinded by jealousy, Kanakodari prepared to commit a heinous act. She stealthily entered the home temple, picked up the idol of the supremely compassionate Lord, and put it... oh! ...into the refuse... into an unclean place... into filth that reeked of a terrible stench. Yet, that woman—blinded by ignorance and envy—felt no sorrow; instead, she experienced immense joy—much like the perverse delight one might feel in cutting off one's own nose just to bring bad luck to others. Oh! ...Karma bound in laughter cannot be undone in tears. As you sow, so shall you reap. Alas! Kanakodari could have realized this!

Uproar and chaos swept across the entire kingdom—a theft! A theft! Queen Lakshmivati's eyes became swollen from ceaseless weeping. "Alas! Who has taken

away my Lord?" Sadhvi Jayashree discovered the secret behind this incident. She reasoned with Kankodari and ensured the re-installation of the Lord's idol. However, Kankodari did not formally repent for this misdeed. Consequently, she had to suffer dire consequences; in her subsequent life as Anjana Sundari, she was forced to spend twenty-two years weeping in separation from her husband. In the earlier life, Vasantatilaka had condoned this misdeed, so she, too, had to share in Anjana's suffering. If we do not repent for our sins and purify ourselves through atonement, the consequences are truly terrible—much like the years of separation in Anjana Sundari's life, which were reduced to a mere tale of tears.



22. Queen Kuntala

Queen Kuntala had taught her co-queens about devotion to the Jin and other religious practices. Yet, they surpassed her. Jealousy arose in Kuntala's mind: "I was the one who introduced them to the religion, and now these queens have gone further than me in their religious devotion!" Even if they did advance, what did it cost her? After all, they were performing acts of righteousness. "No... I do not object to them doing it, but they ought to remain behind me." Because she failed to repent for this jealous mindset—choosing to erase others' standing rather than elevating her own—Kuntala was born as a female dog in her next life. And what is there to do in such a life? Nothing but bark...

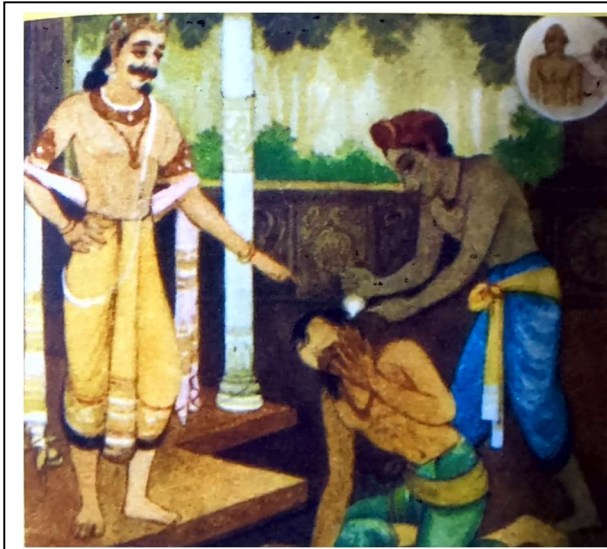
How beautiful are these lines regarding the jealous nature of a dog: The full moon rose, showering moonlight from the sky and bathing the entire city in a silvery glow. Yet, at the sight of this light, all the dogs in the city woke up and began to bark. But no matter how much or how often a dog barks, why should the moon—shedding its cool, soothing radiance—stop shining? As the dog gazed at the moon illuminating it, its agitation only mounted. In other words, the dogs would simply start barking—Bow! Bow!—at it. Yet, their barking would not cause the stars to fall. A star does the work of a star, and a dog does the work of a dog. The star never complains, "If you want to bark, go ahead—but why bark at us?" Stars are destined to twinkle, and dogs are destined to bark; this envious nature is ingrained in their very blood.

If others are envious, should we be envious too? No, never; we should remain cheerful, like the moonlight. If someone else owns three bungalows and four Maruti

cars while we struggle to afford even one, should we feel envy? No, absolutely not. If others feast on almond halwa daily while we barely manage to find a roti to satisfy our hunger, should we envy them? No... remember, if even a trace of such envy arises, do not forget to seek atonement (alochana) from the revered Guru. Otherwise, we might end up in a state worse than Kuntala's; and what is the point of becoming a dog? No Samayik, no Paushadh—just endless barking—Bow! Bow! Bow!

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23. The soul of Lord Mahavir Swami—had it not undergone atonement...



Tripurishtha Vasudev had molten zinc poured into the ears of his bed-attendant.

During his incarnation as Tripurishtha Vasudev, he humiliated a queen and had molten zinc poured into the ears of a bed-attendant. He did not seek atonement for these acts; consequently, the soul of that queen—in the incarnation where she became a low quality Vyantari—inflicted a severe affliction of cold upon him in the form of Kataputana, while the soul of the bed-attendant, having become a farmer, drove spikes into the Lord's ears.

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24. Harikesibal was born into a Chandal family...

After taking initiation, the priest Somadev had harbored pride in his lineage but failed to seek atonement for this arrogance, thereby binding the karma of a low-status lineage (nīcha-gotra). Due to the fruition of that karma, he was compelled to be born into a Chandal family. However, because the soul of Somadev had performed intense spiritual practice and shed a vast amount of karma after his earlier initiation, only a small residue of karma remained; thus, in the life of Harikesibal, he was born as a man with super body (charam shariri). Driven by the spiritual impressions of his past life, he took initiation as Harikesibal, ascended to the state of Sukla-dhyan (pure meditation), attained Kevalgyan, and achieved liberation; yet, because he had not sought atonement earlier, the 'King of Karma' had once cast him into the life of a Chandal.



25. Kalavati's wrists were severed...



1) In a past life, Queen Kalavati cut off both wings of a parrot.

2) As a result, she had to have both her own wrists cut off.

In a past life, Queen Kalavati had rejoiced after cutting off both wings of a parrot and had not sought Alochana (confession and atonement) for the act. Subsequently, the soul of that parrot was reborn as a king, and Kalavati became his queen. One day, a maidservant noticed the queen wearing bracelets and asked, "Where did these come from?" The queen replied, "They were sent by the one who always dwells in my heart

and in whose heart I always reside; the one whom I cannot forget day or night, and at the sight of whom my joy knows no bounds." Upon overhearing these words, the king became suspicious, wondering if the queen was unchaste and had given her heart to another man who had sent her these jewels. Enraged, the king ordered his soldiers to take the pregnant queen into the forest, sever her wrists—along with the bracelets—and bring them back. The soldiers took the queen to the forest and returned with her severed wrists. However, the moment she gave birth to a son, the power of the virtuous queen's chastity caused a deity to restore her hands and transform the forest into a place of prosperity and joy by creating a palace there.

When the king saw the names of the queen's brothers, Jay and Vijay, inscribed on the bracelets, he was filled with deep remorse; he had a search conducted and brought the queen back with full honor. Upon consulting an omniscient Lord, it was revealed that this suffering was the karmic consequence of cutting the parrot's wings in her past life. Realizing this, the king and queen handed over the kingdom to their son and embraced the path of asceticism. Eventually, in her twenty-first incarnation, having eradicated her karma, Queen Kalavati's soul attained liberation. Because she had not sought Alochana in that past life, she had to endure the severing of her wrists; therefore, one should never hesitate to seek Alochana.



26. Holding the eggs in hand...



The Queen picked up the peahen's eggs out of curiosity.

After 16 ghadis—that is, 6 hours and 24 minutes—the peahen tended to the eggs after they had been washed clean by the rain.

In a past life, the soul that became Rukmini was a queen. The king and queen had gone for a stroll in the garden, where a peahen had laid eggs. The queen picked up the peahen's eggs out of curiosity; because her hands were stained with kumkum (vermilion), the eggs became stained with the same red color. Consequently, the

peahen did not tend to the eggs. After 16 ghadis (6 hours and 24 minutes), it rained; the eggs were washed clean, and only then did the peahen tend to them. The queen did not perform Alochana (ritual confession and atonement) for this act. As a result, in her life as Rukmini, she suffered separation from her offspring for 16 years. Upon asking Lord Neminath, the Lord resolved her doubts. Subsequently, Rukmini took initiation and attained liberation.

Touching the eggs led to a separation lasting 16 ghadis, which resulted in the Karma bond of a 16-year separation. What kind of Karma bond, then, would be incurred by those who eat eggs and omelets? And for those who do not perform Alochana for such acts, the consequences would be devastating—crushing enough to shatter one's very bones. Therefore, one must perform Alochana.



27. Why was the fetus transferred from Devananda's womb?

In a past life, the soul that became Devananda was the elder sister-in-law, and the soul that became Trishala was the younger sister-in-law. The elder sister-in-law stole many gems from the younger sister-in-law's jewel box. Following a dispute, she somehow returned some of the gems. In a fit of anger, the younger sister-in-law declared, "May your offspring become mine." The elder sister-in-law did not seek atonement for this act. Consequently, in a subsequent life, Lord Mahavir Swami—who was initially in Devananda's womb—was transferred to Trishala's womb; this is the prevailing legend. Therefore, one should not be negligent in atoning for the act of theft.



28. Failure to seek atonement for the disrespect of knowledge

In a past life, Acharya Shri Vasudevsurishwarji M.S., in a fit of anger, stopped imparting scriptural teachings to his 500 disciples. He remained silent for twelve days and passed away without seeking atonement for this action. In his next life, he was born as Varadatt. He was afflicted with leprosy, and he found himself unable to grasp even a single letter while attempting to study. Later, upon learning the truth from Vijaysensurishwarji Maharaj, he observed the rituals of Gyan Panchami

(a ritual dedicated to knowledge) and attained liberation in his third life. It was the failure to perform atonement for the disrespect shown to knowledge that caused the leprosy and the inability to retain knowledge.



29. Failure to seek atonement for misappropriating temple funds...

Sagar Seth of Saketpur town was managing the accounts for the construction of a temple. Driven by greed for profit, instead of paying the labourers in cash, he provided them with materials from his own shop. In this manner, he made a profit of 1,000 Kankanis (equivalent to 12.50 rupees). He did not seek atonement for this act. Consequently, he underwent a miserable cycle of rebirths: he was born as an Andagolik fish and as an animal (Tiryanch); he visited all seven hells twice; he took 1,000 births each as a pig, goat, deer, rabbit, wild antelope, fox, cat, mouse, lizard, and snake; and he experienced one lakh births as a Vikalendriya (a being with fewer than five senses). Later, when he was born as an impoverished human and asked an enlightened Guru about his plight, the Guru explained the reason. The soul of Sagar Seth then sought atonement, spent 1,000 times the original amount (12,500 rupees) on temple funds, bound the Tirthankar Nam-karma (karmic merit to become a Tirthankar), and attained Moksha (liberation) in his third subsequent life.

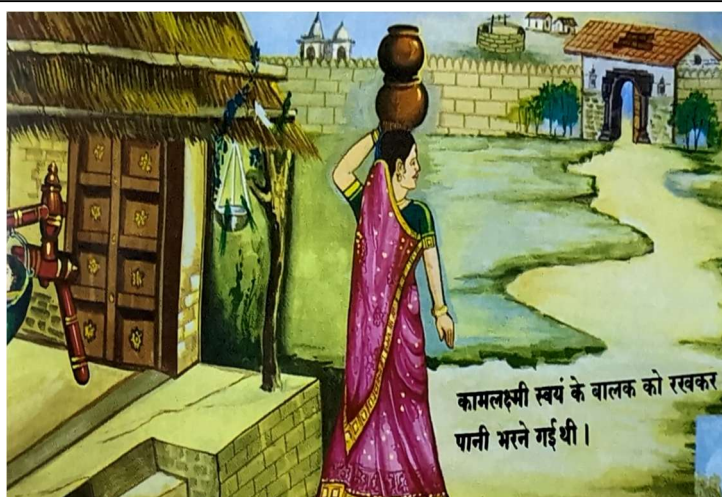
Because he did not seek atonement for misappropriating temple funds, even the soul destined to become a Tirthankar suffered such a wretched fate. Therefore, virtuous individuals must make a sincere effort to seek atonement.



Those who became shining stars by seeking atonement

1. Mother and son became Kevalgyani...

In the city of Lakshmitilak, there lived an impoverished Brahmin named Vedsar. His wife was named Kamlakshmi, and they had a son named Vedvichakshan. An enemy king invaded Lakshmitilak. Kamlakshmi had gone outside the city to fetch water. Due to the invasion, the city gates were shut, leaving her stranded outside.



Kamlakshmi had gone to fetch water, leaving her child behind.

Meanwhile, Kamlakshmi—who remained devoted to her own husband—began distributing alms daily with the king's permission, hoping to find her Brahmin husband among the crowd of supplicants. One day, the Brahmin Vedsar happened to arrive there seeking alms. Kamlakshmi recognized him. She called him over, revealed her identity, and devised a plan for them to elope, telling him, "On the seventh night, I will come to the temple of Goddess Chandi. You must come there too; from there, we shall flee to a place of our choice."

Afterward, the queen feigned a stomach ailment. Many physicians

A soldier seized her and took her to the king. Struck by her beauty, the king made her his queen. In time, when Vedvichakshan had grown up, Vedsar entrusted the household to him and set out in search of his wife.



A soldier captured Kamlakshmi and took her to the king.

were summoned, but to no avail. Then Kamlakshmi said to the king, "Once, when you were ill, I made a vow: 'O Goddess Chandi! If this pain subsides, both the king and I will come to worship you on the day of Kali Chaudas.' Your pain subsided immediately after that, but I later forgot to go for the worship. Therefore, O King, please decide that we shall go to perform the worship this coming Kali Chaudas." Upon hearing this the king agreed to the plan and the pain subsided—or so Kamlakshmi made it appear. On the day of Chaudas, the king and queen, mounted on horses and carrying the materials for worship, set out for the temple of Goddess Chandi. Upon reaching the temple, they dismounted and walked towards the shrine. As the king placed his sword outside and bowed his head at the temple entrance to step inside, the queen picked up the sword from behind and struck the king's neck. The king's head was severed from his torso.



The queen struck the king's neck with a sword.

When Kamlakshmi went inside and looked by the light of a lamp, she saw that a snake had bitten Vedasar Brahmin. His body had turned blue, and his life had departed. The queen thought, "What shall I do now? If I return to the royal palace, I might be accused of regicide (murdering a king)." So, she mounted a horse and fled into the forest. As she fled, she arrived at a city, left her horse at a gardener's house, and went to a temple. Music was playing there. Seeing a woman adorned with

ornaments and finery, another woman asked her, "Who are you? Where have you come from? Whose guest are you?" Weaving a web of lies, she replied, "I was on my way to my in-laws' house with my husband. Thieves intercepted us on the way and killed him. I managed to escape and reach here somehow. I have no one here; I am all alone." Hearing this, the woman—who was a courtesan—enticed Kamlakshmi with her cunning words and took her home. She taught Kamlakshmi arts such as singing and dancing, turning her into a courtesan as well.

One day, Vedvichakshan reflected, "Father had gone in search of Mother. Neither Mother returned, nor did Father. Could he have gotten lost too? What happened? I should go look for them." With this thought, the young man left home. Wandering about, he arrived at that very courtesan's house and became ensnared there. After some time, when his money ran out, he prepared to leave the courtesan's house; it was then that he revealed his identity to her. Hearing this, Kamlakshmi felt deep anguish in her heart.



While Kamlakshmi was living at the courtesan's house, her son, Vedvichakshan, arrived there.



Kamlakshmi was about to jump into a blazing pyre she had lit when a torrential rain caused the river to flood.

The young man had already left. Subsequently, the thought struck Kamlakshmi: "Alas! I have committed a terrible sin; I engaged in a physical union with my own son. The only fitting punishment is to be reduced to ashes in a blazing pyre." The head courtesan learned of this. She reasoned with Kamlakshmi extensively, but she remained adamant.

She lit a pyre in the middle of the river and jumped into it. By a stroke of luck, heavy rain fell at that very moment, extinguishing the pyre. As the river flooded, Kamlakshmi was swept away by the current. A cowherd spotted her drifting in the water and pulled her to safety. After receiving extensive care, she recovered, and the cowherd took her as his wife.



A cowherd caught the drowning Kamlakshmi and pulled her out.

Once, she went to sell a pot full of curd. Another woman was walking alongside her, carrying a pot of water, when an elephant came charging towards them from behind. Both women began to run in panic. In the process, their pots shattered. The woman whose water pot had broken began to weep, while the woman whose curd pot had broken

began to laugh. A priest approached and asked the reason for her laughter; she replied, "Which sorrow should I weep over? When faced with immense grief, a minor sorrow no longer feels like a burden—much like how, when one is burdened by a massive debt, a smaller debt ceases to torment one." She sat in a garden and recounted her life story. The priest who had asked the question was none other than her own son, Vedvichakshan. Upon hearing the entire tale, he was struck by a profound sense of shock and anguish. "Alas! What have I done? I engaged in sexual union with my own mother!" Shame on my worldly cravings! Both mother and son—having sought atonement before the revered Gurudev who was an embodiment of compassion, and having embraced a life of righteous conduct—attained Kevalgyan and ultimately liberation. Just as the mother and son attained purity by confessing their faults with a sincere heart—free from any hidden thorns of guilt or the hindrance of shame—so too must we should seek atonement through honest confession, casting aside all shame.



While running, water pot of a woman shattered and she began to weep; the woman whose curd pot had broken began to laugh.

2. Pushpchula became purified after atonement



Driven by an intense attachment to his children, King Pushpktu convened an assembly of his subjects and, through deceit, obtained their consent to marry his daughter to his son.

There was a king named Pushpktu in the city of Pushpbhadra. His queen was named Pushpvati. She gave birth to a pair of children: Pushpachul and Pushpchula. Pushpachul and Pushpchula grew up sharing a deep bond of love; they could not bear to be apart from one another. The king began to ponder that if he were to marry his daughter Pushpchula off elsewhere, the two would be separated. Consequently, he summoned an assembly of his subjects. In the assembly, King Pushpktu posed a question: "If a precious gem were to appear on my land, who would have the right to decide where to set it?" The subjects replied that the right to set the discovered gem belonged solely to him. The king then declared, "I shall unite this 'gem of a son' and 'gem of a daughter' through marriage." Thus, having secured the subjects' consent through deceit, he had them married to each other. Pushpavati was deeply wounded by this act of injustice. Overcome by a sense of detachment from the world, she renounced worldly life and, upon her death, was reborn as deity. In time, King Pushpktu also passed away and departed for the other world.

The brother and sister began living together as husband and wife. Meanwhile, the deity (the soul of their mother) perceived through clairvoyant knowledge that the two had been her son and daughter in a past life and realized that, by engaging in such an immoral, carnal sin, they were destined for hell. To guide them onto the righteous path, the deity showed Pushpchula a vision of hell in a dream during the night. Terrified by the vision, Pushpchula recounted it to the king the next morning. The king summoned ascetics from various other philosophical traditions to understand the

true nature of hell. They stated, "O King! The suffering of hell consists merely of the agonies caused by grief, separation, disease, and the like." Pushpchula said, "The hell I saw in my dream is completely different from such sorrows; not even a trace of the suffering I witnessed there is visible here." Then, the Jain Acharya Arnikaputra was summoned and consulted. He described the terrifying torments of the seven hells exactly as the queen had witnessed them in her dream.



The deity showed Pushpchula a vision of hell in a dream.

Subsequently, the deity revealed a vision of the bliss of Devlok (the celestial realm) to her in a dream.

Pushpchula summoned other seers and asked them to describe the nature of Devlok, but she could not ascertain the truth from them. When she later consulted Arnikaputra Acharya, he described Devlok exactly as she had seen it in her dream. Inspired by this, she embraced the path of ascetic

conduct (Charitra); through practices such as confession and atonement, she observed her vows flawlessly. Engaging in Vaiyavachch (devoted service to the spiritual community), she attained Kevalgyan in that very life and ultimately achieved liberation.

It is worth noting here that although, due to circumstances, a brother and sister had become husband and wife, Pushpchula attained liberation by performing penance and embracing the ascetic path. Therefore, we too should undertake atonement to purify ourselves. We have certainly not committed such grave sins, so there is no reason to fear. Even if we had committed terrible sins, what is the need to be afraid? If her soul was purified through atonement, will ours not be purified? Oh soul! You did not fear while committing sins; why then do you fear cleansing yourself of them?



The deity showed Pushpchula a vision of Devlok in her dream.

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3. Homage to the Great Sage Khandak

In a past life, Prince Khandak—the son of King Jitshatru and Queen Dharini—had once peeled the bark off a chibhari vine and felt delighted, thinking, "What beautiful bark I have stripped off!" Through this act, he incurred the karmic bond associated with stripping bark. He did not subsequently seek atonement for this deed. In the course of time, he was born as Prince Khandak. Later, upon hearing the teachings of the sage Dharmaghosh, he renounced royal opulence to embrace the path of restraint, transforming from a prince into the sage Khandak. After adopting this ascetic vow, he performed rigorous penances—such as fasting for two or three days at a time—which caused his body to become emaciated. One day, while wandering on his spiritual journey, Sage Khandak arrived at the village where his worldly sister and brother-in-law resided. As his sister sat by the window of the royal palace, her gaze fell upon the sage walking along the road. She reflected, "Compare my brother's once rose-like, radiant physique during his life as a householder to his current body—dark as coal and wrinkled from the rigors of penance.

Alas! His bones rattle as he walks." Lost in these memories and overcome by a surge of emotion, she began to weep loudly. Observing her gaze fixed on the sage and witnessing her weeping, the king—who was seated nearby—thought, "This ascetic must be a former lover of hers; perhaps she is crying because she can no longer enjoy physical intimacy with him."

Because the sage's body had become so emaciated from penance, the king failed to recognize him—even though he was his own brother-in-law—and ordered the executioners: "Go... strip the skin from that ascetic while he is still alive and bring it to me." The executioners informed the sage, "Our king has commanded us to strip the skin from your body." Instead of harboring anger toward them, the sage contemplated his true self, realizing that the soul is distinct from the body and karma. He thought, "They will strip the skin from my body, and through this, I will shed my karma (karma-nirjara). When else will such a rare opportunity to purge karma arise?" With this thought in mind, he said to the executioners, "Oh brothers!..." "My body has become rough due to my penance. Therefore, I shall stand in such a way that you do not face any difficulty." What noble contemplation by the sage! Instead of thinking about his own suffering, he considered the discomfort of the executioners. Now, consider this: "Who suffers more—the one whose skin is being peeled off, or the one peeling it?" Imbued with equanimity, the sage harbored no ill will whatsoever toward the king's executioners. Accepting the fourfold refuge and relinquishing attachment to his body, the sage ascended to the state of Shukla-dhyan (pure, radiant meditation). As his skin was peeled away, the sage advanced further in Shukla-dhyan, attained Kevalgyan, and proceeded to liberation. The Muhapatti (mouth-cloth) lying nearby was stained red with blood.

Mistaking it for a piece of meat, a kite snatched it up and flew into the sky. By chance, the muhapatti fell right in front of the queen in the royal palace. Upon seeing the

muhapatti, the queen had the servants investigate; it was then revealed that the king himself had ordered the ascetic sage's murder. Learning of the sage brother's tragic death, the queen's heart trembled with anguish, and tears streamed incessantly from her eyes. When the king, too, learned the truth, both were overcome with heart-rending grief. They realized that an unthinkable and improper deed had been committed in the world. They understood that if they did not renounce worldly life, such misdeeds would continue to occur; reflecting thus on the nature of the world, both took initiation and performed alochana (confession and atonement). A sajjhay (devotional hymn) states: "By confessing sins and renouncing them, one crushes the burden of harsh karma." Through confession, atonement, penance, and other spiritual practices, both attained Kevalgyan and ultimately achieved liberation.

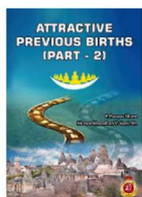
One should reflect on this: in a past life, because the prince did not seek atonement for peeling the skin of a chibhari, he had to endure having his own skin peeled off; in this life, even one had caused a sage's murder, he sought atonement and consequently attained Moksha. Imbued with this realization, one should never be negligent in performing atonement.



4. Purification of Arnik Kumar's soul through atonement...

Arnik Muni and his mother had embraced the path of ascetic conduct. One summer afternoon, while strictly observing his vows of restraint, the sage went out for gochari (alms-round). His feet were burning in the scorching sun, and his head had become heated from the heat; he had become as wilted as a withered flower. He paused beneath the shelter of a house. A woman, consumed by lust, had her maidservant summon the sage. Under the pretext of offering alms, the maidservant led him to her. Swayed by the woman's seductive words, the sage fell from his spiritual path. The Muni became entangled in the worldly pleasures and festivities of the place. His biological mother began searching for him through every street, wandering like a madwoman. Witnessing his mother's plight deeply distressed the Muni descended from the palace and prostrated himself at her feet. His mother—who had become a Sadhvi—counseled him and sent him to the Guru, where he underwent the ritual of Alochana (confession and repentance). Ultimately, he undertook Santhara (a vow of voluntary fasting unto death) upon a scorching stone slab; having attained Kevalgyan, he attained liberation. Muni Arnik purified his soul by performing Alochana and undertaking penance for the transgression of his great vows (Mahavratas). Learning of this, we too must certainly practice Alochana, for it is an unfailing means of soul purification.





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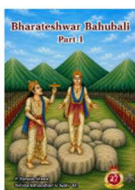
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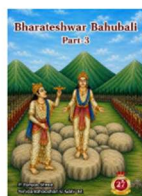
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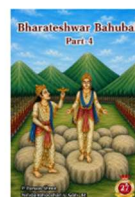
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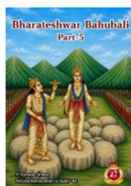
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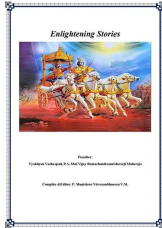
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**Some Other Books Edited / translated / written by
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1.

Enlightening Stories



No. of pgs.: 140

Published:2025

This book is a collection of small stories, narrated by world's best preacher. This book will enlighten your whole life, family, nation, continent & world. How? To get this answer, read 'Enlightening Stories'.

2.

Children's Stories



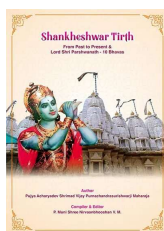
No. of pgs.: 36

Published:2025

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3.

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& Lord Shri Parshwanath – 10 Bhavas**



No. of pgs.: 72

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4.

Miracles of Navkar



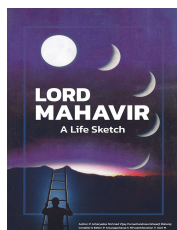
No. of pgs.: 64

Published:2025

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5.

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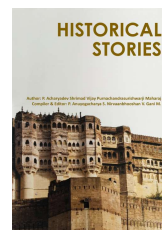
No. of pgs.: 54

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This book is a collection of the main events of 27 Bhavas of Lord Shri Mahavir swami. It will inspire new generation for adopting morality, honesty, human values and Jain religion in their lives.

6.

Historical Stories



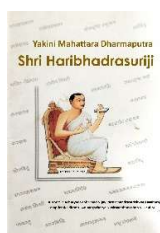
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23 historical events are depicted in a very simple and lucid style, which will inspire new generation for adopting moral values.

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Shri Haribhadraseriji



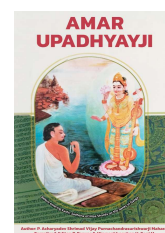
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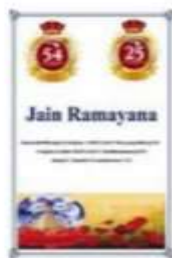


Golden Path Towards Nirvaan

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Published: 2023



Jain Ramayan

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Published: 2023



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No. of Pages: 25

Published: 2023

Books



Chicago Prashnottar

This book includes Questions and Answers on Jainism for the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago U.S.A. in 1893. It will help readers know the eternal truths of Jainism.

No. of Pages: 214

Published: 2018



Our Great Persons

This book is a collection of small stories of great Jain persons in order to inspire new generation for adopting morality, human values, Jain religion and culture in their lives.

No. of Pages: 25

Published: 2023

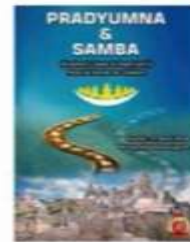


Jain Mahabharat

This book is a collection of small stories on different characters Kaurava and Pandavas, from the perspective of Jainism. Reading this book will inculcate high moral and cultural influence for present generation.

No. of Pages: 165

Published : 2024



Pradyumna & Shamba

This book is all about Krishna's clever sons - Pradyumna & Shamba. Read this book to know more.

No. of Pages: 20

Published : 2024



Life Changer

This book will change your life, how? To get this answer, read this book "Life Changer".

No. of Pages: 40

Published : 2024



Aatma

This book gives you knowledge in order to attain moksha (liberation), a human being must acquire self-knowledge (Atma Gyaan or Brahmajnana).

No. of Pages: 120

Coming Soon

About the Compiler

The compiler Puja **Panyas Shree Nirvaanbhooshanvijayji G. Maharaja**, before monkhood was studying in Jai-Hind college, (Mumbai), one of the top most college of India. Though staying in Walkeshwar, one of the richest areas of India, left all the comforts & luxuries, to achieve high level of spirituality. When he was a teen-ager boy, influenced by the western culture started hating, not only Indian cultures & traditions but Jain religion also. He often went to Jain upashray, just to listen & read Jain stories. This also, helped him to give up his dream of going to abroad. Stories became a turning point in his life. After becoming monk, once he was suggested by his preacher, Guru **H.H.P.A.D. Shrimadvijay Hembhushansurisaraji Maharaja**, to make his English powerful.

He was too obedient to follow each & every order of his Guru. Hence, he was given responsibility of giving 'pravachans' to children & teen-agers, during sanskar-shreni in just one year after attaining monkhood. Due to the grace of Guru-Bhagawants, he achieved mastery in English also. He gave many 'pravachans' created several poems e.t.c. in English also. He became able of compiling books & translating pravachan in English. He also helped his Guru M. in translating case papers of sammet-shikharji, Antarikshji e.t.c. He has a mastery of converting hearts of children, teen agers & young stars too. We have also experienced in our life. He brought us, near to Jainism.

We hope this story which is written in simple & lucid language, would help children, teen agers etc. to study Jainism, who are facing language barriers.

Ketanbhai (C.A.), Hemang (C.A.)
Sagar (C.A.), Jinal (C.A.)
Arham. Aarya, Vinaybhai
Devangbhai

