

WEALTH WISE

(Using Wealth Wisely)

(Translation Of)

(SAMPATTI KA SADUPYOG)

By

Swami Girishanand Saraswati

Pujyapad Swami Girishanandji Saraswati

A Brief Introduction.

Pujyapad Swami Shri Girishanandji Saraswati's outstanding personality, learning, and wisdom are the result of the unceasing Grace of Mahatmas.

In his early life, Swamiji received tuition in Sanskrit from Swami Shankaranand Saraswati, who was an acknowledged authority of the six branches of Indian philosophy. He received teachings from the saintly monk, Shri Rotiram Baba in Gnan, bhakti and renunciation. Shri Rotiram Baba also gave him the name, Shri Girish Chaitanya.

Swamiji came to Swami Shri Akhandanand Saraswati at Vrindavan when he was about seventeen years old. Daily talks on the Bhagwat Gita and the Upanishads were held at the Ashram every morning and evening. Swamiji would listen avidly, and meditate on what he heard, and simultaneously continued with his study of Sanskrit grammar and religious books. Pujya Shri Vamdevji (who also lived at the Ashram) tutored him on the Nyaya Siddhanta Muktavali, Sankhya Tattva Kaumudi, and other philosophical treatises. Maharajji's senior most student, Shri Ramanujacharya instructed him in an in-depth study of the Shrimad Bhagwat Mahapurana.

Swami Girishanandji's intense study and Satsang sharpened his acute thirst for inner peace. After Param Pujya Maharajji Shri Akhandanandji merged into the

Absolute, Swamiji traveled extensively to places of pilgrimage, meeting Mahatmas and having Satsang with them. The talks of Pandit Shri Ramkinkarji Maharaj gave him deep peace and joy. This renowned exponent of Shri Ramcharitmanas also inspired Swamiji to start giving discourses.

On 8th September, 2009, Pujya Paramhansa Swami Shri Satyanandji Maharaj Graced Swamiji by initiating him into Sanyas, on the auspicious day of the birth day of his own Guru, Swami Shri Shivanandji Maharaj. Swami Satyanandji blessed Swamiji, applied a tilak on his forehead, and garlanded him. He wrapped his own cotton sheet round Swamiji's shoulders and gave him the name, Swami Girishanand Saraswati. Albeit he had stopped initiating anyone into Sanyas, some inner prompting induced him to make an exception for Swamiji.

It was the great good fortune for the city of Jabalpur that the concluding rituals of the Sanyas ceremony were done at Saket Dham, on the bank of the holy river Narmada, on the 13th and 14th November, 2010, in the august presence of several renowned Mahatmas.

Swamiji is forging ahead towards his goal of total detachment from worldly considerations, and obtaining a direct personal experience of the Supreme Existence, Consciousness and Bliss of the Brahman.

Offering

A five day discourse on the right utilization of wealth and experiencing the highest peace, was organized at Rourkela in January 2004. The people living in the smaller cities rarely get the opportunity to hear such excellent spiritual discourses, hence, people flocked to listen to Swami Shri Girishanandji. Their eagerness and faith inspired Swamiji to expound on this subject in greater depth and this made the talks increasingly interesting with every passing day.

The topic pertained to Dharma, but from a very unusual angle. Smt. Sheela Jhunjhunwala transcribed the recorded talks with loving diligence. Justice Shri K.K. Lahoti of Jabalpur made time to edit the proofs in spite of the considerable pressures on his time. We are also very grateful for the help of Smt. Vijaylaxmi Jha.

We make the offering of this book to the public, with the hope and confidence that it will benefit the '*Vasudhaiva kutumbakam*' in every way.

Shivratri.
10th March, 2013.

Shri Rajeev Lochan Trust
Saket Dham
Jabalpur.

Blessings

I met Shri Vinod Neotia at the house of his dear friend, Shri Lalit Toolsidass. He had many unique qualities. One of them was his spontaneous desire to help others. People like him are a blessing to this world, and they live on in people's hearts long after they leave this world. My Guruji, Pujya Swami Akhandanand Saraswati Maharaj would say, 'You've been given a human form, so do something worthwhile'. Most people live and move on. The one that uses what he has received to help others is blessed indeed.

It gives me great joy to felicitate Smt. Krishna Neotia for choosing this book as a tribute to her husband's memory. May their family continue doing good work, as they have done in the past. My blessings also to Smt. Purnima Toolsidass for translating this book.

Swami Girishanand Saraswati

1st October, 2013.

DEDICATION

Only a very few people knew the trials and emotional suffering that came into the life of my husband. I thank my parents for getting me married to a man whose heart was so vast, full of compassion and caring.

VKN's suffering was due to his deep love for people, because he suffered when he saw others suffer; his quick understanding enabled him to see the hidden suffering that most people missed, because people always try to hide their sorrows and lacking.

He was often rebuked for extending help (not restricted to monetary help) to all and sundry, but God made him such that he could not see suffering and turn away. He empathized with the suffering of all, and the closer the person, the greater was his own anguish when they were worried or unhappy. He bore this pain with courage and fortitude, extending every possible comfort to the other person while concealing his own depth of feeling. This generosity of spirit made him unique, and made his life divine. There are souls who come into this world, live their lives and depart; and there are souls who come as a blessing to whoever comes their way, and leave behind a joyful memory that guides us long after their physical form is no more. Such a soul was my husband.

I know that he lives on in our hearts, inspiring, guiding, and showing us the right path whenever we think of him. And by 'us', I do not mean only the family and close

friends, I mean every individual he encountered and whose well-being he desired without prejudice or partiality, whether it was in the early days or whether it was after the expansion of our family and fortunes.

When I first heard about ‘Sampatti Ka Sadupyog’, the thought came to me that VKN had not heard the discourse by Swami Girishanandji, but he had instinctively used his mind, body and income to help other people. Had I not seen to it that he was sufficiently equipped with the necessities of daily life; he would probably have gone around like Raj Kapoor in ‘Mr. 420!’ When my dear Purnima told me that she was translating this book, I decided to have this book printed in his memory, because it was she who was doing the translation and because of the strong bond of friendship between her and VKN. I am very grateful to Swami Girishanandji for his permission to do so and his kind words about my husband.

Krishna Neotia
1st October, 2013

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Mangalacharana

*Shaantam shaavatamaprane`yamanagham
nirvaanashaantipradam
brahmaashambhufane`ndrase`vyamanisham
ve`daantave`dyam vibhum,
raamaakhyam jagadeeshvaram suragurum
maayaamanushyam harim
vande`ham karunaakaram raghuvaram
bhoopaalachudaamanim.*

*Barhaapeedam natavaravapuh
karnayokarnikaaram
vibhradavaasa kanakakapisham vaijayanteem cha
maalam,
randhraan ve`noradharasudhaya poorayan
gopavrindaih
vrindaaranyam svapadaramanam praavishad
geetakeertih.*

*Sacchidaanandarooapaaya
vishvotpatyaadihe`tave` taapatrayavinaashaaya
shree krishnaaya vayam namah.*

*Yam pravajantamanupe`tamape`takrityam
dvaipaayano virahaakaatura aajuhaava,
putre`ti tanmayatayaa taravobhine`dustam
sarvabhootahridayam munimaanatosmi.*

WEALTH-WISE
USING WEALTH THE RIGHT WAY
&
EXPERIENCING THE HIGHEST PEACE IN LIFE.

Pravachan 1.

I prostrate at the feet of Param Pujya, pratah-smaraneeya Shri Sadgurudev Bhagwan.

There is a description in the Shrimad Bhagwat Mahapurana, about a great king called Rishabhdev. We think we are great achievers if we become the owners of a couple of factories. Rishabhdev ruled over the whole world, and the world was larger than it is today! Rishabhdev gave this teaching to his sons.

*Naayam de`ho de`habhaajaam nriloke`, kashtaan kaamaanarhate`
vinbhujam ye`. (Bhagwat 5.5.1)*

This is a teaching for princes; not for Mahatmas. Rishabhdev gave his sons this sermon before going into the *vaanaprastha aashrama* (the third stage of life when a person retires from worldly considerations and turns to spirituality), and Sanyas (taking the vows of renunciation).

‘My sons! The goal of a human life is not limited to gathering worldly *sukha* (happiness, comfort and contentment) and conveniences, enjoying good food, and increasing progeny before leaving this world.’

Why?

‘*Vinbhujam ye`*. Even animals and birds obtain these.’

These days, it has become a popular practice in affluent families to keep pet dogs. Have these pets established any factories or businesses? They move around in air conditioned cars, and have servants to attend to their every comfort. They get the food they

like and a doctor is called for their slightest ailment. What have they done to obtain these luxuries?

I do not mean to say that we should not establish factories or undertake business ventures, but the purpose should not be limited to getting more and more creature comforts and luxuries, and it should not cause trouble for other people.

The purpose of a human life is that you should do something that purifies your mind, and helps you to experience an enduring peace in life. None of the other species, or the Devtas, can achieve this. Even the Devtas who live in Swarga cannot get enduring peace, but you, in this *mrityuloka* (the mortal world), can obtain it by your own efforts.

Make the right use of what you earn. There are four *purushaartha* (principle human achievements) in the life of a human being. They are *dharma* (instituted religion), *artha* (material success), *kaama* (desires) and *moksha* (liberation from the cycle of rebirth).

Sampatti (wealth) is the name of the Artha Purushartha. The topic chosen for these five days of *satsang* (spiritual discourses) is, the right utilization of wealth and experiencing enduring happiness in life.

These two seem contradictory, because it is generally seen that wealthy people are compelled to go on a strict diet, and have to abstain from sugar, salt and fried food. They have to take sleeping pills to sleep well at night. They have wealth, but where is their sukha? Their servants eat rich and tasty food, and the bosses eat dry rotis (unleavened bread). Tell me, does the servant have the anand, or the boss? They may have sampatti, but the anand is missing.

What is the reason for this? Is wealth a cause of dukha? Had wealth been a cause of sorrow, Dhruvji should have been sorrowful. Dhruvji was a great King and he was a bhakta of Bhagwan. Bhakta Prahlad was also a great King, but there was no dukha in his life. Maharaj Janak, too, was a great king who was not dukhi.

What I mean to say is that wealth can be a cause for sorrow and it can also be a cause for you to experience an enduring peace. Both

paths are open. We have to think about the right viewpoint for utilizing our wealth, divide our income, decide how much we should earn, how much of it should be used for ourselves, how much for helping the poor and needy, how much for the benefit of society, and how much for doing Dharma.

Why are these divisions necessary? The Ishwara has made the Artha Purushartha. It is not a fault to earn wealth; it is a Purushartha.

My Gurudev, Pujya Swami Akhandanandji Maharaj often visited the Birla family. Shri B.K.Birla and his wife, respected Sarlaji, have rendered him a lot of loving service. Maharajji would jokingly say, ‘I have achieved the Moksha Purushartha (meaning, I have experienced the Ishwara; I have understood what the Atma is, and I have understood the essence of the Brahman and the Atma being one. A person who gets a direct personal experience of these has achieved the Moksha Purushartha.), and Birlaji has achieved the Artha Purushartha. I am successful in one area and he is successful in another area.’

What is the indication of this comment? It means that if you make the right use of your wealth, you can reach the level of the *siddha* (one who has achieved total success), and you can also experience deep peace in your life.

We have been told that these are the four Purusharthas of life – Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. We have to keep in mind that Artha is not the only goal of a human life. When somebody focuses only on the Artha Purushartha, thinking of nothing except amassing wealth, the result is dukha. However, I know many wealthy families – and you must also know some – that some families, consisting of four or six people, do not talk to one another for days on end. They smolder with resentment at the sight of the others. They have far more than they can eat or wear, much more than what they need, but – shanti? They don’t have shanti.

Why don’t they have shanti?

It is because they have misused the Artha Purushartha. They have failed to see the real purpose of earning, and failed to utilize their wealth in the right way. They did not understand that Artha is not

the only goal for a human being. Dharma, Kama, and Moksha are also the achievements needed to live a life of fulfillment.

I ask you to keep in mind that the four Purusharthas – Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha – must be connected. Just as there are four points in the compass – East, West, North and South – which are connected, we must give thought to where and how they are connected. Artha is in the middle, with Kama on one side and Dharma on the other side, and Moksha on top. A person who connects Artha only to Kama becomes dukhi in life. Connecting Artha only to Kama means using his wealth to fulfill his desires, indulgences, comforts, and conveniences.

Our Shastras say that it is not possible to gather lots of means for pleasures and indulgences without causing suffering. If you work hard to earn wealth, so does your employee. If he does not have enough food to eat, clothes to wear, and a place to live in – and you lead a life of great luxury, don't you know that the Ishwara sits in his heart, also, and watches? You are not making your employee unhappy; you are making the Parameshwara seated in his heart unhappy.

My Pujya Gurudev would narrate a story about a wealthy Seth (businessman) who was also a great bhakta. One night, Bhagwan appeared in his dream. 'Sethji, I will come to your house tomorrow.' The Sethji was overjoyed. He made all the preparations for welcoming Bhagwan. He decorated his house with flowers, got the road outside swept clean, had many tasty dishes prepared, and waited eagerly.

The weather was cold. When morning came, Sethji saw a beggar with torn clothes, coming towards him. 'Sethji, please give me a blanket,' the beggar was shivering with cold. 'I am dying of cold.' The Seth gave some cloth and pushed him. 'Go away! Bhagwan is coming to my house today. What will He say if He sees you? He will say that beggars move around Sethji's door!'

A hungry man came in the afternoon, pleading for food. 'Seth, I am very hungry. Please give me food.' The Seth thrust two rotis into his hand and told him to get going. He was waiting for Bhagwan to come.

In the evening a diseased man came up to him. ‘Seth, I have no money to buy medicines. What will happen to my children if I die?’ The Seth gave him ten rupees and sent him packing. He was waiting for Bhagwan to come.

The whole day passed, but Bhagwan didn’t come. The Seth was a bhakta. He became very unhappy by nightfall. He went to bed weeping. Bhagwan appeared in his dream again. ‘Prabhu! You told me that You would come to my house today. I waited all day, but You did not come. Have I done something wrong? Have I made some mistake?’

‘Seth,’ said Bhagwan, ‘I told you that I would come, but I never told you what form I would come in. I came thrice to your door, but you pushed Me away. Early morning, I came as a beggar, in the afternoon I came asking for food, and in the evening I came asking for medicine, but you had no sympathy for Me. What am I to do? I never said that I would come as Rama or Krishna, or Vishnu, or Narayana. I had just told you that I would come.’

It is written in the Gita:

Eeshavarah sarvabhootaanaam hridde`she`rjuna tishthati (18. 61).

The Ishwara abides in the heart of all beings. You get a darshan (see with reverence) of Bhagwan in an image made by an artisan, in which Brahmins have done the *praana pratishthaa* (invoked the spirit of Bhagwan). If you can’t get His darshan in the images Bhagwan has created, in whose heart He abides, your *moorti-poojaa* (worship of the idol) is not successful. You should get the darshan of Bhagwan in the beings He has created. This is successful worship.

Artha Purushartha is flanked by Kama and Dharma, with Moksha above. These are the four Purusharthas. If you have used your wealth only for increasing personal comforts and pleasures, you have connected it to the Kama Purushartha, and the consequences will be that dukha will come into your life. *Ashaanti* (lack of shanti), disease, legal disputes, etc will disrupt your peace.

Connect your wealth to Dharma. It is the misfortune of our Nation that Dharma is being removed in the name of secularism. The teachings of our Shastras give a direction for our life, which helps us to experience sukha and shanti. People are deprived of this guidance because of the so-called secularism. The Government refuses to give any financial assistance to a school or college where the Gita is taught.

Why?

Because the Gita is considered to be a work of Dharma. These people don't understand the meaning of secularism! Secularism means equal respect for all religions, not disdaining Dharma!

What I wish to explain is that if you don't read the Gita, Bhagwat, Ramayana, or any of the other books of our Dharma Shastra, how will you know which is the right kind of life for a human being? Can any Country by run without a Constitution? The Constitution of India is called a Constitution, and the Constitution of the Ishwara is called Dharma. Dharma means a brake; it tells us where to stop. It tells us what we should do and what we should not do. It explains what is true and what is false, what is *hinsaa* (violence; harming someone) and what *ahinsa* (non-violence) is.

The truth is not the truth in all places; nor is wrong, wrong everywhere. Hinsaa is not always hinsaa, and nor is ahinsa always ahinsa. These finer points have to be taught and learnt, and it is the Shastras that give this understanding.

The present education system does not explain these things. Unless and until these books are included in the syllabus, who will explain to the youth what the goal of a human life is? How will they know how they should proceed in life? People spend twenty five to thirty years studying, and earn up to the age of fifty or sixty. How will they suddenly develop an inclination for Dharma in their old age? This inclination does not come in old age, unless there is some background in the earlier years. Whatever is grasped by the intellect is during childhood and youth.

My brother, if a dacoit asks you where your wealth is hidden, is it Dharma to tell the truth, or is it adharma (that, which is contrary to Dharma)? Tell me, what would you say? Will you speak the truth,

or will you try to deceive him? Under such circumstances, it is Dharma to misguide him and save your wealth.

Imagine that a cow is being chased by a butcher. She comes and hides in the forest behind your house. The butcher asks you which way the cow went. You have seen where she went, but will you speak the truth, or will you save the cow by telling a lie? Here, too, it is Dharma to tell a lie; not to tell the butcher where to find her.

When the trouble over Rama Janmabhumi came up, many people told me that the Sanyasis were responsible for the trouble that caused the death of many people. I told them that Shri Krishna had created far more trouble, and so had Ramji! Who instigated the Mahabharata war? It was Shri Krishna. And, who had plotted to deceive the three Generals of the Kaurava Army – Dronacharya, Bhishmapitamah, and Karna – and got them killed? It was Shri Krishna.

And, did Shri Krishna come to earth to establish Dharma or adharma? He came to establish Dharma; and the result of His actions was that Dharma was established again.

How will you understand what Dharma and adharma are, what hinsa and ahinsa are, and what is true and what is false, unless the Shastra explains it to you? The State of our Nation makes it essential that these be included in the education of your youth.

Connect your Artha to Dharma; not to Kama. During one Bhagwat, a young man of the family came and asked me, 'This is the Bhagwat Gita, isn't it?' I was taken aback. The youth of our country – called Hindustan, which is considered the Guru of metaphysical philosophy – does not know the difference between the Bhagwat Mahapurana and the Bhagwat Gita! Good people, this is the condition of our country! Don't feel bad at my pointing it out, but this is due to the people who are at the helm of affairs. So, connect your wealth to Dharma.

I had gone to Maharashtra recently, to do a Bhagwat at a place called Ichalkaranji. Eleven Marwaris have joined hands to manage a college in that town. They have a class on the Gita. They told me that this would not be permitted if the college took any aid from the Government, so they bear all the expenses between themselves.

They take no Government aid, and their results are 98% - far higher than other colleges.

Why is that?

Studying the Gita gives tranquility and sharpens the intellect.

Someone once told my Guruji, 'Maharaj, one should not bring youngsters to *bhajans* (singing of devotional songs) and Satsang (spiritual discourses), because they will get spoilt.'

'They won't get spoilt,' said my Guruji. 'They will improve.'

How will they improve?

Oh, you can experience this for yourself. Go to sleep whenever your mind is tense, or you are not able to remember something important. Wake up early morning and take Bhagwan's name a few times. You will remember what you could not remember the previous night.

How does this happen?

Your brain was tense when you went to sleep, but it was tranquil when you woke up. Meaning, Sattva guna (the lofty tendency of mental peace and clarity) was dominant when you awoke. Tamo guna (the lowly tendency of sloth and confusion) was dominant when you were tense the previous evening.

How does this happen?

Sattva's Dharma (essential nature) is to give light and Gnan. Therefore, if you do Satsang, and study these books, you will experience a feeling of serenity. When Sattva guna increases, and you attach your mind to Bhagwan, you will be able to do it well; and if you attach it to your business, you will be able to do that well, also.

So, let your wealth be connected to Dharma, not to Kama.

Dharma can have many forms. You can help the poor and the needy, provide education, or use it in service of the Ishwara or the Mahatmas. The judge sits in your heart.

Maharajji used to say, 'Before you do some work or charity, do you get a feeling of happiness or not? And, before you cheat someone, do you feel *ashaanti* (lack of mental peace) or not? Tell me.'

I concede that none of you would have cheated anybody, so you would not have that experience, but this is certainly true of people who cheat others.

When someone plans to steal something, his pulse rate increases. What is this? The fruit of his action will come later, but this is the immediate effect of the thought of doing something he knows is wrong. So, relate your wealth to Dharma, not to Kama.

How much can you eat, anyway? A quintal of gold is seized from someone's house. Another house has seven hundred slippers. Do they think they can take their possessions with them, to Swarga? Someone is gobbling fodder and someone is gobbling coal. What will they do with their gains? Where will they take it all? It is baffling! You should certainly use your wealth to meet your needs, buy clothes, eat well, and live in comfort; but what about the rest?

The Bhagwat says another thing:

'Adhikam yobhimanye`ta sa ste`no dandamarhati (7. 14. 8).

A person who accumulates more wealth than he needs is a thief.' Multimillionaires come within this group. They have more than they need, while others don't have even the bare necessities of life. Lakhs are spent on food at parties, of which much is thrown away, while people starve on the footpath. People die of the cold and they die in floods. The *aaha* (cry of anguish) of their heart will destroy your wealth – remember that!

So, unhappiness is the result when wealth is attached to Kama, but the result of attaching your wealth to Dharma is always felicitous. This is the method given in the Bhagwat.

We have discussed three Purusharthas – Artha, Dharma and Kama. Where should we attach Dharma? Some people attach the wrong meaning to Dharma. Many of our group come under that category. I refer to those who give *pravachan* (spiritual discourses), and *kathaa* (talks from the religious texts), and do Yagyas, etc as a means of making money.

A Yagya was held once, by a person who wore the saffron garment of a Sanyasi. Later, someone asked him, 'Maharaj, the Yagya was a great affair, but what do you feel about the result?'

‘The Yagya was excellent, but we incurred a loss,’ he replied. My brother, is a Yagya a commercial venture where profit and loss are taken into account? Don’t put Dharma into reverse gear! Don’t attach it to Artha or Kama. Some people do Dharma to obtain desired objects from the Ishwara. They go to the Mandir, offer *prasaada* (food sanctified by offering to Bhagwan, and having a little as a blessing), and pray, ‘Please let my health remain good. Let my factory flourish. Let all be well with my family.’ Do they think that Thakurji does not understand accounts? How many benefits they want, in exchange of an offering of eleven rupees! My brother, let Thakurji have something!

One gentleman became ill. When the illness worsened, he prayed to Hanumanji, ‘Please make me well. I will offer a prasad of twenty five laddos if I get well.’ By Thakurji’s Grace, he recovered very quickly. He began to think, ‘I must give twenty five laddos to Hanumanji, but how can they be utilized? It will be a waste if I distribute them at the Mandir, according to common practice.’

Please remember, he had already given them to Hanumanji, and yet he felt that they were his. This is a true story. Some people were coming to see his daughter with the prospect of marriage. The man decided that this was a good opportunity of offer the prasad and use the laddos to serve to his guests.

Human beings try to bluff even Bhagwan! It is another matter that they don’t succeed.

What was the result of the man’s scheme? It is very amusing! When offering the laddos, the man told the Pujariji (temple priest), ‘Please keep two laddos for Thakurji and give the rest to me.’ The priest was surprised to hear this, because it is customary to distribute prasad to the people in the temple, and there were many people in the temple at that time.

‘Prasad?’ he asked.

‘No. I want to distribute the prasad at home,’ said the man. He took the laddos home, and used them as planned.

The next day, he fell ill again!

Why?

Hanumanji knew what he had done with the laddos, and wanted to teach the man a lesson. What is offered to Bhagwan is not to be taken back for our personal use.

The Shastras have made five divisions of our income. Suppose you have a hundred rupees, you should use twenty to enhance your reputation. You can get a Yagya done, organize some Satsang, etc. This is Dharma for a grihastha (married householder; the second stage of life). A grihastha should have a good reputation.

What will that achieve?

He will get the support of society. People will speak well of him.

Twenty rupees should be spent on Dharma. It may seem strange to you to hear this, but what we spend on Dharma should not be advertised. It is for the Ishwara. Connect Dharma to Moksha, not to Kama or Artha. These twenty rupees are to be used to please the Ishwara, not gain any temporal benefit. The benefit you get is that you will be sent to Heavenly realms after death.

In this world, you have to retire when you are about sixty years old. Children leave their parents to pursue their careers. Old age comes, and we all have to leave this world one day. Isn't that a fact, my brother? We all have to leave, but have you given thought to where you will have to go? And, what will you take with you? If we keep in mind that we leave behind all our worldly belongings, people will be rather less inclined to do adharma, injustice, and cause harassment or sorrow to others.

We have to leave everything behind one day, taking with us only the karmas of this life. Neither your house, nor family goes with you; not even your own body.

The Bhagwat states clearly-

E`kah prasooyate` janture`ka e`va praleeyate` (10. 49. 21)

A person comes alone into this world and alone he leaves. So, some arrangement should also be made for what lies beyond. My brother, you go to Bombay. You book your ticket in advance, and arrange for all your necessities even though you will be returning after a few days. But, in this journey, there is no coming back. You

don't have to get any items readied for your journey or make any reservation. There is no thought of where you will go, how you will go, which the best train is, or who will accompany you.

Twenty rupees are to be spent on *yasha* (getting a good reputation), twenty for Dharma, twenty rupees for the family, and forty rupees for increasing your wealth. These are the divisions of your income according to the Shastras. This is how a grihastha should divide an income of a hundred rupees.

Why should Dharma be connected to Moksha?

You may be managing a factory, or you may be a Prime Minister of a country, or you may be doing some other important work, but the only goal in life is to experience sukha-shanti. If you run a factory it is in the hope of getting sukha-shanti. If you don't run a factory, that is also because you want sukha-shanti. Those who have come today, for Satsang, have come in the hope of getting sukha-shanti, and those who haven't come, will also have not come in the hope of getting sukha-shanti elsewhere. It is another matter, whether they remain happy or not! They feel, 'Oh, who wants to go there, in this cold weather. Let us stay at home comfortably, and watch the TV.' Their desire is also to get sukha-shanti.

Therefore, the goal of every individual is getting sukha. It is anand. It is shanti. And, it is a sukha that always remains with us, at all times, and in all forms.

Our problem is that we increase our Artha Purushartha through Dharma, thereby increasing our work. People spend years in building a house, thinking it will give them sukha-shanti. But, ask people who have their own houses how much sukha-shanti their house gives them! They feel elated the first few months, and then the problems start coming. They have to decide who to have as house guests and who to avoid. They have to deal with endless repairs and maintenance hassles. It is the same when someone gets a new car. Have a house or car ever given anyone lasting happiness?

A Sant (Mahatma) used to say that if a man wants to succeed in business, he asks a successful businessman how he should proceed. Thus, if you want to be sukhi by obtaining something, you should

ask people who have what you want to get, how much sukha and how much dukha they got from that object.

Some childless couples adopt a child. They are ready to challenge Bhagwan. 'If You don't give me a son, I will take someone else's son as mine!' Oh, why do you insist? People say, 'A son will give me sukha.' Just ask those who have four or five sons, how much sukha their sons gave them! They worry and suffer. None of the sons want to look after the old parents. You are immersed in darkness.

I am not suggesting that everyone becomes a Babaji (Monk). Stay at home, but keep in mind that the goal of life is sukha-shanti, and you cannot depend on anything in this world for it. No one has got it till now, nor will anyone in future.

There is a great secret about sukha. We often feel that watching TV is very enjoyable; or you can say that listening to Satsang is very enjoyable. Imagine that you are watching your favorite serial, and you get a phone informing you that a dear one has met with an accident. Will you enjoy the serial after that? You won't. Why not? You are the same person, and the serial is your favorite serial, but the pleasure is gone. What is the reason?

Some of the people present in today's Satsang may be finding it enjoyable, and some may not be enjoying it at all. What is the reason for this? You can ponder about these things only if you have the leisure. Our traditional lifestyle was to wake up between four or five every morning, and spend fifteen minutes or half an hour thinking about our life, and then start the day. A person must go to bed by ten pm if he wants to wake up so early in the morning. If people stay awake till past midnight, how can they wake up at five am?

Have you ever marked where sukha comes from? Sukha is within you; it is within me. The Paramatma is *sukha-svaroop*a (the form of sukha), and He abides in all hearts. You will experience sukha when your mind is focused, whatever the object of your focus may be. What is the secret of this? The Paramatma is reflected in the mind, or antahkaran (the subtle body), when the mind is concentrated and not restless. And, the Paramatma's swarup is

anand, so His reflection will also be *aananda-svaroop*a (the form of anand), and that is why the person feels sukha.

Even during Satsang you will not get sukha unless your mind is on the Satsang. It is the same with *japa* (ritual chanting of a mantra or Bhagwan's name), *dhyana* (meditation), and when you watch TV. The sukha you get comes from within your heart. Why do you choose to concentrate on the wrong kind of subject? Why don't you concentrate on the right kind of object instead?

Your mind can be focused by doing *japa* or *dhyana*; why have you placed it on the TV or any individual? People say, 'I will feel happy if he talks nicely to me.' The person does not talk pleasantly and you get upset. This is because you have decided that your sukha lies in that person's being pleasant. Your sukha and dukha depend on his behavior.

Good people, you will experience sukha within yourself, if you stop seeking it in the outside world. Choose a good medium for your sukha, and it will rise up in your heart. When the source is within, why choose an external medium you can't depend on? The medium of the outside world makes you dependent, whereas the internal medium makes you independent. Your sukha will be in your hand, not in someone else's hand. If you learn to become *e'kaagra* (focused on a single point) through *dhyana*, you won't need to depend on any external factor for your happiness. No object or individual will have the power to make you happy or unhappy. The problem is, we choose the wrong kind of medium. We have no time to think about these matters, and no time for Satsang or reading spiritual literature, and then we go in the wrong direction.

Therefore, good people, remember that the goal of life is Moksha. Moksha does not mean going to some seventh Heaven. The Paramatma is called Moksha, the Ishwara is called Moksha, and the Atma is called Moksha. To experience them in their authentic form is Moksha. Moksha is not something to be obtained only after death; it can also be obtained in this very life. We get Swarga and Narak after death, not Moksha. Remember that.

An enlightened person experiences Moksha when he is still living. Moksha means *mukti* (freedom). It means a life that is not tied down or bound by anything. It is an enduring peace. It is written in the Gita that even *parlaya* (Dissolution) does not have the power to bring dukha into the life of a person who is mukta.

Pralaya na vyathanti cha (14. 2).

There is a famous story – very likely some of you have heard it – about Sant Tukaram. He derived deep joy in doing bhajan. His wife was very bad tempered, but Bhagwan saw to it that he always had company to help him continue his bhajans.

If you have a quarrelsome person in your family, don't be scared! Think it to be Bhagwan's *kripaa* (Grace). Your detachment (for worldly things) will be unwavering, and your bhajan will continue. Tukaramji's wife lost her temper and berated him for sitting home all day, and not doing any work. Tukaramji went out in search of work. He was hired as a daily laborer to cut sugar cane. At the end of the day he was given eight or ten sticks of cane as payment. As he walked home with the sticks, a group of children gathered around, asking for the sugar cane. He gave one stick each to them. He went home with the one stick that was left.

'You work all day and bring home one stick of sugar cane?' cried his wife. She was so angry that she snatched it from his hand and hit him with it. The stick broke into two pieces. Tukaramji was smiling. 'You are a very intelligent lady,' he said. 'I was just thinking that we should cut the stick into two and have a piece each for our dinner. You have done just what I planned.'

What magnanimity! The state of most men is that they would be miserable for a week, if the wife says something unpleasant. Is it not so, my brother? You will ask me, 'How do you know?' People come to me and tell me about their problems. When people come for a private interview, they hardly ever talk about Bhagwan! They talk about their personal problems.

Why was Tukaramji able to smile when his wife beat him? It is because he had experienced the shanti called mukti. This is Moksha.

When no worldly misfortune has the power to create dukha in the life of a person, that person is called a *mukta purusha* (liberated person); he is called a *param hansa* (enlightened saint); he is called a Sant. All the *avadhoota* (wandering monks), Sants, *karaka purusha* (liberated souls who accept rebirth for the good of the world) are all of this caliber.

Meerabai was given poison. Did she get angry, or did she smile? Meerabai was smiling. Normally, people get upset if someone gives them a *gaali* (foul word of abuse).

Someone gave gali to a Sant. The Sant said, 'My brother, tell me something – if someone gives me a sweet to eat and I do not take it, who is the sweet left with?'

'It will be left with the person who offers it to you.'

'You are giving me abuses, but I do not accept them.' The man was furious, but helpless.

All this is a play of belief and thinking. It is a play of the mind. Tell the other person that you do not accept bad words. Bad words don't stick to anybody. They are accepted mentally.

Suppose your friend told you jokingly, that someone was abusing you, and you thought it was true, and felt unhappy. Where did the dukha arise? It arose from the belief of your mind. A *mukta purusha* is one who does not feel dukha, no matter what happens, or what the situation is. Such a person is called a *siddha purusha* (a person who has achieved some extraordinary capacity). He is called a Mahapurusha or a Sant purusha.

Divide your sampatti in a way that it does not become a cause of dukha; it becomes a cause of sukha. So many worms and insects are killed unwittingly in the working of your factory. Who gets the *paapa* (sin?) for that? It is the owner, and also the workers. What do you do as *praayashchit* (atonement; penance) for the paapa? It is a well-known adage, '*Eshvara ke` ghara de`ra hai, andhe`ra nahin`*' – there may be delay in Bhagwan's house, but there is no darkness. Meaning, justice will be done sooner or later. So, serve

cows and other animals and birds, serve the poor and the suffering. This will wash away the paapa done unknowingly, and you will be spared of the dukha that is the result of paapa.

And, everybody should be given their rightful dues. I have seen wealthy people – who come to Vrindavan on a pilgrimage – haggle with a rickshaw driver for a few rupees. If the driver asks for ten rupees, they will spend fifteen minutes trying to bring down the rate by one or two rupees. Will their increase their bank balance? The poor man is deprived of a sum that means so little to them, but so much to him!

See both the sides of sampatti. I don't think Dhruvji had as much wealth as Ravana, or Ambarish as much as Hiranyakashipu, but the results of their wealth were so different! Ambarish and Dhruv experienced anand; both were kings, as was Prahlad. And, what did Ravana and Hiranyakashipu get, with their greater wealth?

Nobody in today's world has as much wealth as Ravana and Hiranyakashipu had. The Bhagwat says that Hiranyakashipu was so influential that if he looked at the sky, pictures would appear in the sky for him. If he looked at trees, they would produce fruits for him. If he looked at the sea, it would bring out gems and carry them to the shore for him. Brahmaji would recite the Vedas for him, and Naradji entertained him with music. But, what did all that magnificence end in? He connected his sampatti to Kama and the result was *vinaasha* (destruction; death).

What did Ravana connect his sampatti to? He also connected it to Kama, not Dharma or Moksha, and you know the result!

These stories are not just to be read and forgotten. They are meant to help us understand certain truths. The sampatti of Ravana and Hiranyakashipu lead to death, whereas the sampatti of Dhruv lead to his meeting Bhagwan and experiencing peace.

The word 'sampatti' is formed from a number of roots. One of them is '*patrl patane*'. If the word sampatti is to be defined accurately it means that, which pushes you into a ditch. It makes you fall in life.

Maharajji said, 'I do not accept the opinion of those who say that the eradication of poverty will automatically improve society. It is

the affluent section of society that is more inclined to behave wrongly. They have the money to indulge in the wrong kind of activities, encourage things that are wrong, and spread malpractices.’

The result of Ravana’s sampatti was the destruction of his whole society, including his family. The word sampatti means that, which pushed you into a ditch – who can be saved? It is those who connect their wealth to the Ishwara and Dharma. They can make their sampatti a medium for experiencing true shanti and anand.

Do you know what Laxmiji rides on? It is an *ullu* – an owl! (‘ullu’ is commonly used to indicate a fool.) And what is the mount of Laxmi-Narayana? It is a *garuda* (eagle), who is a bhakta of Bhagwan. If a person has only Laxmi in his life – please don’t mind my pointing this out – think of what he is! And, if you have Narayana along with Laxmi in your life, think of what you are!

If you bear the burden of only Laxmi – only sampatti – please remember, it is an ullu who carries Laxmiji alone! The one who carries both Laxmi and Narayana is a bhakta of Bhagwan.

There are people who make a lot of money, but they are often too miserly even to eat well. They go on earning and hoarding till they die. What should they be called, if not fools? They don’t spend on their children; they live like misers, accumulating wealth as long as they live. Even the wealth they hoard is destroyed. Either it is stolen or taken by the Government. What is the result?

Therefore, good people, the proper utilization of wealth is that you connect it to Dharma, to Moksha, to the Ishwara. Let your wealth not be connected to Artha, just making more money, and to Kama, in trying to fulfill unending worldly desires.

You will ask, ‘What is the purport of the Kama Purushartha?’ Kama does not mean what people generally assume these days; it does not mean lust. Society has cultivated a tendency to use words in the wrong way. Once, I read in the newspaper that a certain cricketer had stated that he would take Sanyas from cricket! This is ludicrous! What an improper use of the word ‘Sanyas’! Earlier, Sanyas was an indication of a person who had renounced all worldly relationships and considerations, and left his home to go to

the Himalayas in search of enlightenment. The cricketer should have said that he plans to give up cricket – to take Sanyas means to become a Monk! Foolish people don't understand the real meaning of these words and use them in the wrong way.

According to our Shastras, the word '*kaama*' means a desire for something. As per the Bhagwat, the indication of the Kama Purushartha – and its successful attainment – is that a person becomes totally free of desires. It does not mean the fulfillment of desires.

Narasingh Bhagwan urged Prahlad repeatedly, 'My child, ask for a boon.'

'I don't want anything,' said Prahlad.

'It is My wish. Ask for something to please Me.'

Do you know what Prahlad asked for? He said, 'If You wish to give me something, if I am to ask for a boon to please You, please grant that after today, I never have a wish to ask for anything.' What a boon to ask for! This is the success of the Kama Purushartha.

It is not the successful achievement of the Kama Purushartha if you build a house, buy a car, or have a huge bank balance. The achievement is when your heart is free of all worldly desires. Kama means desire – it means wanting something. So, then, what is the utility of the Kama Purushartha? Why was it made?

The Kama Purushartha was made so that you wear woolen clothes when you feel cold, eat when you feel hungry, and keep your body healthy. You can progress only if you are healthy, whether it is in this life or in *paraloka* (realms after death). Unless you have good health, you can neither manage your factory nor can you do bhajan. The purpose of the Kama Purushartha is to maintain good health, eat nourishing food, protect yourself from the cold, etc. It does not mean wanting rich food and expensive pashmina shawls!

There are educated people who have endless desires. I know educated ladies who want a large number of saris when they get married, and slippers to match every sari! I don't know what men do, but I wonder whether the ladies get shanti or *ashaanti* (lack of

peace) by collecting so many pairs of slippers! How do they maintain them? How do they transport them?

A gentleman came to Guruji, wearing a huge solitaire diamond ring. ‘This ring is worth four lakhs,’ he said proudly.

‘Don’t you feel afraid that someone will steal it, maybe even attack you for it?’ asked Guruji.

‘I carry a loaded gun in my pocket,’ he replied. ‘I will shoot anyone who eyes it.’

Guruji smiled. Then he asked, ‘Tell me this, has wearing this ring given you shanti or ashanti?’

What a beautiful question! The man wore a valuable diamond, but the result was that he has to be constantly watchful that it was safe. He had to carry a loaded gun to keep it safe.

Thus, accumulating luxuries is not the purpose of the Kama Purushartha; its actual purpose is to give up desiring anything in this world. The Kama Purushartha ultimately merges into the Moksha Purushartha when the person becomes free of desires.

These are the four Purusharthas of life.

The Bhagwat has an episode of a *mani* (gem) called the ‘Syamantak mani’. Even Shri Krishna’s name was sullied because of it. Many people were killed for it. That is a story of the Dwapar Yuga, but the same thing is happening even today. In the next four days, I will use such examples to explain how sukha and shanti can be obtained by connecting your sampatti to Bhagwan. And, how sampatti gives ashanti if it is connected to this *sansaara* (interactive world).

Pravachan 2.

Yesterday, we started a discussion on how to use wealth in the right way, and experience enduring happiness and peace in life. Stories were narrated to give instances relating to this topic.

Wealth – the Artha Purushartha – is created by Bhagwan. To have wealth is not a fault. There are only two *shakti* (powers) in this world – one is the *eeshvareeya shakti* (the power of the Ishwara) and the other is *laxmi shakti* (the power of wealth). The dividing line should be that Laxmi shakti is ruled by the Ishwariya shakti.

There is a unique description in the Bhagwat about where Laxmi stays. The education given in colleges these days is generally about how to optimize profits, procure maximum facilities, etc. The Shastras condone making money. It is a grihastha's duty to earn. Had a study of the Shastras been a part of our lives, we would know how to keep Laxmi.

You would have heard about millionaires becoming paupers, and paupers becoming millionaires. The buddhi is the same, the strengths are the same, but nothing works when the time is bad. So, where does Laxmi remain, and who does she choose? Tulsidasji has written in the Ramcharitmanas:

*Timi sukha sampatti binahin bolaaye`n,
dharamaseela pahin jaahin subhaaye`n.
(Ramcharitmanas 293. 3)*

Sampatti automatically goes to the person who connects it to Dharma or Moksha. If a person has wealth, but no shanti, you can take it that he has not connected his wealth to either of them, since a man gets sukha-shanti when he connects his wealth to the Dharma or Moksha Purusharthas.

A Thakur Saheb lived in my Guruji's village, near Varanasi. People supported him in whatever he undertook, with the result that his success was ensured. My Guruji told us about this. Once, my Guruji asked him about the secret of his success.

‘Babaji’, said Thakur Saheb, ‘people have faith that I will do the work sincerely. They know that I will work for the common good, and not just my personal benefit, so they support me in any work I take up.’

What does that mean? It means that success is based on Dharma.

Thus, when sampatti – the Artha Purushartha – is connected to Dharma, and Dharma is connected to Moksha, it is according to the order given by our Shastras. It is the order that gives shanti. However, if the Artha Purushartha gets connected to the Kama Purushartha, it results in destruction. Many wicked people get wealth, but it leaves after some time.

The Bhagwat has another significant story. It is when Laxmiji manifested during the *samudra manthana* (churning of the ocean). The samudra manthan stopped twice – once, when Laxmiji appeared, and once when *visha* (poison) appeared. Shankarji solved the problem of the poison.

The indication is that worldly activities are generally prompted either by fear or by greed. About eighty percent of people’s actions are caused by either one or both. People find out what benefit they are likely to get from an activity. They are disinclined to take up any work unless it benefits them in some way.

The samudra manthan stopped because everyone desired Laxmi – the Devtas, the Rishis, the humans, and the Daityas. If there is one object, and many people want it, it becomes a problem as to who should get it.

It was decided that everybody should sit in a row, and Laxmiji would go past, with a garland of lotuses in her hand. ‘You choose the person, and he will marry you,’ she was told. Laxmiji’s selection is very significant. She started going down the row of candidates. The first in line was Durvasa Rishi. You must have heard about his hot temper. He was quick to give a *shaap* (curse), whether the person deserved it or not. Even today, if a man is very bad tempered, people say he is an Avatar of Durvasa Rishi!

Laxmiji decided not to garland Durvasa. ‘If I accept him as my husband, there will be quarreling and cursing every day!’ she

thought. What does this indicate? It indicates that Laxmi does not stay with a quarrelsome person.

Our village had a proverb – the *shaasana* (Governance) should be hot, a *bania* (tradesman) should be soft, and a *kanyaa* (maiden) should be shy. These are necessary in society. If a Government is lax about punishing wrongdoers, people won't obey the laws. Unless a *bania* is soft, his customers will leave him, and unless a *kanya* is shy, it will be difficult for her to guard her purity of character.

So, Laxmiji did not choose Durvasa. She went ahead. Brahmaji was next in line. 'He is the Creator of the world,' she thought. 'He has a very high position, but he had become infatuated with his own daughter, Saraswati. It is not advisable to accept him.' What is the indication in this? Laxmiji does not stay with anyone who has a *vyasana* (addiction), whether it is drinking, bad habits, or is immoral.

Indra, the King of the Devtas, was sitting next to Brahmaji. Laxmiji thought, 'He is the King of Swarga, but he is a great coward. Any Daitya can come any moment, and he runs away instead of fighting. If the husband runs, the wife will have to run, too.' Courage is required in business, because obstacles are bound to come.

When we study the Neeti Shastra (the Shastra of right behavior), we are taught that the superior person starts some work, and rises above all obstacles, and attains success. The medium level person starts some work but loses heart when obstacles arise, and gives up the work. The lowly person fears obstacles and difficulties so much that he does not undertake any new venture. There is a proverb that a brave man dies once, but a coward dies a hundred times. He gets frightened at the sign of any obstacle or difficulty.

So, good people, Laxmiji did not choose Indra, Next sat the Sanakadis (four brothers), who are *virakta* (detached from worldly considerations) Mahatmas. Virakta Mahatmas do not even touch money.

Laxmiji came before Bhagwan Shankar. Shankarji has all the good qualities. 'He does have all the good qualities,' thought Laxmiji,

‘but his dress is not proper. He wears a necklace of human skulls, and is dressed in a tiger skin, and smears ash all over his body.’ My Guruji used to say, ‘My brother, a businessman should have a good personality. If you look like a servant, who will be interested in listening to a business proposal from you?’

The next person Laxmiji came to was sleeping with a *peetaambara* (yellow stole) covering His face. ‘Who is this?’ asked Laxmiji.

‘It is none other than Narayana.’

‘He has all the good qualities,’ reflected Laxmiji, ‘but He has one fault.’

This is Laxmi’s nature. A person may be wealthy, but if he is not connected to Bhagwan, he has a tendency to find fault even with Bhagwan! Laxmiji was yet to get attached to Bhagwan, and that is the reason for her getting this thought.

What flaw did she find in Narayana?

‘He is perfect in every way, but He is sleeping, with his face covered, during my *svayamvara* (an event when the bride chooses her husband). He should sit up, at least, like the others! However, no one else can compare with Him, so I will garland Him.’ She placed the lotus garland round His neck. Everyone else was disappointed.

Thus, Narayana is the one chosen by Laxmi. She cannot leave Him, and He cannot leave His bhaktas.

We return to the same point. Laxmiji will continue to be with you, provided you use your wealth for the Ishwara, for His bhaktas and Mahatmas, for helping the poor and the needy, as a part of your Dharma. Laxmiji is called ‘*chanchalaa*’ – the fickle one. She is capricious, but she becomes *achala* (loyal; steady) at Narayana’s feet. She never leaves Him for long.

The episode of the Syamantaka mani tells us what happens when wealth is not connected to Bhagwan.

Satrajit did the *upaasanaa* (ritual worship) of Surya Bhagwan (the Bhagwan in the form of the sun). Surya was pleased with his worship, and gave him a unique gem, called the Syamantak mani. When Satrajit was walking back to Dwarka with the mani, its brilliance was so powerful that people thought that it is the Surya

that is coming. They ran to Bhagwan Shri Krishna. ‘Prabhu! Surya Bhagwan is coming to get Your darshan.’

Bhagwan Shri Krishna is the ruler of Dwarka, and He rules the universe. He knew that Surya Bhagwan could never take the liberty of coming without His permission. People often take a week’s medical leave, but can you imagine what would happen if Surya Bhagwan went on leave? Or, if Vayu Devta (the presiding deity of air) took leave for a few minutes? We consider ourselves to be great organizers, but Bhagwan’s organization is marvelous! The ocean never crosses its boundaries. When it does, no country in the world – neither America, nor England, nor any other – can stop it. Surya Bhagwan maintains a fixed distance from the earth. Whose management is this? It is the Paramatma’s; the Ishwara’s. We share a tiny part of His astonishing organizational powers when we organize something. So, we should not get hassled.

A bhakta is happy in life because he connects his efforts to Bhagwan’s shakti. In the Mahabharata war, there were many great and noble warriors in the enemy Army. Arjuna told Shri Krishna, ‘What will I achieve by killing all these great people who I respect and love? I am prepared to beg for my food, but I am not prepared to kill them.’

When we hear or read this, we get the impression that Arjuna had developed great *vairaagya* (detachment; renunciation), but those who have some understanding of the Gita know that Shri Krishna did not appreciate Arjuna’s thinking. Ultimately He showed Arjuna His *viraata roopa* (colossal form of the Ishwara into which everything merges). ‘Look, Arjuna, I have already killed them. I just want to give you the credit. *Nimitta maatra bhava savyasaachin* (Gita 11. 33). Become the *nimitta* (instrumental factor), Arjuna. The one who does things and makes them happen is Me, alone.’ A person who understands this knows that when his shakti is combined to the Ishwara’s, success is ensured.

Shri Krishna knew that it was not the Surya coming, because nothing can ever go contrary to Bhagwan’s arrangements.

Pujya Pundit Ramkinkarji Maharaj used to narrate a beautiful incident. When Hanumanji went to Lanka, he hid in a tree in the

Ashoke Vatika (a beautiful park where Ravana had confined Sitaji). Ravana was threatening Sitaji that if she did not accept him within a month, he would cut off her head with his sword. He ordered the Rakshasis (demonesses) to frighten her. Later, Trijata came and told them about her dream, that a monkey had burnt Lanka.

*Sapane` vaanara lankaa jaaree, nagara firee raghubeera
dohaayee (Ramcharitmanas, Sunder Kand, 3. 6)*

Pujya Ramkinkarji Maharaj said, ‘Hanumanji was sitting on a tree. Janakiji did not know of his coming. Hanumanji was thinking that Shri Rama had sent him to Lanka, but not said anything about burning Lanka. ‘I took the form of a mosquito and wandered around quietly, looking for Sitaji,’ he thought. ‘I was under the impression that I was to find Sitaji and take the news to Shri Rama. However, Shri Rama has given Trijata this dream – how am I to carry out the burning of Lanka?’

Then he thought, ‘The one who sent the dream will arrange for it to happen. Why should I worry?’ This is the state of mind we should have in life – that our shakti is just a miniscule part of the Ishwara’s shakti.

Do not get disheartened when your shakti fails; wait for the Ishwara’s shakti. Oh, it is far better to chant the names of Bhagwan, do His bhajan, and pray to Him, instead of weeping and lamenting!

The scene changed while Hanumaji was thinking about this. Rakshasas came, and there was fighting. Meghnad tied Hanumanji in the *brahmapaasha* (Brahmaji’s weapon) and took him to Ravana’s Court. Hanumanji stood before Ravana. Ravana asked him repeatedly why he had killed the Raakshasas and destroyed the Ashoke Vatika.

Hanumanji Maharaj had no fear. ‘They beat me, so I beat them. How am I at fault?’ he asked.

‘Why did you eat the fruits?’

‘I was hungry, so I ate the fruits.’

‘Why did you uproot the trees?’

‘It is a monkey’s nature to do this; what is wrong if a monkey behaves according to his nature?’

‘This monkey is very impudent! He does not even talk properly. Kill him.’

Vibhishanji entered just then. ‘It is against the code of ethics to kill an emissary,’ he said. ‘Please give him some other punishment.’

‘What other punishment should we give?’ asked Ravana. ‘*Kapi ke` mamayaa poonchha para* – the tail is very dear to a monkey. Set his tail on fire! That will be worse than death for him.’

Ravana’s thinking was misled by Saraswati (the goddess of the intellect). The Rakshasas rushed to obey him, bringing all the rags and oil they could find, and tying them to Hanumanji’s tail.

Rahaa naa nagara basana ghrita te`laa – all the rags, oil and ghee in Lanka were used up.

How?

Baadhi poonchha – Hanumanji expanded his tail. ‘Since Prabhu wants to set fire to Lanka, I should do my bit,’ he thought. He made his tail so long that all the rags and oil and ghee in the city were needed to cover it.

When the Rakshasas were about to set fire to the rags, Hanumanji went into meditation. ‘Prabhu, You are great! I thought I would be bringing You news about Janakiji; I didn’t know that You had already made all the arrangements. The very people who are to be burnt are arranging for the fire! It is Your greatness that You get the Rakshasas to do Your work!’

So, Krishna Bhagwan knows that it could not be Surya Bhagwan who was coming. He went out of the city gates and saw Satrajit coming with the Syamantak mani.

The mani’s effulgence was such that it did, indeed, seem as bright as the sun. Shri Krishna asked Satrajit, ‘What is it, My brother?’

‘It is the Syamantak mani. Surya Bhagwan has given it to me.’

Satrajit kept the mani in his house. He did a ritual puja of it every day. This mani had the power to give three quintals of gold every day. This is written in the original text of the Bhagwat. Had such a

magical gem existed now, the Government would have confiscated it!

After some days, Shri Krishna suggested to Satrajit, ‘Satrajit, what will you do with so much gold? Take as much gold as you want, and give the rest to the Treasury to be used for the benefit of the people.’

The lure of wealth – of Laxmi – is not only in the Kali Yuga (the present eon of time). There are several episodes of the Dwapar Yuga that show that greed has always existed.

When Rukminiji sent a letter to Shri Krishna, asking Him to rescue her from an enforced marriage to Shishupal, she chose a Brahmin who was not greedy.

Why?

A greedy Brahmin could have been bribed by her brother, and not delivered her letter at all. So, it is not as though people’s attraction for Laxmi is anything new.

Another example of this is given with regard to Raja Parikshit. When the deadly snake, Takshak, was on his way to bite Raja Parikshit, he met a Brahmin called Kashyap, who was on his way to save Raja Parikshit.

‘Who are you?’ asked Kashyap respectfully.

‘I am Takshak. I am going to Raja Parikshit to bite and kill him.’

‘I am a Brahmin. My name is Kashyap. I am going to save Raja Parikshit.’

‘Will you succeed in saving him after I bite him?’

‘Yes.’

‘Let us test our powers here and now,’ said Takshak.

‘Very well. I am ready.’

Takshak sank his fangs into a flourishing tree. Poisoned, the tree turned into ashes. The Brahmin chanted a mantra over a handful of water, and threw the water on the ashes. The tree grew healthy again. Takshak became nervous. ‘What do you hope to gain by saving Raja Parikshit?’ he asked.

‘Raja Parikshit is a great king. He will give me a big reward for saving his life.’

‘Oh,’ said Takshak, ‘if it is wealth you want, take as much as you want from me, and turn back.’

Good people, the Brahmin accepted wealth from Takshak and went back. Thus, bribery has always been prevalent. It is nothing new. However, whoever gives and accepts bribes ends up with dukha, regardless of time and place.

I live in Vrindavan. When I was a student, I had gone to make a reservation of a train ticket. I paid the amount and was about to leave, when the booking clerk called out, ‘Brahmchariji, won’t you do “Radhe-Radhe”?’

‘Radhe-Radhe’ I said, thinking he was just making the routine greeting of Vrindavan, and began to walk away.

The clerk called out again, louder, ‘Brahmchariji, do “Radhe-Radhe” before going!’

The man who was behind me in the queue realized that I had not understood the man’s meaning. ‘Brahmchariji, give him twenty rupees more,’ he said. The clerk had made ‘Radhe-Radhe’ his code for demanding a bribe! It is the special quality of Vrindavan, that people say ‘Radhe-Radhe’ even when asking for a bribe! People who have gone to Vrindavan know that even the drivers of the cycle-rickshaw call out ‘Radhe-Radhe’, to ask people walking on the road, to make way for them. Everyone there says ‘Radhe-Radhe’, regardless of their caste or creed.

It is commonly said, in the rural areas, ‘If your son is competent, he will make enough money for himself – why do you hoard wealth? If he is incompetent, he will squander all you have saved, so why hoard wealth?’ The habit of hoarding is inbuilt in some people, and it is a dangerous habit.

Satrajit refused to accept Shri Krishna’s suggestion. How strange – it is Bhagwan, Himself, who is asking. The mani would remain in Dwarka, and the entire population would benefit from the gold it gave out. Yet, Satrajit refused!

‘I cannot give this mani,’ said Satrajit. ‘I have obtained it after extensive sadhana.’

‘All right, brother, it is your mani,’ said Shri Krishna.

New, see the evils of sampatti. After rejecting Shri Krishna's suggestion, Satrajit felt sacred. 'I have refused Shri Krishna. He is the King of Dwarka, and is very powerful. He may take it by force.'

The Bhagwat says that sampatti contains fifteen *anartha* (misfortunes). *Bhaya* (fear), *virodha* (enmity), *avishvaasa* (mistrust), *chintaa* (worry), *hinsaa* (violence), *jhootha* (lies), *dambha* (hypocrisy and arrogance), *anaachaara* (wrong behavior), gambling, and others. Wealth that is not connected to Bhagwan results in these fifteen harmful possibilities. People tell lies, they become arrogant and hypocritical. Violence is a common associate of riches. These faults have come into even the Sadhus (Monks), leave along the grihasthas. People go in for litigation and police diaries. All this happens when people do not connect their wealth to Bhagwan.

Satrajit gave the mani to his brother, Prasena, to save from being stolen by Shri Krishna. Prasena was also afraid that someone would steal it in his absence, so he wore it round his neck after completing his daily puja of the mani and getting the gold. One day, he went hunting, wearing the mani. A lion was attracted by the bright mani. He killed Prasena and his horse, and went off with the mani.

You will see the chain of violence caused by greed. All this happened because the mani was not connected to Bhagwan. Satrajit refused to connect it with Bhagwan Krishna, and with Dharma.

Satrajit's brother was killed because of the mani, and the horse was also killed. The lion who carried it off was killed by Jambavan. Jambavan was a bear who lived through the Treta and the Satya Yugas. Jambavan killed the lion and took the mani home. He gave it to his daughter, Jambavati, to play with.

The Bhagwat says that when Prasena did not come back from his hunt, Satrajit thought, 'It seems that Shri Krishna has hatched some plot to snatch the mani.' Thus, a good and innocent man's reputation can get a blot because of wealth. Wealth is something that should be kept aside when it is not needed. Bhagwan Shri

Krishna's name was sullied. Satrajit felt that He had arranged for Prasena to be killed, and taken the mani. However, there was no proof of this.

Satrajit discussed this at home. The Bhagwat says that Satrajit discussed this with the womenfolk of his family. Prasena was dead; only the womenfolk were left in the family. 'It seems to me that Shri Krishna has got Prasena killed and stolen my mani,' said Satrajit. Then he warned the ladies. 'We have no proof of this as yet, so you should all be careful that you don't talk about this to any outsider.' You can imagine what the result of this was!

Please don't feel offended, but it is a feminine trait to gossip. Women find it difficult to keep a secret. There is a reason for this. The Mahabharata has a story that when the war was over, Yudhishtira was giving *tilaanjali* (oblations to the departed). Kunti came to him and told him to give tilanjali for Karna.

'Offer tilanjali for Karna?' asked Yudhishtira in surprise. 'Why? He was a *suta putra* (son of a labor class person); he was not of our clan. Why should I offer tilanjali for him?'

Mother Kunti said, 'Karna was not a suta putra; he was a Kunti putra. He was your eldest brother.'

Yudhishtira was stunned to hear this. 'My eldest brother? Karna?' Mother, had you told me this earlier, perhaps we would not have lost Karna! He was an exceptional archer, and a great *daanee* (one who gives in charity). Mother, why didn't you reveal this earlier?'

That very moment, Yudhishtira gave a shaap. 'I give a shaap that henceforth, women will not be able to keep anything secret.' So, please don't feel it is your fault, my sisters, if you can't keep anything secret. The gentlemen, however, should be careful about what they confide to their womenfolk, because a lady confides in another lady, telling her not to tell anyone, and thus it goes on! So, don't blame yourself; such an incident has happened in the Shastras and applies to many people.

It is written that Satrajit told his womenfolk, warning them to not tell anyone, since there was no proof. Soon, the talk was all over the city.

Uddhavji lived in Dwarka. He was deeply distressed when he heard the gossip. Bhagwan – killing someone for the sake of a mani?! What an outrageous thought! Laxmi serves His feet! How could anyone imagine that Bhagwan would be allured by wealth? Good people, this is the dilemma. When somebody reaches a high position, and a lowly person casts aspersions on his good name, the noble person feels compassion for him.

Why?

Because he knows that this is what the lowly person sees from where he is seated.

A gentleman invited Anandmayi Ma to his house. He may have asked her a couple of times, but Ma was unable to go. The man told Ma, ‘It seems to me that you, too, go only to the houses of the rich.’ Ma did not get upset. She smiled. The *leelaa* (frolic) of the Sants is extraordinary. ‘Father,’ said Ma, ‘What you say is exactly what you see from where you are seated.’

What a lovely attitude! People have their own level of understanding and see things only from their own viewpoint.

Uddhavji felt deeply disturbed about the rumor spread by Satrajit. He told Shri Krishna about it. Shri Krishna said, ‘Uddhav, this is the reality of this world.’

That means, this *sansaara* (interactive world) spared neither Shri Krishna, nor Shri Rama. Ramji was blamed unjustly by a commoner of His own Kingdom. The lesson to be learnt from these stories is that we should try to lead blameless lives, but we should not become dukhi if we are accused unfairly. Even Bhagwan has been blamed unjustly. The attitude depends on the individual.

Maharajji was asked, ‘I want to avoid hurting anybody at all. I never knowingly do anything that may hurt anyone, but still people get upset with me. What should I do?’

Maharajji said, ‘If you go deep into the matter, you are not the cause of his dukha. The cause of his dukha is the envy, the hatred in his heart. All you can do is pray to Bhagwan to give him *sad-buddhi* (right thinking) and improve the state of his heart, so that

the fire raging in his heart is doused.’ A person is bound to burn when a fire rages in his heart.

It is a fact that no matter how good your behavior is, it is not possible that everybody will speak well of you. The Shastras have established that it is futile to hope that nobody will criticize you. Not even Bhagwan could achieve that, in any of His Avatars! I concede that Bhagwan Krishna’s leelas were such that people would blame Him, but Bhagwan Rama was *maryaadaa purushottama* (the perfectly behaved superior person). When Bhagwan Rama was blamed regarding Janakiji, the word He used is ‘*duraaraadhya*’ – this sansara is such that we can never keep everybody pleased.’

Once, someone asked Maharajji, ‘How can we win unanimous approval?’

‘You should certainly try to win everybody’s approval. But don’t have the hope that you will get it.’

‘Then, what should we do? It makes me sad when anyone is displeased with me.’

‘Make sure that you do what is right in the eyes of your Guru and the Ishwara. You can never be right in the eyes of all the people.’

‘Why is that?’

‘If you are good, you will fall in the eyes of the wicked, and if you are bad, you will fall in the eyes of those who are good. These two groups – good and bad – always exist in this world.’

So, live in a way that has the approval of the Ishwara, Guru, and Shastras. Try to be trustworthy always, but don’t hope to win everybody’s approval.

Bhagwan Krishna smiled and said, ‘Uddhav, this is the way of the world,’ but He did not remain idle. If anyone casts aspersions on you, and you do nothing to clear your name, they become convinced of your guilt. They think, ‘He is quiet, so he must be guilty.’ You should try to bring the truth into the open and establish your innocence.

Bhagwan Krishna set out in search of Prasena, taking some supporters of Satrajit with Him.

Why did He do that?

If He took own supporters, people would have suspected their statement, saying it was natural that His supporters should establish His innocence; but they would be prepared to accept the statement of His critics. The group came to the body of Satrajit and his dead horse. ‘Oh, who killed him?’ asked Bhagwan. The people saw the paw marks of a lion, and followed them. They came to the body of the dead lion, with a bear’s paw marks round it. They followed the bear’s paw marks and came to the opening of Jambavan’s cave.

‘It seems that a bear killed the lion that killed Satrajit and his horse. He took the mani from the lion, and has taken it into this cave,’ said Shri Krishna. ‘We don’t know who he is, or what lies inside the cave. It would not be right to expose the whole group to danger, so I will go in alone. You all wait here for Me. If I don’t come back within fifteen days, you must do what you feel is best.’

Two points are to be noted here. One is that when Bhagwan sees danger, He goes forth alone to face it, saving His people from possible harm. A selfish and cunning man sends others to face danger, and protects himself. He goes forward when there is an opportunity to receive laurels and accolades. What did Ravana say when the Rakshasas were trying to flee from the attacking monkeys?

*Sarbasu khaayee bhoga kari naanaa,
samara bhoomi bhaye` ballabha praanaa.
(Ramcharitmanas, Lanka Kand, 41. 80)*

Ravana said, ‘For what did I feed you all these years? I fed you well and made you strong, so that you could fight for me when the need arose. If you try to run away from the battle, I will kill you myself! You have the choice – fight and be killed by the enemy, or be killed by me now.’

Wicked people save themselves and make others face trouble.

And, Bhagwan Shri Rama? When Ravana and Vibhishan were fighting, and Vibhishan was injured, Shri Rama thrust him behind Himself, and said, ‘Vibhishan, take rest. I will fight.’

These episodes are not to be read as though you were reading story books. A story that is not related to our life does not benefit us. See what your employer is like – does he send you to tackle the problems, or does he go with you and face them himself? And, when there is occasion for praise, does he go forward to take the credit, or does he send you to receive the accolades? These things give an indication about the character of a person. There is no need to discuss it with others, but you can understand for yourself.

So, good people, Shri Krishna stopped the others from going in to face any possible danger, and went in alone. Jambavan's cave was very large, with many chambers. He was doing some work inside one of the chambers. His daughter, Jambavati, was playing with the Syamantak mani in another part of the cave. She had many other manis, but this was the most beautiful. Shri Krishna stood quietly on one side.

Why?

It is written in the Bhagwat:

Hartum kritamatih (Bhagwat 10. 56. 20)

Shri Krishna thought, 'If she starts playing with any of the other manis, I will pick up this one and slip away quietly. Then there will be no need to fight.' Bhagwan Krishna never hesitated to run away, or steal what He wanted!

Bhagwan Krishna and Bhagwan Rama are one, but there is a vast difference in their leelas! Once, a bhakta of Shri Krishna told a bhakta of Shri Rama, 'My Bhagwan is an Avatar of sixteen *kalaa* (arts); your Ramji is an Avatar of only twelve kalas. My Bhagwan is greater than yours because He has four kalas more.'

Ramji's bhakta was by no means weaker. He replied, 'Shall I tell you which four kalas your Krishnaji has, that my Ramji doesn't?' 'Tell me.'

'One kala is stealing things. The second is to flirt with women, the third is to tell lies, and the fourth is to run away! My Ramji does not want these four kalas – you are welcome to your Krishna

Bhagwan!' This is not given in the Shastras; it is just some friendly wrangling amongst bhaktas.

There is a remarkable point in the tenth canto of the Bhagwat. You can read it if you have the time. The very first words spoken by Krishna Bhagwan are a lie!

Naaham bhakshitavaanamba (Bhagwat 10. 8. 35)

In the episode of the leela of eating clay, Yashoda Maiya stood, with a cane in her hand, asking Shri Krishna whether He had indeed eaten clay. 'Tell me, Krishna, did You eat clay?' Shri Krishna was so scared that He said, 'No, I did not eat clay, Maiya.' 'All the boys are saying You did!'

'They are all lying, Maiya!'

This is the limit! Not only did Krishna Bhagwan lie, He established that it was the others who were lying!

What is the indication? You will ask me whether it is all right to lie! Look, my brother, I told you yesterday that at times, it is Dharma to tell a lie, and at times it is adharma to speak the truth. You cannot take a decision about when it is right to lie, and when it is wrong to speak the truth. It is the Shastras that decide and clarify this.

Shri Krishna spoke an untruth in the Mahabharata war. When Dronacharya refused to retire from the battle, Shri Krishna thought it necessary to resort to deceit. He told Bhimasena, 'Kill the elephant called Ashwatthama, and declare that Ashwatthama is dead (Dronacharya's son was also called Ashwatthama). Dronacharya's grief at his son's death may induce him to stop fighting.'

Bhimasena killed the elephant and started shouting, 'Ashwatthama is dead! *Ashwatthamaa hatah.*'

Dronacharya heard this, but did not believe it. 'Ashwatthama is no ordinary warrior. He could not be killed so easily! I do not believe you.'

Shri Krishna was standing close by. 'Will you believe it if I say so?' he asked.

‘I have no faith whatsoever in what You say!’ said Dronacharya. ‘You have been telling lies ever since You were born!’ ‘Then, whose word will you accept?’ asked Shri Krishna. ‘If Yudhishtira tells me that Ashwatthama is dead, I will believe it.’

Neither Dronacharya, nor Yashoda Maiya believed what Shri Krishna said, because He was *leela purushottama* (the most superior person, who frolicked as He pleased). He was not *satyanishtha* (dedicated to Satya), or *dharmanishtha* (dedicated to Dharma).

Shri Krishna asked Maharaj Yudhishtira, ‘Please say, “Ashwatthama is dead”.’

Yudhishtira said, ‘Krishna! I know that Ashwatthama has not been killed; how can I tell a lie and declare that he has been killed? I will be guilty of telling a lie. I will get paapa.’

‘Let me worry about the guilt of lying,’ said Shri Krishna. ‘Just say that Ashwatthama has been killed.’

Dharmaraj was in a quandary. He could not flout Shri Krishna’s command, nor could he give up Satya. He found a middle path. People who try to find a middle path sometimes create great problems. Yudhishtira said, ‘*Ashwatthama hatah nara vaa kunjaro vaa* (Ashwatthama has been killed, either the man or the elephant).’

Was this the truth? Yudhishtira knew that it was the elephant that had been killed. Shri Krishna cleverly waited till Yudhishtira said ‘Ashwatthama hatah’ and then blew His conch shell loudly, so that Dronacharya could not hear the rest of the words.

Dronacharya put his weapons aside. It was announced that the Pandavas had won the battle.

Maharaj Yudhishtira’s chariot would move a foot above the ground, on the strength of his being Dharmaraj (King of Dharma). After his lie, the chariot started moving on the ground. Yudhishtira told Bhagwan Krishna, ‘I asked You not to compel me to tell a lie. Now, the result is before you – my chariot is lowered.’

‘Your chariot is not lowered because of My *asatya* (untruth),’ said Bhagwan Krishna.

Yudhishtira was surprised. ‘Oh, You made me tell a lie, and now You say it is not because of You! Then, what is the reason for my chariot being lowered to touch the ground?’

‘Had you done what I told you, and said only, “*Ashwatthaamaa hatah*”. The chariot would still be moving a foot above the ground. It was your adding “*naro vaa kunjaro vaa*” that lowered it.’

‘Why did that happen?’

‘I was asking you to indicate a lie,’ said Shri Krishna, ‘but the purpose was to establish Dharma. Had Dronacharya not withdrawn from the battle, how could he be eliminated? Had I not blown My conch shell at the right moment, your words would have ruined everything.’

There was a Mahatma who used to say, ‘If you need to do some *anyaaya* (injustice) to get *nyaaya* (justice); if you have to take the support of *asatya* (untruth) for the victory of Satya; if you have to resort to *adharma* (that, which is contrary to Dharma), then that anyaya, asatya, and adharma are not really adharma; it comes under the category of Dharma.’

Bhagwan Shri Krishna demonstrated this, albeit with great care, that it is only the Mahapurushas – enlightened souls – who are entitled to make use of this. Don’t misunderstand what I say and tell people that Swamiji has said that telling lies is not wrong! One has to see whether the untruth has been said for the right reason or not. There are times when it is adharma to speak the truth!

Ramji’s life was that of a maryada Purushottama – then, why did Shri Krishna have to descend to this earth? Bhagwan Krishna’s lifestyle is quite different. You can make Shri Rama’s lifestyle your ideal, but if, in today’s world, you lead a life based on Shri Rama’s principles, you will not succeed in worldly terms. From the *aadhyaatmika* (spiritual) viewpoint, you should certainly speak the truth, do bhajan, and you will get Bhagwan, but if you want to be successful from the temporal viewpoint, you will have to adopt Shri Krishna’s lifestyle. The meaning of Shri Krishna’s lifestyle is

that your intentions should always be the highest – serving others and establishing Dharma.

Shri Udiya Babaji was the Guruji of my Guruji. Two of his disciples quarreled bitterly once. One of them was a Thakur, a Kshatriya (warrior class). ‘Baba,’ he said, ‘I will shoot that man with my gun! He has insulted me.’

Baba said, ‘My son, why take the paapa of killing someone?’

‘Baba, he is a very bad man. He insulted me for no rhyme or reason!’

‘His death will come in six months,’ said Baba. Baba was *siddha* (having supernatural powers). Nobody doubted what he said.

‘Baba, will he really die after six months?’

‘He will die as soon as his death comes,’ said Baba. ‘Don’t take the paapa on yourself.’

The Thakur decided not to kill the man, but he counted the days. When six months passed and the man remained alive, he went to Baba. ‘Baba, you had told me that the man would die in six months, but six months have passed and he is still alive.’

Baba began to smile. ‘My son, look into your heart today. Is your anger as strong as it was that day?’

‘No, there is no anger now, but why did you lie to me?’

‘My child, I lied to save his life and save you from paapa. He is not destined to die so soon.’

Was that lying contrary to Dharma, or was it in keeping with Dharma? Certainly it was Dharma.

There was a Sethji who spent all his time concentrating on his business. His Guruji felt concerned that he gave no time to Bhagwan. One day, he went to the Sethji’s house. ‘Sethji, Namō Narayana!’

The Sethji was irritated at the interruption in his work. He told his clerk, ‘Give him a room, and some money, and arrange for anything he may need.’

‘I have not come to stay,’ said Guruji. ‘I came only to give you some information.’

‘What is it?’

‘Your death will come after six months.’

The man was frightened. He left his work and ran after his Guruji. ‘Guruji! You know about my death. You will also know how I can be saved. Maharaj, what should I do?’

‘Chant the Maha Mrityunjaya mantra for five hours every day. Bhagwan Shankar is Maha Kaala (death). If he wants, he can save you.’

Immediately, business became unimportant, and so did other worldly activities. Sethji gave up everything to do japa for five hours every day. Six months passed; Sethji did not die. He went to his Guruji and said, ‘Death did not come.’

Guruji started smiling. ‘I just told you that because you were not doing any bhajan,’ he said. ‘No death was ordained for you.’ What was the purport? Was it Dharma or adharma to tell this lie? It was certainly Dharma!

So, what is the drift of Shri Krishna’s style? You will not get success in today’s world if you are completely truthful in everything. People will consider you to be a fool. This is why Shri Krishna had to come after Shri Rama. Krishnaji’s style of functioning is quite different from Shri Rama’s. But remember, He never told a lie to give sorrow. He told lies – or did things not entirely in keeping with Dharma – to do good. He should not be blamed for that. This is what we have to learn from the life of Shri Krishna.

Pravachan 3

Bhagwan Krishna was suspected of having stolen the Syamantak mani. Even though He was absolutely innocent, Satrajit spread the rumor all over Dwarka. 'Bhagwan Krishna had my brother, Prasena, killed and stole my mani.' So, if any of you are blamed unjustly, don't let it make you dukhi. Remember that even Bhagwan Krishna was blamed unjustly. However, don't let it rest there – do your utmost to establish your innocence.

Bhagwan Krishna went into Jambavan's cave. He saw Jambavati playing with the Syamantak mani.

Once, a man asked me, 'Jambavan was a bear, but Bhagwan married his daughter, Jambavati. Can Bhagwan get married to a bear?'

There are many explanations to this. One is that Jambavan lived through the Satya, Treta and Dwarpar Yugas. Actually, these are all forest tribes. For example, descriptions about Sugriva and Bali make it clear that they had wives and children and a Kingdom that they ruled. No bear or monkey can rule a Kingdom.

Another possibility is found in other Puranas. When Bhagwan Krishna left Vrindavan, the gopis found it difficult to live on without Him. Lalita Sakhi, unable to bear the anguish of separation, tried to jump from a mountain top. Jambavan saved her and brought her up as his daughter. Which means, Jambavati was actually Lalita Sakhi.

Bhagwan Krishna stood quietly, watching Jambavati and waiting to see if she started to play with another mani, in which case He would pick up the Syamantak mani and leave quietly.

Hartum kritamatistasminnavatasthe`rbhakaantike`.
(Bhagwat 10. 56. 20)

A lady had been kept to look after Jambavati and she saw Shri Krishna and began to shout for help. Jambavan came running when he heard the shouting, but did not recognize Shri Krishna as Bhagwan.

Purusham praakritam matvaa (Bhagwat 10. 56. 22)

Jambavan thought, ‘This is an ordinary man who is harming my daughter. He has come to steal the mani.’ He and Shri Krishna began to fight.

When Bhagwan assumed His *viraata* (colossal) *roopa* (form) in the Satya Yuga, Jambavan had quickly done seven *parikramaa* (reverential circumbulations) of Bhagwan. He had served Shri Rama in the Treta Yuga. It is the same Jambavan who fought with Shri Krishna in the Dwapar Yuga. We think we’re very old if we reach seventy five or eighty – think of Jambavan’s longevity! He lived for hundreds of thousands of years.

How is it that Jambavan did not recognize Bhagwan, and fought with Shri Krishna? He was such a staunch bhakta of Shri Rama – how could he fail to recognize Him when He came in the form of Shri Krishna? Shri Jeeva Goswami has given a very appealing reason for this. He said that when the war with Ravana was over, Jambavan told Shri Rama, ‘Prabhu, the war is over, but my urge for a good fight lingers.’

Shri Rama said, ‘Ravana, Meghnad and Kumbhakaran have all been killed. Who is left, who can fight with you? You will have to wait until the Dwapar Yuga, when I will take the Avatar of Krishna. I will fulfill your desire for a good fight.’ You can take it that there were a number of unfulfilled desires in the Ramavatar, that people had to wait to be fulfilled in the Krishnavatar.

The hunchback, Kubja, is believed to be the Surpanakha of the Ramavatar. Surpanakha had chosen Shri Rama. ‘I want to marry You,’ she told Him. Shri Rama was Maryada Purushottam, so He did not accept her. He told Laxman to cut off her nose and ears, when she revealed her true form as a Rakshasi. On the surface, it seems as though Bhagwan insulted her. People ask, ‘Why did Shri Rama have Surpanakha’s nose and ears chopped off? He could have just told her that He won’t marry her!’ We have to understand the purpose behind this. Once someone has chosen Bhagwan, he or she cannot choose the world. Surpanakha chose Bhagwan as her

husband, but the *maryaadaa* (ethical framework) of Ramavatar was to have only one wife.

There was no such maryada for Shri Krishna. Do you know how many wives Shri Krishna had? He had sixteen thousand, one hundred and eight wives! Some men ask, ‘Shri Krishna had sixteen thousand one hundred and eight wives, what is wrong if we have two or three?’

My answer is, ‘Bhagwan did marry sixteen thousand one hundred and eight wives, but He had the ability to manifest in an equal number of forms, and live with them individually and keep them all happy. If you don’t believe me, try to get married to two or three and you will find out for yourself.’ There is no need to say anything further!

Bhagwan’s pledge is:

‘Yo yathaa maan prapadyante` taanstathaiva bhajaamyaham. (Gita 4. 11)’ – whatever way a person approaches Me, I meet them in the same way.’

Surpanakha had chosen Bhagwan for her husband. Bhagwan accepts it if a person wants to marry Him. He accepts it if someone wants Him to be their father or their son.

There was a great bhakta at Mathura. He considered Shri Krishna to be his child. The followers of the Pushti Marga of Vallabhacharya worship Shri Krishna in the form of a little boy. This bhakta’s love was so intense that ‘Lala’ (the child Krishna is called *laalaa*) would manifest before him and crawl onto his lap.

One day, the man was walking in the lanes of Mathura, carrying his Lala, when a monkey appeared. Shri Krishna began to shout in fear. ‘Baba! Baba! Save Me! Protect Me!’ The man – a Goswami – said, ‘You stayed with so many monkeys in the Ramavatar, and now You are shouting at the sight of a single monkey?’

Bhagwan Krishna gave Goswamiji a resounding slap. ‘At that time, I was an Emperor – how could I be afraid of monkeys? Here, however, you have made me a four year old child, so won’t I feel scared?’

Ye` yathaa maan prapdyante` taanstathaiva bhajaamyaham.

Bhagwan could not accept Surpanakha in the Ramavatar, but why did He have her nose and ears cut off? The reason is that nobody would marry a deformed lady. In her next birth, Surpanakha was born as a hunchback, Kubja, and remained unmarried. Bhagwan Krishna came to Mathura, cured her of her deformity, and accepted her.

So, when Jambavan told Bhagwan that his urge for a good fight was unsatisfied, Bhagwan told him to wait until the Krishnavtar. 'I will come to you when I am born as Krishna, and fulfill your desire for a good fight.'

So, here too, it was Bhagwan's wish, else how could it be that a staunch bhakta like Jambavan failed to recognize Bhagwan? Had Jambavan recognized Shri Krishna, he would never have fought with Him.

Tulsidasji has also written about how Bhagwan fulfills the desires of His bhaktas. '*Rama sadaa se`vaka ruchi raakhee* – Bhagwan Rama is careful to do what those who serve Him desire, just as loving parents do everything for their children's happiness.' The Paramatma is the Supreme Father, who Laxmi herself serves – how can here be any lacking on His part?

'If it is Jambavan's desire to fight, I will fight.' Bhagwan did a\the leela that Jambavan failed to recognize Him as Bhagwan. A fierce fight ensued. Bhagwan had told the people of Dwarka to wait for fifteen days for Him, and then do what they felt was best. Bhagwan Krishna was so engrossed in fulfilling Jambavan's wish that twenty seven days passed unnoticed. This is written in the Bhagwat.

Why did all this happen?

If there is any task that is dearest to Bhagwan, it is fulfilling the desires of His bhaktas.

A Mahatma told me about two *siddha* (having supernatural powers) Sants lived in a city. They spoke to Bhagwan whenever they wished. A Grihastha (married householder) went to one, and

said, ‘Maharaj, what am I to do? I am now middle aged, but I have no son. I feel very unhappy.’ The Mahatma tried his best to convince the man that whatever Bhagwan does is for the best, but the people of this world are not interested in such talk. ‘Maharaj, you must somehow, give me a son.’

Bhagwan would talk to the Mahatma, so he asked Bhagwan, ‘Maharaj, this gentleman is desperate to get a son. He is unhappy because he doesn’t have one. Is it possible that he gets a son?’

‘He is not destined to get a son for three births,’ said Bhagwan.

The Mahatma went back to the man, and told him that he was not destined to get a son for three lifetimes.

The man craved a son. He had nothing more to say. He went to the other siddha Mahatma, and wept pitifully, telling him about how he longed for a son. That Sant had a *fakkad* (carefree) nature. He was also a great bhakta of Bhagwan. ‘Go, you will get a son,’ he told the man, without bothering to ask Bhagwan. He gave the man some *prasaada* (food sanctified by offering first to Bhagwan) and blessed him. In due course, the man got a son.

Strangely, the man did not go immediately to the Sant who had blessed him. Instead, he went to the first Sant. ‘You had told me that I was not destined to get a son for three lifetimes,’ he said, ‘but I got a son within a year, in this very lifetime!’ The Sant was surprised to hear this, since he had told the man only what Bhagwan had said.

‘Very well, wait here,’ he said, ‘I will be back in a few minutes.’ He went and asked Bhagwan, ‘You told me that the man is not destined to get a son for three births, and yet You gave him a son! You are a liar and You made me a liar, too!’

Bhagwan Krishna started smiling. ‘My brother, I did not lie to you. When you asked Me whether the man would get a son, I told you the truth – no son was destined for him for three lifetimes. However, My other bhakta told him – without consulting Me – that he would get a son. What can I do? I cannot go against what My bhaktas say, so I had to give him a son.’

My Guruji, Pujyapad Swami Akhandanandji Maharaj, used to say, ‘Bhagwan is called *sarva samartha* – having the capacity to do

anything and everything. *Kartum akartum anyathaa kartum samartha* – He can do anything, not do anything, or do something altogether different. However that Bhagwan has a weakness.’

What is the weakness?

‘He can never deny what His bhaktas say.’

If a person is a genuine bhakta of Bhagwan, He finds Himself incapable of refusing to grant his smallest desire. A bhakta is very dear to Bhagwan.

Why?

A bhakta never asks Bhagwan for anything. Bhagwan waits eagerly, ‘He does so much bhajan – I wish he would ask Me for something!’ And, as soon as some desire rises up in the heart of a bhakta, Bhagwan fulfills it at once.

It seems strange that the people of Dwarka stood outside the cave for fifteen days, but Bhagwan was unconcerned about them and about Dwarka. He was so engrossed in fulfilling Jambavan’s desire that He was oblivious of day or night for twenty seven days!

‘*Bhagavaana bhakta-bhaktimaana*’ is written in the Bhagwat. We are Bhagwan’s bhaktas, but if we are asked, ‘Is Bhagwan anyone’s bhakta?’ the answer is, ‘Bhagwan is the bhakta of His bhaktas. He is always alert about what they like and what they want.’

There is a story in the Mahabharata. Bhishma Pitamah was fighting on the side of the Kauravas, but no success had been achieved. So, one day, Duryodhan accused Bhishma Pitamah of laxity. ‘You have the *varadaana* (boon) of *ichhaamrityu* (death when you wish it). You are such a great archer. In spite of this, not a single son of Pandu has been killed. I am suspicious about your loyalty to me.’

Bhishma Pitamah was deeply hurt. He took five arrows from his quiver and placed them before Duryodhan. ‘I will kill the five Pandavas tomorrow, with these five arrows,’ he pledged.

You are aware that no vow of Bhishma Pitamah is ever broken. Bhagwan Krishna was greatly worried. ‘Bhishma Pitamah has taken a vow to kill the Pandavas tomorrow. If his vow is broken, people will laugh at Me, because he is also My bhakta. And if his vow is fulfilled, all five of My Pandavas will be killed. This is a great dilemma.’ Bhagwan could not sleep that night. If Bhagwan’s

bhaktas stay awake longing for Him, He also stays awake longing for them.

Bhagwan Krishna woke Draupadi at three in the morning. Duryodhan's wife used to go at four every morning, to bow down to Bhishma Pitamah and get his blessings. Bhagwan Krishna found a way out of His dilemma. 'Draupadi, come with Me!' He said.

'You are always up to some tricks!' said Draupadi. 'Where are You taking me at this time of the night?'

'The situation is very grave,' said Shri Krishna. 'Just do as I say.'

Shri Krishna walked ahead and Draupadi followed. Her slippers squeaked as she walked. 'If anyone is awoken by this noise, My plan will fail,' said Shri Krishna.

'What should I do?'

'If you leave the slippers here, and somebody sees them, they will recognize your slippers, and wonder where you have gone at this hour. Give them to Me; I will wrap them in My *pitaambara* (yellow stole).'

They proceeded with Shri Krishna carrying Draupadi's slippers wrapped in His pitambar. They entered Bhishma Pitamah's tent soundlessly. It was a quarter to four. Bhagwan told Draupadi to go and bow down to Bhishma Pitamah, and He hid in a corner. Draupadi went foreword and bowed down to Bhishma Pitamah, who was meditating with his eyes closed. He presumed that Duryodhan's wife had come, as per her daily routine, and blessed Draupadi, saying, '*Aayushmati bhava, saubhaagyavati bhava*, - may you have a long life, and have the good fortune that your husband outlives you.'

'Pitamah,' said Draupadi, 'may I ask something? Yesterday you made a vow to kill all five Pandavas with five arrows, and today you have given me the blessing of being a saubhagyavati, and dying before my husbands. Will yesterday's vow be Satya, or today's blessing?'

Bhishma Pitamah opened his eyes, startled to hear Draupadi's voice. 'Who are you?' he asked. 'Oh, Draupadi! What are you doing here at this hour? I thought it was Duryodhan's wife who

had come, as she does every morning. I was giving the blessing to her. How is it that you have come here just now?’

Draupadi said, ‘I will tell you later, how I came to be here; first, you please tell me which word of yours will be Satya – yesterday’s or today’s?’

Tears of love streamed from Bhishma Pitamah’s eyes. ‘My daughter, the wish of the one who brought you here will be Satya. Now, tell me, please, where is that thief hiding? Let me have His darshan early in the morning today! Where is He? The truth is that it is His wish that will prevail, not my vow of yesterday or my blessing of today.’

Bhagwan Krishna came forward smiling. Bhishma Pitamah gave all five arrows to Draupadi as a blessing, saying, ‘My vow, taken yesterday, is ended. Today’s blessing will be true.’

What does this indicate? If someone has *pre`ma* (pure love) for Bhagwan, He is willing to even carry their slippers in His pitambar. He is willing to serve His bhaktas to even this extent! You will not find such a Master in this world, or such a parent! In the Ramcharitmanas, Bhagwan Shankar tells Parvatiji:

*Umaa raama subhaau je`hin jaanaa
taahi bhajana taji bhaava na aanaa.
(Ramcharitmanas, Sunder Kand, 33. 3)*

Once a person gets to know Shri Rama’s nature, he is interested in nothing except doing Bhagwan’s bhajan.

Why?

Because, there is no Master, no powerful person or merciful person, in this world, who can compare with Bhagwan.

It seems surprising that Bhagwan was too engrossed in fulfilling Jambavan’s wish to remember the people waiting outside the cave, or the city of Dwarka, for twenty seven days! The people outside the cave waited for fifteen days then went back to Dwarka. What else could they do? Then Bhagwan remembered them and decided to end the fight. He gave Jambavan a hard punch, and Jambavan

collapsed – *ksheenasattvah*. Jambavan felt intense pain in every part of his body. He folded his hands and said,

‘*Jaane` tvaam sarvabhootaanaam praana ojah saho balam.*’
(*Bhagwat 10. 56. 26*)

‘Prabhu! I have recognized You!’

‘Oh, why didn’t you recognize Me earlier?’

The answer should be, ‘Because You did not want me to. As soon as You decided to return to Dwarka, You gave me a punch that restored my memory.’

A Mahatma used to say jokingly, ‘Nobody recognizes Bhagwan until he is punched by this world.’

I ask the people sitting here, ‘Are you fully happy?’ Pujya Rotiram Baba told me about an incident. ‘G.D.Birla, the father of B.K.Birla, had gone somewhere. He is a great Dharmatma (committed to the principles of Dharma). He is a Raja of this country. Let us go and meet him.’

Pujya Rotiram Baba was a great *virakta* (having total renunciation). He was always carefree and happy. He told me, ‘When I went to him, he bowed down with great *shraddhaa* (faith).’ Baba had a sublime personality. Birlaji did not know who he was, but he felt like bowing down to Baba.

‘I asked Birlaji just one question – “I hope you are in *aananda* (absolute happiness)?”

“I am a beggar of anand,” he replied.’

Just think of it – what a question and what an answer! Generally, people seem well and happy on the surface, but if you ask them about the state of their heart, whether they are a hundred per cent sukhi where they are living, amongst the kind of people they live, the circumstances they are in, you will – perhaps – find one or two who will say that they are happy, by Bhagwan’s Grace. Mostly, they all have something or other to complain of. Somebody’s wife doesn’t listen to him, somebody’s son is disobedient, somebody has poor health, somebody’s business is not doing well, etc.

Somebody asked my Guruji, ‘Why did Bhagwan create such a sorrowful world? He should either have made it good, or not made it at all!’ Maharajji gave a very humorous answer, ‘You are not able to give up this world, even though it is full of sorrow; what would your condition have been had He made it full of sukha? You would never have been able to cross over it. If you let go of one object today, you catch another tomorrow; then a third, and so on. If you part with one friend you make another.’

‘This world is a bitter truth,’ my Guruji would say. ‘Do those, who you believe to be your own, tell you all that is in their heart?’ Well, my brother? Please don’t go back and ask your family about this, or else there will be quarrels! People will blame me for instigating strife. But, examine the thought and you will realize that nobody tells anyone all his thoughts and feelings, whether it is two brothers, father and son, husband and wife, or any other. That being the case, what are you caught up in? You should certainly do your duty, but if you consider yourself the owner of anything in this world, you will have to face dukha. Stay as a manager, Bhagwan’s manager. This family is given by Bhagwan; this duty is given by Him.

Kabirdasji writes:

‘Daasa kabeerane` aisee odhee jyon kee tyon dhara deenhee chadariyaa – Bhagwan’s servant, Kabir, wore the sheet given by Him so carefully that he returned it (his heart) spotlessly clean (when he died).’

‘Padmapatramivaambhasaa’(like the petal of a lotus). Bhagwan says in the Gita (5. 10), that a lotus stays in the water, but no part of the water touches the lotus. Do everything for your family as a duty, but don’t get attached. The Shastras say that after the age of fifty or fifty-five, a person should turn to Bhagwan. By then, the children get married and are settled in life. What is the purport of this? Both the parents and the grown up children are happy when the elderly parents give up the control of the house and business. When they continue to control everything, the grown children have

no scope to do things their way, and this leads to strife. The sons feel, ‘What kind of a father is he – I will be old before my time, just working under him. He refuses to part with the keys.’ My brother, why don’t you do bhajan? Why do you want to cling to controlling the finances when it is time to retire?

Pujya Rotiram Baba used to say, ‘When one comes into your family, who calls you ‘Baba’ (Baba is used for a grandfather, and also for a Sanyasi), you should understand that Bhagwan has sent you a sign that it is time for you to become a Babaji.’ To become a Babaji does not mean that you take the vows of renunciation and leave your home; it means that you should spend more and more time focusing on Bhagwan. You will be sukhi and your family members will be sukhi, too. You will find happiness in this world and also in the next.

Jambavan fell at Shri Krishna’s feet as soon as he recognized Him. ‘Prabhu! This was Your leela!

*Jaane` tvaam sarvabhootaanaam praana ojah saho balam,
vishnum puraanaapurusham prabhavishnumadheeshvaram
(Bhagwat 10. 56. 26).*

I know that in this world, wherever there is *ojah* (the power of the senses), *bala* (physical strength), and *saahasa* (strength of mind), in whichever being, it is You who is present in those forms. Prabhu, we are all puppets in Your hands.’

My Guruji told us about a siddha Mahatma who stayed on the bank of the Gangaji near Benares. A wicked man crept up behind him, with a stick, to hit him on the head. When he raised his hand, the hand remained suspended in the air; he could not bring it down. My Guruji was sitting with the Mahatma at that time, and saw the whole incident. He saw how frightened the man became, and how he fell at the feet of the Mahatma, begging forgiveness. After he had gone, Guruji asked the Mahatma, ‘Did you use your supernatural powers? How was his arm arrested in mid-air?’ The Mahatma replied, ‘My brother, I was not even aware that he had come up behind me.’

The Ishwara always protects those who have become His. Unless the Ishwara wants, you can't move your hand at all.

Jambavan said, 'I know that if a person has physical strength, or strength of mind, and his senses are strong, it is only You who is present in these forms. You are great, Prabhu! In the Ramavatar You had given me the boon that You would fulfill my urge for a good fight when You come in the Krishnavatar. You fought for twenty seven days, forgetting Dwarka and all Your bhaktas, just to fulfill my wish.' He fell at Bhagwan's feet. 'Prabhu, please command me – how can I serve You? With what purpose did You come into this cave?' Bhagwan soothed Jambavan's body with His hands, before replying. He knew that Jambavan's whole body ached with the blows He had rained on him. He, who gives pain, can also remove it. Jambavan's pain disappeared at the touch of Bhagwan's hands.

'The truth of the world also applies to Me,' said Bhagwan. 'I have been accused of stealing the Syamantak mani, Jambavan. And, as you are aware, the mani is in your possession. If you give Me this mani.....' How deeply Bhagwan loves His bhaktas! Had He wanted, He could have taken the mani by force – what could Jambavan have done? But Bhagwan is helpless before His bhaktas. He is asking Jambavan to give Him the mani. 'Jambavan, if you give the mani to Me, it will wipe out the slur on My name.'

Jambavan was delighted. 'Prabhu! Why only the mani? I want to give You something else, along with the mani.'

'What?'

'My daughter, Jambavati, is of a marriageable age. You are married to Rukminiji, but You are not the Maryada Purushottam now, in the Krishnavatar. You are leela Purushottam. You are not bound to marry just once. Where will I find a better husband for Jambavati? I pray to You, to accept my daughter's hand in marriage; accept her as Your wife. I will give You this mani has her dowry. Your purpose and mine will both be served. Please marry my daughter.'

Bhagwan was pleased. 'Very well, I accept' He took Jambavati and the mani, and returned to Dwarka. You will see the chain of

events. Jambavan gave the mani lovingly to Bhagwan, which means that sampatti was connected to the Ishwara. What was the result? His daughter got married, he got Bhagwan, and his life was filled with shanti. Thus, shanti comes when sampatti is connected to Dharma and the Ishwara, but ashanti comes when sampatti is connected only to Kama. They are separate departments. You will see this as the story unfolds.

The people waiting outside the cave returned to Dwarka when fifteen days were over. They felt that something must have gone wrong, since Bhagwan had not come out, so they went back.

Dukhitaah svapuram yayuh. (Bhagwat 10. 56. 33).

Jeeva Goswami has written in his commentary on the Bhagwat, ‘The people were dukhi for Shri Krishna, but how could they return to Dwarka without making any effort to find out what happened to Him? If your son went into a cave and did not come out, would you leave him behind and go home quietly? What would you do? Of course you wouldn’t go away; you would make every effort to find your son. Then, why did these people go?’

Right at the start, you were told that these people were from Dwarka, but they were not Shri Krishna’s bhaktas; they were of Satrajit’s group. They felt sad to return without Shri Krishna, but they never felt deep grief that He did not come out of the cave. Had their mental state been such that they would not bear to stay without Shri Krishna, they would have gone into the cave in search of Bhagwan.

Does our life contain such prema for Shri Krishna? People say, ‘Bhagwan doesn’t come to us, we can’t experience Bhagwan.’ What is the depth of your prema for Him? Very well, if you can’t meet Bhagwan, does it disturb your night’s sleep or affect your appetite in any way? How many times a day do you feel agitated about not being able to get His darshan?

If your son is a bit late returning from school, don’t you become anxious? How restless you feel. Is it not so?

There was only one rule in Shankarji's *kathaa* (discourse). Do you know that Shankarji's katha has the smallest number of listeners? Shankarji is the speaker and Parvati is the only listener! And, she falls asleep while listening! Bhagwan Shankar says the katha for his own pleasure, but there is one binding factor. Shankar Bhagwan said, 'I will narrate the katha on the condition that you will respond periodically by saying "Yes" or "No".'

This is the rule, and it also applies to you! Your participation in the *kirtan* (group singing of Bhagwan's name) is also very muted. Kirtan should be sung loudly and lovingly. Oh, it is Bhagwan's name – whichever way it is spoken, it brings good fortune. You keep busy all day. It is written in the Bhagwat that you should do kirtan whenever you have a hectic day and are full of tension. Your tension will reduce. Try it and see. If you feel embarrassed to do it here, you can try it in a closed room at home. Sing loudly, and you will soon feel more relaxed. This is a practical point; it is not just a sermon! I know that you listen with great love, but when you respond by expressing your agreement or disagreement, it becomes clear that you are grasping what is said.

Don't you feel worried if your son doesn't return on time? You do. But, you haven't met Bhagwan – maybe up to the age of fifty – and, do you feel worried about it? You don't. Then, why blame Bhagwan? You don't really yearn for Him. How strong is your wish to meet Him?

If you keep an image of Bhagwan, it is good, and if you offer Him bhoga (food offered to Bhagwan's image before eating) it is also good. Some people keep Bhagwan in a show case, and some keep Him in a locked cupboard. Or, they offer Him something to eat as though doing Him a great favor! They offer food and give Him a fixed amount of time – maybe ten minutes or fifteen minutes – in which to eat it, and then remove the food. It is like saying, 'Eat within this period if You want to, else I'll remove it and have it as prasad.'

What is your mental condition, regarding Bhagwan? Think for yourself. You probably treat an ordinary guest better than you treat

Him! Why complain that He doesn't meet you? Don't complain about Him; He is always ready to meet you.

Two Sants were doing bhajan. Naradji passed by. They asked him, 'You are going to Vaikunth; please ask Bhagwan when He will come to us.' Naradji went to Vaikunth and placed the question to Bhagwan.

'Tell the Sant who is doing tapasya under the tamarind tree that it will be twelve years before I come to him,' said Bhagwan.

'What about the other Sant?' asked Naradji.

'Tell him it will take as many years as there are leaves on the tree under which he is doing tapasya.'

Naradji returned by the same path. When he told the first Sant that Bhagwan would meet him after twelve years, he got up, picked up his mat and other objects, and prepared to leave. 'I have no more patience!' he said. 'If Bhagwan wants to meet me, let Him; if not, let Him not meet me!' Saying this, he walked off.

Naradji felt nervous. If this was the reaction of the Sant who had only twelve years more to wait, what would be the reaction of the Sant who would have to wait so much longer? He tried to walk away unnoticed, but the second Sant called out to him. 'Naradji, please tell me what Bhagwan has commanded for me.'

Naradji went to him hesitatingly. 'My brother, what am I to say? You will have to wait for as many years as there are leaves in the tree under which you are sitting.'

Now, see the difference in the mental states of the two Sants. The second Sant's mind went to Bhagwan in gratitude. 'Oh, my message has reached Bhagwan! He has decided to come to me one day!' He was overjoyed at the thought that Bhagwan would, indeed meet him; that He had decided on the day He would come. He felt so elated that he began to dance joyfully. Naradji had not yet left, when Bhagwan manifested and embraced the bhakta.

'Prabhu,' said Naradji, 'What is this leela of Yours? Had you said that You would come now, the poor man who was told that You would come after twelve years would not have gone off dejected. He would also have met You. You told me that You would come after many years.'

‘What I told you was the truth,’ said Bhagwan. ‘However, such a strong upsurge of love rose up in the heart of this bhakta when He thought of My coming – and by his imagining meeting Me – that I was unable to stay away. I felt compelled to manifest. What can I do?’

What is your mental state like? It is not possible that you do bhajan with sincerity and Bhagwan does not come. In the beginning, the feeling is that of not experiencing Bhagwan in any way, but when you start experiencing something of Him by His Grace or a Sant’s blessing, you feel that He is showering far more Grace than you deserve. This is what people experience after a while. We feel sometimes. ‘I have got a human birth – I should obtain Bhagwan; I should get His darshan.’ But, how many times in a month or in a day, does this feeling come?

Once, in Calcutta, a bhakta asked Maharajji, ‘Maharajji, I do have the wish to meet Bhagwan, but why doesn’t He come?’

My Maharajji had a great sense of humor. He said, ‘You have the *chaa* (*chaah* means desire and *chaa* means tea; this is a play with words), but it is not *kaafee* (*kaafee* means enough and if pronounced slightly differently, it means coffee).’ Meaning, the wish is there, but it is not strong enough!

Your desire for Bhagwan does not interfere with your sleep, or your appetite, or your worldly interaction. You feel no desperate longing for Him. You feel that everything is fine, and Bhagwan should also come, the way a relative or a friend comes. Why should Bhagwan come if the desire is tepid?

Thus, good people, the people of Dwarka went back. Jeeva Goswami writes, ‘*Svapuram yayuh vilam na yayuh*. They went to Dwarka, but they did not go into the cave.’ This shows that they lacked bhakti for Bhagwan. They returned to Dwarka and told Devki-Vasudev-Rukmini and the others about what had happened. These people’s prema for Bhagwan was genuine. They became greatly agitated. What could they do? They did an *anushtthaana* (ritual of worship for a specific purpose) to propitiate Durgaji, who is Shakti incarnate.

Here, we have to understand that shakti (power) is needed to do anything. There are a number of lessons here. If you are a Krishna bhakta, don't disdain Ramji, Shankarji, Durgaji and other divine forms. Some people tell me, 'Maharaj, we should be *ananya* (worship only one form). We should have bhakti for only one.' Yes, that is true, but what is the correct method for this? If you are a Krishna bhakta and are doing a puja of Durgaji, ask Durgaji to give you prema for Shri Krishna; and ask Shri Krishna for whatever you want for yourself. Don't ask Durgaji for the things you want for yourself. This is the form of *ananyataa* (being ananya). It is not that you insult Shri Krishna if you are a bhakta of Durgaji and vice versa.

This is a true story of Vrindavan. Bhagwan has many forms in Vrindavan. There is Radha-Raman, Radha Vallabh, Banke Behari, and others. The bhaktas of Radha-Vallabh don't go to the Banke Behari Mandir although both temples have the form of Shri Krishna. Someone asked, 'Why don't you go?' They replied, 'Our ananyata will be broken. We should be a bhakta of only one form.' There was a bhakta – he himself told me about this – 'Some relatives had come to Vrindavan. They wanted to do darshan in all the Mandirs. I took them to the Banke Behari Mandir and told them to go and do darshan; that I would wait outside and keep an eye on the shoes.

"Why don't you come for darshan, too?" they asked. "The shoes can be kept with the man who is appointed to keep the shoes."

I told them that I was an ananya bhakta of Radha-Vallabh and would not go for Banke Behari's darshan, since that would break my ananyata.

"If your fate is to do darshan of shoes, how can you get Banke Behari's darshan?" they asked. "This is not what ananyata means!"

What does this teach us? Problems and tricky situations come into everybody's life, but to let them frighten you is not the answer. If you are not able to deal with the situation, you should pray to Bhagwan, do an anushthana for Him, or a *paatha* (reciting a

passage of worship) for Him. You will find an answer to your problem.

My Maharajji's disciple, Swami Prabuddhanand Saraswati, was very fond of swimming. Once, on a trip to South India, he went to have a swim in the sea. A huge wave swept him far out. The whole group was aghast. They began to weep and shout, thinking he would drown. 'What will you achieve by weeping and shouting?' asked Maharajji. 'Do Bhagwan's bhajan.' A few minutes later, another wave brought him back and he was flung to the shore. 'Now, stop the bhajan and attend to him,' said Maharajji.

If the situation is beyond your control, weeping and shouting will not help; you should call for Bhagwan's help. Take His *aashraya* (shelter). Pray to Him. And when the situation comes under control, thank Him, and go ahead. Thus, a person who proceeds in life, joining his own shakti to the Ishwara's, will always be sukhi.

There is one great advantage in this – if you work with only your shakti, and gain success, a pride of achievement will be developed. And, failure will bring shame and dejection. If you take Bhagwan's shakti when undertaking any task, your success will bring the thought, 'Bhagwan showered Grace and my effort was successful.' If you fail, the thought will come, 'Well, I tried, but Bhagwan did not want it, so it did not happen.' You will be spared of shame and dejection. You will be saved from the vanity of success and the pain of failure.

The people of Dwarka began an eleven day anushthana of Durgaji. Just when the puja was being concluded on the twelfth day, Shri Krishna arrived at the puja mandap with Jambavati and the Syamantak mani. Everybody was filled with joy, that they had got the fruit of their puja. It was like life returning to a dead body. They embraced Shri Krishna, and then asked, 'Who is this lady?' 'She is to be My second wife,' said Shri Krishna. This made everybody feel even happier.

There is another exceptional factor in Krishnavatar. If you carefully read the stories of Bhagwan Krishna's marriages, you will see that not a single wedding of His was held at His in-law's house, as is customary. Nor did He receive a single proposal from

the bride's parents. Whenever there was a *svayamvara* (an assembly where the lady chooses the man she wants to marry), He went uninvited; sometimes He abducted His bride! It is another of His leelas, the way He got married to sixteen thousand one hundred and eight wives.

Now, His second marriage was with Jambavati. The following day, Bhagwan Krishna called Satrajit to the Court.

Why?

Bhagwan's good name had been smeared. 'Bhagwan Krishna had my brother Prasena killed, and stole the Syamantak mani' was the rumor spread by Satrajit. So, Bhagwan called him and showed him the mani in front of all the people in the Court. 'This is the Syamantak mani. A lion killed your brother Prasena, and took it. The lion was killed by a bear, Jambavan, who took the mani and gave it to his daughter, Jambavati. Jambavati is with Me. I have married her. This mani was given to me in dowry. Even though it is rightfully Mine, I am returning it to Satrajit.'

If you are a man of integrity and a blot has been put on your honor, you should make your best effort to bring the truth into the open and clear your name. This will strengthen people's faith in your integrity.

Shri Krishna gave Satrajit the mani in front of the whole assembly. 'Take your mani, Satrajit. What will I do with you mani? You had cast a false aspersion on Me.'

Everyone present felt displeased with Satrajit. 'He blamed our Prabhu unfairly! How much trouble he created for our Prabhu – He had to stay in a cave for twenty seven days!' Satrajit felt deeply ashamed. He went back with his head hanging in shame. 'What should I do now? I have been very wrong. An unnecessary antagonism has been created with Bhagwan Shri Krishna. My suspicions were baseless.'

The fact is, suspicions concerning wealth are generally baseless in seventy or eighty percent of the cases. Sampatti is such that it becomes a cause for even Bhagwan to be blamed unjustly. We should be very careful when dealing with wealth.

Satrajit kept thinking about how he could atone for the false allegations he had made on Bhagwan. Ultimately, only one method came to his mind, and that was to get his daughter, Satyabhama married to Shri Krishna. ‘Let me take Jambavan’s example and do the same,’ he thought.

The next morning, he went to Bhagwan Krishna. ‘Prabhu, no *e`kapatnivrata* (vow of having only one wife) binds You in this Avatar. Please accept the hand of my daughter, Satyabhama, as Your third wife. I want to give the Syamantak mani to You as her dowry.’

‘Very well,’ said Bhagwan. All Shri Krishna’s wives are members of Bhagwan’s eternal retinue. The Bhagwat says that Satyabhama’s outstanding quality was her beauty at three levels. Her *svaroompa* (essence, true nature) was beautiful, her face and figure were beautiful, and her heart was also beautiful. Three qualities are mentioned in the Bhagwat – *sheela* (self restraint), *roopa* (beauty) and *udaarataa* (magnanimity). All ladies should give thought to this. Whenever the virtues of a wife are mentioned, special emphasis is given to the quality of sheel.

What does sheel mean?

My Guruji described it through the medium of a little story.

A Sethji wanted to hire a servant. Many candidates applied for the post. Sethji had a method of testing them. He would call a man and say, ‘Get me a glass of water.’ When the man brought it, he would say, ‘throw it away.’ When the man obeyed him and threw away the water, he would ask, ‘Why did you throw it away?’ The man would naturally say, ‘Because you told me to.’ The man would tell him to sit on one side and repeat the exercise with the next candidate.

One man was very intelligent. When he was asked why he threw the water, he folded his hands and said, ‘I made a mistake.’ Sethji said, ‘Keep this man. He is suitable.’ Well, my friends, which would you prefer – a man who pointed out your mistake, or the one who accepted your mistake as his own? Neither an employee nor an employer can be successful without the virtue of sheel. Neither brothers nor friends can continue to have a good relationship

unless they have some forbearance. The quality of sheel is essential in a lady. The straightforward meaning of sheel is to ignore small mistakes of the other; and if a person lacks this ability, he is not likely to succeed in life.

My Maharajji used to say, ‘Bhagwan has given us eyelids to enable us to shut our eyes to certain things. Only then can we succeed in life.’

When I was in Calcutta, Respected Sarlaji Birla told me that they have an excellent driver. He does his duty very efficiently, but he takes two hours off when he goes for lunch. ‘I know that this is his minus point,’ she said, ‘but I never touch upon this topic.’ This is how things have to be managed. If you have an employee who is excellent in every other way, you should overlook minor faults.

What is the indication in this? If a husband says something in a moment of anger, the wife should accept his mistake quietly to avoid a quarrel. A girl questioned this statement. ‘Why should only the wife keep quiet?’ she asked. ‘Why should this not apply equally to the husband?’

‘Your point is valid,’ I told her, ‘because these days, both husband and wife have jobs or do business. You can have an arrangement that your husband keeps quiet in your field and you keep quiet in his. The purpose of reticence is not to encourage unfairness or harass anyone.’

You can see for yourself – if you are angry and your wife says, ‘Very well, it was my mistake,’ you will feel ashamed when you calm down. You will realize that the mistake was yours, but your wife accepted the unjust blame. Won’t it increase your love for her? If you are an honest man, this is bound to happen. And, if she retorts – she may be justified – but your love for her will not increase; it will decrease. Why has divorce become so common in the past few years? It is because tolerance is lacking. No relationship – whether it is between two brothers, father and son, husband and wife, employer and employee, or two friends – can remain good if people don’t overlook minor faults in each other.

A Mahatma narrated a story about a highly educated bride. When she came to her in-law’s house after marriage, she would not wake

up before eight or nine o'clock. Then she would take her brush, wear her slippers, and walk around the house. The husband and his mother did all the work, like fetching the milk, making tea, and cleaning the house. Some ten or fifteen days passed in this manner. 'How long will she continue to live like a guest?' asked the mother-in-law. 'She should help with the daily chores, now.' The mother and son made a plan to make her realize this. 'When she wakes up tomorrow morning, we will start quarreling about who should sweep the floor. You say that you should do it, and will say that I should. Maybe this will make her realize that she should sweep the floor.'

The next morning, the mother and son carried out their plan and began to argue about who should sweep the floor. The daughter-in-law woke up. For a while she sat there, listening to them, and then she said, 'If you both feel that it is such a good thing to sweep the floor, why quarrel? Take turns in doing it.' The mother and son were stunned to hear her reaction. All their tactful planning was wasted.

It is written in the Bhagwat that people's intellect will become dull in the Kali Yuga, but children are highly intelligent these days. Then, what is the purport of this statement? My Guruji used to say, 'The intellect will be sharper, but its direction will change.' The buddhi that should be applied in an *anukoola* (favorable, positive) direction will become *pratikoola* (unfavorable; flowing in the wrong direction). This is the mockery of the Kali Yuga.

It is sad that the beauty competitions held in other countries are becoming increasingly popular in our country. Our traditional concept of beauty is not mere physical beauty; it is the good tendencies of the mind. Was Shabari beautiful? Bhagwan Shri Rama accepted her as beautiful. Was Kubja beautiful? Bhagwan Shri Krishna accepted her. Surpanakha took on a very beautiful form, but did Bhagwan accept her? The definition of beauty in our culture is inner beauty. Blind aping of Western culture leads to unhappiness. The people of the West are more unhappy; if we follow their culture unthinkingly, we will also become unhappy.

So, as far as possible, we should guard our cultural values and study our ancient literature, and understand the truth.

Satyabhama's beauty was her sheel, but she was also exceptionally beautiful. Many men desired her, but Satrajit got her married to Bhagwan Krishna. When he went to give the Syamantak mani, Shri Krishna told him, 'This mani is the cause of much strife. I will not keep it; you keep it.'

'No, Maharaj,' said Satrajit, 'I have made a resolve to give the mani to You.'

Bhagwan Krishna was very clever. 'Keep the mani with you. You are now My father-in-law, so do some work for Me. Conduct the daily puja and send the gold given by the mani for the State coffers.' Bhagwan knew about the problems that would be caused by the mani.

Pravachan 4.

You are listening to a discourse on how shanti can be obtained while interacting in this world, through the proper application of the four Purusharthas. The episode of the Syamantak mani helps to clarify this.

The Syamantak mani was with Satrajit. He gave the hand of his daughter, Satyabhama, to Shri Krishna – King of Dwarka – in marriage, and started giving the gold given by the mani to the State coffers.

Another event took place at this time. Shri Krishna got news from Hastinapur that all five Pandavas had perished in a fire that burnt down the *lakshaagriha* (house of wax) where they had been put up. Although Bhagwan knew that they had actually escaped secretly, He went to Hastinapur on a condolence visit.

One may ask why Shri Krishna went on a condolence visit when He knew that the Pandavas had not been killed in the fire. He went and expressed grief to Bhishma Pitamah, Dronacharya, Kripacharya, Dhritarashtra, and Gandhari because they knew Shri Krishna's deep love for the Pandavas. They knew that it was impossible for Him to not come in the face of such a tragedy. Had He not gone, it would have made them suspicious, whether the Pandavas had actually died in the fire. Shri Krishna wanted them to believe that they had, indeed, perished, and so He went and pretended to be full of grief. It is written here:

Tulyadukhau cha sangamya haa kashtamiti hochatuh.
(*Bhagwat 10. 56. 2*).

Bhagwan said, 'It is a matter of great distress that the Pandavas came to such a tragic end.' He even wept! This is something to learn.

Kali Yuga comes immediately after Dwapar Yuga. It is just five thousand years since Bhagwan Krishna returned to His realm. Scientists have found the ruins of Dwarka under the sea near the

present island of Dwarka. It is not as though these stories are all imagined.

The Shastras say that if you have to tackle an *adharmee* (one who behaves contrary to Dharma), with adharma, that will not be adharma. Bhagwan Shri Krishna was very good at acting. He knew that the Pandavas were alive, but He shed crocodile tears before these people at Hastinapur.

What does this teach us? If you wish to live with safety and shanti in today's world, a certain amount of hypocrisy is necessary. A person who cannot do this may succeed on the spiritual path, but not on a worldly one.

The meaning of the word 'arjuna' in the Gita is *rijutvaat arjunah* – straightforward, not crooked. His words and actions are in keeping with his thoughts and feelings. Such a person attains success rapidly on the path to the Ishwara, but remains unsuccessful in worldly interaction.

You must have seen that a person who behaves like Harishchandra (a King who was honest to a fault) adhering strictly to the truth, is mockingly called 'Harishchandra' in society. He is considered foolish and impractical. Is it not so?

Harishchandra was born in the Treta Yuga, not in the Kali Yuga. In the tradition of the Ramavatar, Ramji's Dharma was to speak the truth and adhere to Satya. So, it is right and proper for Harishchandra to be born in His lineage. What was the result of Harishchandra's honesty? He had to work as a servant in the house of a Dom (a low caste man who tended the cremation ground). If you have such *nishthaa* (faith) in Satya that you are prepared to give up all you have and work for a Dom, it is another matter; but if you cannot be completely *satyavaadi* (speak only the truth) if you want progress and prosperity in this world. Now, please don't misinterpret what I have said, and tell people, 'Swamiji is teaching us to tell lies!' Never tell a lie to cause trouble for anyone, but if you have to tell a lie to protect yourself, it is not a paapa.

There is a shloka that is written in the Bhagwat as well as in the Manu Smriti. It says that a person does not get paapa if he lies

under six circumstances. People listen to this very attentively, because they need to speak untruths every day. The shloka is:

*Streeshu narmavivaahē`cha vrittyarthe`praanasankate`,
Gobraahmanaarthe`hinsaayaam naanritansyaajjugupsitam.
(Bhagwat 8. 20. 43.)*

Streeshu: Here, the word ‘stree’ (woman) is used to indicate a fallen woman; a prostitute. If a man gets caught by a depraved woman, he will not incur paapa if he tells a lie to escape from her.

Narma means a joke. If a person tells a lie in a joke, he does not get paapa.

Vivaaha means marriage, the marriage of a daughter. If you lack the capacity to give a huge dowry, you can tell a lie and get your daughter married. You will not incur paapa.

Vrittyarthe`: If your source of income will be lost by telling the truth, or you may lose your life if unless you tell a lie, you can tell a lie to save yourself. You won’t get paapa.

Furthermore, if speaking the truth results in a cow or a Brahmin being killed, you should tell a lie to save their life. No paapa will be attached to you. These are the six occasions on which a person can say an untruth with impunity.

Ahinsaa (non-violence) is Dharma, but ask the Kashmiri Pundits (who have been the victims of Islamic terrorism) whether ahinsaa is Dharma for them. If someone takes the honor of your wife and daughters, and carries them off, and you hold on to the principle of ahinsaa instead of saving them, you will not be called a *dharmee* (one who adheres to Dharma); you will be called an adharmi.

People tell me, ‘It is the Sant-Mahatmas who create these quarrels. They should live peacefully.’ I tell them, ‘I also say that people should live peacefully, but everyone should live peacefully and allow others to do the same. How can you say that one group should live peacefully while another commits whatever atrocity they want?’

The things that must be learnt from the Shastras are, when it is Dharma to speak the truth and when it is Dharma to prevaricate; when is *hinsaa* (violence) Dharma, and when is ahinsaa Dharma.

Hinsa can also be Dharma. Shri Rama did a lot of hinsa. Shri Krishna instigated the Mahabharata war, which resulted in a great deal of hinsa. Did Bhagwan Krishna need to take a bath in the Gangaji to wash away paapa? What does this indicate? It certainly does not indicate that we should quarrel and create strife! We have to learn from the Shastras what Dharma actually is.

Bhagwan Krishna was such a skillful actor that He went and expressed deep sorrow before Dronacharya, Dhritarashtra, and the others. It needs considerable skill to shed tears without feeling unhappy! Shri Krishna had this ability, and – please don't be offended at my saying so – ladies also have this ability! The ladies present will think, 'Swamiji is speaking against us.' It is written somewhere, that we should not trust tears fully. To cry at will is an art, and Bhagwan has this art. He wept before these people even though He felt no sorrow.

And, what was happening at Dwarka? There were three people there. One was Akurji Maharaj, who was a bhakta of Bhagwan Krishna, the second was Shatadhanva, a citizen of Dwarka, and the third was Kritavarma, the Commander of Shri Krishna's Army. When they came to know that Shri Krishna and Balaramji have gone to Hastinapur, leaving the Syamantak mani at Dwarka with Satrajit, they felt it was a good opportunity to kill Satrajit and steal the mani.

The purpose of the scheme was not limited to stealing the mani. They knew that Satrajit had given the mani to Bhagwan Krishna and was doing its daily puja, giving the gold it gave to the State, as per Krishna Bhagwan's wishes. The fact is that all three of them had wanted to marry Satyabhama. They had been attracted by her inner and outer beauty and asked Satrajit for her hand in marriage. Satrajit was clever. He bluffed them by agreeing to the proposal of each of them, and then getting Satyabhama married to Shri Krishna.

There are some people in society who think, 'I have half of the cleverness in the world, and the other half is scattered among the rest of the people.' They keep outwitting others. If someone gains

success by bluffing others, don't think that deceit gives them success. Such theories have become very popular these days.

A man once said to me, 'These days, a person who does *adharma* (that, which is contrary to Dharma) and deceives people is the one who prospers; while a truthful person is left behind.'

'It is not right to interpret it in this way,' I told him.

'Why?' he asked. 'It is seen clearly in social interaction.'

'That is true, but look at history. Ravana did a lot of *adharma* and he had the golden Lanka and a large family. He was always victorious and kept progressing. Hiranyakashipu did a lot of injustice and he flourished. It was the same with Kansa.

However, to say that they flourished because they did *adharma* is not the right interpretation. The fact is that Ravana, Hiranyakashipu and Kansa had undertaken severe *tapasyaa* (asceticism) before they took to wickedness. Their progress was due to the power of their *tapasya*, not due to their misdeeds. The result of their *adharma* was the gradual diminishing of the *punya* earned by their *tapasya*.'

Think of it this way – you go to some city, taking five lakh rupees with you. Then you use the money for drinking, paying gangsters to murder someone, and other immoral activities. That does not mean that your misdeeds are making you flourish; it means that you had earned five lakhs and were making the wrong use of your money. Your wealth is depleted by this misuse, and the day will come when it is finished. You may even have to go to jail.

Thus, Ravana and Hiranyakashipu seemed to flourish for a long time, but it was not because of *adharma*. They had earned great spiritual merit by doing severe *tapasya*. Ravana had cut off his heads, one by one, and offered them up in worship. Hiranyakashipu had stood on his big toe for thousands of years. Their *tapasya* built up great power, which they misused, and it dissipated gradually. What was the end for Ravana when his power was finished? His entire lineage was destroyed.

How did Hiranyakashipu end? All the wicked demons were destroyed. What end did Kansa come to? The destruction of everyone who supported him. So, never think that a person who

walks on the path of Dharma becomes dukhi, and a person who walks on the path of adharma becomes sukhi. The sukha of people who are cunning and unethical is not due to their present lifestyle; it is due to the Dharma, puja and punya of past lives. The more adharma they do, the faster is their punya used up. This arrangement can never be upset in the Ishwara's law, though it may be upset in human society.

Satrajit always tried to outsmart other people. He had refused to give the mani even to Bhagwan. He always felt, 'I am so clever, I can fool everyone else.' He told all three – Akrur, Kritavarma and Shatadhanva – that he agreed to their proposal for Satyabhama's hand in marriage, and got her married to a fourth – Bhagwan Krishna. All three of them felt offended and angry.

There are two *siddhaanata* (principles) in our Shastras – the Dharma siddhanta and the Bhakti siddhanta. The Dharma siddhanta is that the person will get good or bad fortune, depending on his karmas. If he does good deeds he will get good fortune and if he does bad things he will suffer accordingly. In the Bhakti siddhanta if a person has genuine love for Bhagwan, and he makes some mistakes, Bhagwan will forgive his lapses and he will not have to suffer fully for them.

Satrajit was certainly not a bhakta; he comes under the jurisdiction of the Karma siddhanta. He had deceived people and was faced with the result. Anyone who cheats another will have to suffer for it.

Most of you would be knowing the story of the shepherd who would harass everybody by calling out 'Wolf!' People would run to his aid, and he would enjoy harassing them needlessly. One day, a wolf came, and he called out, but nobody came to help him. They all thought he is up to his old tricks. The wolf caught and killed him. Thus everyone has to face the consequences of their actions.

A Mahatma had told me this story about three Brahmin friends. They were traveling to a distant place, and reached a village at night. They went to people's houses for food, and were given some rice, milk and sugar. They cooked *kheera* (a rice pudding), but the quantity was just enough for one. 'We have not eaten the whole

day; let us go to bed without eating.’ They decided, ‘the person who got the best dream during the night will have the kheer next morning.’

Two of the friends were very cunning. The third was intelligent but honest. Nobody can get a good dream at will. The two cunning friends pretended to be asleep as they planned what dream they would claim to have seen. They dozed off eventually, and when the third friend saw that they were asleep, he got up quietly and had the kheer. Then he went to sleep and slept soundly.

The two cunning friends woke up the next morning and asked eagerly, ‘What did you dream about?’ The first said, ‘Thakurji came in my dream and took me to the fourth Heaven. I experienced an intense bliss, such as I had never experienced in my life. What was your dream?’

‘Thakurji came in my dream and took me to the seventh Heaven. I stayed there with Him for several hours. I was unaware of time, because I was filled with bliss.’

The third friend was still sleeping soundly, since he had eaten the kheer and was not troubled by hunger. The other two woke him up. ‘Get up, brother. Tell us about your dream.’

‘No! No! Don’t wake me!’ said the third friend. ‘Let me sleep. My dream is not a very good one.’

‘Oh, never mind if your dream is not good. It is morning, so wake up. Tell us what you saw in your dream.’

The third friend roused himself and sat up. ‘As soon as I went to sleep, Hanumanji came in my dream,’ he said. ‘He woke me up and told me to have the kheer immediately. I told him that we had decided that the one who gets the best dream was to have the kheer in the morning; that I could not have it by myself. Hanumanji lifted up his foot and placed it on my foot. I was very scared. Hanumanji’s form is huge –

*Je`hin giri charana de`yi hanumanta chale`u so paataala turangaa
(Ramcharitamanans, Sundar Kand, 0-7).*

As soon as Hanumanji placed his foot on the mountain, it sank into the ground.

Hanumanji scolded me, “Will you obey me and eat the kheer, or not?” I kept looking at him in fear and ate all the kheer. What was I to do? It is very sad that I ate the kheer without telling you.’

Both the cunning friends shouted in anger. ‘You should have woken us when Hanumanji came. We would have seen how he forced you to have the kheer!’

The third friend said, ‘I tried repeatedly, to call out to you. One of you was in the fourth Heaven and the other was in the seventh Heaven, so you could not hear me. What could I do? Had you been close, you would have come to me, but you were far away.’

The two cunning friends understood that the third had outsmarted them!

This shows that if a person wants to achieve worldly success, he cannot do it by trying to be another Harishchandra.

A Sant has written a lovely couplet:

Saain so sacche` raho, santan son sadbhaava.

Be true in the eyes of the Ishwara, because even though the world may not know what is in your heart, He knows, and you know. Nothing can be kept hidden from you both. And, *santan son sadbhaava* – have goodwill like a Sant. Sant does not mean a man in saffron robes, mala and a tilak. A Sant can be in ordinary clothes – any of you could be a Sant. The meaning of a Sant is a man of truth who lives his life with the viewpoint of the Ishwara. Be true to those who are true, but keep in mind that if you behave like Harishchandra with people who are crooked, you will not succeed in this world. A degree of cleverness is required in interaction, but it should not be used to create trouble for anyone; it should be used to safeguard yourself. You have to counter cunning people with cleverness.

There is a saying, ‘*Jo jasa karaa so tasa fala chaakhaa*’ (everybody has to taste the fruit according to his deeds). Satrajit had made a fool of many people, and these three got their chance to take revenge. Kritavarma was the Head of the Army, Akur was a bhakta. They met Shatadhanva. ‘Shatadhanva, this Satrajit has

shown himself to be a very cunning man. He promised each of us that he would give his daughter to us in marriage, and deceived us all. Krishna and Balaram have gone out of town. This is a good opportunity to take revenge. We should attack Satrajit tonight.’

There are a number of lessons to be learnt from this episode. The Commander of Bhagwan Krishna’s Army is involved in a plot against Him. Our Shastras say that a King who does not know *raajaneeti* (the principles of governance) cannot rule a country. Raj-*neeti* means that a Raja should know about the activities of every person in his kingdom. Unless he has this information, he cannot rule his country for long.

Why?

Who knows when someone will become an enemy. Politics is such an activity that a person turns into an enemy as soon as something is done that is not to his liking. Therefore, a ruler has to be constantly alert, and be kept informed about all that is going on.

It is also written that a ruler should use the four methods of *saama* (dialogue), *daama* (bribery), *danda* (punishment) and *bhe`da* (the policy of divide and rule). Both the Bhagwat and the Ramayana have beautiful commentaries on this. The same four methods – sama, dama, danda and bheda – are needed for successful interaction. Of these, two are for decent people and two are for wicked people. Sama and dama are to get work done peacefully and amicably, by convincing or winning over with gifts. An upright person will not cooperate if he is threatened. He will respond only to a decent approach.

A wicked man, on the other hand, will think it a weakness of someone approaches him with folded hands. Wicked people don’t understand the language of peace. The *danda-neeti* (policy of punishment) is needed for wicked people. *Danda-neeti* means to suppress.

What if the wicked are very powerful?

Then, *bheda-neeti* has to be used, to divide the opponents and weaken them. This is written in the Shastras. All these are worldly methods, and no ruler can govern successfully without using them.

Kritavarma was the Chief of Army. If Shri Krishna's Chief of Army can be a traitor, how can you be sure that your top man will not be disloyal to you? This is why it is said that a King should always be watchful.

And, Akrurji Maharaj? It is very surprising that being such a premi bhakta of Bhagwan, Akrur should be involved in a plot against Bhagwan Krishna!

The Bhagwat describes how Akrurji was sent to Vrindavan by Kansa, to bring Krishna and Balaram to Mathura. The distance was barely fifteen kilometers, but it took Akrur the whole day to cover, because he was so lost in thoughts about Bhagwan Krishna that forgot to drive the chariot! It is the same Akrurji, who – when he saw Bhagwan Krishna's footprints on the ground – jumped down from the chariot and rolled on the ground in ecstasy. Tears of happiness filled his eyes, and his body tingled with joy when he saw Shri Krishna. And now he is involved in a conspiracy against the same Krishna Bhagwan!

How did such a change come into Akrur's life? It is written in the Bhagwat that Akrurji felt grateful to Kansa. 'How would I have got Shri Krishna's darshan, if Kansa had chosen someone else to bring Him and Balaram?' he thought. 'Kansa has done me a great favor by sending me to Vrindavan.' How could someone with such great love change to this extent? It is due to what is called '*bhaagavata aparaadha*' – an offence done against a Sant, a bhakta of Bhagwan. Akrurji had unknowingly done an offence against the gopis.

Good people, Bhagwan forgives us all other offences and lapses, but remember – if even a bhakta does something against a Sant, a Mahatma, or a bhakta, Bhagwan saves him to some extent, but does not pardon him fully. If both are bhaktas, Bhagwan protects both, but if a third does something against a bhakta, he is destroyed.

Akruruji was a bhakta and the gopis are also Bhagwan's bhaktas. What was Akrurji's offence against the gopis? The Bhagwat has a poignant description of how thousands of gopis wept helplessly when Akrur was taking Krishna and Balaram with him to Mathura.

Some of them lay on the ground before the chariot, some tried to hold on to the chariot, and some said, ‘This chariot will leave along with our life spirit.’

But what was Akrur’s reaction? If such a situation arose at your place, even today, people would wait a while and try to find a way out or convince the gopis. Akrur, however, remained silent and drove the chariot forward. He may have done so unknowingly, but it was a great offence against the gopis.

The gopis would take Shri Krishna’s name with every breath; He was their life. Every pore of their body tingled at the sound of His name. To take Shri Krishna away from them – to separate them from Him – was the greatest offence that could be done to the gopis. And, the fruit of that offence was that Akrur fell from his own *svaroopa* (basic nature).

Jeev Goswami Maharaj writes:

‘Gopeejanakopaade`va akroore` eedrishee matirjaataa.

Akrur’s intellect was spoilt because of his offence against the gopis.’

Thus, we must be careful to do nothing that can become an offence against a Sant, Mahatma, or bhakta. Bhagwan does protect those who are attached to Him, but we are bound to suffer if we do anything against His bhaktas.

Akrurji’s buddhi was sullied. He joined the plan to kill Satrajit and persuaded Shatadhanva to do the deed. How was this achieved? Kritavarma and Akrurji said, ‘If we go to Akrur’s house, people will recognize us, because Kritavarma is the Commander of the Army and I am a close friend of Shri Krishna. You are an ordinary citizen. You can easily get into Satrajit’s house.’

‘What will I get out of this?’ asked Shatadhanva.

‘If you kill Satrajit, you can keep the Syamantak mani.’ This is how they tempted Shatadhanva.

We should be wary of people who pay bribes to get their work done, because they can go against you at any time. This is what

happened here. Both Akrur and Kritavarma abandoned Shatadhanva.

Shatadhanva entered Satrajit's house at night. Satrajit was fast asleep. Shatadhanva cut his neck, picked up the mani, and fled. Satrajit's widow and other members of his family began to weep pitifully. Satyabhama got the news the next morning that her father had been killed and the Syamantak mani stolen.

My Maharajji used to say, 'Look; Bhagwan's father-in-law was murdered, and his house burglered. So, nobody should think that they are immune from misfortunes. It all depends on a person's *praarabdha* (fate decided by deeds of the previous lifetime).

In that case, what is the fruit of Satsang and bhajan?

My Maharajji said, 'The fruit of Satsang and bhajan is not that misfortunes never come, that you never make losses, or fall ill. The fruit of Satsang and bhajan is that even if misfortune comes because of your *prarabdha*, your mental equilibrium will not be destroyed.'

The mind is the most precious thing. What is the use of all your wealth if the mind is spoilt? And, even if everything else is lost, what does it matter if the mind is strong and healthy?

There was a *virakta* (having renunciation) Sant at Vrindavan. A thief crept into his hut one night, during the winter. The Mahatma had nothing with which he could cover himself, so he lay shivering on the mat, unable to sleep due to the cold. The thief took off his blanket and put it down, in order to search the hut for what he could steal. Seeing the blanket, the Sant thought, 'Thakurji has sent me a blanket because I was feeling cold.' He picked up the blanket and covered himself with it, and lay down again.

The thief found nothing worth stealing, so he decided to try some other place. When he went to pick up his blanket, he saw that the Sant was sleeping, and had covered himself with it. 'If I try to take the blanket, he may wake up; then I'll be caught,' thought the thief. 'If I leave it behind, I will lose my blanket, in addition to not getting anything from here! Still, better to lose the blanket rather than get caught.'

The thief crept towards the door. The Mahatma had an irrepressible sense of humor. When the thief opened the door, he called out, 'Who is it, my brother? Please shut the door as you leave.' The thief felt irritated. 'Baba! What is there, in your hut that anyone will be tempted to take? One thief came and gave you something with which to cover yourself. If another comes, he'll probably give you something to sleep on!' If the heart is filled with happiness, material things don't matter, and if the heart is sullied, none of the possessions give pleasure. Those who suffer from tension and depression find scant joy in their luxurious homes. Their air-conditioned cars seem to give out heat! It is all a play of the mind.

If you think that your circumstances will always be favorable, give a thought to the lives of Ramji and Krishnaji; then you will never feel disheartened in life. Where was Krishna Bhagwan born? He was born in jail; his parents were imprisoned before His birth. He could not stay with His mother – the Nandotsava (birth celebration) took place at Gokul.

The demoness, Putana, came on the sixth day of His life, to feed Him poison. Some Rakshasa or other came every so often to kill Shri Krishna. He had to kill His own maternal uncle when He was just eleven years old! Later, He had to flee from Mathura. How far did He run? He ran to Gujarat! No one would have run so far till today!

None of Bhagwan Krishna's weddings took place in the traditional manner. At the end, He had to destroy His own clan. Nobody's life can be as full of trouble as Shri Krishna's was. However, what was His most superior point? It was that His smile remained unchanged, no matter how adverse a situation He faced. This is the fruit of Satsang and bhajan.

Shri Krishna's smile was not the measured smile taught by today's social skills! These days, people are trained in how they should smile as they talk, and that also adds to their tension. A smile that comes from the heart is a real smile.

What does this indicate? Circumstances may change, but if they don't have a detrimental effect on your life, you can take it that

your *saadhan* (method for spiritual progress) and bhajan are progressing satisfactorily. It is not possible that adverse circumstances will never come into a person's life at all; that was not possible even in Bhagwan's life.

There was a death in a bhakta's family. He was a very good man, and the whole family was greatly saddened. They went to a Mahatma and said, 'Maharaj, do something! Bring him back to life somehow!' The Mahatma looked at all the land with his inner vision. He saw that there was not a single patch of land on which someone or other had not been cremated. He told them, 'Had nobody died up to now, I would certainly have brought him back to life, but it is an eternal law that whoever comes to this earth will have to leave it, whether it is a King, a pauper, or a wandering Monk.'

You can never obtain happiness by changing the world. The fruit of your *saadhanaa* (effort for spiritual progress) and bhajan is that you can obtain happiness by changing your state of mind, by changing your viewpoint.

Satyabhama was weeping. She had her father placed inside a container filled with oil, to prevent decay, and drove to Hastinapur in a chariot. She wept and lamented before Shri Krishna. 'My father was murdered! The Syamantak mani was stolen! Both you brothers are here at Hastinapur while such tragic events are happening at Dwarka!' It is written here:

Aho nah paramam kashtam (Bhagwat 10. 57. 9)

Bhagwan Krishna began to weep. He is very skillful in the art of weeping! He wept more than Satyabhama. Why was He doing this? *Nrilokataam (Bhagwat 10. 57. 9)*' He was doing the leela of behaving like an ordinary human being. He was enacting a role.

Why was He acting?

This was one method to make Satyabhama calm down. She would have wept more, had He not wept so much; and the more He would have tried to calm her, the more hysterical she would have become. Krishna Bhagwan's profuse weeping stopped her tears, and she

began to console Him. ‘Please don’t weep any more. What has happened cannot be undone.’ Just see the amazing insights given in the Bhagwat! If you sit with the aura of being a very learned and wise person, people will bother you continuously with their petty problems.

Maharajji told us about Jaidayalji Goenka of the Gita Press. There was a tragic death in his family. All the family members wept, and he wept with them. He had a remarkable understanding of the Gita, and yet he wept so much that people could not understand how someone who believed in the Gita so much could be so shattered, even at a loved one’s death.

When the outsiders had left and they were alone, Guruji asked Jaidayalji, ‘Sethji, are you greatly troubled?’

‘Swamiji, I am not troubled at all,’ he said.

‘Then why were you weeping so much?’

‘Swamiji, I achieved two things by weeping so much.’

‘What are they?’

‘When I started weeping copiously, the others began to control themselves, and I escaped the task of trying to convince them to control themselves. Our family is huge – it would have been very difficult to counsel them all individually. When I went on weeping, I became the foolish person and they all became *gnaani* (having Gnan) and began to tell me that I should accept the loss as Bhagwan’s wish. They became calm.’

It was the same leela Bhagwan did, to calm Satyabhama. ‘It is over, Prabhu,’ she said. ‘Now we should go and do my father’s last rites and catch the culprit.’

Please remember, Bhagwan had to do this drama in worldly interaction. You can be hypocritical to protect yourself, but if you do it to make someone dukhi, you will have to suffer the consequences.

Bhagwan went back to Dwarka with Satyabhama. She had found out the identity of the intruder. The people of Satrajit’s household had seen Shatadhanva come at night, and had recognized him. Bhagwan Krishna started a search for him. ‘I will catch him, take

away the mani, and kill him,' He said. Satyabhama was comforted to have Shri Krishna's sympathy and support.

Shatadhanvaanamaare`bhe` hantum hartum manim tatah.
(*Bhagwat 10. 57. 10*).

Shatadhanva was terrified when he heard that Bhagwan Krishna had come to know that it was he who had entered Satrajit's house that night. 'I can no longer live safely in Dwarka, having opposed Shri Krishna,' he thought. He went first to Kritavarma, since he was the Commander of Shri Krishna's Army. 'You had told me that you are with me. Now, find a way out. Bhagwan Krishna has found out that I had gone to Satrajit's house that night. Who will protect me?'

'My brother, I cannot oppose Shri Krishna,' said Kritavarma. This is the tendency of people who lead you into wrong-doing. They are themselves at fault, and you never know when they will betray you. You should always be very guarded with such people. Why should anyone persuade someone to do something, if he can't save the man when the need arises? Kritavarma said, 'I cannot help you in any way,' and began to give a philosophical lecture. 'He, who killed Kansa as though in play, and drove back a warrior like Jarasandha seventeen times, who is there who can oppose this Shri Krishna?' What was Shatadhanva to do? He had been a fool to trust them. We should be vigilant if we have to associate with crooked people.

One gentleman used to say that even enmity with a Sant is good, but friendship with a wicked man is bad. Even if you quarrel with a Sant, you will benefit by your interaction with him; but what happened when you become friendly with a wicked person? There is a beautiful couplet in the Ramcharitmanas:

'Baru bhala baasa naraka kara taataa, dushta sanga jani de`yi vidhaataa (*Ramcharitmanas, Sunderkand, 45. 7*).

It is preferable to be in Narak – may Bhagwan never make me friendly with a wicked person.'

Once Pujya Ramkinkarji was asked about this. ‘There is great suffering in Narak (Hell), and yet it is said that staying in Narak is preferable to having a wicked friend. What does this mean?’

Ramkinkarji’s reply was profound. ‘Pay attention to what I say. A person who goes to Narak goes there as a result of his paapas; his suffering is the result of his wrongdoings. His paapa diminished bit by bit while he suffers in Narak; it is expiated by his suffering. So, even though there is pain in Narak, there is also a cleansing of paapa.

And, what is there in the friendship of a wicked man? Friendship with a wicked man gives pain and increases paapa. Now, you tell me, which is better – Narak or having a wicked friend?’

Why is there pain if you are friendly with a wicked man? It is because if you obey him it will be painful to go against your conscience, and if you don’t obey him he will find some way to punish you. You will always have this dilemma and your paapa will increase.

Shatadhanva was trapped. ‘Akrur is my only hope now,’ he told himself. He went to Akrurji. ‘Akrurji, this is the situation. What am I to do? Please tell me how I can be saved from death.’

Akrurji also took recourse to philosophical talk.

‘Ya idam leelayaa vishvam srijatyavati hanti cha. (Bhagwat 10. 57.15).

Shatadhanva, what confusion are you laboring under? Shri Krishna is the same Paramatma who creates the world as a leela, sustains it, and destroys it. He is the same Paramatma who held the Giriraj aloft on His little finger for seven days. Who can oppose Him?’

Shatadhanva lost hope. ‘Very well. You have expressed your inability to help me and so has Kritavarma. The only option open to me is to escape from Dwarka as quickly as I can. However, if I take the Syamantak mani, its brightness will be recognized, and I will be caught. You keep the Syamantak mani.’

‘Yes, leave it here. There is no objection to that.’

This is a strange reaction from someone who was just telling Shatadhanva that Shri Krishna is the Paramatma incarnate, who creates, sustains, and destroys the world as a leela. How strange that he is prepared to keep the Syamantak mani! Is this going against Bhagwan, or is it supporting Him? This is clearly going against Bhagwan Krishna. Then, what do Akkur's words mean? It means that Akkurji has neither Gnan nor bhakti. He hides his shortcomings by repeating the principles he has heard and learnt from others. This is what people often do. They go to Satsang and hear that not even a leaf moves unless He wants. If they make some mistake, they are quick to cover up by saying, 'Oh, brother, this is Bhagwan's wish. Nothing happens unless He wants. How is it my fault?' However, if someone else makes a mistake they are quick to quarrel! Thus, people are inclined to misuse principles, to cover up for their own lapses.

A journalist came to Pujya Ramkinkarji. He said, 'Everything happens at the will of Ramji, then why do people blame Kaikeyi and Manthara? They only did what Ramji wanted.'

Ramkinkarji Maharaj asked him, 'If a thief comes to your house and steals your valuables, will you report the theft to the Police or will you accept it as Ramji's wish?'

The journalist was taken aback. 'I will report it to the Police,' he said.

'Why will you report it to the Police, if you believe that everything is done at Bhagwan's wish? If you see Bhagwan in all forms, what is your problem if He comes as a thief and steals your valuables?'

What we have to understand is that when we go to a Satsang and hear that Bhagwan abides in all beings, do we use these principles to cover up our own weaknesses, or do we actually feel this? If you abuse someone and he hits you with a stick, will you see the wish of Bhagwan in being beaten? This is where the test lies. If you indeed see the wish of Bhagwan in being beaten, you have passed the test. Then, your abusing the other person is also at Bhagwan's wish. However, if you see an individual wielding the stick and Bhagwan in your abusing, it is misusing a principle.

Akrurji misused the principle because his emotional condition was neither that of a bhakta nor that of a Gnani. He used the philosophy of Vedanta that he had heard, finding it expedient to absolve himself.

If you read the shlokas, Akrurji first says that Shri Krishna is Bhagwan Himself. The, when Shatadhanva suggested leaving the Syamantak mani with him, Akrur is quick to give his consent. He does not feel that he is opposing Shri Krishna.

Shatadhanva left the Syamantak mani with Akrur and rode off in haste. He wanted to escape from Dwarka and reach Janakpur, because the King of Janakpur was a friend of Duryodhan. Why? Because a wicked man makes friends with another wicked man. As soon as Krishna and Balaram came to know that Shatadhanva had ridden out of Dwarka they followed him in a chariot.

Shri Krishna had come to know that Shatadhanva had left the Syamantak mani behind with Akrur, but He did not reveal this to Balaramji. Why did He withhold this information? Shri Krishna knew that if Balaramji came to know that Akrur had the mani, Shri Krishna may forgive him, but Balaramji wouldn't. Akrur was Shri Krishna's bhakta, even though he had gone astray. Bhagwan always protects His bhaktas, even if they are punished to some extent. Bhagwan has made a vow:

'Kaunte`ya pratijaaneehi na me` bhaktya pranashyati (Gita 9. 31).
Arjuna, you take a vow that My bhakta will never be destroyed.'

My Guruji would smile when he spoke about this. Arjuna asked, 'Prabhu, since it is You who is making the vow, why don't You say that Your bhakta will never be destroyed? The vow is Yours, so why do You want me to make it?'

Bhagwan Krishna smiled. 'Arjuna, you know very well that My vow cannot be depended on. I may have to give it up at any time, but if you make the vow, it will by My task to protect the vow of My bhakta.'

Just as a mother punishes her child if he goes on the wrong path – she scolds him, but her heart is filled with love for him – Bhagwan

also scolds and punishes His bhaktas when they err, but He also protects them.

Bhagwan Krishna protected Akrur by not telling Balaramji that he had the mani. The mani was the cause of one more death – Satrajit's murder.

You will see again and again that when sampatti is attached to the Ishwara, the result is shanti; and when it is not attached to Him, it results in ashanti, famine, violence, and mental tension. So, as far as possible, you should use what you have for Dharma and the Ishwara. Only then will you get the sukha of the sampatti, as well as spiritual benefits.

Pravachan 5

You have heard how the Syamantak mani became the cause of the death of so many. Prasena died, his horse died, the lion died, and Satrajit died. It is obvious that the sampatti that is not connected to Dharma or to the Ishwara results in sorrow. All these things happened at Dwarka, where Bhagwan Krishna lived. And, Jambavan gave the Syamantak mani to Bhagwan Krishna, and lived with sukha and shanti. Thus, when sampatti remains connected to Dharma and the Ishwara, it becomes a source of happiness for us and for others.

The trend these days is that people make a great effort to bring others down, rather than lift themselves higher! This is because our Shastras are not studied.

Bhagwan Shri Krishna has said:

Karmanyē`vaadhikaaraste` maa fale`shu kadaachana (Gita 2. 47).
You are entitled to do the work, not to get its fruit.

Fruit means the result. It is in your power to try to do something with the purpose of spoiling someone's image, but it is not in your power to succeed in the attempt. Sometimes it happens that the image of the person who tries to spoil another's image is spoilt instead.

Thus, we come back to the same point – we should study our books of Dharma. In my opinion, education should include the beneficial teachings of all religious philosophies. Dharma never teaches dispute and quarreling. It is the people who take it upon themselves to interpret religion in a way that creates friction.

A gentleman once came to my Maharajji. Maharajji knew that he had made a profit of twenty five lakh rupees, and yet he was very depressed. Maharajji asked him, 'I have heard that there has been a good profit in your business. Then, why are you depressed?'

'Yes, Maharaj, what you have heard is correct. I have made a profit of twenty five lakhs. However, my competitor has made a profit of fifty lakhs!' Now, who can save him from dukha? He did

not focus on his gain; he focused on the fact that his competitor's gain was more than his!

You must have heard about the story of the man who did *tapasyaa* (severe asceticism) to propitiate a Devta. The Devta was pleased, and appeared before him. 'What do you want?' he asked.

'I did tapasya because I want something.'

'Your wish will certainly be granted, but remember that your neighbor will get double of what you get.'

The man felt very unhappy. 'I did the tapasya, and my neighbor will get double of what I get!' He had done the tapasya with the intention of making his neighbor dukhi. So he said, 'Very well, I agree.'

The intellect of some people is very sharp, but is wrongly channeled.

What boon did the man ask for?

'Please give me, as the first boon that I go blind in one eye.'

What was his purpose? He felt that it was worth losing one eye if his neighbor lost both eyes! However, he was not satisfied with this – he wanted one more boon.

'What is the second boon you want?'

'Let a well be created just outside my house.' The man hoped that two wells would be created outside his neighbor's house and that his neighbor – being blind in both eyes – would fall into one of them and die!

The attitude that gives preference to harming others instead of improving one's self is because the study of the books of Dharma is not included in our education system. If wealth is used only for personal benefits and luxuries, and it gets connected to *raaga-dve'sha* (attachments and aversions) and adharma, it brings harm, sorrow, and lack of peace.

You have seen the chain of events caused by the Syamantak mani. It was used wrongly, even in the city where Bhagwan ruled! Even He could not prevent the sorrow it caused.

Akrur was glad to keep the Syamantak mani Shatadhanva left with him. Shatadhanva rode with all possible speed, followed by Shri Krishna and Balaram on their chariot. Shatadhanva's horse was so

fast that he started from Dwarka – in the East – in the morning, and reached Janakpur – in the West – the same evening. The horse collapsed with fatigue. Shatadhanva got off and began to run. Krishna Bhagwan jumped down from the chariot and began to chase him on foot. He wanted to save Akrurji because he was His bhakta. That means, if a person once sets out on the path to Bhagwan, Bhagwan always protects his life. This is seen clearly in Akrur's case.

The first point is that Shri Krishna took Balaramji with Him, to save Akrur. Had Balaramji stayed back at Dwarka and come to know that Akrur had the mani – for which Satrajit was killed – he would have killed him.

Bhagwan jumped down from the chariot, telling Balaramji, 'Please stay here. I will deal with this wicked man.' Bhagwan knew that Shatadhanva should not be killed at once, if the truth was to be got out of him. Even the Police do not kill criminals outright, if they want to get information from them. They capture the criminal and get the information from him first. Bhagwan, however, knows everything, so He sent His Sudarshan Chakra (the divine discus) after Shatadhanva. It sliced through his neck and he fell down dead. It is written here:

*'Chakre`na shira utkritya vaasasa vyachironmanim.
(Bhagwat 10. 57. 21).'*

With Shatadhanva dead, the proof about the whereabouts of the mani was gone. Bhagwan Krishna was a great actor. He pretended to search for the mani in Shatadhanva's clothes. The omniscient Paramatma, who knows every thought of every being, is enacting a drama.

Why?

He does this to protect Akrur. That means Bhagwan can even leave His brother to save His bhakta. Bhagwan's *svabhaava* (intrinsic nature) is shown here; it does not mean that Bhagwan is crooked. His actions are prompted by His wish to protect His bhakta.

Balaramji was watching from his seat on the chariot. He got down and came to Shri Krishna. Shri Krishna said:

Vrithaa hatah shatadhanurmanistatra na vidyate` (Bhagwat 10. 57. 22). My killing Shatadhanva was of no use. The mani is not on him.

Balaramji felt angry. He knew what Krishna is! He knew that it is not possible that Shri Krishna did not know where the mani was. He knew that Shri Krishna was bluffing him.

In this Avatar, Balaramji is the elder brother. In the Ramavatar, he was Ramji's younger brother, Laxman. Balaramji occasionally scolded Shri Krishna, and that is why Bhagwan had to deal very carefully with him in this Avatar. As Ramji, He would tell Laxman to keep quiet, but this was not possible in this Avatar, so He had to be devious. It was the same in the matter of Subhadra's marriage.

So, when Shri Krishna told Balaramji that the mani was not in Shatadhanva's clothes, he said, 'Very well, Krishna. You go back to Dwarka and find out where the mani is. I have decided to go to Janakpur.' This shows clearly how angry Balaramji is with Shri Krishna.

How?

My brother, Satrajit's body was yet to be cremated. Balaramji – Shri Krishna's elder brother – was not going with Him for the last rites. This was unthinkable! 'I have friends in Janakpur who I have not met for a long time,' said Balaramji. 'You go to Dwarka and find out about this mani.' Had Bhagwan Krishna wanted, He could have asked Balaramji to forgive Him and go back to Dwarka with Him. But Shri Krishna was silent. He felt it was better that Balaramji went to Janakpur.

Why?

Akrurji was at Dwarka. 'If Balaramji returns with Me and finds out that the mani is with Akur, he will kill Akur and punish Me for deceiving him,' thought Shri Krishna. His silence was His consent. Wise people don't talk much. It is written in the Shastras:

Svakaarya saadhaye`t dheemaana – a wise man speaks very little. A man who talks a lot is a fool.’

My Maharajji used to say, ‘Look; we have been given two ears and one tongue. Bhagwan has made this arrangement for us to hear twice as much as we speak.’ A person who is in the habit of talking a lot finds it difficult to succeed. One has to learn when to remain silent.

Bhagwan Krishna is very adroit. He came to this earth when the Kali Yuga was just starting. There are many things we have to learn from His life. However, always keep in mind that all the actions of Shri Krishna were done to establish Dharma and shanti. If you try to behave as He did, and your intentions are wrong, you will have to go to Narak.

It can be Dharma to tell a lie, and it can be adharma to tell a lie. If your intention is right, your falsehood will be Dharma, but if your intention is wrong, it will take you to Narak.

Balaramji’s anger increased when Bhagwan Krishna remained silent. In his heart of hearts, he wanted Shri Krishna to be open with him and ask him to go to Dwarka. He went to Janakpur in a huff.

Bhagwan Krishna left Shatadhanva’s body as it lay, and returned to Dwarka. He told a lie to Satyabhama:

Apraaptim cha mane`h praaha priyaayaah priyakrid vibhuh.
(*Bhagwat 10. 57. 27*).

In spite of His deep love for her, Shri Krishna told her, ‘I did not find the mani on Shatadhanva. I don’t know who has it.’

This indicates that Bhagwan’s love for His bhaktas is so great that He can even conceal certain facts from His brother and His wife. This episode reveals Bhagwan’s nature, His Grace on His bhaktas, whom He loves like a mother loves her child. Don’t misinterpret it and start thinking that He wants to tell lies and conceal facts.

There is a famous incident in the Mahabharata, which you may have heard. Bhishma Pitamah made a vow, ‘I will compel Krishna

to take up arms today.’ Before reading the Bhagwat, I was also under the impression that perhaps Bhishma Pitamah was justifiably proud of his prowess, and that is why he challenged Krishna. However, that was not the case. The reason was something else.

The Bhagwat has the *stuti* (eulogy) by Bhishma. In it, Bhishma Pitamah has, himself, clarified the reason. During the battle, Bhishma saw an extraordinary phenomenon. Arjuna was the *rathee* (charioteer), and Shri Krishna was the *sarathee* (driver of the chariot). The driver sits in front of the rathi, so Shri Krishna was in front and Arjuna was seated behind Him on the chariot. Bhishma Pitamah knew that Shri Krishna had, before the war, declared that He would not take up arms in this war. In spite of His vow, Shri Krishna was playing a trick.

What trick was He playing?

Bhishma Pitamah observed that during the battle, Shri Krishna made His face so entrancing that the eyes of Arjuna’s opponent were drawn to His face, despite all their efforts to concentrate on Arjuna.

And, what was the result?

When the opponent’s eyes were fixed on Shri Krishna’s face, Arjuna was able to kill him with ease. That means, although Shri Krishna did not use any weapon overtly, He extended covert help to Arjuna. Was this not a form of a weapon? Bhishma Pitamah marked this. His heart danced joyfully. ‘You are great, Prabhu! You are *bhakta-vatsala* (loving Your bhaktas the way parents love their child). I had not thought of this until today. You are letting go of Your vow and helping Arjuna secretly, because he is Your bhakta. You don’t care about Your own vow!’

Then it occurred to Bhishma Pitamah, ‘If I can show everybody how deeply Bhagwan loves His bhaktas, many people will develop bhakti for Shri Krishna.’ That is why Bhishma Pitamah made this vow on the following day.

‘Aaaja jo harihin na shastra gahaavaun, tau laajaun gangaa jananee ko saantanu suta na kahaavaun.’

(If I don't compel Shri Krishna to take up arms today, it will be a shame to my mother, Ganga, and I will not be fit to be called the son of my father, Shantanu.)

Having made this vow, Bhishma Pitamah rained such a shower of arrows at Arjuna that his armor was pierced and he began to bleed profusely. Seeing Arjuna's condition, Shri Krishna left the reins of the horses and jumped down from the chariot. He picked up a wheel of a broken chariot that was lying on the ground, and rushed to attack Bhishma Pitamah with it.

In his commentary on the Mahabharata, Shri Jeev Goswami has written, 'Had Bhagwan Krishna wanted to kill Bhishma Pitamah, why did He pick up the wheel of a chariot? He could have remembered the Sudarshan Chakra who is always waiting for Bhagwan's command. Bhagwan was so upset to see Arjuna's condition that He forgot His divine discus and picked up whatever lay at hand.'

Tears of prema rose in Bhishma Pitamah's eyes. He put aside his bow. 'My work is done, Prabhu! I showed the world that there is nothing You can't do for Your bhaktas. You can break Your vow for Your bhaktas, You can tell lies for them, and You can deceive people for their sake. The purpose of my vow is fulfilled. Now, this bhakta of Yours is before You – kill him if You wish, or let him go if You wish.' Bhagwan Krishna stopped. What else could He do?

Bhishma Pitamah showed the world the deep love Bhagwan has for His bhaktas. For their sake, He can leave His wife and brother. He did not reveal the truth even to Satyabhama. He told her, 'We don't know where the mani is. We killed Shatadhanva.' Satyabhama was not concerned about the mani. 'Very well,' she said. 'It is good that Shatadhanva is dead, because he killed my father.' The last rites were done for Satrajit. The news spread in Dwarka that Shri Krishna had killed Shatadhanva.

Two offenders remained in Dwarka – Kritavarma and Akrur. As soon as they heard that Shri Krishna had returned to Dwarka, they became very nervous. They knew that nothing can remain hidden

from Shri Krishna. Akrurji wrapped the Syamantak mani in layers of cloth and fled from Dwarka at night, along with Kritavarma.

One commentator has written, ‘Well, Akrur was Bhagwan’s bhakta; it is understandable that he escaped, because Bhagwan always favors His bhaktas. But why did He allow Kritavarma to escape? He should have killed Kritavarma as He killed Shatadhanva, because both were involved in the plot.’

The reason he gives is very touching. ‘Bhagwan thought, “I should kill Kritavarma. Being the Commander of My Army, he plotted against Me. He deserves to die. However, Akrur’s complicity will be exposed if Kritavarma is killed.”

How?

“If Kritavarma is beaten, he may disclose that the mani is with Akrur, and Akrur is involved in the plot. Then, My planning to save Akrur will fail.” This is why Shri Krishna did not prevent them from escaping.’

Just see how merciful Bhagwan is! How much Grace He showers! Kritavarma was spared because he was connected to Akrur. This is the greatness of a Sant, of Bhagwan’s bhakta, and Bhagwan’s mercy for His bhaktas. This is *bhaktavatsalataa* (motherly love for bhaktas) of Bhagwan.

There was a great bhakta in Maharashtra, called Sakhubai. She saw pilgrims preparing to go to Pandarpur, and longed to go with them for Bhagwan Vitthal’s darshan. Her mother-in-law was a very difficult woman. Bhagwan places difficult people in the lives of His bhaktas to make sure that they *vairaagya* (detachment from the world) remains steady and their bhakti increases. It may be a nasty mother-in-law, or daughter-in-law, child, or some other person.

When Sakhubai asked her mother-in-law that she also wanted to go on the yatra, the mother-in-law said, ‘Who will cook the food if you go on the yatra? Who will wash the utensils? Who will wash my clothes?’

Sakhubai’s prema for Bhagwan was very strong. There was an idol of Vitthal Bhagwan in the house that they worshipped every day. Sakhubai said, ‘I can go on the yatra only if You want. There is no other way I can go.’

Bhagwan Narayana manifested before Sakhubai. ‘Sakhubai, why are you calling out to Me?’

‘Prabhu! I want to go on Your yatra, but my mother-in-law won’t let me.’

‘There is no way your mother-in-law can be convinced to change her mind,’ said Narayana. ‘There is only one way; I will become Sakhubai while you go on the yatra. Your mother-in-law will think that you are doing the work. You can go on the yatra if you agree to this plan.’

Sakhubai was so simple and straightforward that she did not protest even for form’s sake! She never said, ‘No, You don’t become Sakhubai. I will not go on the yatra.’

Bhagwan Narayana became Sakhubai and did all her chores. He would press her mother-in-law’s feet, cook the food, and wash the clothes and utensils. Sakhubai went on the yatra.

When Sakhubai reached Pandarpur and got the darshan of Vitthal Bhagwan. She was so overcome with emotion that she died there, in front of the Mandir. The people she was with did her last rites at Pandarpur. When they came back to the village, they told Sakhubai’s mother-in-law, ‘The yatra was excellent, but we had one misfortune. Your daughter-in-law’s life ended there.’

‘What are you talking about?’ asked the mother-in-law. ‘My daughter-in-law is in my house.’ (It was Bhagwan, in Sakhubai’s form.) The people did not believe her. ‘We have done her last rites,’ they said.

‘Whose last rites have you done?’ asked the mother-in-law.

‘Let us see your daughter-in-law,’ they said.

‘O Sakhu!’ called the mother-in-law. ‘Come here.’

‘Yes, Mother,’ Narayana came out in the form of Sakhubai.

‘Oh, Sakhu is here, in her own home!’ The people were confused.

‘Could she have come here as a ghost? We did her last rites before coming back.’

Sakhubai had left her body; who was to free Narayana now? Sakhubai was free of her mother-in-law, but Narayana was trapped! This became a problem. One month passed. Laxmiji was

at Vaikuntha wondering where Narayana was. She asked Naradji, 'Where is Narayana?'

'Narayana must never have done the kind of leela He is doing at present,' said Naradji. 'Go and get His darshan. He is in the form of Sakhubai, and is rendering service to her mother-in-law! He presses her feet, washes the utensils, etc and cooks the food.'

Laxmiji went there to see. She met Narayana when He was alone. 'Was this work all that was left for You to do?' she asked.

'What can I do?' asked Narayana. 'Sakhubai left her body at Pandarpur. Had she come back, I could have come back to Vaikuntha. Now, if you can find some way out of this debacle, and get Sakhubai to come back to life, only then can I escape from here.'

Laxmiji went to Pandarpur. She used the *mirtasanjeevani* (the science of bringing a dead person back to life), and Sakhubai lived again. She returned to her home and Narayana returned to Vaikuntha.

Thus, Bhagwan can even leave Vaikuntha for His bhaktas. Bhakti depends on the *bhaava* (feeling). There are five bhavas in bhakti – *shaanta* (tranquil), *daasya* (servitude), *sakhya* (friendship), *vaatsalya* (motherly love), and *madhura* (romantic love). When any of these comes into a person's life, and he feels prema for Bhagwan and a sense of belonging based on any of these bhavas, he experiences this secret. You have to feel a strong attachment for Bhagwan; listening to His pravachans or reading about Him is not enough. It is only when a bhakta experiences His Grace that bliss fills his life and he feels a deep peace.

Both Kritavarma and Akrur escaped from Dwarka. One year passed. Balamramji was still angry with Shri Krishna and continued to stay at Janakpur. 'Krishna has not told me the truth of the matter. It is not possible that He does not know where the Syamantak mani is,' he thought.

Dhritarashtra heard that Balamramji was living at Janakpur due to some misunderstanding with Shri Krishna. He told his son, Durodhan, 'This is a good time for you to go to Janakpur and make Balamramji your Guru. Learn *gadaa-yuddha* (fighting with a mace)

from him.’ It was during this period that Duryodhan became Balaramji’s student, and an expert mace fighter.

Thus, even in the Dwarpar Yuga, there were people who were on the lookout for anyone who was in difficulties, so they could derive some advantage from the situation. It is not that this happens only in the Kali Yuga.

Akruruji lived at Varanasi for a year. He had the Syamantak mani with him, which gave out three quintals of gold every day. Where was he to keep so much gold? This became a problem. He began to organize great Yagyas at Varanasi, giving gold to the Pundits as *dakshinaa* (monetary gift given to Brahmins). He made payments in gold. People began to talk about Akruruji’s great wealth. The talk reached Dwarka that gold was being given in dakshina at Varanasi. Bhagwan knew that Akruru had the mani. A question comes up here – since Bhagwan had so much love for Akruruji, why did He let him go to Varanasi? He could have found some way to keep him in Dwarka. Why did He keep His bhakta away from Himself for a whole year?

This is also one method Bhagwan uses for His bhaktas. ‘When Akruru spends one year separated from Me, the bad tendencies that have come into his life will be washed away by the suffering caused by being separated from Me.’ Whenever a person feels anguish at being separated from Bhagwan, he is spared of the suffering caused by the fruits of his paapas. The paapas are cleansed by the sorrow of being separated from Bhagwan.

*Trividham narakasye`dam dvaaram naashanamaatmanah,
kaamah krodhastathaa lobhastasmaade`tattrayam tyaje`t.
(Gita 16. 21)*

The doors of Narak are opened when a person’s life has an increase of *kaama* (desire), *krodha* (anger; violence), and *lobha* (greed). And, Bhagwan says, ‘These three are the gateways to Narak. If these three faults come into a person’s life, take it that he has reached the gates of Narak, and is about to go in.’

And, on the other hand, Shri Krishna says:

‘Kaunte`ya pratijaaneeti na me` bhaktah pranashyati (Gita 9. 31).
Kaunteya, swear that My bhakta will never be destroyed.’

All three faults had come into Akrur’s life. He had a desire to marry Satyabhama – that was kama. He planned to get Satrajit killed – that was krodha. And, he wanted to get the Syamantak mani, even if it meant going against Shri Krishna – that was lobha. When *dosha* (faults) come into the life of an ordinary person, he goes to Narak. There are two kinds of Swarga and Narak. One pair are on this earth, and one pair are the different realms. You will want to know their divisions. If the paapa is nominal, the person gets its fruit on this earth, in this lifetime. That is the Narak of this earth.

Go to any hospital. You will feel you have come to Narak. New diseases are being discovered, that even the doctors cannot diagnose. Babies are being born blind, with heart trouble, or diabetes. What is this? This is Narak of these people.

What is the Swarga of this earth? The people have happiness and prosperity, good children, good friends, etc. However, if a person who has such good fortune does a lot of paapa and punya – so much that the fruits cannot be given while they are on this earth – then they go to Swarga or Narak to experience the resultant sukha-dukha.

So, if an ordinary person’s life contains kama, krodha and lobha, he gets Narak. All three came into Akrur’s life, but Bhagwan protected him.

You will observe Arjuna’s *sharanaagati* (taking refuge in Bhagwan) in the second chapter of the Gita:

*Kaarpanyadoshopahatasvabhaavah prichhaami tvaam
dharmasamoodhahche`taah,*

*yachchre`yah syannishchitam broohi tanme` shishyaste`ham
shaadhi maam tvaam prapannam.*

(Gita 2. 7)

‘My intellect is not functioning. I don’t know what I should do or shouldn’t do. I accept being Your disciple. Please command me and tell me what to do.’

Arjuna did not stop there. Those who read the Gita know what he said in the next two shlokas. What is Arjuna's concluding statement?

'I accept to be Your disciple, but if You tell me to fight, I will not fight.'

What sort of a discipleship is this? You make conditions before becoming a disciple? Both Armies stand ready for war, all the preparations have been made, and now you say that you will not fight! What teaching is Shri Krishna to give in these circumstances? If a Guru gets such a disciple, he will say, 'If you are determined to not obey me, you may go. How are you my disciple?' But Bhagwan Krishna said nothing of the sort.

You and I both take this kind of a sharanagati (taking refuge in Bhagwan) every day, either with Bhagwan or a Mahatma. We say, 'Maharaj, I will accept to be your disciple provided you don't interfere with my beliefs in my personal life.' Oh, if you wish to hold on to your personal beliefs, why do you want a Guru or the Ishwara?

Here, Arjuna is also accepting the same kind of sharanagati. We accept this kind of sharanagati and remain dukhi in this and many more lifetimes. Bhagwan, however, gave Arjuna a teaching.

Why? Arjuna was also talking irrationally, overcome by *moha* (deluded affection for loved ones); but his plus point is that he has been Bhagwan's friend since he was a child. His *sakhya bhaava* (feeling of being Bhagwan's friend) has been established for long. Therefore, Bhagwan's pledge:

Na me` bhaktya pranashyati (Gita 9. 31)

'If an ordinary person makes a mistake, the fruit will be given only by Dharmaraj, but if My bhakta makes a mistake, it is I who deals with him; he becomes My responsibility.'

One Mahatma used to say, 'When a person starts to take Bhagwan's name and doing His *maalaa* (ritual chanting with a rosary), Dharmaraj sends his file to Bhagwan on the same day.'

“Now this man’s account of deeds is no longer with me; it will remain with Bhagwan.”

You have seen how all three faults – kama, krodha and lobha – were present in Akrur’s life. He wanted to marry Satyabhama when he was already old. He schemed to get hold of the Syamantak mani, and have Satrajit murdered. In spite of this, Bhagwan protected him.

What are we to learn from this episode? Certainly not that we should go on entertaining kama, krodha and lobha! What we are to learn is to make a bunch of all the threads by which we are emotionally tied to our mother, father, friend, children and wife, and attach them to Bhagwan. If this is not possible, take any one thread and attach it to Him. If even a single thread of your life gets attached to Bhagwan, He will protect you all your life. Who knows which Narak Akrur would have been in, had Bhagwan Krishna not protected him?

Bhagwan gave *viyoga* (the pain of being separated from Him) to Akrur, because *viyoga* causes suffering, and this suffering removes the doshas. Bhagwan now wanted to bring Akrur back to Dwarka. ‘My bhakta should stay with Me now.’ But, how should he be called back? Bhagwan found a unique method to achieve this.

Bhagwan Krishna stopped rain over Dwarka. The people of Dwarka knew that Akrur’s father had the gift that it rained wherever he stayed. They thought that rain had stopped because Akrur had left Dwarka. Krishna Bhagwan knew that the people would want rain, and ask Him to call Akrur back because he may have inherited his father’s gift for rain. ‘It is better that people request Me to call Akrur. If I call him on My own, they will wonder why I called him, knowing that he was involved in the conspiracy.’

The people of Dwarka came to Bhagwan Krishna. ‘Prabhu! There has been no rain for the past one year, ever since Akrur left Dwarka. Akrur’s father had the gift of rain. Please have mercy on us and call Akrur back. He is living at Varanasi and doing great Yagyas.’

Bhagwan smiled. His plan had worked. Akrurji was brought back to Dwarka. It says in the Bhagwat that when Akrur came back to Dwarka, Bhagwan had a long talk with him in private.

'Poojayitvaa (10. 57. 35) – He showed a lot of respect. Kathayitvaa priyaah katha (10. 57. 35) – how are you? Where were you living for the past one year? How did you spend your days?'

And, when they were alone, 'Akrur, where is the mani?' Akrur was startled because he had done everything possible to keep the mani a secret. Not a single ray of its effulgence was allowed to be glimpsed by anyone. Akrur was under the impression that Shri Krishna did not know that the mani was with him. This *jeeva* (Atma attached to a body; a human being) sometimes tries to bluff even Bhagwan! Akrur tried to deny having the mani, but Bhagwan said, 'Akrur, I know exactly which day the mani came into your hands.'

Viditah poorvame`va nah (Bhagwat 10. 57. 36)

'I have known since then that the mani is with you.'

Akrurji asked fearfully, 'You know that the mani is with me?' His eyes filled with tears. 'Prabho! I have behaved so badly with Your family. I got Your father-in-law killed, for the mani stolen, and ran away with it in the dead of night. Knowing this, You killed Shatadhanva but kept my guilt a secret!' He fell at Bhagwan's feet. Where will we find such a compassionate Paramatma who shows so much Grace?

'Prabho, if I show this mani now, it will bring shame to both of us. The mani is with me, but why do You want to show it now?'

'Akrur', said Bhagwan Krishna, 'even I would prefer that the mani was officially lost, and remained with you secretly, but there is a problem.'

'What is the problem?'

'Balaramji is angry with Me because of the mani, thinking that it is not possible that I don't know where it is. He is still staying at

Janakpur. You will have to show that the mani was with you all through, and I did not know about it.’

A messenger was sent to Janakpur to ask Balaramji to come to Dwarka. ‘The mani has been found.’ Balaramji felt even more indignant. ‘He sends me a message to say that the mani has been found, but I’m sure He knew all along where it was!’

One word has been used in the Bhagwat, to describe Shri Krishna.

‘Akhilakalaa-aadiguruh’.

He is the Guru of all the Arts! Bhagwan Krishna is an Avatar of sixteen *kalaa* (arts); Bhagwan Rama is an Avatar of twelve *kalas*. The *akhila-kalas* include the good as well as the bad skills. In the Gopal-sahasranama (the thousand names of Gopal), one name is, *‘chora-jaara shikhaamanih’* – the best among thieves and lovers. He is the most skillful thief and lover. He is also the most skilled in lying, pretending, fighting, and protecting His *bhaktas*.

A gentleman once asked my Guruji, ‘Bhagwan Krishna did the Maha-Raas; why can’t we do it today?’

Pujya Swami Vamdev was sitting there. He gave a lovely reply. ‘Bhagwan Krishna first danced on the hood of the Kaliya Nag. If you dance on the hood of Kaliya Nag, you are permission to do the Maha-Raas.’

Akhilakalaadiguru.

You may question my saying that Bhagwan was the best in bad skills as well as good ones, but you have to understand that He never misused His skills. He used them for achieving good. He spoke lies to protect His *bhaktas*, and deceived people to establish Dharma.

The ancient books describe that *sattva guna* (the lofty tendency) was very limited in the Dwapar Yuga; *rajo guna* (the mixed tendency) and *tamo guna* (the lowly tendency) were predominant. When there is a predominance of *Rajo guna* and *Tamo guna*, there is little value for *Sattva guna*. This is why Shri Rama did not have

to take recourse to deceit, but Shri Krishna did. Bhagwan Krishna did much *chhala* (pretense) and *kapata* (deceit). But what was the result? What was His purpose? It was the destruction of the wicked.

When did Bhagwan Krishna give the command to kill Karna? It was when Karna was trying to lift the wheel of his chariot that had got stuck in the mud. Bhagwan told Arjuna, ‘Kill Karna now!’ Even Arjuna was startled – he was *dharma-nishtha* (believed in Dharma). ‘Prabhu,’ he pleaded. ‘This is against Dharma.’

Bhagwan Krishna said, ‘I have already told you:

sarvadharmaan parityajya maame`kam sharanam vraja (Gita 18.66)

Give up all Dharma and take refuge in Me alone. My command is your only Dharma. I will elaborate on this later, but kill Karna now, at once.’

Karna was kneeling on the ground, holding the wheel of his chariot. He called out, ‘Shri Krishna! You are Bhagwan; You have come to this earth to establish Dharma – and yet You are ordering Arjuna to do adharma?’

‘Karna!’ said Shri Krishna. ‘You see the Sanatana Dharma (eternal righteousness) today, because your life is threatened. You talk about a Dharma-yuddha. But, you were present when Draupadi was being disrobed publicly – where was your Dharma at that time? You knew about the plot to burn the Pandavas alive in the house of wax – where was your Dharma at that time? And, in this war, six of you, Maharathis (outstanding warriors) got together and killed Arjuna’s son, Abhimanyu – who was a single Maharathi pitted against six of you – where was your Dharma at that time?’

What could Karna say? He remained silent.

Bhagwan Krishna said to Arjuna, ‘Kill him! He deserves to be killed!’

The purpose behind this act of adharma was to establish Dharma, because of the way people behaved at that time. Thus, the tricks

and deceptions done by Shri Krishna had a good purpose behind them, not a bad one.

Bhagwan Krishna called Balaramji from Janakpur and told him, 'Dau, the mani has been found.'

'Where was it?'

'Akrur had taken it, and ran away with it.'

Akrur was waiting, ready, in the Court. 'Yes, Dau, the mani is with me.' He had wrapped the mani in layers of cloth. He unwrapped it and said, 'Here it is. My intellect had become sullied.'

Akrur felt a deep gratitude for Bhagwan Krishna. 'Bhagwan protected me in spite of my doing so many wrongs. I will cooperate with Him in every way.' He never mentioned that Shri Krishna knew about his having the mani all through. He said, 'I escaped in the dark of night, taking the mani with me. Nobody knew that I had taken it. Now, you can give it to whoever you want. The mani is Yours.'

'What should we do, Dau?' asked Shri Krishna. 'This mani has created endless problems for whoever had it. Only for the past one year, since it has been with Akrur, have there been no problems.' Bhagwan talked so convincingly that Balaramji said, 'Yes, You are right. Let the mani remain with Akrur.' The mani was given to Akrur.

The Syamantak mani symbolizes wealth and income. If wealth and income remain attached to a bhakta and to Bhagwan, it will give shanti; but if it remains attached to wicked people, it will give ashanti. Both aspects are shown in this story.

The Bhagwat says that before leaving this earth, Bhagwan Krishna inspired Mahatmas to give a shaap to the Yaduvanshis – His own clan – that they would fight among themselves and perish.

Someone asked Shri Krishna, 'Why did You have this done? What would have happened had You allowed Your clan to live on?'

'This Yaduvansha of Mine has great power,' explained Shri Krishna. 'As long as I was there to control it, My clan was helpful in the betterment of society. When My control is removed – when I leave this earth and go to My realm – the Yaduvanshis will become harmful for society.'

Thus, when power and wealth are connected to the Ishwara, they are beneficial, but when controlled by the wicked, they are used wrongly.

The mani was given to Akrurji and the gold it gave was used for the benefit of the people. All were at peace.

Let us return to the theme – Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha are the four Purusharthas for every human. Artha Purushartha means wealth. Our topic is, ‘Making the right use of wealth and experiencing anand.’ So, if you connect your Artha Purushartha to Dharma and your Dharma Purushartha to the Ishwara, you will experience sukha-shanti in your life. However, if you connect the Artha Purushartha to Kama – fulfilling unending desires – instead of Dharma; and use it for adharma, you will experience ashanti in your life. This is not just a pravachan. You can experience this in your life.

I, myself, have seen wealthy families who are attached to the Ishwara. They live in comfort and peace. I have also seen wealthy families who are not connected to the Ishwara. They have comforts, but they are not happy. There are multi-millionaires who can’t sleep at night, can’t eat the things they like, and can’t enjoy a relaxed evening with friends and family. What joy does their wealth give them?

So, good people, I pray to Thakurji that may Dharma-nishtha come into everybody’s life, may you all turn towards the Ishwara, and may you connect your wealth to Dharma and to the Ishwara.

Vrindavan beharilal ki jai! Sadgurudev bhagavan ki jai!