

Swami Shreeji



Divine Discourses of Sant Bhagwant Sahebji

Spiritual Essence

Discourse on Vachanamrut Gadhada Pratham 6: 'Viveki-Aviveki nu'
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Short Vachanamruts like this one, Gadhada Pratham 6, are one's which Bapa used to call 'boporiya Vachanamrut'. They can be read in five to seven minutes.

Yogiji Maharaj was so consistent in his daily routine. He would awake at 5.00 in the morning. His sevak, Madhavcharan Swami would always be awake. He would move the mosquito net that Bapa slept under, arrange the pillows so Bapa could sit up in bed, and then would place a murti of Shri Akshar Purushottam Maharaj in Bapa's hands. Bapa would then do *darshan*. After that Madhavcharan Swami would open the door and Santo and devotees would come in and sit around Bapa's bed. Bapa would then speak for half an hour from 5.30 to 6.00am and would make everyone laugh so much. Then he would start his daily routine, brush his teeth, take a bath and then do his *pooja*.

Whenever Bapa was in Gondal, he would go to the Akshar-Deri first for *darshan* and would always do his *pooja* in the Akshar-deri. His *pooja* would be arranged by the pillar. He would do *pradakshina*¹ of the *pooja*, would stand on one leg and do *mala*, and perform five prostrations. He would make everyone do dhun, give blessings and then do *pradakshina* of the Akshar Deri. After this, Bapa would take breakfast, which would be in the verandah behind Bapa's room, next to the sabha mandap. Pramukh Swami, Mahant Swami and a few Santo and senior devotees – or guests would sit with Bapa. Here too, Bapa and Pramukh Swami would immerse everyone in such joy.

Everything Bapa ate was virtually tasteless – there would be no salt or chillies in the food. He would mostly just eat bottle

¹ *Pradakshina* means to circumambulate or walk around (a deity, sacred object or temple) in a clockwise direction

gourd. Let me tell you a story. Here, in Vallabh Vidyanagar, near Nana Bazar, Bhikhubhai had moved into a new bungalow and at the *vastu-pooja*² in the evening, there were tea-time snacks, following which there was Bapa's sabha in the V.P. Science Hall. Bapa was inside the room having *ukaro*³ and so all of us, Ashvinbhai, Shantibhai, V.S. were standing outside. Bapa sent a *sevak* to call me inside. He then sat me next to him. At that time, whenever it was teatime – the snack would be served on a *patraadu* or a piece of newspaper. The newspaper would be cut into squares and those were your plates! Someone put a piece of newspaper in front of me, and then Bapa gave me a *theplu* and some *shaak* from his plate. I took my first mouthful – and it was absolutely tasteless. I thought let me go outside and distribute this *prasad*⁴. But Bapa was all-knowing, and he immediately understood that this youth has found it tasteless. It was taken as *prasad* but we simply do not have the *mahima*⁵ that Bapa had for *prasad*. Otherwise, we would feel.... How amazingly fortunate I am! How blessed I am to have this! That is what we should feel if we had *mahima* like Bapa.

Yogiji Maharaj had such exceptional *mahatmya*⁶! If we place ourselves before him, we are worth nothing. When in

² *Vastu pooja* is a Hindu ritual performed when moving into a new building, to purify the space.

³ A hot drink mix of water and milk with ginger.

⁴ Any food or item that has had the association of God or Satpurush is considered consecrated and is referred to as *prasad* or *prasadi*.

⁵ An inner understanding of glory, virtues, qualities and greatness.

⁶ Absolute unshakeable faith and conviction in God and his devotees as being divine and faultless coupled with the feeling of unparalleled fortune to have attained their association.

Sarangpur with Shastriji Maharaj, they would make *danko* – and all it consisted of was *rotla* mixed with tempered buttermilk. What flavour would that have? It would be tasteless. Some devotee asked, ‘What taste is there in this *danko*?’ For starters the buttermilk that would be used, would be *japudi* – meaning greatly watered down. There would be three categories for buttermilk – *aapudi*, *bapudi* and *japudi*. *Aapudi* would be the best full-fat version, that people kept for their family; then there would be *bapudi* – in which water would be added and that buttermilk was for extended family, and out of what was left, would be added even more water and that would be *japudi* buttermilk. This is the type of buttermilk that the mandir would receive. The mandir would have so little, not even spices; the only thing they would have is salt. So, the devotee asked, ‘Bapa would flavour do you get from this?’ Bapa immediately replied, ‘*Ohoho!* I get the flavour of Shastriji Maharaj’s *murti!*’ And saying this, Bapa’s whole face would light up. Whereas, even if we are seated with Bapa, nothing happens to us. That is when we realised, just how much *mahatmya* Yogiji Maharaj had! Bapa said to me, ‘You have to eat it all. You have to finish it and then go.’

Whenever everyone would be sitting for their morning breakfast – Bapa would make everyone laugh so much. He would ask, ‘So tell me, what did you all do yesterday? Where did you go?’ He would get all the devotees to sing the *mahima* of other devotees. After this, Bapa would visit the kitchen. He would go around the kitchens for half an hour and then come to the sabha mandap. The sabha would continue till 12.00pm and then everyone would go for lunch. After lunch at 1.00pm, Bapa would come back and there would be a small sabha from 1.00pm – 1.30pm, where Bapa would have the Vachanamrut read. It is Bhagwan Swaminarayan’s boon that in the mandir, the *taavdo*, *tagaro* and *nagaro*⁷ will always continue. Quite often, someone or other would have sponsored the food, and so there would be a sweet item in the meal. For that reason, after the meal, if the discourse went on a bit longer then people would doze off. For that reason, Bapa would keep the after-lunch discourse to only half an hour. When someone had to pick out a Vachanamrut for the discourse, Bapa would say, ‘*Bopariyu kadho.*’ This meant to choose a short Vachanamrut like Gadhada Pratham 3, 6, 16 etc., which would be over in ten to fifteen minutes and then, Bapa would make everyone laugh. At 1.30pm, Bapa would go for his rest.

⁷ *Taavdo, tagaro, nagaro* refers to the kitchens, construction and bhajans.

Bapa would get up at exactly 3.00pm. He would meditate in his room for a while, and then at 3.30pm, he would come to the Aksharmandir. There, he would sit cross-legged directly opposite the mandir and meditate, until Shri Thakorji’s *darshan* opened at 4.00pm, following which he would go and do *pradakshina* of the Akshar Deri. After that, Bapa would hold a sabha, but it would be at different spots within the temple premises. There were four to five spots where the sabha could take place, such as the *ghat* - which is the spot next to the river or Khandeshi Purushottam Bhagat’s memorial etc. Bapa would tell us in the morning, ‘This evening, we will have sabha at the *ghat.*’ And so, our army of youths would go to the *ghat*, clean it, wash the whole area and make it ready for the evening sabha. On the next day, Bapa would say to us, ‘Today evening, we will have sabha at Khandeshi Purushottam Bhagat’s memorial.’ Today, a sabha hall stands where the memorial used to be. In those days there were farms and that is where Khandeshi Purushottam Bhagat’s memorial was. On the way to that memorial spot, there were two large rubbish heaps; it was where everyone would dispose of any waste. When Bapa would go for his afternoon rest, about 35 to 40 of us youths would dive into cleaning that whole area. We would remove all the cow dung from the waste heap and transfer it onto the farming lands. Then we would clean the whole area, and spray water along the entire pathway. We would get a large cloth and spread it out at the memorial, and that is where everyone would sit and the sabha would take place.

After the sabha, Bapa would come back into the mandir and the arti would take place. After the arti, the *ashtak* would be sung, and then Bapa would have some refreshments and after that the night sabha would happen. Following the night sabha, everyone would sing *chesta*, ‘*Pratham Shri Hari ne re charane sheesh namavu; nautam leela re, Narayan ni gaavu...*’ and then go to bed. This was Bapa’s everyday routine. It would follow like clockwork. Bapa did not even wear a watch, but his timing was impeccable. Whereas all of us might wear watches, but we cannot do anything on time.

In 1966 when I asked Kakaji whether us youths should continue staying in the Chhatralaya or not, Kakaji said to me, ‘You should meet Bapa about this.’ So I went to Gondal. I reached Gondal mandir at 1.10pm and knew I would have *darshan* of Bapa in the sabha mandap. Bapa was seated there. Bapa called for Balmukund Swami – Kothari Swami and told them, ‘Take Jashu for lunch; I will go to rest now and will meet him at 3.30pm.’ Bapa went to rest at 1.30pm, and at 3.30pm Bapa called me into his room. He was so punctual in his timing.

Pappaji's timing was also like this! If you look at our Shantibhai, Ashvinbhai, Ratikaka's everyday schedule, they are so perfect in their timing! V.S. and Doctor were also so perfect in their timing! But if you were to ask me, I am completely irregular in everything, but Yogiji Maharaj and everyone else have tolerated me. Discipline is a virtue of *sadhuta*⁸. Discipline, punctuality, *vivek*⁹ – are all characteristics of *sadhuta*. If there is *mahima* – *mahatmya*, then one develops the characteristics of a sadhu.

Thereupon Shriji Maharaj said, 'In this satsang fellowship, a person who is wise increasingly finds flaws within himself and perceives virtues in God and his devotees.'

The *vivek* that Maharaj is speaking of, is spiritual *vivek*. In social dealings, if you have a guest, you ask them to come in, you seat them, welcome them, ask after their well-being; that kind of *vivek* is common, but the *vivek* that seeks to please God, that is spiritual *vivek*, and that is what Maharaj is talking about here. The person who has spiritual discretion, is one who every day increasingly perceives his or her own flaws and on the other hand, increasingly recognises the virtues in God and his devotees. This is *vivek*! The person who has spiritual *vivek* perceives his own flaws and sees good in devotees. Ordinarily in the world, people perceive their own virtues. They see how good they are, how well they act, how well they speak, the wonderful work they do, and as a result, they perceive flaws in others. They feel, he or she does not know anything, is unreliable, is of no use. If this happens it means one has sidestepped spiritual *vivek*. If one has spiritual *vivek*, one will perceive one's own flaws and see the virtues in others.

'Moreover, when God and his Sant utter harsh words of advice for his own benefit, he accepts them as beneficial and is not hurt by them. Such a person steadily attains greatness in Satsang.'

Maharaj goes on to say that where God or his sadhu utters harsh words, scolds you or is stern with you; the one with spiritual *vivek*, accepts those words to be for his or her own good. The reason is, such a person understands that God and

⁸ ***Sadhuta refers to the qualities of a true sadhu such as humility, complete selflessness and surrender, with the recognition of God as the Supreme All-Doer. Because of his *sadhuta*, the true sadhu will never act for his own benefit. He is natural, simple and joyfully immersed in God.***

⁹ ***Vivek in everyday Gujarati, refers to politeness, courtesy and good manners. Its deeper meaning alludes to wisdom and the ability to discern truth from untruth, right from wrong. The spiritual meaning of *vivek*, follows in the text.***

his Sadhu only wish good for me, and therefore whatever they do is only for my ultimate good, and so he or she does not feel hurt by harsh words.

Gopalanand Swami's headquarter was at the Swaminarayan mandir in Wadi, Vadodara. He mastered *ashtang-yog*¹⁰ in Umreth and Kalali. The satsang which happened in Gujarat, Kanam and Vakad regions is thanks to the constant travel and preachings by Gopalanand Swami and Santo. Gopalanand Swami also gave exceptional *darshan* of his divine powers during this time. There was a devotee who would come to the mandir every morning; he would sweep the floors and keep everything clean. However, this poor fellow was on such hard times; he did not have an income nor the means to feed or look after his family. His name was Nathalal, but everyone would call him 'Nathiyo'. With Gopalanand Swami's blessings, he went on to earn a fortune. His name started to appear among the wealthiest in Vadodara. For that reason, people would now respectfully address him as 'Nathalal Sheth' instead of 'Nathiyo'. Because of the great increase in his business, he did not have the time to come to the mandir. One day, Gopalanand Swami asked a devotee, 'What is that Nathiyo doing? Why have we not seen him?' Two or three days later, that devotee bumped into Nathalal somewhere, and so he told him, 'Nathalal, Swami was remembering you and asked 'why have we not seen Nathiyo? What is Nathiyo doing?' Nathalal immediately retorted, 'Swami called me 'Nathiyo'? The whole town calls me Nathalal, does Swami have any *vivek* or not?' The devotee was astounded. When he met Gopalanand Swami, he did not mention that he had met Nathalal. Two or three days later, Swami asked that devotee again, 'Did you meet that Nathiyo?' The devotee replied, 'Yes, I did. I told him that you asked after him, and he replied that 'Gopalanand Swami has no *vivek* to be calling me Nathiyo.' Gopalanand Swami was turning a rosary and as soon as he heard this the rosary fell to the ground and at that very moment, Nathalal's good fortunes began to recede. He fell into fault with the King, all of his possessions were seized, he was thrown into jail and ultimately ended up back on the streets with nothing. And so, within two to three months, Nathalal went back to being Nathiyo. He then came to the Wadi mandir for Swami's *darshan*. Swami asked, 'Who are you?' He replied, 'Bapji, it's me Nathiyo.' Swami replied, 'If you had accepted that Swami called me Nathiyo - and thought it is my great fortune that Swami remembered me!

¹⁰ ***Ashtang Yog refers to the rigorous eight-limbed path of Yoga***

If you had said this, then your fortunes would have still been on the rise.' That is why Maharaj says here, that when a Satpurush or Sadhu utters seemingly harsh words, one should know them to be doing good for you and should not feel offended. That kind of *vivek* will grant you progress.

There is another story that aligns with this. Once the King was going somewhere, and an elderly street sweeper happened to be sweeping that street. The King shouted out at her, 'Hey donkey, move! Get away from here!' and so she stepped aside. She threw her broom to the ground and ran home to tell her husband, 'From today, I am not going to cook for you! The king himself looked at me and called me today.' Her husband asked, 'What did he say to you?' The old woman replied, 'Hey donkey move! Get away from here!' The husband said, 'but he called you a donkey!' The old woman retorted, 'But who said it to me? It was the King himself!' This is what you call *mahima*! If you have this kind of *vivek* where you feel, 'The Satpurush remembered me? That is my greatest fortune!' When one has this kind of *vivek*, then no matter if the Satpurush reprimands you, or scolds you; you feel he has considered me his very own and so of course he can scold me! It was me that he addressed! Thinking in this way, the person becomes happy. Out of so many people, it was me he scolded, which means I am his, and he has every right to tell me off. This is spiritual *vivek*! However, many people get offended, and their faces get puffed up; that is a shortcoming of *mahima*. It is precisely to resolve this shortcoming that we have to come into the world.

One believes the words of God and his Sadhu to be ultimately beneficial.

People who think in this way attain greatness in Satsang, and gaining God's *prasannata*¹¹, the light within increases. The light increases, means the devotee's greatness increases and continues to increase. Even if one wants greatness, one cannot go out and get it. It doesn't come from asking for it, and one cannot bring it from somewhere – it is through one's life and actions, that greatness increases. Otherwise, everybody used to think that Bapa was an ordinary sadhu; they thought he doesn't know anything, doesn't understand anything. But his life was such that God became seated in everyone's hearts; that is greatness!

'Conversely, as a person who lacks wisdom practises satsang and listens to discourses in satsang, he continually perceives virtues within himself.'

¹¹ **When God or Guru is so pleased with you that it culminates in an outpouring of grace, this is called *prasannata*.**

Maharaj firstly spoke of *vivek*; where one perceives one's own faults and sees the good in others. If God or the Satpurush scold you, even then such a person sees virtue for he or she knows that they only have my best interests at heart and that is why they are telling me. Accepting this, such a person feels happy and makes improvements as advised, and day by day, such a person increasingly attains greatness. After this, Maharaj speaks of the one who does not have *vivek*. Such a person is called *aviveki*, and perceives only good within oneself. Now, both would be doing satsang together, but the one who is *viveki* would be perceiving his or her own flaws and seeing good in others. The one who is *aviveki* however, would see virtues within him or herself, such as good behaviour, discipline etc. and would perceive flaws in others who may not be behaving in that way.

Moreover, when God and his Sant highlight his flaws and advise him, he misinterprets such advice due to his arrogance.

This is what happened when Gopalanand Swami said *Nathyo* to Nathalal; he took it the wrong way and got offended! At what point did Nathalal say, 'Gopalanand Swami has no *vivek*'? It was when his pride was punctured.

[Moreover, when God and his Sant highlight his flaws and advise him, he misinterprets such advice due to his arrogance.] The person then perceives flaws in God and his Sant and such a person steadily declines and loses his reputation in Satsang. Therefore, if a person renounces the vanity of his own virtues, becomes brave and keeps faith in God and his Sant, then his ignorance is eradicated and he attains greatness in Satsang.

'To become brave' meaning to fight? Being brave enough to quarrel? No! It is to be courageous enough to discipline your senses and faculties. You have to tell the mind and senses, 'Don't you dare! If you so much as dare to bring up thoughts and negativities about devotees that I am doing *seva* with, then I will crush you!' However, the majority think of courage as standing up to people, being able to overpower others, flaring your eyes at them and ensuring they are scared; but that is not courage. To stand up to your own mind, senses and faculties; that is spiritual courage!

Also, let go of the pride you have of your own virtues. If I write well, then I will look down on those that do not write well. If I behave well, then I will think negatively of those that do not behave well. In this way, having pride of your own virtue, is itself a flaw. No matter if it is a flaw, but if you see how wonderfully someone is doing something and feel how great

they are in comparison to oneself, then your flaw will become a virtue. If you have this kind of *vivek*, then that flaw becomes a virtue. If you use the flaws of a devotee to see good in them, then your own flaw becomes a virtue. If you use the virtues of a devotee to see flaw in them, then your virtue becomes a flaw.

Therefore, if a person renounces the vanity of his own virtues, becomes brave, and keeps faith in God and his Sant, then his ignorance is eradicated and he attains greatness in Satsang.

If one keeps firm faith in God and his Sant, trusting that out of love they wish my ultimate good, then such a person's *avivek* will dissolve and he will attain greatness in satsang. Bapa had given us the *aagna*¹² to read Vachanamrut Gadhada Pratham 6 'Viveki – Aviveki nu' and Gadhada Pratham 16 – 'Vivek nu'. While we were studying there were no problems as such. Whatever problems there were, were problems with other boys who were not satsangees and there would be fights or tiffs with such boys, but that was not really a problem. However, Bapa wanted to join us to the work of BAPS through the *seva* of the Akshar Purushottam Chhatralaya. If we were to see faults in anyone, then whatever we were doing – whatever he was making us do, would become useless. That is why, before getting us to start the work of the Chhatralaya, Bapa made us set up a mandir in the hostel. We made a mandir in our hostel room no. 14 and Pramukh Swamiji performed the first arti in that mandir. Bapa had given us *niyams* – to perform *aarti* every morning and evening, to get together every evening and read the Vachanamrut, perform *niyam-cheshta* and then go to bed. We also had to read Vachanamrut Gadhada Pratham 16 – 'Vivek nu' every single day; we had to always perceive only the virtues in everyone. After doing this, the work of digging the foundations of the Chhatralaya began. If we had not been trained in this way, we would have been finished. We were all youths, full of energy - enthusiastic and intelligent. When you have such driven, enthusiastic youths, they are bound to clash sooner rather than later. Bapa had set the brakes for us. Vachanamrut Gadhada Pratham 16 is a brake. For spiritual progress, Gadhada Pratham 16 and Gadhada Pratham 6 are absolutely necessary. No matter what you do, but in any way

¹² Any instruction given by God or Guru, which is always for our spiritual benefit.

whatsoever, if you see fault in God or God's devotee then that is most certainly and absolutely a shortcoming in oneself. It is *darshan* of your own pride, ego and *deh-bhav*¹³. You have to rise above this first and then do *bhajan-prarthana*, to ensure that you do not clash with anybody. So many incidents arose for us, but we did not clash with anyone; it did not present any hurdle to the *seva* we were doing. There were also many for whom if things did not go according to their wishes, would say, 'Here take your work, what is it to us? Go ahead, do it yourself.' But who is at loss here?

If we were to tell the sun right now, 'Why are you giving out heat of 45 degrees? Make it cooler, otherwise I will not get up in the morning.' So, would the sun shut down? It will obviously continue to do its work, but it is your work that will suffer. Similarly, by clashing with devotees, you will fade away. If you do not do anything, the loss is not to devotees, to God or to the work you are doing, remember this! Listen to this very carefully; it is not because of you or me that the work of God happens – everything happens solely by God's will. Even if you and I are not here, His work will continue through someone else.

In Dabhan, Gunatitanand Swami was going to be given *diksha*, and Bhagwan Swaminarayan was going to perform a special *yagna*. The Brahmins who were going to perform the *yagna* did not know about the glory of Bhagwan Swaminarayan. When they all got together and saw the grand scale of the preparations, the number of people and Santo, they thought this is going to be a very big *yagna* and we have settled for very little *dakshina*¹⁴. So the Brahmins gave Maharaj an ultimatum, 'If you do not increase our *dakshina*, then we will not perform the *yagna*.' The *yagna* was going to take place in two days, and all the Brahmins had gone on strike. They thought, where will they get so many Brahmins from in two days? Maharaj called all the Brahmins and told them, 'We will gladly give you *dakshina*, but we will not give it if you demand it.' The Brahmins did not accept. So, Maharaj called for the Santo that would usually travel and discourse in the Panch Mahal region.

¹³ *Deh-bhav* in a literal sense refers to the attachment we have with our bodies, forgetting that the 'soul' is our true self- which is separate from the body i.e. all our desires, ego, emotions etc. Because we have *deh-bhav* we are prone to anger, infatuation, grief etc.

¹⁴ A material or monetary gift customarily offered to priests or Brahmins for conducting rituals.

Maharaj told those Santo, 'Get 100 youths from your region and seat them in rows of five.' Maharaj asked for some water and sprinkled it on them and said, 'Now start and sing the *shlokas* for the *yagna*.' They youths who knew nothing, immediately started singing the *shlokas*. Maharaj said to the Brahmins, 'If you do not perform the *yagna*, it is not a problem – these will be our Brahmins. Let us put a sacred thread on each of them.' The Brahmins thought, 'If they do this, we will lose all of our *dakshina*,' so they said to Maharaj, 'we will perform the *yagna*.' Maharaj then increased their *dakshina*. But Maharaj says, 'it is by our strength and by our will that everything happens, everything has happened and everything will happen.' Maharaj simply gives us the *seva* to become a medium for that. If we don't walk straight, and give rise to hurdles in his work, then Maharaj says, 'You are making a mistake.' We are so blessed to have this kind of opportunity given to us in this lifetime. So now humbly carry out your *seva* with *vivek*, in the way that God likes, and carry out the devotion of God and his devotees, while understanding their glory.

During the *seva* of building the Chhatralaya, if we had clashed with somebody, or if we had put our hands up and stopped the work, then where would we be roaming right now?! Is this understood? But it was Bapa's immense grace in getting us to read the Pratham 16 Vachanamrut daily. No matter what God's devotees are like, whether they shout, scold, listen to you or do not listen to you, do good or do bad, you have no right to judge it. You have only one right, and that is to perceive them as faultless, and speak of their virtues and *mahima*! And whatever *seva* you have been given, keep carrying out that *seva* with the strength of dhun and prayer, then you will earn God's *prasannata*. After all, all of the work is going to happen by his will. All of the help is also going to come by his will. If you look, the whole BAPS organisation was created out of nothing! Even our organisation has been created out of nothing! It is only by His will, and we have been fortunate to have *seva* within that. We are so fortunate that he took us into his fold and selected us; that is truly His grace!

A short while back, the Indian ladies team won the World Cup cricket match. There are fifteen players on the team, and they are all so happy and so enthused! Do we feel that enthused and elated that we are in Yogiji Maharaj's team?! Who has selected us?! Out of the billions of people in the world, we have been selected to do God's work – what a huge thing that is! That is the kind of *mahima* we should have. That is why Maharaj has said in the Vachanamrut, 'It is due to a lack of *mahima*, that the *jiva* remains poor.' Because of the poverty of

our inner being, we sidestep *vivek*. We may not be speaking of *amahima*, or negativity or criticising or gossiping but because we come into contact with such 'dumbbells' we start doing those things, and that is utter foolishness – so be alert and aware in this. The more the *mahima* increases from within, the more one's *nirdosh-bhav*¹⁵ will increase. As *nirdosh-bhav* increases, the more joy, enthusiasm and eagerness will increase in doing *seva* and thereafter from gaining God's *prasannata*, you will feel as light as a feather and ever so joyful. You do not have to make an effort to become free of your weaknesses or shortcomings, they will lessen themselves. That is what this Vachanamrut is saying.

Keep it like this from the very beginning, that we want to immerse ourselves in this. We do not want to do any of this so that someone sings our praises or appreciates or acknowledges us; we want to simply give ourselves to this wholeheartedly. No matter if someone tells us off – reproaches us, says good – or bad, but we are young so the benefit is that we will have time to learn how to bear this. People always tell the youngsters off – but that is to their advantage – do you see? To remain small in front of others is a great advantage. There is no advantage in sitting on a raised seat. I am telling you this after sitting on that seat. If there is *vivek*, then you will attain greatness as you go along; you will not have to make an effort for it. This is the kind of *sadhuta* that our young santo must aspire to and cultivate. In the directive given by Bapa, to make us sadhus with saffron hearts – *vivek* is in the very foundations. Whoever has sidestepped this has suffered and has not become freed of their shortcomings. But for those who have held onto *vivek*, those sadhaks have not suffered, those Santo have not suffered, and those youths and householders have not suffered.

This is a foundational Vachanamrut. That is why it is said, that in our everyday lives we must chant Swaminarayan.... Swaminarayan.... Swaminarayan as we go about doing everything, then there will be peace within. In the January 2026 edition of 'Brahmanizar', the editor has written a good article about this. It is my prayer to all the Santo to read the Brahmanirzar. Satsang is our life; it is our nourishment. It is for this that we have given our lives. So let us make it a habit to be chanting Swaminarayan....Swaminarayan...Swaminarayan as we go about doing everything in our daily lives. We must practice this, and if we do this then all these Vachanamruts will become realised in our lives! Remember this! If we chant

¹⁵ **The inner understanding that God and all of God's devotees are faultless.**

Swaminarayan all the time, throughout everything we do, then you will see that there is no great effort in this. Has anyone asked you to stop eating? Has anyone asked you to stop sleeping? Has anyone refused you to go anywhere? Has anyone said anything like that? No, but simply throughout whatever you are doing, do it while chanting Swaminarayan...Swaminarayan, then at whichever point one needs to maintain *vivek*, or do whatever needs to be done, God will take control of it all from within. It is our prayer that everyone has the strength to pray in this way!

One must cultivate the habit of reading. The mind gains great benefit from this habit. In the September 2025 issue of 'Swaminarayan Prakash,' when Yogiji Maharaj went to England for the first time in 1969, a journalist asked him, 'What is there in this country that you have come all the way here? You have renounced the world, so why have you come to England? Is it to see something? Or to get something?' Bapa replied, 'Our Bhagwan Swaminarayan came to England, so we have come to visit this sacred place.' Yogiji Maharaj was such an unimaginable being! The journalist asked, 'But after Bhagwan Swaminarayan came to Gujarat, he has not gone outside it, so when did he come here?' Bapa replied, 'Your Sir Malcolm was a governor in India. He had welcomed Bhagwan Swaminarayan in Rajkot, had his *darshan* and honoured him. It is Bhagwan Swaminarayan's promise that whoever comes into his association, he will personally come to receive when they take their last mortal breath. Your Sir Malcolm came back to England when he retired, and when he passed away, Maharaj came here to take him.' Now would any of us even think of this?! But he truly believed this – that Maharaj went to England to take Sir Malcolm with him, and therefore England became a place of pilgrimage! Then another question was put to Yogiji Maharaj by the journalist, 'Do you ever become disturbed? Or have you ever become frustrated?' Bapa replied, 'Who has ever seen disturbance or frustration?' With reference to this question, Param Pujya Mahant Swamiji and Param Pujya Doctor Swamiji, gave exceptional *darshan* of Yogiji Maharaj's *sadhuta* when speaking to Santo and devotees. Santo transcribed those words and published them as articles in the September 2025 issue of 'Swaminarayan Prakash'. We should all read those articles and read them over and over again. Through those articles you will see what *sadhuta* is. Within the articles, the question is asked, 'what causes disturbance?' The cause of disturbance is not other people, or wealth, or interactions; none of these things are a problem – the thing that causes disturbance is one's own mind. During Bapa's time, what were the people like? What

were the circumstances like? There was so much hardship, and regardless of that, Bapa never ever became disturbed. His mind lived constantly and continuously engaged in God.

What are people like? Bapa was once going from Vasana to Sokhda. Swaminarayan sadhus are required to stay in pairs, and if while walking, the distance between them becomes greater than 200 metres, then they have to observe a fast. Yogiji Maharaj was so conscientious in his *katha-varta* and so strict in his observance of moral codes of conduct. Once the sadhu that was with Yogiji Maharaj thought that today I will make him fast. Just think about it, even those that are with you can be like this! While walking with Yogiji Maharaj, the other sadhu suddenly started to run and the distance between them became more than 200 metres, and so the next day Yogiji Maharaj observed a fast. When someone asked Yogiji Maharaj about it, Bapa said, 'It was his grace that I got the opportunity to fast.' No matter how anyone acts towards you, but disturbance only comes when you perceive them negatively! Bapa would never fall into this. These kinds of incidents that happened with Bapa and what people did to him, are covered in the articles.

During Bapa's time, what severe circumstances they went through! Once Shastriji Maharaj was at Anand railway station, sitting on a bench, waiting for a train. Someone who had been eating *bhajia*, crumpled up the paper packet and threw it on the ground. Shastriji Maharaj got up, picked it up, removed the string from the discarded package and wound the string to keep. Seeing this, someone asked Shastriji Maharaj, 'why did you do that?' Shastriji Maharaj replied, 'This string will be useful in mending the robes of the Santo.' Just think about this, what must their circumstances have been like? These are the kind of circumstances that Yogiji Maharaj lived in, and yet he never got disturbed. There was a lack of everything – they had nothing. They did not even have the means to travel, nor did they know where their next meal was coming from. They had to walk, walk, walk – work, work, work and there was nothing but hardship all the time. But none of this could disturb his joy. The thing that causes disturbance is the mind; and Bapa's mind was continuously immersed in Gurudev Shastriji Maharaj and his *Ishta-dev*, Shriji Maharaj. While chanting continuously, if the mind becomes immersed in him, then no person, object or power in the world has the capacity to disturb you. That is what Maharaj wants to give to all of us. The articles in the Swaminarayan Prakash are worth reading, so everyone must read them.

Sahajanand Swami Maharaj ni Jai! ◆