



Divine Discourses of Sant Bhagwant Sahebji

Spiritual Essence

Discourse on Vachanamrut Gadhada Madhya 44 :
 'Daivi-Asuri jiva na lakshan nu'
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Shriji Maharaj asked Muktanand Swami, 'When a person perceives a flaw in a devotee, does that person perceive the same amount of flaws in that devotee as he had noticed previously, or does he perceive more flaws?' Muktanand Swami replied, 'It would seem that he would perceive the same amount of flaws as he previously perceived.'

What are the characteristics of godly people and what are those of ungodly people? If we were to look, then Ravana, Kansa, Shishupal, Duryodhan, Jarasangh, Kalyavan, Hiranyakashyap were all ungodly, and even today there are many such ungodly people. They were human beings just like us, but when we look at pictorial depictions, they show Ravana as having ten heads; Hiranyakashyap as having horns etc. In pictures, they show them as being so different to human beings and having bizarre forms! Ravana was a human being; not only was he a king, but he was also an exceptional administrator. Additionally, he was extremely learned, and one who practiced great austerities. Through his austerities, he pleased Shankar Bhagwan so much and asked for the boon of invincibility, such that no one could kill him. God granted him that boon but left a slight window open, saying that he could only be killed if

someone struck an arrow into his belly button, otherwise he could not be killed.

Having attained all this, why are they known as being *asuras* – ungodly? Firstly, they deny God, they harass the devotees of God, and their focus is on looting the community. One with such *asuri-bhav* gains great pleasure from seeing someone in pain. If some good work is happening, they find a way to disrupt it. For those who have such characteristics, we will say such and such person is crazy or that he is an *asura*, meaning he is ungodly. Why would people call someone crazy? The reason is everything he talks about is bizarre. In society, his actions are such, that people would call him foolish, crazy, dumb etc.; but at the end of the day, he is still a human being. In this way, the one who is ungodly, is one who troubles others. But where does that *asuri-bhav* come from? Maharaj is showing us this.

Within us, there are two states of being and feeling, one is godly, the other is ungodly. One or the other blossoms. For the one who has taken refuge in God, has accepted God, carries out *seva* according to the instructions of Santo, the godliness within such a person blossoms, and the ungodly sentiments are transformed and become godly. However, if one sees faults in

devotees, maligns them, backbites, gossips or criticises them, then it means that one awakens all the negative energy within, which gives rise to power that is used in negative ways. Such a person uses all his strength in negative ways, and so becomes a criminal, a thug, is involved in violence, fighting, troubling others – all of these are people who are ungodly. For this reason, God says, never look at faults in others. If you pick faults in others, and hurt devotees, God says it is I that reside in their hearts. So, when a devotee is pained, or a devotee is put into trouble, the person that does this attains a state of dull, spiritual denseness and ignorance, and thus becomes ungodly.

Yesterday, there was a video clip that came through in which there was a rabbit shown to be jumping around, running around, and in spite of doing so much exercise only has a life span of 15 years. Whereas a tortoise is so slow, does not move much, does not do anything and in spite of this has a life span of 200 to 300 years. So the person on the video comments that the rabbit after exercising so much lives only 15 years, whereas the tortoise lives for 200 years without doing anything and so the moral of the story is we do not need to exercise. But understand this now, the tortoise is born with denseness and inertia. It has to live for 200 to 300 years, but it simply has to lay around for all that time! If one maligns the devotees of God, one either develops a state of ungodliness or a state of dense inertia. So many people are religious, but they are not grasping this principle.

At present, in religion and among Santo – on some petty matter or other, so many people jump onto the bandwagon without having understood anything, and then speak anyhow about *sampradaya* or *Ishta-dev*. But they do not know that in doing so they will attain a state of ungodliness. If one speaks out of ignorance or contempt, or for whatever reason rants and raves, he

does not realise that in speaking against an entire *sampradaya*, the entire Sant community or for their *Ishta-dev*, he is hurting the hearts of thousands of devotees, and the *prarabd¹* that arises from that clings to the speaker of those words. Such a person becomes one with *asuri-vrutti*. In this way, *asuras* are on the increase in the world.

Daivi-bhav, or the sentiment of godliness, means to see and speak about the virtues in others, to sing their glory. Keep your *desh*, *kaal*, *kriya* and *sang²* good. If you associate with good people and stay in a region where there is the sentiment to serve others, it means that your *desh-kaal* is good. Shri Swaminarayan Bhagwan has said that *mandir* and *Santo* are the places which nurture and increase our *daivi-bhav*. Whatever we do with the *aagna³* of *Santo*, nourishes all the values of humanity within us. Maharaj has said to us that human beings are all the same, but because of variation in *desh*, *kaal* and *sang*, differences arise – and thus we get people with *daivi* characteristics and people with *asuri* characteristics.

Yogiji Maharaj has showered his grace upon all of the organisations walking on the path of Akshar Purushottam Upasana. Yogiji Maharaj always explained that no matter even if someone opposes you, but we must not think negatively of them. We must pray for them, ask God to grace them with pure intellect, such that they are able to see the truth. If this principle is

¹ **Prarabd^h simply put, refers to the consequences which one has to endure as a result of one's previous actions. With respect to the law of karma, it means deeds whose consequences are already set in motion.**

² **Desh refers to location, country or the physical place where a devotee lives. Kaal refers to the prevailing era or time. Kriya refers to deeds, rituals or daily activities. Sang refers to association or company.**

³ **Any instruction given by God or Guru, which is always for our spiritual benefit.**

understood, then we would never negatively perceive anyone who opposes us, speaks badly about us, or wishes ill for us. The characteristic of God's devotee is to endure; to always wish good for others, always do good for others, to focus on the virtues of others, to spread good things about others. That is what you call a devotee! God is eternally by the side of such a devotee and is always in their protection. Bhagwan Swaminarayan says, if one only looks towards one's own flaws and only sees good in others, then God is pleased with such a person.

In Vachanamrut Gadhada Pratham 16, it says that however much good you see in others and speak about it, is how much your own goodness will increase. When one speaks of the virtues of others, whose glory increases? The glory of the person one speaks about will certainly increase, but the glory of the speaker will also increase alongside. People feel drawn to the person who sings the virtues of God and God's devotees, they feel love for such a person, they enjoy listening to such a person and in this way the glory of such a person increases. One must always speak of the virtues of others, spread good about others. The highest wisdom; the essence of the essence is to recognise God and to speak of and spread the glory of God and his devotees. That is true wisdom. No matter what you talk about, but you must always speak about the glory of God, about the life and divine pastimes of God, such that one can know God and one's faith and refuge in God becomes firm. When you speak of the virtues of his devotees, then *nirdosh-bhav*⁴ automatically becomes firm. And Yogi Bapa would always say, '*Nirdosh-buddhi* is the supreme *seva*!' In this way, whatever traces of negativity are within us, which trouble us, whatever sentiments of ego, jealousy, obstinacy or flaws of anger, lust etc., will

⁴ The inner understanding that God and all of God's devotees are faultless.

dissolve. You do not have to stop eating, you do not have to fast; but whatever weaknesses you have which the body hungers for, will not remain. Whether you get food or you do not, whether the food is too salty or too spicy, you do not become angered by it. Whether you get a good place to sit or not, whether you are sat at the front or at the back, or whether you are left standing; no matter what happens, you will not get disturbed. If there is no negativity within, then one will always be joyful.

Bhagwan Swaminarayan has said that we have been given a special opportunity to nourish the *daivi-bhav* within us. However much you do in this lifetime will carry forward to the next lifetime. For example, say you are studying in the first year of college in Amdavad. You then transfer to Anand; would they make you go back and repeat your 10th standard? They will admit you into the same year in Anand, as the one you were studying in Amdavad. Similarly, if you were to pass on, you shed your mortal frame, and when your soul gains another mortal frame, you will start from exactly where you left off. It means everything you do now does not go to waste, it stays with you, lifetime after lifetime. In a previous lifetime, however much you lived to please God, will be to your advantage in this lifetime. So, one must always remain firm in the refuge of God, and absolutely firm in one's conviction! Whatever has happened in my life, whatever is happening, and whatever will happen is only by the wish of my Lord, Bhagwan Swaminarayan and the wish of the Satpurush, and it is all only for my ultimate good. When one lives with this conviction, drawing on the strength of chanting and prayer, drawing on the strength of *seva* and drawing on the strength of speaking of *mahima*, then the body and everything within it is purified. It will lead to *divya-bhav*⁵ – *daivi-bhav* and thereby one will live in joy.

⁵ The inner understanding that God and all of God's devotees are divine.

It is said that when a cancerous tumour is surgically removed, but if the tiniest particle of the tumour is left behind, the cancer returns. After surgery, doctors then put the patient on scheduled treatments of chemotherapy and radiation. Finally, after five to seven years, the doctor will declare the patient free of cancer. Similarly, we too want to be completely free of *asuri-bhav*. If we are able to live 100% with *daivi-bhav*, then fountains of joy will burst forth from within as mentioned in the bhajan, '*Jag aakha ma shodhi rahyo e anand tari paas chhe...*' You will not have to go looking for that complete joy – it will happen when one has complete *daivi-bhav*.

There are many *daivi* beings. Many are worshipped, many receive respect and praise, whereas many are scorned. Why are they worshipped, or what is it that makes them receive praise and respect? It is because of good education, good works, and altruistic activities. Joban Vadtalo was someone with complete *asuri-bhav*, but Bhagwan Swaminarayan, through his Santo completely transformed him and made him worthy of praise and respect. Takho Pagi, Suro Pagi were all Kathis of Kathiawad and everyone was scared of them, but simply with Maharaj's grace, they attained *daivi-bhav* and thereby earned the praise and respect of everyone.

In the world, whoever worships Lord Shiva, for them Lord Shiva is supreme. Those who worship Shri Krishna Bhagwan believe him to be supreme. Everyone believes their chosen deity to be supreme. But to undercut someone to prove that your God is greater is something that God has forbidden. Bhagwan Swaminarayan has said in the Shikshapatri, 'If you perchance pass any Dev, Devi or Mataji mandir, you must bow to it and give due respect.' When I was a child, I had read this, so every morning when I would go to the mandir, out of one handful of rice I would give some rice grains in the Mataji Mandir, some rice grains in the Mahadev mandir, some rice grains in the Jagaji Mandir, and place the

other whole fistful of grains in the Swaminarayan mandir. Maharaj has said in the Shikshapatri that when you go to the mandir, you should not go empty-handed, and whichever mandirs come on the way, you should bow to them. And so, I would go to the mandir every morning with two fistfuls full of rice grains.

So, sing the *mahima* and praises of God, sing the *mahima* of Santo and devotees, perform their *seva*, then godliness will arise within and you will attain *daivi-bhav*, that is absolutely certain!

If we believe Maharaj to be supreme and if by chanting his name and performing his *seva* so much is attained, then why is nothing happening to me? There should be some change inside shouldn't there? So we need to introspect, examine our shortcomings and then pray to be rid of them, live according to the *aagna* of our Guru, immerse ourselves in the *seva* of devotees with *nirdosh-bhav* and *divya-bhav*, and then everything will be understood. Maharaj has said that those who malign, criticise or cause friction with others will fall into *asuri-bhav*. Ravana harassed Shri Ramchandra Bhagwan, Hanumanji and his devotees, and so he was known as an *asura*. Kansa and Jarasangh harassed Shri Krishna Bhagwan, Duryodhan insulted Shri Krishna Bhagwan in the royal court, so they were known as *asuras* and never found any peace.

Maharaj says simply sing the *mahima* of Santo and devotees and perform their *seva*, do dhun and prayer, then whatever negativities are within us, which we call *asuri-bhav*, will transform and become *daivi-bhav*. If there is *daivi-bhav* then you will become completely fulfilled and content. Always keep good company, then *asuri-bhav* will not have the slightest chance to enter. Keep the company of those who are always speaking about the *mahima* of others, then that will become a habit. May our lives become like this; that is our prayer!

Jai Shri Swaminarayan. ◆