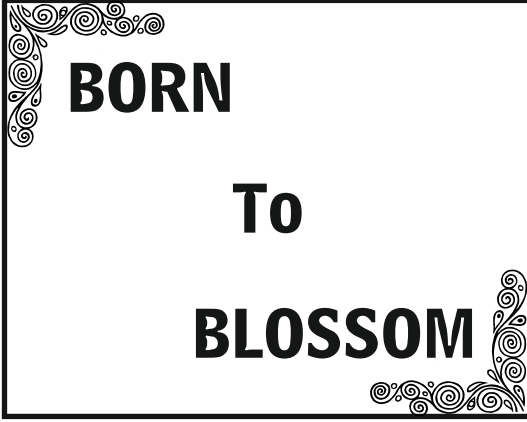


JAINAM JAYATI SHASANAM
LABDHI BAAL VAARTA Series

Part-5



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ACHARYA

RAJYASH SOOREESHWARJEE M.S.

1

:: सौजन्य ::

पूज्य पिताश्री आईदानजी लोढा
के आत्मश्रेयार्थे
पूज्य मातुश्री आशीबाई लोढा के
जीवराशि क्षमापना निमित्ते
लोढा परिवार, धमतरी



विचक्षण जैन विद्यापीठ

दुर्ग-रायपुर रोड,
कैवल्यधाम तीर्थ के पास,
कुम्हारी, (छ.ग.) - ४९००९२



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PUBLISHERS NOTE

"LABDHI BAAL VAARTA" are wonderful short stories collected from various sources which were in different languages. We are grateful to all those authors. Our appreciation to Poojya **Acharya Sri Raj-Yash Sooreeshwarjee M.S.** and his disciples Upadhyaya Vishrutyash Vijayaji Gani, (SatishMardia from Chennai & Ahd,) for compiling and editing, and all the donors and printers for their monetary & physical support.

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PREFACE

Man is a social animal. Not only his physical but his mental needs should also be satisfied. He needs contact of other people by man-to-man relations or by books as a media to create social relationship. The topics of reading are changing according to age and interest of individuals. In childhood we like fairy tales; in youth, we like real stories and in old age, we like stories of the Lords. Books give us real eyes and ears to enjoy the divine bliss along with practical knowledge which bring us on the epitome of knowledge. Books are the safe deposit vaults for the learned. It is told by one of the great philosopher that 'Books are like universities'. Some philosophers have related books to a museum or nectar of the words of great men. According to Ruskin, good books are like the king's treasure in which collection of good thoughts of great men are stored. Books show the magnificent past and teaches us or empowers us how to live in present by the ideals put before us which happened in the past. So books are like a light in the night, island in the ocean, vegetation in

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the desert and a heater in the cold. Sometimes in the world, what is not even possible to be done by great Aacharyas, religious preachers & philosophers, could easily be done by a book. They are the best guides and nearest and dearest to the readers. Books have no limitations regarding country, cast & creed. Books can save the culture and help in the upliftment of mankind, remove his cruelty and make him merciful.

The reader must apply some discretion regarding the choice of books to read. How many books have you read is not important but how you have read it and that also repeatedly, how much you have imbibed from it, mingled with it & absorbed it, is more important and in turn it should create one's character. One must understand that rather than for money-making books are for but man-making and character- making. After all one who can read it and live it is a real reader. This short story book '**Labdhi Baal Varta**' will surely be a turning point towards success for its readers.

Dr. M. M. Begani, Bombay Hospital, Mumbai
10th July 2018

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FOREWORD

His Holiness Acharya Raj Yash Soreshwarjee Maharaj has gone into the very depth of building Life with utmost care and concern. Here in this small book '**Labdhi Baal Varta**' one will find stories that are an eye opener.....

My humble pranam to H.H. Acharyaji, Prof. M.S. and all the sadhus who are constantly spreading the message of Peace & Non-violence to one and all, by means of short stories.

I hope that I will be given many chances to serve the religion, Society and the World at large by Gurujee

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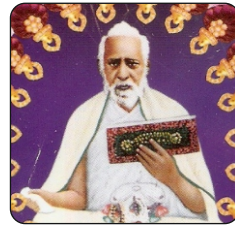
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1 Abhaydevsoorijee

Abhaydevsoorijee has earned immense fame by composing Sanskrit commentaries on nine of the Jain Aagams (Jain canonical literature). These commentaries provide a key to the innermost deep meaning of Jain Aagam literature. Besides being brief and well-worded, these commentaries depict and discuss many topics. Thus his name ranks at the top of those Acharyas who have written books with a view to immortalizing the pure tradition of Jinaagam.



It is so said that one night when Acharya Abhaydevsoori was engrossed in meditation, the Shasandevi (the guardian Goddess) revealed herself before him and said that the commentaries of two Aagams namely, Acharanga and Soottrakrutang, were well preserved but other commentaries were lost and destroyed with the passage of time. The Goddess then asked him to make efforts to remedy that deficiency so as to

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serve the interests of Shrisangh (congregation).

Acharya Abhaydevsooriji accepted this enormous task. He commenced the writing of commentary by performing Ayambil tap (type of religious austerity). After prolonged and laborious efforts he wrote volumes of commentaries on Anga-agam (canonical text, one of the twelve). He developed a leucoderma like disease. His opponents spread the rumor that the mother Goddess had cursed him with the disease as a penalty for having wrongly interpreted the scriptures. Acharya Abhaydevsooriji invoked Shasanrakshak Dev (the guardian God) Dharanendra at night and as the God appeared before him, Acharya said, "O Lord! I am least afraid of my death but I can't endure the false charges and malafide criticism that slandering people level against me since I am affected with the disease. Hence I have decided to undertake fast till I die."

Shasanrakshak Dev Dharanendra assured him that he was quite innocent and provided him necessary guidance. As guided by Dharanendra,

Abhaydevsooriji, together with shravak sangh, came at the banks of river Sedhi in Stambhangram. Acharyashriji discovered the place where a cow was yielding milk automatically. Soon he composed a stotra of 32 shlokas entitled **Jayatihuan**. As the stotra was composed, a very ancient and bejeweled idol of Shri **Stambhan Parshwanath** immersed from under the ground. Shri Sangh performed all the rituals of bathing the idol and as soon as the holy water was applied to the body of Acharya Abhaydevsooriji, he was cured of the disease. Acharyashri regained his former health. Presently the same idol is installed at the temple of Cambay.

Then Acharyashri completed the ask of writing Navangi commentary and attained Kaldharma (swargarohan - reached heavenly abode) at Kapadvanj in Gujarat and his Samadhi (a memorial structure), exists there in Tapagachchha upashraya.

Moral : Let the every house holder have the enthusiasm for their heirs for their spiritual development.

2 Anathi Muni

king Shrenik Bimbisar of Magadh went for an outing in the forest riding a horse. As he entered a garden, he saw a saintly person in meditation under a tree. He was surprised at the sight of such a pleasant face with glowing forehead and was impressed by the monk. The king wondered as to what heart-rendering and shocking experience of worldly life might have lead him to forsake the joys and pleasures of youthful life and resort to a saintly way of life, dedicated to penance.

The king bowed before the monk and asked politely "I request you kindly to set at rest, the doubt agitating my mind. What has compelled you to take diksha (i.e life full of penance and abdication by abjuring worldly joys and pleasures) in the prime of your life? As I look at the unusual beauty of your body and face and your youthful age, I am prompted to ask as to what has compelled you to forsake your family, wealth and dear-ones at such a young age. "

In a loving tone the monk said "O king I was absolutely lonesome and a helpless being in this

world. There was neither any protector nor friend. I abjured worldly life because of such helplessness."

King Shrenik laughed loudly and said "O monk, if you feel so insecure and unprotected (anath) , I shall be your protector (nath). Moreover a person like me, as your protector, will make all the difference and there shall be no problem in having sincere friend, near-ones and dear-ones and the whole retinue in your attendance. In their company, you shall be able to enjoy all the pleasures like wealth, power and peace. You won't miss any of the worldly pleasures. I am your protector now. Renounce this sainthood accepted in your youth and come with me to my grand palace."

To this the monk said "O king of Magadh, how shall you be my protector when you yourself are unprotected? I also possessed invaluable wealth and riches as you do. But once when I had severe pain in my eyes and burning sensations in my limbs, none could help me, neither the riches of my father nor any medical help nor the sweet love

of my mother. My devoted wife renounced all the ornaments and brothers and sisters wept and wailed helplessly. I was helpless. They were helpless too. With a view to avoid such helplessness, I decided to go for initiation (diksha) which, I thought, was an unfailing remedy to all my pains. I made up mind to renounce the world if during that night my pain subsided. To my utter surprise it started subsiding immediately. By the time the day dawned, the pain had vanished completely. I was perfectly healthy. As per my decision of the earlier night, I took diksha and thus, one totally unprotected (anath) found his protector (nath) in **Lord Mahaveer**”



Deeply impressed by the preaching of Anathi muni, king Shrenik decided to seek refuge of lord **Mahaveer**. Anathi muni went his own way.

The character sketch of Anathi muni shows that a person suffering from worldly pains and tortures, despite his numerous near-ones, dear-ones and immense riches, can feel unprotected and

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helpless too. A person having his soul awakened is indeed a sanath - a person protected forever.

Scriptures say that having attained the ultimate status of spiritual bliss, Anathi muni achieved siddhipad, everlasting state being sanath.

Moral : We all are Anath without Right Faith, Right knowledge and Right conduct which is the way to Salvation i.e. Super enlightenment.

3 Anupama Devi

Anupama was Tejpal's wife. Her complexion was dark and even her body was not that beautiful but she possessed extraordinary intelligence. She showed rare common sense in solving complicated problems not only of the family but those of others as well.



Tejpal and Anupamadevi both were devoted to religion and as such, the ascetics were worshipped with great respect by them. Once Anupama devi was giving alms to Jain monks when the vessel of alms

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slipped and Anupama devi's clothes became fully soaked with ghee from that vessel. Tejpal, the minister, was standing nearby and he saw this. He was just on the verge of losing his temper. He became enraged as he suspected that something ill-auspicious would happen as a result of spilling of ghee.

But Anupama devi handled the situation very skillfully and said, "O! What would have been my position, had I been born to a ghee dealer? But I feel fortunate today since I have secured the most desired though rare chance to give ghee. As she listened to Anupama devi, Tejpal's temper cooled down.

Once Vastupal and Tejpal, the two brothers set out on a pilgrimage of Shatrunjaya Teerth and Girnar Teerth. The Minister's family had left for the pilgrimage with whatever wealth they had. On their way both the brothers rested near the village Hadala. At that time they thought that in Sorath region in Saurashtra, even the great and mighty were looted at the hands of dacoits. Hence they decided to hide their wealth somewhere in the

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forest. At night, both the brothers were digging the earth to hide their wealth, to their surprise they found a vessel containing gold coins. They reflected that they had intended to hide the wealth under the ground, but were rewarded with more wealth.

They were also puzzled as to what to do with that immense wealth which was not earned by their own labour. They consulted Anupamadevi and she advised them that instead of hiding the wealth under the ground, it should be placed at a top peak. She added that there in would lie the true dignity of human beings and the wealth itself. By burying the wealth underground, the greedy person meets his hell, but the same wealth if used for the pilgrimage places like Shatrunjaya and Girnar, one can attain heaven. She suggested that some wealth be spent for the Jain temples atop the mountain peaks. Vastupal liked Anupamadevi's suggestion and Tejpal was very happy that she was such an unselfish woman.

At the great pilgrimage place of Shri Shatrunjaya, Nandishvar Jinprasad was

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constructed with the help of Vamdev Salat. A unique lake was built at the holy place. In A.D 1236, at the time of celebrating the great penance called Panchami, they arranged the construction of 25 holy assemblies and also managed to construct 32 wadis at the foot hills of Shatrunjaya and 16 wadis at the foot hills of Girnar. A Jinalaya, a lake and goshala were also constructed. Atop **Mt. Abu** was erected a huge, attractive and beautiful edifice named "Lunigavashi" for Neminath Bhagvan. During the construction work, Anupamadevi looked after sculptors, with motherly love and feeling. With a view to keeping them healthy and fit she had hired men for massage. She paid adequate money to all of them. All her painstaking efforts made the Jain temples at Abu a Unique Creation as unique as she was -Anupama.

Moral : How to use the money for that Anupama devi is a good example for all the readers so that everybody could enjoy but no body can take it.

4 Ardrakumar

There were ties of friendship between king

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Ardra of Ardrapur and king Shrenik of Rajgruhi. King Shrenik sent valuable gifts to Ardra, to further strengthen the bonds of friendship and love. King Ardra's son sent gifts to Abhaykumar, the son of king Shrenik. Pleased with the gifts, Abhaykumar thought of sending gifts as would inspire, in Ardra's heart, love for Jain religion. He therefore sent an idol of Bhagvan Adinath in a box, with firm instructions to open it in a pious and calm place.

Prince Ardra did as was bid by Abhaykumar and on seeing the idol, he could remember his previous birth. In His 3rd incarnation before the present one, he was a householder in Vasantpur in the kingdom of Magadh. His wife was Bandhumati. Later as a result of his karma (One's good or bad deeds during one's life time), he was born as a prince of non-Aryan kingdom, and his wife was born as Shrimati, the daughter of a gentleman of Vasantpur.

This knowledge of his previous birth prompted Ardrakumar to seek his father's approval for diksha (renunciation) but his father refused permission. There upon Ardra dressed himself in

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robes of a sadhu (ascetic) and set out for Vasantpur quietly. He came to a temple and sat there for meditation. By chance Shrimati also happened to come there while playing the game of hide and seek. She was blindfolded and caught hold of Ardra thinking that she was holding onto a pillar. Then she realized that the inanimate pillar was in fact a living human being.

She said to her companions : "Mentally I am married to this man!" At that time gods from heaven showered gems, blessing the couple. However, Ardra felt that it was not the ideal place for a man like him to live in. He immediately left the place. But he returned to the place after twelve years. He found Shrimati waiting for him there and she said "Lord I had vowed to marry you when I saw you in the temple twelve years back but you deserted me. You are my husband and now you if you refuse me, I will immolate myself in fire." Shrimati's father too reasoned with Ardra and he married her and lived with her at her abode. After a gap of twelve years, he once again felt the desire to renounce the world. Shrimati was spinning at

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that time.

Her son said, "Why do you engage yourself in such an ordinary type of work? " To which she replied "Your father is going to renounce the world and I will need some occupation to earn a living". The child in all innocence said "I will tie him down so that he cannot escape". So saying the son tied his father's feet with cotton thread spun by his mother. Ardrakumar was overwhelmed by the child's love. He said "I will count the number of threads tied around my feet". He counted them and there were twelve threads. He said, "I will stay here for twelve years more and live like a householder".

On the completion of those years, he again decided to have a glimpse of **Mahaveer**. On his way he met followers of different sects. He engaged himself in debates with Goshlaks , Buddhists, Brahmins well versed in Vedas, atmadwaitwadi, hasti tapas and others and demolished their points of view and beliefs. " **Shri Sutrakritang**" an Agam , contains his logical arguments and also tells us how he dispelled the

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myths related to **Bhagwan Mahaveer**.

Ardrakumar took refuge at the feet of **Mahaveer** and five hundred followers were initiated into the fold by him.

Moral : Human birth is a rare privilege. one should use it by leaving the worldly affairs internally & externally.

5 Bakuladevi

Bakuladevi ! An exceptional woman whose name shines like a bright star in the history of Gujarat. Like a lotus , which remains unaffected by the mud around, she grew up in the midst of luxuries and lust, to be a highly pious, virtuous and righteous woman.

It was not that she was blessed only with external beauty but her inner beauty also radiated brightly. Though she was a daughter of a courtesan yet she lived a pious life and guarded her chastity zealously. She wanted to marry in a high family.

King Bhimdev of Gujarat came to know about Bakuladevi and her sterling qualities and spotless character, despite being a courtesan's daughter.

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He thought of testing her character and chastity. He sent a marriage proposal which was accepted by Bakuladevi. Bhimdev instead of solemnizing the marriage, was diverted to warfare and decided to invade his arch enemy King Bhoj of Malwa.

Gujarat and Malwa had been at war for a long time. Bhimdev was determined to inflict defeat on Bhoj. The war lasted for two years with a decisive victory for Bhimdev. People thought that this was difficult for an alluring lovely woman like Bakuladevi to protect her chastity, especially in an environment she lived. But Bakuladevi was made of different stuff. From the moment Bhimdev had sent the marriage proposal, she had accepted him as her spouse. During the period he was fighting the battle, she had vowed not to wear expensive robes or ornaments. She took all precautions to guard her chastity and waited patiently for Bhimdev to return.

When he returned after his victory over Bhoj, he learnt that Bakuladevi had been waiting for him and that her character was as spotless as ever. She had been pining for him and had grown frail and emaciated, having abandoned good food and

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all luxuries.

Bhimdev was convinced of Bakuladevi's devotion to him and her spotless character. He then decided to marry her. People, on the other hand, spread all the types of rumours. They said, "we don't know who she is and her family too is not a honourable one! How can a son, born of such a woman, inherit the throne of Gujarat? He will not have royal blood flowing in his veins". Bhimdev ignored such malicious gossip. He said, "Forget that she is the daughter of a courtesan. Her character is clean and she is pious, righteous woman". People realized their folly in condemning such a virtuous woman and her esteem grew in their eyes. Bhimdev married her and made her the queen of Gujarat. A son Kshemraj, was born to her. Kshemraj's son was Devprasad. Devprasad's son was Tribhovanpal and his son was the mighty **Kumarpal**, a brave king and **propagator of non-violence**.

It is said that good and noble sentiments bloom in the hearts of the people only if there is congenial environment. Very often quite contrary

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is the case.

Moral : A person must be judged by her deeds, by her thoughts and her noble character and history indeed has judged her as such.

6 Balashamata

Balasha was a young, devout man who lived in a hamlet near Ujjain. The city is known for its valour and devotion of its people. Balasha was devoted to his mother. He used to help her mother in the house hold work and would also accompany her on pilgrimages. Once he went to Ujjain. He saw big shops selling variety of goods. He knew that his mother slept on floor and therefore he bought a cot for her to sleep on.

Balasha returned home with the cot. His mother was pleased to see the cot and also Balasha's boundless love for her. But, then, she laughed and said, "Ours is small house and so is the entrance. How shall we take the cot in?" This made Balasha think. His mother said, unscrew its four legs and then we will be able to take in". Balasha did as said. To his astonishment, he found hidden diamonds in the inside of the hollow

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legs of the cot. It was windfall for the two, but their lifestyle did not change. They could have build a palatial house and lived lavishly. But they continued to live a simple life as before. Balasha's mother had an intense desire to undertake pilgrimage to Shatrunjaya and to have darshan (glimpse) of Bhagwan Adinath.

She knew that worshipping the Bhagwan there or installing his idol or building a temple and protecting it would be an act of piety and earn great punya (auspicious karma). She then, learnt that the pilgrimage to Shatrunjaya was to be undertaken by Samarasha. Balasha and his mother joined the devotees on their way to Shatrunjaya and after some days arrived in Shatrunjaya.

Early next morning both of them preformed pooja and offered the diamonds they had brought. Samarasha, who had organized the pilgrimage, was denied the first chance to perform the pooja as he would not offer as much as Balasha and his mother did. He therefore, decided to fast that day.

The same story repeated the second day and

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Samarsha fasted the second day too. Balasha and his mother learnt about his fasts and were deeply pained. She said, "Samarsha is highly devout and pious. He must get the first chance to perform the pooja." Samarsha broke his fast at her hands and performed pooja the next day.

Balasha had wealth and riches. He built a grand toonk and named it after him. He also built an impressive Jinalay of Bhagwan Adiswar there. The toonk today consists of 270 stone idols, 458 metal idols and in all there are 13 small temples. Wealth or money is used by people in three ways.

1. Some use it for their own personal comforts and happiness.
2. Some just hoard it.
3. Some use it for charitable or philanthropic purposes, which is the best use of one's money.

Balasha was very **wealthy and he used it not for his personal comforts or pleasures but for the religion which was so dear to his heart! Balasha proved to be a worthy son of a worthy mother. A mother with an exemplary character**

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can beget a son like Balasha and Balashmata was such a mother.

Moral: A true shravak would not think of using money for his own pleasures but use it for religious or noble purposes.

7 Bappabhattsoorijee

Bappabhattsoorijee was versatile in interpretation of scriptures and model of celibacy. He was born in A.D. 743 in the village of Duva, in Banaskantha. As a child he was known as Surpal. Once when Acharya **Siddh sensoori** had a stay in Modhera, he happened to have a dream of a young lion leaping over a place of worship. Next morning when he went to the Jain temple and saw a bright looking and dignified young boy, he was reminded of the previous night's dream. Soon he called Surpal's father named Bappa and mother Bhatti. With due regards for their son's brilliance and determination, the parents handed him over to the religious master on his request. As a token of their fond memory, the boy was named **Bappabhatti**. After his initiation, the boy acquired intensive knowledge of books of reasoning and

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logic as also of 72 arts.

King Aam of Kanyakubja acquired instructions from Bappabhattsoori and as a reward the king wanted to hand over half of his kingdom to him, but Bappabhattsoori acquainted the king with the concept of non-possessive vow of a Jain monk. The king was also extremely impressed by the poetic composition of Bappabhattsoori. However, from time to time, the king subjected Bappabhattsoori to some sort of acid test to confirm his scholarship and celibacy.

Keeping in view the youthfulness of the young Sooriji, the king sent him a young courtesan dressed as a male with a view to test his celibacy. She went to the sleeping Sooriji and began to attend to him. But as soon as Bappabhattsoori felt the soft touch of the feminine hand, he was awakened and was very much shocked. Immediately Sooriji realized the intensions of the king to tempt him and deviate him by providing the company of a beautiful young woman in the darkness of the night. He requested the courtesan to go back. She bowed to the Sooriji as he

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conquered the cupid. The King **Aam** came to know about the dignified behaviour of his spiritual teacher (Guru) during the strange ordeal and became overjoyed.

Once, at the instance and invitation of Dharmaraja, a scriptural debate was organized between Bappabhatti representing King Aam and VardhanKunjar, the learned scholar representing King Dharmaraja. In this battle of scholarship, Bappabhattisoori came out victorious and as such he was honoured with the title of **VadikunjarKesari** but Sooriji turned this victory in a battle of arts and an occasion of harmony and dialogue. Over the years, there existed severe enmity between King Aam and Dharmaraja. Sooriji explained to both of them the significance of forgiveness and brought about a reconciliation.

Bappabhattisoori had greatly influenced Vakpati, an ascetic from Mathura. Under the impact of Sooriji's preaching, the king accepted initiation in



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the last years of his life.

Bappabhattisoori had composed 52 books of which Chaturvinshati and SaraswatiStotra are available even now. He also inspired the people at large for the construction of numerous Jain temples.

Shri Bappabhattisoori is a great Acharya of Jain religion. He was as much competent in theological debating as he was composing spiritual literature. His strong character, extensive knowledge and deep-seated religious faith had greatly impressed the ruler.

Moral : Age is not the barrier for the mastermind personality. Bappabhattisooriji initiated in very childhood.

8 Bhadrabahu Swami

Shrutkevi (Knower of all the canonical literature) Shri Bhadrabahu Swami was the seventh in the line of pattadhars (chief disciple) of lord **Mahaveer**. Reputed Acharya Yashobhadra's disciple as he was, he had the knowledge of 14 purvas (early canons). At the age of 45 years he accepted the life of penance and restraint. In the

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presence of Acharya Sambhuti Vijayjee he was designated as Acharya (head of a mendicant group). For over 14 years he ably managed the affairs of Jinshasan (Jain order) and added honour and glory to the post. He died at the age of 76 years and with him the tradition of Shrutkevi came to an end. Shri Bhadrabahu Swami was born in Pratishtanpur. He and his brother Varahmihir both were expert scholars of 4 vedas and 14 vidyas. Their meeting with Shrutkevi Shri Yashobhadrashri resulted in their initiation. However, the guru considered Shri Bhadrabahu as a more deserving candidate for the learning of 14 purvas as also the Acharyapad and so the Guru appointed him as his successor. This decision irritated and enraged Varahmihir who ultimately renounced his initiation. About this time, a child was born to the king and Varahmihir made a forecast that the boy would live for one hundred years.

Incidentally, sanghnayak (leader of a congregation) **Shri Bhadrabahu Swami** staying in the same city did not go to the palace to bless the child and to congratulate the king. Seizing this

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opportunity, Varahmihir instigated the king and the people against Shri Bhadrabahu swami. When Shri Bhadrabahu swami came to know all this, he said that he knew that on the seventh day, the boy was to die because of a cat and so he had decided to call on the king to console him. Though he had full faith in the forecast of Varahmihir, the king took all precautions and arranged to catch and drive away all the cats out of the town in the forest area.

The child was kept under strict surveillance. But as destined, the wooden bat at the door with a cat's figure on it, fell on the child's head, killing him instantly. On this shocking and sorrowful occasion Shri Bhadrabahu swami went to the king to convey his consolation. Greatly moved by this gesture, the king offered him unusual honour. Varahmihir had failed in his plan and stepped in his own anger and enmity. Varahmihir was born as 'Vyantardev' (a class of lower god) in his next birth and by any means of knowledge he came to recall his earlier birth and soon became jealous of Jain



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sangh. He then caused the spread of plague amongst the Shreesangh as a result of which a number of people began to die suddenly and instantly. Shreesangh requested Shri **Bhadrabahuswami** to do something and by the sheer force of his Shrutgyan (scriptural knowledge) he could correctly assess the entire situation and with a view to getting rid of the nuisance he composed "**Uvasaggaharam Stotra**". The Impact of this great stotra (devotional song) was so great that the strength of Vyantter got immensely diminished. Acharya Shri Bhadrabahuswami also composed "Kalpasutra" which is popular. It is also believed that he wrote Niryukti on 10 Sootras.

He composed 4 Chhed sutras (a law book dealing with monastic offences) and wrote monumental works like "Bhadrabahu Samhita" and "Vasudevcharit" containing one lakh and twenty five thousand pads (verses). Thereby, he imparted invaluable knowledge of the purvas (early canons) to Arya Sthulbhadra, and thus he managed to Practice the great Mahapran dhyan

constantly for 12 years. Bhadrabahuswami is respected as the fifth and final shrutkeveli.

Moral : Cast and creed is not the barrier for master mind. Bhadrabahuswami was not jain by birth. yet his devotion is remarkable.

9 Bhim Kundaliyo

A man who donates a huge sum but has no true devotion or love for the people does so out of either vanity or ego. On the other hand, a person donates a very small amount but does it with no ulterior motives except sincere devotion. The second one is better as it not the sum that is important but the sentiment, the bhav attached to it. Bhim Kundaliya's life symbolizes selfless devotion and love.

In A.D 1157, Mahamatya Bahad undertook the restoration of original Jinalaya in Shatrunjaya Teerth, the well known centre of pilgrimage. Celebrations were on. Poverty stricken Jain Bhim of Timana village was also there in tattered clothes, to take part in the celebrations. He was a trader selling ghee (purified butter). He had earned about rupees two, out of which he spent a

rupee in buying flowers to perform pooja (worship). Bhim, after performing the pooja desired to have a glimpse of Mahamatya bahad, but was hesitant. He was too poor to go near him. **Bahad** could see devotion written all over on his face and seated Bhim beside him. Bhim told him everything about his life and his present state.

Bahad, then said, "Bhim we are fellow travellers. You are a devotee and so am I. Let me know if there is anything that I can do for you." Bhim felt overwhelmed by **Bahad's** words.

At that time, the administrators of the restoration project came to Bhim and asked for his contribution. Bhim had a very small amount with him. But he contributed every penny he had and felt happy. It was a gesture of utter devotion, his love for religion! Mahamatya **Bahad** highly appreciated Bhim's gesture and told people gathered there, "This is what I call sacrifice. Whatever he had earned, he spent on buying flowers for worship and the remaining money he donated. He is not worried about what he will eat tomorrow. This is selfless devotion".

Bahad gave three silk robes and a certain

amount to Bhim but he refused to accept the clothes and money. He said "Mahamatya I cannot barter my punya (noble and good deeds) for what you offer me. I cannot part with my accumulated 'punya' in exchange for these worldly possessions. I cannot indulge in this deception".

This pleased **Bahad** very much and he honoured him by offering him a betel leaf as was the custom. Bhim then went home. He was apprehensive about his wife who was a tart-tongued woman, quarrelsome by nature. But he found her to be happy as she had discovered four thousand gold coins, while digging up the land. Bhim exclaimed, "How wonderful ! It is the reward for what I did for the god. We must spend the money for the restoration work in Shatrunjaya". Next day he met **Bahad** and offered the gold coins to him, which he refused to accept.

At night Yaksha (demi-god) Kapardi appeared to him and said, "The money belongs to you. You had pleased the God by offering flowers from your meagre earnings. Keep it and use it for your own-being as well as for God's worship . You will be prosperous forever now ."Bhim next day,

performed the pooja of god Rishabhdev with flowers and precious jewels. Bhim of Kundaliya village built a Bhimkund (water-tank) in Shatrunjaya Teerth.

Moral : For doing religion money is not the only necessary thing.

10 Bhimji Sanghpati

Bhimji Sanghpati was a true devotee, a staunch adherent of truth. King Harishchandra, who is known as the truth loving king in Indian mythology, was one such who could uphold truth at any cost. Bhimji was a businessman of Cambay and renowned for his business **acumen**. Bhimji Sanghpati scrupulously observed the vow of refraining from lying. It was the vow of not telling lies about animals and about land. This vow included refraining from misappropriating the deposits, bearing false witness in or out of court and forgoing fake documents. The observer of the vow had specifically to bear in mind that if he practiced treachery and fraud in business or indulged in boasting and spreading rumours, he would put his religion to shame and make it an object of ridicule and mockery. He was not to

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forget that breach of confidence or trust and giving wrong advice were great sins. In short, he was to understand that wealth is to be earned through honesty and morality as one's own happiness, peace, mental health and other's welfare were ensured by morality. Acharya Devendrasoori arrived in Gujarat from Malwa. Bhimji met him and said, "What vow should I observe so that I receive God's grace?"

The Acharya said, "Decide never to tell a lie. Adhere to truth at any cost and you will be happy." Bhimji did as bade by Acharya and vowed to speak the truth always. Once a robber, Pallipati Bhil way laid him on the bank of the river Mahi demanded to know how much money he had. Bhimji honestly said "Four thousand rupees". Pallipati Bhil hid Bhimji in a secret hideout and demanded a **ransom** of four thousand rupees for his release. Bhimji's son sent counterfeit coins to Bhil Pallipati. Pallipati realized a rat on seeing the coins that they were genuine. He showed them to Bhimji. Bhimji said that they were not genuine. Pallipati was surprised to hear these words. He thought, "How truthful this man is! He is captive

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and will be released only if his son sent genuine coins. But he has the courage to call his son a cheat and did not lie to secure his release." Bhimji's truthfulness struck him deeply and he thought that any harm caused to such a person would be a grievous sin. He then released him.

In A.D 1271, Achryadevendrasooriji died in Malwa in Rajasthan. His disciple Vidhyanandsoori also died six months thereafter. Bhimji, being a staunch devotee of Devendrasoori felt sad at the death of his Guru and for 12 years he did not eat manything. Those who observed celibacy, the fourth vrat, were given silk sari and five expensive pieces of clothes by Bhimji. There were four vratas before the birth of **Mahaveer** - non-violence, truth, non-stealing and non-possession. The religion comprising these four came to known as the religion of Parshwanath. Mahaveer added the fifth vrat, i.e Celibacy - Brahmacharya - which was given prime importance. All our woes, he said, could be traced to carnal desires. Bhimji Sanghpati emphasised the importance of restraint and self control. It should be self-imposed and Sanghpati Bhimji always loved and respected all

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those who exercised restraint.

The Mantri (Secretary) of Mandavgadh, **Pethadshah** and his wife **Padmini** were also given those robes. Thirty two years old Pethadshah and his wife decided to observe the vow of Celibacy and performed pooja wearing the robes given by Bhimji.

Moral : Bhimji Sanghpati is remembered today for his adherence to truth, supreme devotion to his gurus and unshakeable faith in the vows.

11 Chaampalde

Bhimdev was the king of Gujarat. He was so kind that people often cheated him. Very often people would poison his ears against others and get their work done. Abhad Vasa lived in Patan. He sacked his accountant as he was very dishonest and used to tamper with the accounts and misappropriate money. The accountant wanted to avenge his dismissal and thought of a plan. He went to the King and said, "See, Abhad is very rich



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but he does not contribute even ten paisa to the state's **coffers**. His wealth remains intact, you must do something so that the wealth is spent for the good of the people".

The king did not know that the crafty accountant was up to some mischief to entrap Abhad. He liked the idea. As per the accountant's advice the king sent his maid to Abhad. Bhimdev's maid came to him with a plateful of meat. Abhad was busy in pooja (worship). The maid said, "Festivities are going on in the kingdom and the king has sent the prasad (food offered to diety and taken by devotee after worship) for you". Abhad's daughter Chaampalde took the plate and when she removed the cover, she found, to her horror, meat in it. She was a widow and lived with her father. She was highly religious but a very intelligent woman. She thought, "Why should the king indulge in such an indecent crude gesture? There is something deeper than what meets the eye." She, at once realized that the king must have acted on the advice of the dismissed accountant. She sent with the maid a very precious necklace

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for the king and gifted a chain to the maid. She then told her father, "The king is acting on the advice of the dishonest accountant and they have an evil eye on our property and wealth. We must be careful. The king wants to grab our wealth but we must turn him into the protector of our wealth."

Abhad then made an inventory of his property and went to see the king. The king had thought that his act of sending 'special prasad' will enrage Abhad and he would rebel against the King. It will then be easier for him to appropriate his wealth for rebelling against the state. But that did not happen, instead Abhad was standing in front of him, with no trace of anger. The king realized his folly that it was the accountant who had instigated him to spite Abhad. He called the accountant and reprimanded him severely. He said "You should not be jealous of Abhad's wealth. Now touch his feet and ask for forgiveness for your evil designs." The accountant did as bade by the king. Chaampalde's cleverness helped her father to retain his wealth which he used for the welfare of the people and he and Chaampalde went to

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heaven after their deaths.

Jain shravikas occupy an important place in the Jain religion. They often display sterling qualities, character of a high order and an uncanny insight when in difficult situations. Such shravikas are the true pillars of the religious edifice. Jain religion therefore, equates shravaks and shravikas with sadhus and sadhvis. There are many shravaks and shravikas who possessed virtues and qualities which one would normally find in sadhus and sadhvis.

Moral : Chaampalde was one such character whose life is beacon to other mortals.

12 Champa

People of the country were extremely terrified by the oppressions of the emperors of Delhi during the last three hundred years. But as an emperor when Akbar occupied the throne of Delhi, there was a great sigh of relief and there was a new ray of hope among the people. Akbar was keen to know about various religions. Knowing their fundamental principles, he respected and honoured all the religions. He tried to mitigate

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animosity between the Hindus and Muslims. He made sincere efforts to temper religious fanaticism.

Once Akbar, the emperor, was standing in a balcony of his grand royal palace and had his eyes set on the highway when he saw a procession in which a shravika (a Jain woman) in a chariot was bowing to people all around and intermittently was making offerings to the people. She was preceded by a band and all the people in the procession were singing auspicious songs.

Akbar was greatly surprised at the sight and asked the royal servants about the procession. Having inquired about it, the royal servants informed him that the



shravika being a follower of the Jain religion, had undertaken fasts for six months and the Jain Sangh of Agra had organized that procession in honour of the



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prolonged penance of **Champa**, the name by which she was known.

Akbar was astonished at the fact that one could survive without food for as many as six months, since he knew too well as to how extremely difficult it was to observe 'roja' (a fast) for a month despite the permission for a meal at every night. The royal servants added to Akbar's astonishment as they said that the shravika named Champa had never taken a meal either during the day or at night for six long months.

Akbar thought it to be impossible, hence he decided to test it's **veracity**. Champa shravika was invited to the court with utmost respect. Akbar told her that it was impossible that anybody could undertake such fasts. Champa shravika replied that the strength of religion could make everything possible. Akbar added that he could believe Champa shravika if she would undergo fast in the palace under the watch of his guards.

Champa shravika agreed to the proposal. She stayed at the palace with full respect and honour and guards were posted outside the palace. On

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expiry of the time limit, Akbar wanted to know about her fasts and he was told that she had not taken any food either during the day or at night. Akbar's surprise was genuine. He had banned killing of any living creature for the days for which Champa shravika had gone on fast. Akbar praised and complimented her. Champa shravika said politely that it was possible because of the impact of the religion, the Gods and the Guru Heersoorishwarjee m.s.

Akbar, the Emperor became interested and wanted to have detailed knowledge about the Jain religion. In all humbleness he requested Acharyashri **Heervijaysoorijee** to come to the palace for the purpose. After **Bhagwan Mahaveer**, it was Champa shravika who had performed such a rare penance by undergoing six months fast. These facts created great reverence in Akbar's mind for the Jain religion, the Jain Acharyas and the Jain shravikas and shravaks. As a result he abolished the toll tax levied on the Jain pilgrims, He acquainted himself not only with the significance of non-violence but all over his kingdom he practiced non-violence for six months

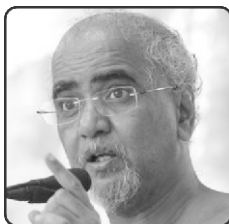
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in the year by preaching from Acharyashri Heervijaysoorijee - all this was the result of the most extraordinary penance of Champa shravika.

Moral : One should not think that external penance is only for showmanship.

13 Chandrarudracharya

In the evening time, some youths who had set out for fun and frolic, arrived at the upashraya (a place for Jain monks and nuns to stay) of Muni Chandrarudracharya. Old Shri Chandrarudracharya was staying at the upashraya. These youths, out of mischief, wanted to play some joke on this elderly saint. One of the mischievous youth was to be married soon. Pointing at this young boy, the other youths said in a jocular tone to the monk, "O monk! Save this boy. The poor fellow is compelled to marry though he has the least desire to get married. You are merciful. If you shall be kind enough to him and grant him initiation, it shall end all his miseries and it shall



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be a great obligation of yours.

Initially the elderly monk ignored the joke. But his silence provoked the youths further. They again requested the monk to redeem the youth from the worldly ties. True to his name, Shri Chandrarudracharya known for his extremely angry temperament, as a result of excessive joking, lost his temper and addressed the about to-be-married youth, "So you want to have initiation? Okay, I shall grant you that, only then would you realize what it is to live as an initiated." The youth was still in a jocular mood. He said "Yes, please grant me initiation. At any cost, I want to leave the worldly way of life and accept the path of penance."

Bursting into a fit of temper Shri Chandrarudracharya caught hold of the youth and seizing his head he soon began to pluck his hair(loch). On seeing this, the other youths ran away, but that youth did not budge an inch. He said to Shri Chandrarudracharya, "Muniraj, soon my relatives will arrive here. It would be better if we start on a journey (vihar) before they all arrive"

Due to old-age, Chandrarudracharya had

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already entrusted all the responsibilities of the gachchha (a group of monks) to a disciple. He had confined himself to self-attainment. How could such a Muni undertake a journey (vihar)?

The youth carried the old monk on his shoulders and started the journey. It was a very difficult and uneven path strewn with thorns all the way. Whenever the disciple's foot would falter giving the old monk a jerk, the old Guru's temper would soon burst out. The disciple's feet were bruised with blisters and stained with blood. The Guru (spiritual teacher) riding on his shoulders, scolded him constantly. Meanwhile the disciple's feet faltered as a result of a deep pit on their way and Guru too lost his balance. That was enough! It was the undoing of the disciple. As the volcano of Guru's anger erupted, he gave a heavy blow with his thick stick on the disciple's head. The disciple was in an extremely difficult and pitiable condition, yet he thought that it was his fault that the guru had to undergo all such hardships and harrasment. Consequent upon his deep repentance the disciple's thinking was purified and soon he attained pure and absolute knowledge. The Guru

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said, previously you did not walk properly but now you walk so smoothly and steadily. How is that? How do you find your way in such thick darkness?" The disciple said, "That is the power of knowledge (Kevalgyan)."

As soon as he heard these utterances, the Guru jumped off the disciple's shoulder. He appologized to the disciple who had now attained pure knowledge. Full of repentance as he was by now, the Guru too attained pure knowledge.

Moral : one should not boast of one's superiority, because even the junior could become the omniscient and omnipotent within a night.

14 Chelনারানী

She was Chelna rani who inculcated noble sentiments and love for religion in Shrenik, the king of Magadh. Her life was one of ups and downs. King Shrenik had heard that Chelana's elder sister Sujyeshtha was very attractive and sent, through a messenger, his marriage proposal to king Chetak. Chetak denied the offer which hurt Shrenik's pride. His minister Abhaykumar promised him that he would, through deception,

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manage to accomplish the impossible for him. Sujyeshtha then saw Shrenik's picture and felt instant attraction for him. She was now eager to marry him. Abhaykumar called King Shrenik to the city of Vaishali and a plan was prepared to abduct Sujyeshtha. Chelana was sad as she was going to lose her sister. Sujyeshtha suggested, she should accompany her to Magadh.

They were ready to depart when Sujyeshtha suddenly remembered that she has forgotten her ornament box in the palace. She went into the palace and at that very moment king Shrenik arrived to abduct her. Chelana sat in the chariot and waited for Sujyeshtha to return. On seeing the king's soldiers, king Shrenik had already left with Chelana, Sujyeshtha returned to find that king Shrenik had already left with Chelana. She, then lost all interest in the worldly affairs and became a sadhvi. Chelana then married Shrenik built a palace, resting on one pillar for Chelana to perform religious rituals. She would make a garland of fragrant



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folwers plucked from the garden and offer it to God. Once they both went for **Mahaveer's** darshan and, while returning, saw a monk completely naked, performing penance in bitter cold. Both got off from the chariot and bowed to the monk. Both returned to the palace quite happy.

In a deep **slumber** at night, queen Chelana's hand hung out of the **quilt** and became stiff due to severe cold. She felt terrible pain and remembered the monk performing penance in the cold. She muttered in the sleep, "Oh! what would he be experiencing?"

King Srenik heard the words and thought the queen was referring to a person whom she had promised to meet. He suspected Chelana's chastity. He could not sleep the whole night. In the morning he summoned his minister Abhaykumar and said, "Someone has committed an impious act and the palace be burnt with all inside it". Then he set out for **Mahaveer's** darshan. Bhagwan was seated in Samavasarana. King Shrenik was uneasy. His mind plagued by suspicion.

He went to Mahaveer and said, "Tell me, O

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Lord, whether my wife is chaste or not." Bhagwan said, "Yes, she is." Shrenik was stunned. He was now in a state of shock at the thought of Chelana having been reduced to ashes. He hurried to the palace and called Abhaykumar to know whether the palace was burnt down or not. Abhaykumar said, I have set only the elephant's house on fire and the antahpur (woman's portion of the palace) is still intact. Shrenik heaved a sigh of relief that the queen Chelana's chastity was proved beyond a shadow of doubt.

In the Jain traditional literature, the emphasis has been on spotless character. A woman's character is often tested but she never loses courage and faces the challenge with equanimity. "Chelana Rani was one such woman. Merely on suspicion, the king Shrenik wanted to kill her but her piety saved her. When she learnt the truth, she did not show any ill will towards Shrenik. There was no trace of bitterness and she was willing to pardon one and all, such was the greatness of Chelana Rani.

Moral : One should try to live a celibate life as far as possible.

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15 Devardhigani Kshamashraman

In A.D. 453, in the city of Vallabhi, under the leadership of Acharyadev Shrimad Devardhigani, three unprecedented religious tasks were undertaken which turned out to be landmarks in the history of Jain religion. These tasks were preservation of shrut gyan (spiritual knowledge), a more systematic compilation of the texts and conversion of those texts into written script.

Owing to famine some years ago many shrutdhar shramans (ascetic) had died and this had made the collection and compilation of the shrut gyan inevitable. At this time Vachanacharya Devardhigani Kshamashraman invited the shraman sangh in Vallabhi to consider the issue of preservation of the scriptures. The task was daunting and in the beginning Devardhigani sat with shramans and listened to the texts of agam and memorized them all and scripted them systematically. There were two texts, Skandili and Nagarjuniya. Acharya Kalak-IV was represented by



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Nagarjuniya text, whereas Skandili text was represented by Acharya Shri Devardhigani. Both the agams (Jain canonical literature) had variations because Arya Kandil and Arya Nagarjun had never met. This type of variations in the two texts had created a situation leading to division of the Jain Sangh itself. As a gesture of nobility, Devardhigani noted the Nagarjuniya text as a variation. In this task full co-operation was made available by Acharya Kalak. The prime urgency was about agamlekhana and reading of texts made the simultaneous writing of agam possible.

As regards his life, numerous anecdotes are available. Devarshi was a Kshatriya of Kashyapa gotra (Family lineage) and he was known by two names of Kshamashraman and Devavachak. Once Bhagwan Mahaveer had told Saudharmendra in a holy assembly in Rajgruhi city, Haringameshi transferred me in my foetal state from the womb of Devananda to the womb of Trishala and after 1000 years of my nirvana (emancipation) he would live again by the name of Devardhigani and he would be the final authority

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on the twelfth anga of Drashtivad (a title of twelfth anga work).

When Devardhigani was in foetal state in the womb of his mother Kalavati, she saw lord's Ruddhi (Richness) and she named her son Devardhigani. In his youth he was very fond of hunting. Many efforts were made to divert him from his sport. Once when he had gone for hunting, he came across a roaring lion and behind him he saw a deep ditch, moreover he was surrounded on either side by wild animals with elephant like tusks. The earth under his feet seemed to move and it was raining heavily. Terror struck Devardhigani heard a voice, "You still have time to realize your condition of helplessness, otherwise your death awaits you". In a tone of utmost helplessness, he said, "Do whatever you can but kindly save me. I am ready to do whatever you want me to do". Lord saved him and sent him to Acharya Lohityasoorijee and having sincerely listened to the sermons of Lohityasoori, Devardhi became Muni. By acquiring the knowledge of dashangi (a knower of ten anga works) and one purva (early canon) he became 'acharaya',

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'gyanacharya' and 'vachanachrya'. In A.D 473 he passed away with his death the tradition of poorva (mystery and miracles of knowledge) came to an end.

Moral : One should try to write the religious scriptures himself.

16 JYESTHA

Jyestha, the wife of Bhagwan Mahaveer's elder brother Nandivardhan and the daughter of King Cheda of Vaishali, was strikingly beautiful. She learnt her first lessons in the royal family itself and was an accomplished woman. Nandivardhan and Jyestha had deep faith in Shri Parshvanath as was the family tradition.

Jyestha's beauty was the talk of the town. At the same time, she was a woman of spotless character. She was deeply influenced by Bhagwan Mahaveer's religious discourses and had undertaken to observe twelve vratas (vows). Very steadfast in observing the same, she would not succumb to any temptation. Once Indra praised the character of Jyestha. He said that it was difficult to make her deviate from her chosen

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path. One of the Gods, not convinced, said, "A mortal is a timid being. Fear makes him/her seek refuge. Offer wealth or riches and he/she is easily subjugated. I can easily make her break the vows she has decided to observe."

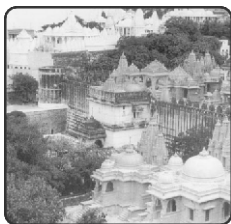
The God, arrogant that he was, abducted Jyestha and abandoned her in a forest. Then he disguised himself as a powerful and rich King and approached her with a big army comprising of elephants and horses. He then said, "O beautiful damsel, I am fascinated by your beauty. I want you to be my Queen and roll in wealth." Jyestha spurned the offer and refused to listen to what the King was saying. She said, "Even if God from heaven descends, I will not be tempted nor will I deviated from the path I have chosen. I am a devoted wife and will remain so." The God said, "You are an obstinate woman. Consider my offer or else wild animals will kill you. I promise to protect you if you accept my offer." But Jyestha refused to budge. Finally the God said, "If you do not come with me, I will take you away forcibly." Jyestha responded by saying that in that case she

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would commit suicide. The God was convinced that she was a woman of sterling character and nothing could make her deviate from the path of righteousness. He, then, appeared before her as God and said, "Jyestha, you are a pious woman and I was trying to test you but you have passed the test. Accept this small gift of kundal (earrings)."

Jyestha, then, was returned to Nandivardhan and was crowned mahasati, a truly great pious woman. Nandivardhan and Jyestha performed all the functions of a householder and also observed 12 vratas of a Shravak. It is also said that after listening to the discourses of Bhagwan Mahaveer, she obtained Nandivardhan's consent and accepted diksha from **Mahaveer** and become a nun. Jyestha's life, thus, symbolizes sterling character and supreme control and austerity.

Spotless character is an invaluable ornament, not of the body, but of the soul. A person with a spotless character can only hope to develop mentally and spiritually. Possession of impeccable character can help



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one to strengthen body, mind and soul. It is difficult, if not impossible, to strive to keep one's character spotless and chaste. Its attainment involves qualities such as self-control, restraining desires and possessing abstemious habits in regard to food, drink and pleasure. A person with such a character and certain qualities can hope to attain spiritual heights. Jain religion has figures with such character and qualities which can show light to mortals like us. It is but natural that mahasatis (women with piety and impeccable character) are remembered early in the morning and one such figure is Jyestha.

Moral : If one does morning pratikraman he could recite their holy names in it.

17 KABHAI BAROT

Sultan Mohammad Begado, at that time, ruled Gujarat. He ascended the throne at the age of thirteen and began annexing one state after another to the state of Gujarat. He indulged in forced conversions of the defeated populace. Those who refused to convert to Islam were ruthlessly killed. He invaded Junagadh three times from A.D. 1467 to 1469 and defeated Raja

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Mandlik, the King of Junagadh and forced him to embrace Islam. During 1483-84, he invaded Pavagadh and defeated Jaysinh Raval, the ruler of Pavagadh. After Junagadh and Pavagadh, he set his eye on Shatrunjaya Teerth. The victorious Begado was now arrogance incarnate. He had nursed an ambition to conquer Shatrunjaya Teerth and wanted to flatten it completely. He invaded it with a huge army and carnage began. He had thought it would be a cakewalk for him and he would conquer Shatrunajaya and demolish the temples in a jiffy. Who would protect Shatrunajaya against the marauding army of Begado? About a hundred bold Barots (name of a caste) risked their lives to protect Shatrunajaya Teerth and sacrificed their lives fighting the infidels.

Shri **Shatrunjaya Teerth** is rightly considered the chief among all the centres of pilgrimage. The first Teerthankar of Jain religion, Bhagwan Rushabhdev, had sent out a message of non-violence to the world from here. Moreover, the mountain has been sanctified by twenty three Teerthankars. It is difficult to find anywhere in the

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world such beautifully carved idols and temples in such a large number as are found here.

The Teerth (centre of pilgrimage) was not funded by any one King, nor was it constructed with the help provided by King or by hiring labourers to work for it. It is a symbol of the religious sentiment of the people which resulted in its creation. Hence, its importance is uncomparable.

Such a unique place was threatened with external aggression and the very foundation of religion was challenged. Begado was leading the army marching towards Shatrunajaya. The one hundred Barots stood in the way, their hearts full of devotion with only one mission to protect Shatrunjaya from falling into Begado's hands. Old, experienced Kabhai Barot came forward and shouted, "Do not move an inch. We will not allow you to conquer Shatrunjaya. It is not meant to be profaned with your swords. It's a symbol of faith and values so dear to all Jains."

Mohammad Begado laughed mockingly and said, "You are a mere hundred and my army is vast - how dare you challenge me? You are all

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unarmed and have the cheek to challenge me? Don't cross our path or else you will be crushed to death."

Kabhai was undeterred. He refused to budge an inch and said, "Sultan! Retreat at once. If you fight, we will shed our blood and you will have to walk over hundred corpses." King Begado ordered his army to march. Suddenly Kabhai unsheathed his dagger and thrust it into his chest. His lifeless body fell on the ground. Everyone let out a painful cry. The other Barots too followed suit and each one sacrificed his life.

The sight of each dying was so gruesome that Mohammad Begado was moved. The army stood motionless and everyone felt shocked and stunned. Then Begado came forward and said, "O' Barots! Today I stand defeated. My powerful army has been rendered powerless. Mohammad Begado has seen valour on the battle field but never has he seen act of sacrifice of such a magnitude." Ashamed, **he returned without conquering**



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Shatrunjaya Teerth.

Moral : Jains should come under one roof by putting the disputed matter aside if they want to save their teerths.

18 KALAKACHARYA

In the history of Jain religion Acharyashri Kalaksoori-II had a deep insight in religious scriptures. He had a revolutionary outlook and approach. One thing that strikes about his life is his constant insistence on performance of duty. Without expecting any assistance from any quarters, he incessantly struggled to achieve his goal.

Acharyashri Kalaksoori was born to King Virsinh of Dharavas. His mother's name was Sursundari and sister's name was Saraswati. True to her name, Saraswati was the treasure-house of learning and beauty par-excellence. Both of them, the brother and the sister, loved each other immensely. Once when they had gone horse riding they happened to listen to the religious discourse of Acharya Gunakar. As they listened to the sermons of the Acharya, both of them felt

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intense feelings of renunciation and with their parents' consent both accepted initiation. After a long spell of time, Acharya turned Kalak Muni on a visit to Ujjayini city. Sadhvi Saraswati, his sister of pre-initiation life, had come to Ujjayini to pay respect to her brother. Because of her unparalleled charm and beauty, the lustful King Gardabhilla of Ujjayini arranged to abduct Saraswati.

Despite the cries of "O brother! Please help me," Saraswati was abducted. Subsequently Shreesangh (congregation), leading intelligentsia and neighbouring Kings went to the King to persuade him but he paid heed to nobody. At last Acharya Kalaka, the incarnation of strength and power, came out to oppose the King. He undertook the task single-handedly. Acharya Kalak went out of the town and become avyaktalingi. He reached Iran via Punjab. Acharya Kalak marched from there with a massive army of 'shaks' together with 97 'shak' chieftains. King Gardabhilla created many hurdles in their way very proud of his Gardabhi vidya (form of black

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magic). With the power of this Gardabhi black magic he could make such a loud sound that all those who heard would die instantly. In the front row of the battlefield, Acharya Kalak positioned a troop of very accurate and unfailing marksmen. As soon as Gardabhi opened his mouth these marksmen filled his mouth with numerous arrows with the result no sound could come out and ultimately King Gardabhilla was defeated. Saraswati was freed from the palace and was restored to her previous status of Sadhvi (nun) with honour and dignity. Thus, Acharya Kalak earned immortal fame in the history as a promoter of a superior religion - saddharma.

Shri Kalkacharya had a wide following of disciples but was not attached to them. Sometimes he felt that living together with impolite disciples might enhance the karmic bondage; consequently he used to do vihar alone. Such was his unique detachment. When he went to Iran, he had impressed the Kings there with the power of his knowledge



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and learning and brought them to Saurashtra. The story of his life is full of many astonishing incidents. Because of his strong will-power and very impressive personality, he could initiate a change in the political situation. He was a serious thinker and a great philosopher.

For a purely spiritual attitude, he enumerated eight virtues to be essential; viz non-violence, truth, refusal to steal, celibacy, non-possession, abstaining from love and hatred religious meditation and the purest meditation. Whenever one thinks of brotherly love or of justice, the revered name of Arya Kalak comes to mind.

Moral : Jains should take all the trainings necessary for selfdefence as well as for safeguard of teerths and temples.

19 KAMDEV SHRAVAK

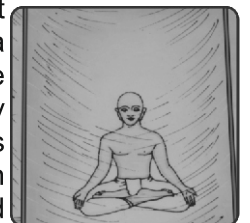
In the ancient volumes of Dvadashangi (a group of 12 anga works) is the life story of Kamdev Shravak, a highly religious-minded and devoted soul. A resident of Champanagari, the affluent Kamdev spent 14 years in the service of religion. Then he thought of renouncing everything and

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spending the rest of his life as an ascetic observing the 12 vows of a Shravak (a Jain layman). One morning he renounced the world and sat in meditation.

Once, Saudharmendra during the course of his address before the religious congregation, praised Kamdev for his deep involvement in religion matters. But a doubt was raised about his commitment to religion. "Will it falter in the face of fear, wealth or a beautiful damsel?" asked a God. It was therefore decided to test Kamdev's commitment. With this intention in mind Saudharmendra then, assumed a hideous form to frighten Kamdev.

He appeared before him and roared, "Give up your meditation, O' Kamdev, or else this dagger will cut you into two. Forget your fake religion and be a householder again. Save yourself from an untimely death." But Kamdev was unperturbed. When God again tried to frighten him and



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threaten him with dire consequences, Kamdev said, "Don't threaten me. I have the bulwark of my religion to protect me. You cannot harm me. I am as steadfast as a rock in my resolution."

The God was furious on being challenged and gave a resounding blow of the dagger but nothing happened to Kamdev. He was serenity incarnate, with no fear written on the face. The God assumed the form of an elephant. He, then, said, "O hypocrite! I will trample you under my feet and crush your bones to powder." So saying the God pounced upon him but Kamdev was calm and composed. At last the God assumed the form of a poisonous, hooded serpent and entwined around Kamdev's body. He said, "Take refuge at my feet and give up religion, else I will bite you at thousand places and my lethal poison will spread through your body. You will die a miserable death." But Kamdev was in his usual self, unperturbed. The serpent entwined itself round his body and began to bite him. The poison caused him intolerable pain, but he did not utter a word. He thought the pain was to the body, not to the soul. He was in deep meditation, thinking of Bhagwan Mahaveer.

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Nothing happened to him.

Who can harm a staunch devotee of Bhagwan Mahaveer? The God failed in frightening Kamdev and in setting him off course from the path that he had chosen. The God finally conceded defeat and realized his folly. He then bowed to Shrivak Kamdev and said, "Forgive me. You are a staunch devotee of Bhagwan Mahaveer. My pride has melted. You are like a sandalwood tree spreading its fragrance everywhere and bestowing coolness on one and all. I accept you as my Acharya, my Guru."

Thus saying, he again bowed to Kamdev and left for his heavenly abode. Kamdev then went to see Bhagwan Mahaveer. Bhagwan, in the presence of his disciples, praised the steadfastness of Kamdev. He told them, "A Shrivak suffers so much. What about you, then? You are all out to conquer the vices that beset the message and were all praise for Kamdev's devotion. Kamdev, at last, became a realized soul.

Moral : One should become staunch follower of the religion internally as well as externally.

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20 KAPIL KEVALI

Jain philosophy very specifically mentions that human desires are as infinite as the sky itself. Muni Shri Kapil Kevali's life is one such rare instance of unique divine light that dawns on a person who abandons worldly life full of infinite desires. Kapil, son of the state minister Kashyap of Kaushambi city, was brought up in indulgence and had therefore remained totally unlettered. On seeing the palanquin of the learned state minister, who had replaced Kapil's father Kashyap, tears rolled down his mother Shridevi's eyes. She exclaimed: "Alas, son Kapil is unlettered!" Mother's tears inspired Kapil to go for studies. He went to Shrivasti for studies but there he fell in love with the maid servant of Shalibhadra. Abandoning studies, he got busy with the problem of livelihood as he had got married. As the time of his wife's delivery approached, the monetary stress became all the more acute.

The King of the city used to give two masa (a unit of weight) of gold to a person who came to him first in the morning to give him blessings. Thus

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with a view to reaching the palace first early morning Kapil left his house by midnight, but suspecting him to be a thief, the town-police arrested him. Kapil narrated his experience in the court and the King said, "You may ask whatever you want, I shall surely grant it."

This was an unexpected surprise, as if an ocean was offered to him when he had asked for a few drops. Kapil therefore decided to reveal his mind in the morning, after careful consideration of the issue. Sitting on a stone seat in Ashokvatika Kapil thought 100 gold coins would be better than two masa gold-coins. That led him to demand one crore gold coins. Meanwhile a worn out leaf fell from the tree and that led him to think that whereas his actual need was that of two masa of gold, begging loses all considerations of propriety. Desires are unending, wants have no limits!

A worn out leaf provided Kapil a very striking reminder of the transient nature of life and world. How ungrateful he was! Driven by strong inducement



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he was about to deprive the very King of his Kingdom who had wished to give him something! He felt that even a thousand gold-coins were of no use to him. Actually he needed two masa of gold. Reflecting still further he thought, "What would I do even with two masa of gold? I should be content with what I have. In contentment lies the real happiness. Greed has a slippery way and yet mind is tempted to go that way." Insatiety is what the mind inhales and it exhales dissatisfaction. At the time when Kapil was deeply engrossed in such thoughts, he had the realization of jatismarangyan (memory of past birth). Attired as a Monk, Kapil went to the King who offered Kapil numerous and varied temptations but despite all the offered, he succeeded in remaining as firm as the Meru mountain.

Once while Muni Kapil was on his way to Chorpalli in the vicinity of Shravasti city, Balbhadra- chieftain of the robbers - asked him to sing a song. Kapil Muni sang the stories of the 8th adhyay (chapter) of Shri Uttaradhyan Sutra in such a touching tone and appealing tune of drupad raag that it cleansed the wickedness of all

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the 500 thieves and they all became averse to worldly desires and pleasures. They underwent initiation under the guidance of Kapil Kevali. This Muniraj Kapil Kevali attained nirvana (emancipation). It is said that the famous Bhadreshvar Teerth in Kutch (Gujarat State) was founded at the hands of such a great Kapil Muni.

Moral : It is easy to supply the necessity of all but it is difficult to supply all the desires of even one person.

21 KARMA SHAH

Tolasha of Chittod had immense agony. The glory and sanctity of Shri Shatrunjaya Teerth that he used to worship every morning was being defiled at the hands of foreigners. The moment Tolashah came to know that Ahmad Sikandar, son of Mohammad Begado had damaged and destroyed the temple (derasar) and other idols of Shatrunjaya Teerth, he became restless. His deep religious faith prompted him eagerly to remove such severe



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impurity in the great pilgrimage place.

Tolashah's 6th and youngest son Karma Shah was a witness to his father's agony and he also began to contemplate as to when they would be able to undertake renovation of the place of pilgrimage and restore its holy sanctity. It so happened that Acharya Ratnassinsoori told Tolasha to forget his agony about Shatrunjaya Teerth because his son was to fulfill that task. At that time Upadhyay Vinaymandan was frequently giving sermons to Karma Shah about Shatrunjaya Teerth. In the meantime, Acharya Shri Vijaydansoorijee arrived at Chittod and he also inspired Karmashah for this task. In 1583, Bahadursha was made the Sultan of Gujarat. Prior to becoming the Sultan of Gujarat, Bahadursha had enjoyed Tolashah's hospitality. On having a small quarrel with his father, Prince Bahadursha had come and stayed with Tolasha for some days and this had resulted in close friendship between Bahadursha and Karma Shah. While going to Gujarat from Chittod, he asked for some money to meet the expenses on way and Karma Shah gave him one lakh rupees

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unconditionally.

As Karma Shah came to know about Bahadursha's installation as the Sultan of Gujarat, he came to Ahmedabad to pay a courtesy call. The Sultan welcomed him with great respect and repaid rupees one lakh that he had borrowed from him. Moreover he inquired if there was anything that he could do for him; since he was greatly obliged to Karma Shah.

Karma Shah told that it was his strong desire to install an idol of his Lord at Shri Shatrunjaya Teerth. In that connection he requested for the royal permission. The Sultan issued an order to that effect. From Ahmedabad, Karma Shah left for Cambay (Khambhat) and informed Upadhyay Shri Vinaymandanjee about the incident and informed him to come to Shatrunjaya Teerth. Karma Shah led the Shreesangh to Palitana . Khan Mazadkhan the suba (governor of a province) of Sorath was reluctant that glory of Shri Shatrunjaya Teerth should be re-established but his displeasure did not prevail against the order of the Sultan.

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Upadhyay Vinaymandanjeer came to Palitana together with an assemblage of monks and nuns. The work of renovation of the original Jinprasad (Jain Temple) was carried out; simultaneously the mammani stone that was retained by chief minister Vastupal was dug out and an idol of Teerthankar Bhagwan Rushabhdev was carved out of the special stone. Karma Shah alongwith Chha'ri palak sangh (a congregation on pilgrimage practicing six special vows) came to Palitana. A grand function was organized for the anjanshalaka (idol installation ceremony) of the Jin pratima (idol) which was deformed by Ahmad Sikandar in the past. This was replaced by the installation of new idol of Bhagwan Rushabhdev. This was the 16th grand renovation function of Shri Shatrunjaya Teerth. It was attended by about 10 Acharyas including Acharya Somajaya.

Moral : One should try to keep good relations with the kings and higher authorities which helps for the safeguard of teerths and temples.

22 KHEMO DEDRANI

The Jain community has always rendered help to one and all in times of crises, especially in

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time of famines when the population suffered from acute scarcity of food grains and women and children died of hunger. The stories of the relief operations undertaken by the Jain have been written in letters of gold. All their wealth and riches are spent to alleviate the suffering of the people and are second to none in providing support to the needy and those in dire state. The poor and the needy would have a free access to their granaries and godowns and therefore the title Shah has been appended to their names.

The shahs (philanthropic Jains) would render all possible help during difficult time when even the Emperors would feel helpless. The bards used to say that the tag 'shah' is put before the name of the Jain, while in the case of Emperor (badshah) it comes at the end. Thus they are superior even to the Emperor.

The Emperor of Gujarat was Mohamad Begado. He called a member of the Jain community from Champner and said, "There is a famine in Gujarat and people are dying, all granaries in the state are empty. I want your shah to provide foodgrains to the people for one year. If

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they fail to do so, the title 'shah' will be withdrawn."

The bhojak of Champaner collected the members of the business community and told them what the Emperor had said. They all agreed to provide grains and clothes for one year to the people of Gujarat. They approached the shahs in towns and cities and started collecting money. They could collect sufficient amount to last for about 190 days. Now they had to plan for the remaining period. Hadala is a small village on way to Dhandhuka. Khemo Dedrani was an ordinary villager. He was on his way to the well with his buffalo. He bowed to the members of the mahajan (the business community). One of them said, "Do you want anything?" Khemo said that he did not want anything but he wanted them to come to his house to enjoy his hospitality. His wife prepared a sumptuous meal and they all had good time at his place.

Khemo came to know about their mission. After obtaining his father's consent, he said, "Why not give me an opportunity to show that I care



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for the suffering people?" I will meet the entire expenditure of one year." All those present were stunned. They thought "How can an ordinary man have the money to meet the expenses for one full year?" To their surprise they discovered that ordinary looking Khemo was fabulously rich and he could feed people not for one year but for 12 years.

The Mahajan, accompanied by Khemo, came to the Emperor's court and informed him about the offer. The Emperor was also wonderstruck. After sometime bullock carts loaded with bags of grains began to reach the Emperor's godowns. The grains were distributed to the starving people and Gujarat could face the crisis posed by the famine, thanks to the philanthropy of Khemo Dedrani. The Emperor was pleased and the title "Shah" was permanently affixed to the Jains. When the Emperor praised Khemo Dedrani, he only said, "I did my duty and Jinshasan (Jain order) has triumphed."

Moral : One should try to serve the country through king as well as the general people.

23 KOSHA

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Kosha, the court dancer of Pataliputra, was alluringly lovely and highly accomplished in fine arts. The elder son of Mahamatya shaktal was Sthulibhadra. He lived with courtesan Kosha in her house. She loved him passionately. After the death of his father, as a result of a conspiracy, he abdicated the title "Mahamatya" and decided to renounce the world. The initiation (diksha) took place in the presence of Acharya Sambhutivijayjee. He was, then, asked to stay at one place, undertake penance and observe austerities, alongwith three other monks. The three monks decided to spend four months respectively in a lion's den, in the snakehole and near a well surrounded by women coming to fetch water. Sthulibhadra asked Acharya Sambhutivijayjee's consent to stay in Kosha's dancing hall whose walls were covered with attractive pictures inflaming passion. The consent was granted. The idea behind this arrangement was to test the self-control of each of the four monks.



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Kosha's joy knew no bounds when she learnt that **Sthulibhadra** was to spend four months in her luxurious palace. She was **agog** to receive her **paramour** and the past memories began to crowd her mind. She, then, cooked delicious food and offered it to him. She would dance gracefully and play on the veena (a musical instrument) and the whole palace would reverberate but Sthulibhadra was immune to what was happening around him. He was deep in meditation, his heart full of devotion and Kosha's beauty held no attraction for him. Kosha realized her folly and asked his forgiveness. Muni Sthulibhadra discoursed on the inner beauty of the soul which, he said, was far superior to the physical one. He also explained to her how worship would make her experience inner happiness which no luxuries could offer. Kosha, then, became a Shravika. Acharya Sambhutivijayjee was highly pleased and said, **"You have attained the impossible!"**

The three other monks spent four months in different places in difficult conditions. On hearing their tale of how they survived the ordeal, Acharya

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said, "difficult", but he had uttered the word "difficult" three times on listening to Sthulibhadra's tale. What it meant was that what he had accomplished was far more difficult than what the other three monks had faced and accomplished. The monks were naturally not pleased and said, "What Sthulibhadra had accomplished was very easy." So saying one of them went to see Kosha. Kosha fed him delicious food and dressed herself so attractively that the monk fell for her. She, then, asked him to go to Nepal and bring her the expensive blanket studded with jewels. The monk went to Nepal and borrowed from the King of Nepal the blanket and gave it to Kosha. Kosha wiped her feet with it and threw it into a puddle of dirty water. The monk was naturally angry as he had borrowed from King of Nepal. Kosha said, "O Muni! You are worried to see your blanket being soiled but you are not worried at the fact that you have sullied your character." Listening to these words of Kosha, the monk realized his folly and returned to the Acharya. He praised the efforts of Sthulibhadra to triumph over the temptation posed

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by Kosha. Rathakar(charioteer and political advisor) of King Nand showed his skill and managed to bring a bunch of mangoes to where he and Kosha were sitting. Kosha then showed her skill by dancing on a lotus placed on a needle tip. Quite a rich literature, in the form of stories, novels etc. about the lives of Kosha and Sthulibhadra, exist in Jain folklore. But Kosha praised Sthulibhadra, whose skill led all the rest.

Moral : It is a great and heroic task to remain celibate while living among the opposite sex.

24 KSHULLAK KUMAR

Kshullakkumar had listened to the preaching of his mother and other monks for years together but the concepts of restraint, renunciation or detachment did not appeal or move him at all. His mother had granted him initiation at a very early age of eight but because of long-standing delusion of mind, his lustful desires did not vanish. In accordance with the promise given to his mother, he had listened to the inspiring sermons of Jineshwar Prabhu (venerable Jina) from her but that too could not move him. After listening to his

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mother for twelve long years when Kshullakkumar bid farewell to his mother she insisted that he should also see the Guru before leaving. The Guru, instead of giving him permission to leave, preached him for twelve more years. Thereafter Upadhyay (spiritual leader) and Gachchhadhipati (a leader of a group of monks) also gave him sermons for twelve years each. But all was in vain.

After 48 years of initiation when he finally left his mother, she gave him the ratnakambal (shawl studded with diamonds) and a ring from her previous worldly life. Shri Kshullak Muni found it difficult to go from house to house for alms. He stopped the practice of going for alms. He thought that as a result of sleeping on a grass bed on the ground, his joints were severely aching. He told his Guru that it would be better to have a cot. Similarly, he asked permission for having a bath with hot water. In the course of time, he could not bear the loch ceremony of removing hair, so he secured permission from the Guru for shaving with a razor. A monk's way of life proved to be an ordeal for Kshullak Muni. Penance and renunciation were too hard for him to follow, for an

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ascetic way of monk's life calls for severe penance. It became impossible for Shri Kshullak Muni to abide by the monk's way of life and finally Kshullakkumar renounced all the formalities of life of restraint and reached the court reverberating to the steps of dancers. It was an unusual sight for him and he was spellbound. Diamond studded shining throne, lovely paintings on the wall, and dazzling light of the golden lamps - amidst this unusual atmosphere, there were the sounds of loud appreciation by the lustful spectators. Kshullak got lost in this atmosphere of worldly joy and excitement.

At dawn, the dancer's feet began to falter because of fatigue; soon her mother Akka, warned her, conveying the message in musical tune, in the words, "Much of the night is gone and very little time remains. Do not be lethargic any more." No sooner did Kshullakhkumar hear these words his conscience awakened. He got an inspiring message in those words. He gifted the ratnakambal to the dancer. Kshullakkumar began to ponder: "So many of my years have passed and

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now it is not desirable to be lethargic for the remaining life." What numerous sermons and preaching of the spiritual teacher could not achieve, a single utterance of Akka could. It succeeded in awakening his sense of penance and restraint.

Kshullak showed his mother's signet-ring to king Pundarik and said, "The name on this signet-ring would tell you that i am the son of your younger brother Kundarik." The king, on recognizing the ring, wanted to hand over his kingdom to Kshullakkumar but he refused it. Finally the king and all others accepted initiation under Kshullakkumar and at last they all attained bliss.

Moral : a single word in time is equal to thousand.

25 KUNDALIYO SHRAVAK

Kundaliyo Shravak was a merchant by profession selling ghee (clarified butter) but he was a deep scholar of religious philosophy. Once he had gone to the town for selling ghee. There he saw that Acharya Ratnakarsooriji, seated in a palanquin, was going towards the royal palace.

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Alongwith the palanquin, numerous scholars were walking on foot and many armed soldiers were walking ahead and they were followed by royal servants.

Kundaliyo Shravak got engrossed in thought at this sight. He was well aware that Acharya Ratnakarsoorjee was a versatile scholar of religious philosophy, logic, grammar, literature, prosody and many other branches of knowledge. No scholar would introduce himself as a scholar before him because they knew fully well that as compared to the versatile scholarship of Acharyashri their scholarship was quite negligible. Shri Ratnakarsoorjee had the unusual ability of providing many consistent interpretations of a single pad (a form of a poem), since he possessed profound intellect and mastery of many sciences. Because of his ability, the king himself had honoured him with the title of "Anekarthvadi"(one capable of interpreting a given sentence in several ways). As a token of their respect and honour for him, the king as well as the people had requested him to come to the royal court in a palanquin rather than by walking.

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Ultimately this led to a slow but regular laxity in his characteristic qualities. One error leads to a thousand. In course of time Acharyashri began to relish the tastiest and sweetest food meant for the king and the chieftains and he also began to use their costliest clothes and he was accustomed to accepting pearls and rubies by way of gifts.

Kundaliyo Shrivak was surprised to see that the Acharya having so great an impact on Jain religion should sit and move in a palanquin and accept valuable gifts and put on costly dress. He wondered if this was fair for a monk committed to the vow of non-possession! But Kundaliyo Shrivak bowed to him and paid his respects. The other day he went to attend the lecture of Ratnakarsooriji and at the conclusion of the lecture; he quoted a gatha (verse) from Updeshmala and requested the Acharyashri to tell its meaning. It meant that money is regarded as the root cause of all evils. It has been renounced by all past sages. If some Acharya keeps such evil-causing money and riches with him, it is needless and useless for him to undergo renunciation and penance.

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Anekarthvadi Acharyashri, with scholarly wisdom, provided various meanings other than the standard one. Kundaliyo Shrivak said politely, "Acharyashri! You have provided wonderful meanings of the 'gatha' but I request you kindly to oblige me by providing its original and essential meaning." So saying bowed down and went out to sell his ghee. He returned the other day. Acharyashri offered almost a new definition and when Kundaliyo went to him the third day he offered a totally new meaning which was never heard before. Thus six months passed in interpreting the 'gatha'.

Kundaliyo came after six months and said, "Acharyashri! All the money that I had earned by the sale of ghee is exhausted to-day. I shall have to return to my village for some urgent work. I repent only one thing that I have not been able to grasp the original meaning of the "gatha". Next day, Acharyashri explained to him the original and correct meaning of the gatha, and Kundaliyo Shrivak



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went home very delighted. It was a moment of awakening for the Acharya and he recited a prayer at Shatrunjaya Teerth which came to be known as Ratnakar Pachhisi.

Moral : One should say to the elders in a polite way without any prejudice then only the positive result comes.

26 KURGADU MUNI

Kurugadu Muni's name is associated with the humane quality of forbearance. Kur means cooked rice and gadua means a kind of vessel. It means that Munishri Kurgadu required a large vessel full of cooked rice in the morning and only then would he feel fit. This habit of his eating in the morning had become an object of mockery among other monks. But he could not go hungry. He had to eat a large quantity of food. Because of his excessive eating some monks called him a glutton.

Four of the sadhus of his gachchha were mahatapasvis (great practioner of austerity). One of these monks observed a fast for one month, the second one for two months, the third one for three

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months and the fourth one for four months. Ignoring the jocular remarks of these sadhus, Muni Kurugadu continued performing all his personal services to them. He never envied the severe penance of other monks; on the contrary he always supported and praised them for their penance.

As he was aware of his own limitations, he used to be ever-willing and ever-ready to perform such selfless service to all the monks that were engaged in penance. He had formed the habit to use all such slander and censure as a method of self-analysis and self-introspection. Thus, his way of life was that of constant forbearance.

Once, on the occasion of Samvatsari (annual ceremony of public confession) Kurgadu Muni returned after collecting the alms (gochari). He put his alms before the monks and politely requested them to have something from the alms if they so desired. As the monks heard his words, they got furious and scolded him bitterly for eating even on a religious day and offering them food so shamelessly on such a day of parva. In their view

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this was shocking and scornful. The furious sadhus spit on his food. However, Kurgadu Muni was not enraged; on the contrary he was embarrassed and puzzled. His sincere request for service had become a cause of anger.

His mind was agitated and he thought, "Oh! What an idleness of mind on my part! A sadhu is supposed never to be idle for a second whereas I am not able to perform even a single minor penance. It is indeed shameful for me that I am unable to perform the penance on a day of parva. I deserve to be hated!"

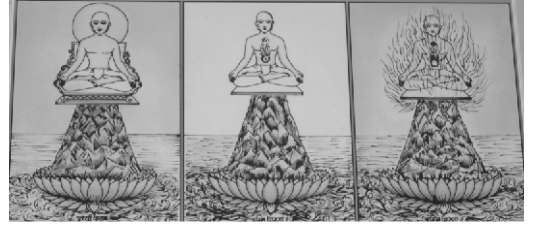
His thoughts continued, "Instead of serving these four monks, I have committed many blunders of serious consequences. How shameful!" And, thus, Kurgadu Muni began to repent. Sincere repentance becomes instrumental in revealing the truth; so Kurgadu Muni realized what was wrong with him and he could understand his own weakness and sadhu maharaj's nobility.



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For the Muniraj this proved to be an occasion for self-probing and self-reproach. In this mood of self-censure and gloom, Kurgadu Muni was lost in purest meditation and **ultimately attained absolute knowledge**. This occasion of his attaining knowledge proved to be a festival for divine celebration. It is said very truly that only a large-hearted and noble person can forget, forgive and forbear.

Moral : Always appreciate all the persons for their smallest good even if we are doing the biggest of it.



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- 1 Shantilal Manilal Vohera- Nadiyad
- 2 Late Bhailalbai Somchand Parivar - Hanshaben - Halol
- 3 Indiraben - Ratilal Shah - Shantinagar (Idarwala)
- 4 Heet Jignesh Narechania - Ahmedabad
- 5 Bhavya-Vipra-Vishal, Arya, Krupali, Jaya, Bhavna, Nitin, Satyavadi - Ahmedabad
- 6 Ranulajee Rajeshkumar, Kotadia (Varsha, Vineet, Saumya-Rajnandgaon)
- 7 Hiya Kunal Shah, Reedita Saunak Verdia
- 8 Subhadraaben Jyantilal Nagardas Shah - Khimmat - Palanpur - Banglore
- 9 Pushti, Devarsh, Dhruvi, Yashasvi, Samarth, Vinod K. Shah, Mumbai - Palanpur
- 10 Susheela Shantilal Sethia - Bikaner, Vinita Jain - Ahmedabad
- 11 Chetna-Umesh-Manilal-Lodaya-Solapur
- 12 Prithy Jain - Pernambut T.N.
- 13 Dilipbhai Vadilal Vasa - Jamnagar
- 14 Khyati Chirag Varan - Ahmedabad
- 15 Vruti Atul Shah (Krishil) - Ahmedabad
- 16 Jas, Mohit, Seema, Piyush, Prerna, Tirth - Ahmedabad
- 17 Ramandeivi Gyanchand Gandhi - Ahmedabad - Sirohi
- 18 Hitesh Mohanlal Sanghavi (Sushilaben, Paresh, Priti, Kinnari, Mansi - Chennai)
- 19 Disha Bhavin Shah - Ahmedabad
- 20 Shrimati Sukhidevi Sumermalji Vanigotha, Bhinmal-Delhi - Heydrabad
- 21 Dr. Kalpanaben Shah - Seva Rural - Jagadiyajji Dr. Dhara
- 22 Dr. Nirav Dr. Nidhi - Bharuch
- 23 Dr. Samir Shah - Pune
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