

108 fable of virtues



108 FABLES OF VIRTUES

By **K. G. Mehta**

Dedicated to the sweet
Memories of my beloved
Wife Late Smt. Sarala K. Mehta

“To work alone you have competence, and not to claim their fruits. Let not the longing for fruits be the motive forces of your action. At the same time let not this attitude confirm you in indolent action”.

SMT. SARALA K. MEHTA

8-3-1940

8-11-2001

HE

R IDEALS:

- (i) Religion is the foundation of life.
- (ii) Service to poor is not less than service to God!



Om Namah Shiwaya
“Prayer to God”

- I. “Oh my lord! Oh my God! You only are my mother, you only are my father, you only are my brother, you only are my friend, and you only are my wisdom. You only are my wealth and you only are everything for me”.
- II. “Oh lord Krishna! I beg of you only that let my life be full of miseries as during miseries only I shall worship and pray you and thereof, I shall have your vision, and once having your vision, I shall not be required to have a vision of this world and thus I shall be liberated from the cycle of birth and death”.
- III. “Om poornamadh Poornamidam,
Purnat Purnamudachyate!
Poornasya poornamaadaaya
Poornam via avusishyte!!”
- It was whose; it is whose now also. What has come out of the whole is also whole.
When the whole is taken out of the whole, the whole still remains whole.
- IV. “ Power behind creation, presentation and destruction!
The ancient one! Support of all the gunas!
Full of (blessed) qualities! Narayani!
Billions of obeisance to you!”

Hanuman Chalisa 1

Doha

With the dust of Guru's lotus feet, I first clean the mirror of my heart and then narrate the sacred glory of Sri Ramachandra, the supreme among the Raghu Dynasty, the giver of four fold attainments of life. (The fourfold attainments are Kama, Artha, Dharma, Moksha i.e. pleasure, wealth, religious-merit and salvation).

Knowing myself to be ignorant, I urge you, O Hanuman, the son of Pavan (wind God)! O Lord! Bestow on me strength, wisdom knowledge, taking away all my miseries and blemishes.

Chaupai

Victory to three, O Hanuman, ocean of wisdom and virtue, victory to the Lord of monkeys who is well known in all the three worlds.

You, the messenger of Ram and repository of immeasurable strength, are also known as Anjaniputra (son of Anjani). and Pavanputra.

Mighty, powerful and strong, as lightning, O Mahaveer, you being the companion of wisdom, dispel dark and evil thoughts.

O! Golden hued hanuman, you look beautiful with earstuds and curly hair.

You hold the mace of lightning and a flag in your hands with the sacred thread of Munja grass adorning your shoulder.

Reincarnation of Lord Shankar and the son of kesari, your lustre and glory are praised by the whole world.

The master of all knowledge, full of virtue and wisdom, you are always eager to serve Lord Ram.

Immersed in listening to hymns on Lord, in your cherished heart do, Ram, Laxman, and Sita dwell.

While you presented your humble form to Mother Sita, you assumed demonic size and burnt the city of Lanka.

In your colossal manifestation, you killed the demons, fulfilling your Lord's mission.

You revived Laxman with the sanjivani (nectarine herb, said to revive the dead) you brought and Sri Ramachandra embraced you in deep joy.

Sri Ramachandra said you were as dear as his brother Bharat and praised you highly.

The Lord of Lakshmi (Sri Ram) embraced you saying that Sheshanaga (the thousand-hooded diving serpent carrying earth's weight on his hoods) sings your glory.

Not only Sheshanaga but also Sanakar, Brahma (the creator of the universe) and other Gods, Narad, Sharada (the goddess of knowledge) and other sages eternally sign your praise.

What to speak of poet and seers! even yama (the god of death), Kuber (the god of wealth), and Digpal (the god (s) of directions) have no words to praise your glory.

You helped Sugriva (brother of Vali who with the help of Rama was crowned as king of Kishkindha) win back his crown with the blessings of Rama.

Vibhishana (brother of Ravana, crowned as king of Lanka after Ravana's death), according your counsel, became the king of Lanka, is known throughout the world.

You swallowed the sun, millions of miles away, taking it to be a sweet fruit.

Keeping the Lord's ring in your mouth, you conquered the mighty ocean (in search of Sita.)

With your grace all the impediments and the difficulties in the world can be overcome easily.

No one can enter Rama's abode without your consent, O sentinel of the Lord.

By your grace, one can enjoy all happiness and one need not have any fear under your protection.

When you roar, the entire worlds tremble, and only you can control your might.

Evil spirits cannot come near your devotees, Lord Mahaveer, who chants your name.

Chanting your name constantly, O Hanuman, one can be cured of all disease and pains.

Hanuman keeps one, who has him in his heart, deed, word and meditation, free from all Troubles.

The ascetic king Sri Ram is the ruler of all and you even accomplished all his missions.

Whoever comes to you for fulfillment of any desire, achieves great fruition in his life.

Your glory is acclaimed in four yugas (satayug, dvapar, treta, and kalyug) and radiance is spread all over the cosmos.

Sri Ram has great affection for you, O Mahaveer, the decapitator of evil spirits and protector of saints.

You are blessed by mother Janki (Sita) to grant anyone with any of eight siddhis and nine nidhis.

You, with the ambrosia that is Ram, are always in the service of Lord Raghupati (king of Raghu dynasty i.e. Ram.)

One can reach Ram chanting your name and become free from suffering of many lives.

After death, he enters the eternal abode (Vaikunth) of Sri Ram and remains a devotee of him, Whenever, taking a new birth on earth.

Other gods may not care to take heed, but one who serves you, O Hanuman, enjoys all pleasures.

Sri Hanuman, the mighty God, remove all the problems and pains of those who invoke you.

Hail, three Hanuman, be as compassionate to me as my Supreme teacher.

He who chants this prayer a hundred times, is liberated from earthly bondage and enjoys the highest bliss.

He, who reads these forty verses as, Lord Shankar witnesses, overcomes all troubles.

Tulsidas (writer of these verses) is an eternal devotee of Lord Hari.

O Hanuman, kindly resides in my heart forever.

Doha

**O Sri Hanuman, the son of Pavana, savior, the embodiment of blessings,
reside in my heart together with Sri Ram, Laxman, and Sita.**

Introduction

For the last about 3 to 4 decades, there is a growing tendency amongst the parents to give a western oriented education to their children. This may be possibly for the sake of status symbol or under the impression of giving better education. The present curriculum in the schools doesn't sufficiently cover topics concerning our ancient heritage. With the result the present generation has remained aloof from getting a glimpse of our culture. My two sons are also not exception to this. However, my wife, being from a very pious and spiritual family, left no stone unturned to give our sons same idea of our ancient culture. She would purchase "Amar Chitra Kathas" in English, which described the ancient folklore in pictorial form. It was an endless purchase of such books in my house, to the extent that one of our rooms was practically converted into a library. Even during the absence of our children, the children from the neighbourhood used to specially come to read these books. We too encouraged the children to read such books.

During our family gatherings I used to quiz the children: Name any five rishis. Who was King Dashratha? Who was the father of Lord Krishna? Etc. But hardly any kid could reply correctly. On the other hand they had a thorough knowledge about Bollywood and Hollywood stars.

After my wife's sad demise, I left for U.S.A. to stay with my younger son. Whilst in U.S.A., I had many opportunities to chat with the youngsters of the Indian origin. I used to ask them: "Which place you belong to?" They used to reply "India", but many of them were not even aware about the state to which they belonged. This was because their parents had never bothered to take them to India. Many youngsters had very little knowledge about Lord Krishna and Lord Rama. Some of these boys had never even heard of the names of Swami Vivekanand or Ravindranath Tagore. Of late, spiritual TV serials such as "Ramayana", "Mahabharat" are being featured. The present generations are doing their schooling in English medium schools, whereas, the serials are in Hindi. So not much interest is being evinced by the present generation to watch these serials.

This sorry state of affairs inspired me to write this book, to give a glimpse of our Indian culture. Our great rishis viz. Vyasa, Valmiki etc. have produced epics like 'Ramayan' and 'Mahabharat'. This book contains 108 spiritual stories taken from such epics and the theme of the story is aptly reflected in the title.

I appeal particularly to the young boys and girls, studying in schools and colleges, to read this book. There is not a page perfect in all respect in them but after reading I hope they will emerge with greater courage, purer mind and stronger will.

I wish I were gifted with greater vision, knowledge and greater ability so that I could have done this work in a better way. I confess that in the evening of my life, writing this book must have left many errors and contradiction. The faults such as may be noticed are entirely mine.

New Bombay

K. G. Mehta.

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Fable 1 : How you lived is more important than how long you lived

Life is but a journey from the “womb” to the “tomb”. What you have achieved during this journey is more important than how long you carried out the journey. Shankaracharya epitomizes an individual who reached the summit of spiritual attainment at a very young age.

He was born on the 5th day of the bright fortnight of the month of “Vaisakh” at a beautiful village “Kalati” in Kerala, on the banks of river Poorna.

There lived a couple named Shivguru and Aryamba. Theirs was an orthodox Nambodari Brahmin family. Though rich, they lived a simple life. Both of them were educated and devoted to God. Their only worry was that they didn’t have an issue even after several years of marriage.

They made vows and supplicated to all Gods. At last they went to “Trichur” for rendering devotional service to God Vrishachaleshwar. One night God appeared in their dream and posed a question to them: “I am pleased with your steadfast devotion. I shall grant your prayer, but there is one question. Do you want only one scholarly son with a short life span, or do you want many dull witted children with long life spans?”

They left every thing to God! The Lord said: “Your son, born as an aspect of a Shiva will emerge on the world stage as an universal teacher”. Pronouncing thus, he disappeared and the couple felt very happy. A son was born to Aryamba, by the full grace of God, on the 5th day of bright fortnight of the month of “Vaisakh”.

When he was just one, he had mastered both Malayali, his mother tongue, and Sanskrit, the language of Vedas. At the age of two, he was able to write and read in these languages. When he was three, he was able to expound upon the epics and the mythology. When he was eight, he had completely grasped all the four Vedas. By the time he was twelve, he had understood all branches of knowledge. At the age of sixteen, he had written commentaries on the Vedanta. At a very young age Shankara had become proficient in Prakrit, Maghadi and Sanskrit languages.

Shankra stayed in “Gurukul” for eight years. By the time he graduated, he had a thorough knowledge of all the scriptures. More than any other subject, he was greatly interested in Vedanta, the most advanced part of the Vedas, the cream of the spiritual truth. This is the highest and the culminating point of all knowledge, knowing which every thing will be known. He has written commentaries on

the three basic texts, namely the Upnishadas, Bhagvatgita and Brahma Sutras, the spiritual treasures of Bharat. The next period of Shankara's life was devoted to the propagation of Vedanta.

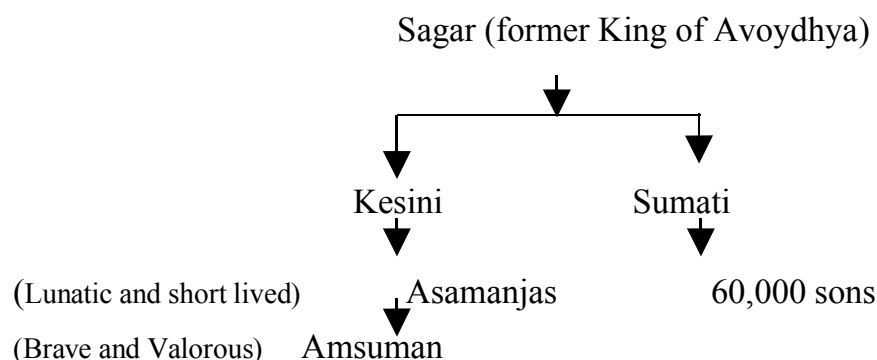
Shankara's plan was to establish four centres in the four corners of Bharat for spreading the knowledge of Vedanta. The founding of Sharda Peetha in the south, the Kalikapitha in Dwarka, in the west and Jyotish Peetha in Badrikashram, in the north was the first step in this direction.

At the age of 30 he had gone around the whole of the Bharat twice. He had traveled from Rameshwaram and Kanyakumari, in the South, to Kashmir, in the north. From Jagannath Puri, in the east, to Dwarka, in the west. Shri Shankaracharya has thus set an example for all of us, on the spiritual gusto one should have in one's life. One's life should shine forth with pious qualities like knowledge, devotion and asceticism. At the age of 32, he had cut asunder all worldly bonds and had attained to the state of Brahman. An ordinary person may perhaps spend 32 years of his life before he is even able to ask, "What is the meaning of life? What is God? Where is God?"

Table 2: Put in “Bhagirath’s efforts” to get your ancestors liberated

“Bhagirath’s efforts” is a word that has been coined to connote the arduous efforts one puts in to secure one’s goal. This term has been derived from King Bhagirath’s name. King Bhagirath’s had performed severe penances to get the Ganges down from *devlok* (heavens) to *prithvilok* (earth). The legend runs as under:

The former King Sagar of Ayodhya had two wives, one named “Kesini” and the other named “Sumati”. “Kesini” had a son named “Asamanjas” who was a lunatic. He was short lived. “Sumati” had 60,000 children. Asamanjas had one son named “Amsuman” who was brave and valorous. The following family chart will make the relations more clear : -



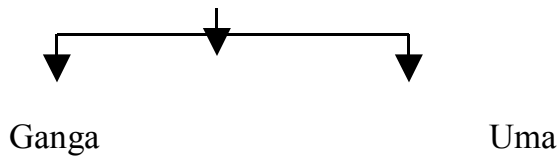
King Sagar performed the great “Aswamedh Yagna”(horse sacrifice). Indra, disguised as a *Rakshash* (ogre), carried away the sacrificial Horse. King Sagar dispatched his 60,000 sons in search of the horse. The horse was traced at the Ashram of “Kapil Rushi”. Indra had, with malafide intent, left the horse here. The 60,000 sons assumed that Kapil Rushi was the culprit. So they demeaned him and leveled allegations against him. Piqued by these allegations, Kapil Rushi cursed the 60,000 sons and burnt them to ashes.

When the 60,000 sons didn’t return, King Sagar dispatched Amsuman. He reached Kapil Rushi’s Ashram and found a heap of ashes. “Garuda”, Sumati’s brother, chanced to be there and briefed Amsuman about the events. He further mentioned that the souls of his cousins could rest in peace only if their ashes are washed by river “Ganga”.

Ganga was then in the heavens and she had to be brought down to make this possible.

“Himayan” the King of mountains was married to Manorama and they had two daughters as shown in the following chart.

Himayan (King of mountains) + Manorama



While Ganga was sent to the Land of Devas to serve the Devas, Uma was married to Lord Shiva.

Amsuman's lineage continued as shown below:

Ansuman

↓
Dileepa

↓
Bhagirath.

As nothing was done to liberate the souls of his 60,000 forefathers, Bhagirath took upon himself the task of bringing down river "Ganga" to wash the ashes of his fore fathers. He did great "Tapas" and pleased Brahma. Brahma granted him a boon through which Ganga would descend. As it was not possible for the earth to withstand the force of "Ganga", King Bhagirath continued his penances to please Lord Shiva, so that Lord Shiva could take the impact of the falling river on his head. Thus blessed by Lord Shiva, Ganga dropped on the head of Lord Shiva, but with an intention to wash away Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva arrested her in his tangled maze of matted locks.

Bhagirath was again disappointed and continued his penance and prayer to Lord Shiva to get river "Ganga" released. Thus Lord Shiva released "Ganga" in "Bindu Saras", where she flowed down in 7 streams, 3 in West and 3 in east and 7th river followed "Bhagirath". On her course "Ganga" damaged the Yagna platform of Rushi "Jahanu". The Rushi took the entire flood in his palm and sipped it off.

"Ganga" disappeared again and "Bhagirath" had to approach "Jahanu". He begged of him to forgive Ganga. "Jahanu" relented and let the Ganga out of his right ear. This way Ganga became Jahanu's daughter. Finally with the holy water of Ganga, King Bhagirath performed the funeral rites of his ancestors and secured their entry into heaven. Thus Ganga is also known as "Bhagirathi".

It is said that those who will read this divine story with devotion will be cleansed of all sins and be endowed with virtue, strength and zeal.

Fable 3: Even slightest anger can prevent your entry into kingdom of God

Any Tom, Dick or Harry can't just barge into the office of the prime minister. In the same way, any one cannot have an access to kingdom of the Lord Vishnu. In this regard there appears a famous story about the Sanatkumars in Srimad Bhagvat.

Once the Sanatkumars decided to visit *Vaikunth* to seek Lord Vishnu's blessings. There are beautiful trees and gardens all-round the kingdom of Lord Vishnu. One has to cross seven forts before one can reach Lord Vishnu. Everyone is equal in the kingdom of Lord Vishnu. There is no bias anywhere. The seven forts mentioned above are as under: -

(1) Lust (2) Ego (3) Greed (4) Attachment (5) Pride (6) Jealousy (7) Anger.

Sanatkumars crossed the first six forts quite easily. They arrived at the gates of the seventh fort viz. fort of Anger. Here the 2 gatekeepers named "Jaya" and "Vijay" prevented them from going further. Sanatkumars requested the two gatekeepers to allow them in. But, the gatekeepers refused saying this were the orders from Lord Vishnu. At this the Sanatkumars turned furious and they picked up a row with the gatekeepers. They cursed the gatekeepers saying that they would be born in the families of "Danavas" for the next three births. When Lord Vishnu learnt of this he came out and tried to pacify the SanatKumars, but he didn't invite them in and neither did he look at them. Lord Vishnu conveyed to them that since they had spread his virtues and knowledge they were very dear to him. But they still need to overcome one weakness viz. anger. Sanatkumars understood the message and went back without being able to gain an entry into the kingdom of God.

Thus cursed by Sanatkumars, "Jaya" and "Vijay" took three births in the family of Danavas. The three births were: -

- (1) Ravan and Kumbhkarna (symbolising lust and sloth)
- (2) Sishupal and Dantvakra (symbolising anger).
- (3) Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu (symbolising greed).

Since "Jaya" and "Vijay" had only performed their duty, Lord Vishnu consoled them: "I shall incarnate to liberate you". The incarnations of the Lord were as under: -

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| (1) Ramavtar | - To kill and liberate “ Ravan and Kumbhkarna” |
| (2) Krishnavtar | - To kill and liberate “ Sishupal and Dantvakra”. |
| (3) Varahavtar | - To kill and liberate “ Hiranyaksha”. |
| (4) Nrusinhavtar | - To kill and liberate “Hiranyakashipa” |

Fable 4: God will turn your saviour if you worship him faith and devotion.

There are different types of “Bhaktas”: some worship God for accomplishments, some for protection in distress, some for “Gyana” i.e. God realisation.

I. Dhruva typified a Bhakta who worshipped God for accomplishments. Manu Maharaj had two sons: i) Priyavrata ii) Uttanpad. Uttanpad had two Queens, “Surichi” and “Suniti”. Uttam was born of “Surichi”, while Dhruva was born of “Suniti”. Once, when Dhruva was playing with his father, “Surichi” refused Dhruva by saying: “Go away from here, you do not deserve the love and affection of your father”. Dhruva returned weeping to his mother, “Suniti”. He complained to his mother. The king was fond of Suruchi, hence Dhruva’s mother was helpless. Expressing her helplessness, she said: “What Surichi has stated is true. Please go perform penances and propitiate ShriHari.” Without waiting for a moment, Dhruva made straight for the Madhuvan forest, near the banks of Jamuna. On the way, he met Rishi Narad. The great Rishi gave Dhruva a mantra: “Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya”.

Dhruv commenced incessant chanting of this mantra in the dark recesses of the forest. He did so forsaking all kinds of fear and overcoming all temptations. Pleased with his devotion Shri Hari, finally, gave him a darshan. Blessing him, Shri Hari asked him to return back to his Kingdom.

Dhruv was returning home. Here, Dhruva’s father, who was out on a hunting expedition, met Rishi Narad, who informed the King about the turn of events. The King met Dhruva on the way and carried him to the palace in a grand style. The King nominated Dhruva as the crown prince and the entire city rejoiced at Dhruva’s homecoming.

II. Draupadi typified a Bhakta who sought the Lord’s refuge while in distress. Draupadi was the daughter of King Drupada. She was gifted with a strange, mystic beauty and she was an ardent devotee of Lord Shri Krishna.

When Dushashan, under orders of Duroyodhana, seized her and tried to disrobe her in an open assembly, she lifted up her heart to Krishna. She cried to him in affliction: - “O Keshav! O Govind! O Keshav! O Govind! O Lord! O destroyer of all afflictions, save me. O Mahayogi! I have taken refuge at thy feet, please come to my help! Guard me in this hour of my deep distress!”.

And Krishna heard his bhakta's cry. He performed the "Vastra Lila". Dushashana removed one piece of sari, but found another covering Draupadi. He removed the second sari, but found a third already there. So a veil after veil was removed, but Draupadi was under protection. One sari after another was removed in endless succession, until Dushashana fell down tired, exhausted. Draupadi's honour was saved. Krishna became the guardian of his Bhakta.

III. Bhakta Prahlad typified a "Gyani" Bhakta i.e. one who had realised the presence of God everywhere: -

Bhakta Prahalad was the son of the king of "daityas", Hiranyakashipu. The king proclaimed: "I am the Lord and every body should worship me. No one should worship Hari".

But the boy Prahalad was a Haribhakta. Prahalad said: "Father! Hari is the real Lord and I shall worship him alone."

The infuriated King asked: - "My boy! Where is Hari?"

Prahalad replied: - "Father! I see Hari before me, behind me, above me, around me! Hari is everywhere!"

The king then ordered the boy to be flung in the midst of serpents. But they did not harm him! He saw Hari in them.

The boy was, then seized and thrown in front of an elephant. But the elephant refused to trample the boy! He saw Hari in the elephant too.

He was thrown down from the mountaintop. He landed on the earth unharmed. He saw Hari pervading the sky and the earth.

He was flung into the sea but the sea waves refused to drown him! He saw Hari in the undulating motion of the sea waves!

He was thrown into blazing fire. But it would not burn him. He saw Hari in the blazing fire.

He was tied to a searing hot pillar. Hari, taking the incarnation of "Nrusingh"(half- man, half-lion), emerged from the pillar and killed Hiranyakashipu.

Bhakta Prahlad was thus a "Gyani" Bhakta who saw presence of God everywhere

Fable 5: “Mother’s Love” is peerless.

There are many types of relationships viz. that of a husband and wife; father and son; mother and son; brother and sister. Each relation has its own importance. But “Mother’s Love” is unique, and it is pure and selfless. The following few examples will clearly bring out this:

- (i) Once a huge fire broke out in one of the skyscrapers in Mumbai. The residents of the building started running helter-skelter. The residents on lower floors started jumping out from the window. The fire brigade people rushed to the building immediately, but by now the fire had engulfed the entire building. With great difficulty they rescued all but 4 people. On the top most floor a couple and their two children were trapped. There was no way out for them but to jump out from the window upon the ladder of the fire brigade. While the mother and her son 7 years were trapped in one room, the father and the other son aged 5 years were trapped in another room. The firemen called out: “ The fire is spreading rapidly and only one person from each room can be rescued. So jump quickly.” The mother, without even a moment’s hesitation, threw her son down. She thought that she had lived enough while her son was still young. In the other room, the father and the other son were trapped. The father jumped out leaving behind his son thinking: “If I survive I can remarry and beget another son”. Here the intention of mother was crystal clear. She was an epitome of sacrificial love.
- (ii) About 30 years back an earthen dam burst in Morbi, Gujarat, causing a furious flood in the city. A monkey and its small kid were trapped on a tree. There was water all around and there was no way the monkey could escape. The water level was rising at a break-neck speed. The monkey placed the kid on its back. As the water level kept rising, the monkey with its kid kept on jumping on the higher branches of the tree. She reached the top most branches but there were no signs of water level receding. The monkey then put the kid on her head and allowed herself to drown in the water. By the time the water levels receded, the mother monkey was dead though the child survived. What a fine example of mother’s love even in the animal world.
- (iii) The following is a letter from a blind widowed old lady, located in a remote village in Gujarat, to her young son studying in a college in Ahmedabad. This letter itself is a very expression of mother’s love.

My dear Chi. Ramesh,

At the outset I pray Almighty to bless you with all the happiness in life. May you enjoy a very healthy and a prosperous life. May you live long. Ever since you have taken admission in a college in Ahmedabad, I have been regularly sending you money orders of Rs. 25/- every month to meet your expenses. My heart melts in joy on seeing your signature in the money order acknowledgements. I have addressed many letters to you during the last four years but have not received even a single reply. I presume you must be keeping very busy. My dear Ramesh! You should not overstrain yourself lest it should affect your health.

As you know, when you were hardly 10 and I about 40, your father passed away. This development was a bolt from the blue for me as there was no earning member in the family. I was in a state of trauma and shock. I do not even recollect as to who performed the last rites of your father. After few days when I recovered from the shock, I found you lying by my side running a high fever. I borrowed some money from the neighbours and took you to a doctor and by God's grace you recovered soon.

It was your father's wish that you receive a good education so that you don't live a penurious life like us. To fulfil his aspirations I took up work in some households as a maidservant. With a great deal of struggle I could manage to get you through your matriculation examination.

Since you were keen upon pursuing higher studies, I decided to work hard and took up some more work so as to meet your college expenditure. I have left no stone unturned to see that all your needs were met. I had to skip my meals at times to buy clothes for you. I continued to carry on with my job even when I was running high fever and suffering from backache.

For the last few months my health has further deteriorated. I have had a paralytic attack and both my legs are dysfunctional. My vision has also been impaired. I feel that I may not live long.

Recently I learnt from our neighbours that you have graduated and married one of your college mates. I would have loved to see you along with your wife. But it may not be in my good fortune to bless both of you. You will, therefore, accept my blessings through this letter. I pray God that you always remain happy and not even a ray of misery falls in your married life.

Chi Ramesh! My only wish is that you visit our house as soon as you receive this letter. I may not live long so please do rush. In case you arrive after I pass away, collect the keys from our neighbours , pick your father's photo from our house, and do venerate his photo daily.

Your loving mother,

Kanta

(N.B.: - But the son never visited his native village and house still remains closed)

(iv) One day Naradji arrived in Mathura and instigated Kansa telling him that Vasudev had taken him for a ride. He revealed to him that Devaki's eight child had been smuggled out of the prison cell and was presently in Gokul.

Kansa was now busy devising a plan to wipe out Krishna. He was advised to perform a "Yagna" and invite Nandbaba along with Sri Krishna. Accordingly, Kansa ordered Akrur to visit Gokul and invite Nandbaba along with his two sons, so that they could be wiped out.

Akrur arrived in Gokul. When Yashodaji learnt of this invitation she became suspicious. She pleaded with Nandbaba. "If Kanaiya leaves, Gokul will be a deserted place. Cows will stop grazing without Kaniya. They do not even drink water without Kanaiya.If you are keen upon visiting Mathura, you may do so alone. But I will not allow Kaniya to leave me. Who will take care of him? He is very shy by nature. He does not eat unless I feed him".

She continued further: "Akrur looks to me like a messenger of "Yam". I shall not allow Lala to be taken away from me under any circumstances". Nandbaba tried convincing her saying that Kanaiya was now a grown up lad. But, Yashodaji struck to her arguments.

Every body slept, but notYashodaji. She sat at doorway weeping. She was praying that the sun should never rise so the question of Lala going to Mathura next day morning does not arise.

Lala in the meantime woke up. Not finding Yashodaji in the bed, he too came out. On seeing Yashodaji he hugged her and said " Maiya! I can't get sleep without you. I shall definitely come back as soon as my task is finished" But Kanaiya, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, didn't specify a time frame for his return.

They both went to bed. Yashodaji sung devotional songs. Lala slept but Yashodaji kept awake the whole night. Next day morning, when Akrur was leaving Gokul along with Lala, Yashodaji fainted. How tender and caring is mother's love!!

Fable 6: It is easier to preach but difficult to practise

Jivraj, a shepherd and Atmaram, a Brahmin were bosom friends. Both of them had a son each who in turn were very close, much like their fathers. Both were very obedient by nature and always brimming with vim and vigour. At about 22 they had started sharing most of the responsibilities with their fathers. One day, “Jivraj’s” son had gone to the jungle to graze their sheep. Here, a snake suddenly bit him and he died before he could be given any treatment. When “Jivraj” learnt about his son’s sudden demise he practically turned insane. His relatives arrived and consoled him, but he was unconsolable. The next day his friend “Atmaram” returned from his outstation tour. As soon as he came to know of the details he rushed to his friend’s house. He gave him a long winding advice, which ran as under:

- 1) Look here, Jivraj! Lives if like a flowing stream, wherein two particles of sands meet, move on together and separate after some time. They never meet again, and even if they meet they would not recognise each other. In much the same way in this “Sansar” we come together impelled by our past “Karmas”. As soon as our *runanubandhan* is over we separate. Your *runanubandhan* with your son was over and hence he has been separated from you.
- 2) Jivraj! Here is another analogy. “Sansar” is akin to a passenger train, wherein, the Engine could be compared to “Parmeshwar”, and the passengers to “Jivatma”. As the passengers detrain at their destinations, likewise we humans too have to detrain when we reach our destinations. So grieve not.
- 3) Life is like a flower of rose. The petals start withering and falling off after spreading their fragrance. In the same way we too fall off on completion of our tasks.
- 4) Sansar is like a drama wherein the actors go behind the curtain as soon as their roles are over. Similarly, we too have to, one day or the other go behind the curtains as soon as our pre-determined roles in this life are over.
- 5) Life is two-sided like a coin. Birth and death are but the two sides, two faces of life. While birth is beginning of one journey, the death is beginning of next journey. Thus the journey goes on. It is the body, which gets consigned to flames. The “Atma” or the “Chaitnya” is eternal, immortal and unborn. “Atma” never dies and is never born. It simply continues its journey by changing the body. The atma changes the body just as we change our clothes. Your son’s soul might be already on its way to acquire another birth. So your crying and weeping has no meaning.

6) Further more Jivraj!

- a) Can you stop the Sun from rising and setting?
- b) Can you stop the earth from revolving?
- c) Can you stop the moon from shining?
- d) Can you stop the tides and ebb in the Sea?
- e) Can you stop the winds from blowing?
- f) Can you stop the onset of various seasons?
- g) Can you stop the clouds from raining during monsoon?
- h) Can you stop the stars from twinkling?

No! My dear Jivraj, we simply cannot do any of these things, as these are the creation of God, the supreme power that has created this “Brahmand”. Similarly births and deaths are also creation of God! And we simply cannot do any thing. Your shedding tears and crying will not bring back your son, so please stop crying and keep courage.

As the luck would have it, after a few days “Atmaram’s” young son drowned in a river and was found dead. When “Atmaram” learnt of this he was shocked. He was terribly aggrieved. He began lamenting. People came and consoled him but he continued with his sobbing. Hearing this sad news, his friend “Jivraj” came to console him. He reminded him: “Oh! Atmaram only few days back you told me not to cry or weep on a death.” Atmaram replied: “Jivraj”! That was your son, while this is my son”. Jivraj appreciated his sentiments, he nevertheless asked him to display fortitude. Atmaram enquired: “ It is O.K.to speak so but can you please tell me as how to display fortitude.” Jivraj countered: “ In the same way as you explained to me a couple of days back”.

Friends, this is not “Jivraj’s” and “Atmaram’s”story but our story as well. We attend funeral in the morning, some one’s birthday party later in the day, and a marriage reception at night. This is our society; it is only those and only those who have to bear the pain, who have suffered a loss can appreciate this.

Fable 7: Equanimity is the foundation of all religion

The Pandava's stipulated period of exile in the forest was drawing to a close. Yama, the Lord of death wanted to meet his son Yudhistir and test him. So he assumed the form of a Yaksha and entered into a lake. The Pandavas were roaming in the forest in search of water. When they came near the lake, the Yaksha killed them one by one. Only Yudhisthir was left. When he arrived at the lake he found all his brothers lying dead.

A voice then called out saying that all his brothers had been killed because they did not heed his words and he too would meet the same fate if he didn't reply to his questions. Yudhistir realised that these was a "Yaksha". He agreed to reply all the questions. The voice rapidly put one question after the other.

(i) "Yaksha": - What makes sun shine every day?

Yudhistir replied: - "The power of Brahman"

(ii) "What rescues a man in danger?"

"Courage is a man's saviour in dangers"

(iii) "By study of which science does man becomes wise?"

"It is by association with the saintly and the sagacious, does a man become wise and not through study of any science"

(iv) "What is more nobly sustaining than the earth?"

"The mother who brings up the children is nobler than and more sustaining than the earth"

(v) "What is higher than the sky?"

"The father"

(vi) What is flitter than the wind?"

"Mind"

(vii) "What befriends the traveler?"

"Learning".

(viii) "Who is the friend of one who stays at home ?"

"The wife"

(ix) "Who accompanies the man in death ?"

"Dharma".

(x) "Which is the biggest vessel ?"

"The earth"

(xi) "What is happiness"?

“The result of good conduct”.

(xii) “What is that, which if abandoned makes a person beloved of all?”

“Pride”

(xiii) “What is that, which if lost brings joy and not sorrow?”

“Anger”

(xiv) “What is that which if given away makes a person rich?”

“Desire”

(xv) “What is the greatest wonder in the world?”

“Every day, people see creatures dying and yet, those who remain, seek to live for ever.”

Yudhistir had answered all the questions correctly. The Yaksha then said: - “Yudhistir, I am pleased with you, please tell me now, which amongst your four brothers you would like to revive?” Yudhistir replied: - “I would like “Nakul” to be revived”. Yaksha asked: “Why do you prefer Nakul. He is only your step brother, whereas, Arjun, Bhima and Sahadeo are your own brothers?”

Yudhistir replied: “My father had two wives, “Kunti” and “Madri”. I am the surviving son of Kunti, so she is not completely bereaved. In order to have equanimity, which is the foundation of all religion, I preferred Madri’s son Nakul. The Lord of death, Yamaraj, the father of Yudhistir who had come disguised as “Yaksha” was pleased and revived all the brothers. He blessed Yudhistir that his enemies would not detect him during his one year of hiding.

Table 8: No harm can befall those who are loved and blessed by God !

i) There was a small village in Saurashtra. In one of the years, there were no rains even though the monsoon had set in. The cattles were dying, many cattle's were being sold to the slaughterhouses, the fields were getting parched, the women folk of the village had to trek 3 to 4 kilometers daily to fetch a pitcher of water, the trees had started drying. Some families had to skip their meals for days together. Some people even started migrating.

The village head, therefore, decided to arrange a 72-hour prayer meeting to please the "rain God". Accordingly, the people congregated and a mass prayer was started in the local temple. At the end of seventy-two hours signs of rain could be seen. The skies became cloudy, the winds started blowing and there was a cold breeze all around. The people of the village were overjoyed. In the mean time a lightning struck the temple 3 –4 times.

The president of the panchayat opined that, peraphs, there was one sinner amongst them because of whom all the remaining could face death. He therefore, suggested that all should one by one, go to the opposite tree, touch it and return back. Lightning would strike the person if he is a sinner.

Every body liked the idea. Those present started implementing the idea. In this manner, 39 out of the group of 40 had gone to the tree and returned safely. "Gopal" was the last man and he was now scared. But he had no choice, so, he started walking towards the tree.

It, however, so happened that as soon as "Gopal" reached the said tree, the lightning struck the temple. The temple collapsed and all of the 39 people inside were trapped and killed. "Gopal" who was near the tree had a lucky escape by God's grace. How can any harm befall upon the person who is blessed and loved by the God! Gopal was the Lord's beloved, thus he was saved.

ii) One day, Sage Durvasha visited Duryodhan along with his one thousand disciples. Knowing the Sage's short temperament, Duryodhan carefully attended himself to all the matters connected to the reception of the guests. So lavish was he in his hospitality that the Sage was truly gratified and asked Duryodhan to seek a boon.

Duryodhan felt greatly relieved at having come so safely out of the ordeal and when Sage asked him to seek a boon, it occurred to him that here was an opportunity of letting loose

the irritable Sage on Pandavas, who had been exiled to the forests for 13 years. He said: - “ You have blessed us, by accepting our hospitality, but our brothers Pandavas are in forest and need your blessings.” He suggested a similar visit to them, knowing fully well that all the food prepared would have been eaten and none would be left for unexpected guests.

The Sage, who always wanted to test the people, consented.

Duryodhan felt that Pandavas, who led a hand to mouth existence in the forests, would not be able to feed or entertain the sage and his one thousand disciples. They would thus incur some dreadful curse. This would give him greater joy than any benefit he could have asked for himself when Sage offered a boon.

Sage Durvasha thus visited the Pandavas with his one thousand disciples. The Pandavas were resting after their mid-day meal. The brothers welcomed the Sage, saluted and honoured him. The Sage then said: - “We shall be back soon after our bath in the river. Please keep our meals ready by then, for we are very hungry”.

As a result of the austerities of Yudhistira at the beginning of their stay in the forest, the Sun God had given him the Akshayapatra, a wonderful vessel that had a never-failing supply of food. In making the gift, the Sun God had said, “Through this I shall place at your disposal, for your 12 years of exile as much food as you require for your daily consumption. Not till every one has been served and Draupadi herself has taken her share, the vessel will become empty for the day”.

Accordingly, the Brahmanas and other guests would be served first. Afterwards, Pandavas would take their meals. Finally Draupadi would have her share. When Durvasha reached the place, all of them, including Draupadi, had eaten their meals and so the vessel was empty and denuded of its powers for the day. Draupadi was, therefore, greatly upset and perfectly at a loss to find food for the sage and his 1000 disciples who had gone for their bath. In the kitchen she prayed earnestly to Lord Krishna to come to her aid in this hour of crisis and relieve her from the wrath of the sage.

Lord Krishna at once appeared before her and said: - “I am famished, get me some thing to eat and we shall speak of other things later”. She cried out in confusion: - “Alas! Why do you try me thus, oh Krishna? The power of the vessel given by the Sun God is exhausted for

the day and I have nothing to serve you. Moreover, the sage Durvasha and his party will arrive now at any moment and as though this was not enough, you have come at this juncture to say that you are also hungry”.

Shri Krishna said: - “I am terribly hungry and want food and not excuses, please fetch the vessel and let me see for my self”.

Draupadi gave him the vessel and picked a tiny bit of cooked vegetable and a grain of rice sticking to the rim of vessel. Shri Krishna ate them with satisfaction, accepting them as Sri Hari, the soul of universe. With this Durvasha and his 1000 disciples also felt well fed and full and were not able to eat any thing more and told Bhima who had come to the river: “ We have taken our meals and tell Yudhistir to pardon us. The party then went away. Thus Lord Krishna rescued the Pandavas from the wrath that they would have otherwise received from Sage Durvasha.”

Table 9: To achieve self-realization, where and how you are placed is not important; but it is essential that your mind always remain in its source.

i) One day a spiritual aspirant approached Raman Maharishi and enquired with him: - “Where can I find all I want, so that I may devote all my time for meditation and self-realization.” Maharishi replied: “ There is nothing external which is not also internal. The mind is all. If the mind is fickle, then even solitude becomes a market place. There is no use closing your eyes. What is required to close mental eye and you will get what you require.”

True renunciation is “closing the mental eye”. It is the inner attitude of the mind. He illustrated this with the example of “King Janak”, who lived in a palace but regarded nothing as his own. He was a man of true renunciation. One day, a ochre robed “Sanyasin” came to him, having renounced the world outwardly. Seeing Janak surrounded by pomp and grandeur, the “Sanyasin” thought to himself: “How could this man living, as he does, in the midst of luxury, have attained to God?”

Just then, there was a loud hue and cry and the people were shouting that the entire palace was on fire! Immediately, “Sanasyin” ran out to save his loincloth, which he had washed and hung on a rope to dry. When returned, he found Janak sitting there unconcerned and was very much astonished.

The Sanyasin said: “Oh! King did you not hear that palace was on fire?” How is it, then that you sit here, as though nothing has happened ?”

King Janak quietly replied: “What is mine is with me. It cannot be burnt by any outer conflagration. True renunciation is detaching oneself from the world of name and form.”

The man of renunciation, having rid himself of “ego”, allows his heart to flow in a ceaseless stream of sympathy to the poor and broken ones, to the forsaken and forelorn, to birds and animals.

ii) Here is another illustration, which stresses the importance of keeping the mind in its source.

There were two brothers, Motilal and Chhotalal. Both yearned to have darshan of Lord “Vithoba” on the Gokulasthami day. Both of them started together from their village. Nightfall had set in and it was raining heavily also. On the way they came across a house, where a woman of disrepute resided. Chhotalal suggested to Motilal that they could spent the night here and leave

early in the morning. But Motilal did not agree. He left the place immediately and arrived at the temple by “Aarti” time. But his mind was full of lascivious thoughts. He imagined that Chhotalal was perhaps enjoying himself with the woman of disrepute. Thus though he was at a temple doing “Arti” his mind was with that woman of disrepute. On the other side Chhotalal quietly slept in one corner of the house. He was constantly praying to “Lord Vithoba” without any amorous thoughts. He was thus blessed with a darshan of Lord Vithoba. But his elder brother, Motilal who was in the temple right in front of the image of Lord Vithoba could not get a darshan, as his mind was with that woman of disrepute.

Fable 10: The others should not be considered apart from you but as a part of you

Shri T. L. Vaswani, popularly known as beloved Dada, was the very picture of renunciation till the last day of his earthly life. Having renounced all, he announced the Eternal. And he looked in all, as his own self. He regarded nothing in this world as being separate from him and endeavored to bring joy into the lives of those who came to him for help, healing and wholeness. Their happiness was his happiness; their sorrow was his sorrows. Every creature was, to him, an image of the king of beauty.

One morning, beloved Dada spoke to his devotees about the Atma, the spirit. He said, “The true man is the Atman not the body. And the soul (Atma) cannot be destroyed. Death is an event not of the soul, but of the body. The soul is deathless, indestructible, and eternal. It is the body that dies. It is the form that perishes. The soul ever lives. So be not afraid of death, nor grieve over the passing away of your dear ones.”

Beloved Dada delivered this discourse in the morning. In the course of the day, he was by the side of a mother who was caught with grief and sorrow, due to sudden death of his only son in an air-crash. She wept with unending tears of sorrow. As beloved Dada met her, he too shed tears. Later, some of his devotees put him the question: “ This morning you taught us that we must not grieve over the passing away of our dear ones, for there is no death. Our dear ones live in the life undying. How is it that you shed tears as you sat by the side of a bereaved mother?”

Beloved Dada answered: “ As I sat by the side of the mother, I felt I was the mother!” What nobility! He considered others as not apart from him, but as part of him.

Fable 11: Life is governed by destiny

Gautami was an old lady. A snake bit her only son. Through her “Yogic” powers she summoned the snake and grilled him: “ For what crime of his have you killed my son?” The snake replied: “ I am not at fault in this case. It is true that it is in my nature to bite, but I am helpless. The God of the death inspired me to bite your son and I did so. Therefore, the God of death is responsible for your son’s death, and not me. I have committed no transgression in biting your son”.

Gautami then approached Yamaraj, the God of death and asked him: “Why did you inspire the snake to bite my son?” Yamaraj replied: “ Neither me nor this snake are responsible for your son’s death. I just obeyed the orders of the “Kal”. The “Kal” motivates what ever is happening here in this universe. Sun, Moon, Air, Indra, Fire, Sky, Earth, Rain, River, Ocean all are “Kal’s” creation. And “Kal” alone annihilates everything. “Kal” alone inspires men to act in the way, which they do. The entire world is under the influence of “Kal”, therefore, it is not fair that you blame me or the snake.”

In the meantime, “Kaldev” arrived there and clarified that neither him nor the snake nor “Yamraj” were responsible for her son’s death. The past deeds of your son alone inspired us to kill him. The past deeds of a person manifest in the form of *svabhav* (nature), *vasna* (desire), *samskaras* (impressions) etc.. The deeds of the past lives are thus known as *prarabdha* (destiny) and the efforts, deeds of the present life are known as *pursarth*. Today’s *pursarth* becomes tomorrow’s *prarabdha*. Your efforts today will shape your destiny in future. If a person dies because of snakebite, accident, fire, hunger, murder, thirst, disease etc. it is outcome of his destiny alone.

Fable 12: Cultivate firm faith for the almighty

The following illustrations will bring out the theme more clearly:

(i) In the good old days, when T.V. was not in vogue, the spiritual leaders propagated the knowledge of our scriptures by holding discourses at prominent spots in town and cities. In one such village a so-called Brahmin was narrating a story from the “Ramayana”. The story went thus: “The monkey army was constructing a transoceanic bridge between Lanka and Bharat. The monkeys wrote Lord Rama’s name on the boulders and the boulders would float when thrown in the waters.” The Brahmin continued, “In the same way, we too can cross this worldly ocean by chanting Lord Rama’s name.”

A milkmaid was one amongst the audience who heard this discourse. The milkmaid would deliver milk to the nearby village on the other side of the river using a ferry. It occurred to her that if by uttering Lord Rama’s name one could swim across the worldly ocean, then one could likewise cross this village river as well. She accordingly started uttering Lord Rama’s name while crossing the river and Lo! Behold she could walk over the waters. The said Brahmin learnt of this event and he too decided to cross the river by uttering Lord Rama’s name. But, since he had no faith in what he had preached, he requested some of his followers to tie a rope around his back and instructed them that if he is found drowning he should be immediately pulled out. But as he was lacking in faith, the moment he jumped into the river he started drowning.

ii) Once Saint Namdeo’s father was required to go on a tour. Namdeo was very young then. The Lord’s image was being worshipped daily at their house. In order that the routine shouldn’t break, Namdeo’s father issued instructions to Namdeo as regards the rituals to be followed. He specifically mentioned that an offering of *panchamrut* should be made. The young son followed the rituals. But when he found that God was not drinking the *panchamrut*, he was very much upset. He started crying and entreating with the Lord. When all his efforts had drawn a blank he prayed: “Oh My Lord! Oh My God! My father would scold me if you don’t accept the *panchamrut*. I, therefore, once again request you to drink the *panchamrut*. And if you still refuse I shall bash my head against the floor and give up my life.” God, finally, had to but acquiesce to this innocent but firm devotee’s request. The Lord started sipping the milk. The son then requested the Lord that he should leave behind some milk as *prasad*. The Lord complied with this request too. How great is the glory of faith and devotion!

(iii) In a town, on the bank of river Ganga, there was a temple of Lord Shiva. As per the legend, those who worshipped Lord Shiva in this temple on the Mahashivratri day, after taking a dip in the river Ganga, were purged of all sins; Lord Shiva blessed them.

Though the legend said so, Mother Parvati noticed that Lord Shiva would not actually bless the multitude of devotees who came here. Parvatidevi was surprised and enquired from Lord Shiva as to the reason for his not blessing the devotees. Lord Shiva explained that though the devotees came here and chanted his name-they lacked faith and devotion. Parvatidevi prayed to the Lord to actually demonstrate this to her.

Lord Shiva and Mother Parvati then decided to visit the place in a disguise. Parvatidevi transformed herself into a young girl, 16-17yrs of age and Lord Shiva transformed himself into an old man with a white beard and a stick in his hands. Both of them mingled with the devotees and walked to the temple after taking their bath. On the way the people joked about this unmatched couple of an old man and a young girl. Lord Shiva brought this bantering to the notice of Parvatidevi.

Lord Shiva now decided to test his devotees. Lord Shiva, in the form of an old man, got himself trapped in a slushy pit and asked Parvatidevi to stand by and request the people to save him.. People just listened to the cries of the young girl but nobody came to their rescue. Some people did show their willingness and held out their hand to help the old man. But, they too backed out when Lord Shiva told them that they would be able to extricate him only if they had committed no sins. Otherwise, there was a danger of they falling in the pit. On hearing this, every body ran away even though they had supposedly washed away their sins by taking a dip in the river Ganga.

After a few minutes a young person arrived and offered to the rescue the old man. He said: "I have committed numerous sins but all have been washed away by a dip in the holy Ganges." He thus gave his hand and pulled out the old man. Lord Shiva and Parvatidevi then disappeared. Lord Shiva concluded: "Devi, you have seen for yourself as to how many people who come here chanting my name do so with full and unbound faith"

Fable 13: Giving up attachment and hatred is superior to donating or cramming scriptures

There was a farmer who had dug up a well in his farm. He planned to perform a religious ceremony, before the well water could be used for watering the crops. He, therefore, approached a *purohit* to find out an auspicious day and time for the ceremony. The *purohit* gave him a suitable date and time after consulting the almanac.

In the evening, when the farmer went to the well he found two dogs had fallen into the well and as such the well water was emanating very foul smell. He, therefore, again approached the *purohit* for some solution. The *Purohit* instructed him to remove some 20 to 30 buckets of soiled water and add about 1 to 2 buckets of Ganga water, so as to purify the soiled water. The farmer, accordingly, removed 30 to 40 buckets of water, which was much more than the 20 to 30 buckets specified by the *purohit*. But to his surprise the foul smell still persisted. So he once again approached the *purohit* and said he had done more than what was told to him but the foul smell persisted. The *purohit* then enquired whether he had removed the carcasses of dead dogs? The farmer replied in negative.

In the same way, if we give donations or read scriptures without getting rid of *rag* and *dvesh* (Attachment and Hatred) it will not serve any purpose.

Fable 14: Even a little bit of ego can prevent your salvation

King Bharatuhari left his kingdom and family and proceeded forth to seek salvation. He undertook very arduous penances to please the Lord. He wandered about in the Jungles and from one temple to another with only a piece of loincloth around him. Most of the time he passed on the banks of the river meditating on his Self. He would even skip his meals at times. He thus moved from place to place, worshipping Lord Shiva with total devotion.

Looking to this Parvatidevi enquired: “O Lord! This devotee of yours is worshiping you for last so many years without success.” Lord Shiva said: “Devi! Let us personally go to him and find out as to what is still lacking in his worship.”

Thus both Lord Shiva and Parvatidevi transformed themselves into an old man and an old lady. They arrived at the crematorium where Bhartuhari Raja was cooking some rice left behind by the relatives of a deceased person. Bhartuhari was about to eat the cooked rice. Just then, the old man and the old lady arrived and requested Bhartuhari for some food. Bhartuhari gave away the entire pot of rice to the old couple. Seeing this sacrifice the old man enquired: “Oh! My son do you not want anything to be kept for you? Are you giving away every thing to us?” Bhartuhari replied: “When I have given up my entire kingdom, what is there in sacrificing this small pot of rice?” Lord Shiva then pointed out to Parvati that there was still a slight trace of ego within Bhartuhari, and for this reason success was eluding him.

Fable 15: Others will think about you in the same way as you think about them

Nirmal Singh, the emperor and Chandanalal, the sandalwood merchant were very good friends. They would meet every evening and discuss various issues, ranging from politics, religious issues to welfare issues.

Suddenly, the king started developing ill feelings about his friend Chandanalal. He mentioned this to his secretary, Chanakya. He stated: “Whenever I see Chandanalal a feeling of revulsion arises in my mind, even though we have had no quarrels or arguments.”

Chanakya said: “Maharaj! Please give me three days time to unravel the mystery.” Chanakya investigated deeply and found out the facts of the case but he did not disclose anything to the king. The fact was, Chandanalal had purchased a huge stock of sandalwood at an astronomical price and now the prices had started dropping down. If this trend continued he would incur a very heavy loss. He, therefore, started thinking that if somehow or the other the king died all this stock of sandalwood could be sold to the kingdom, as a huge amount of sandalwood would be required for lighting the King’s pyre.

Next day, Chanakya suggested the following to the king: “My lord! All the furniture of our Palace has become very old and it needs replacement. If you so permit I would like to get the new furniture made from sandalwood. We have now enough budget at our disposal.” The King immediately agreed and asked his secretary, Chanakya to place the entire order on Chandanalal, so that they get good and genuine sandalwood.

The secretary complied with the orders and Chandanalal was a very happy man. Next day Chandanalal visited the king. But, surprisingly the ill feelings, he had about Chandanalal, had all vanished. On the contrary he was all praise for him.

Chanakya then narrated the entire story to Chandanalal and advised him that in future he shouldn’t nurture such thoughts. The mind is a mirror in which the thoughts get reflected, so never nurture ill will.

Fable 16: Eschew Jealousy

Sati Ansuya's name is etched in golden letters in our epics. She was totally devoted and faithful to her husband. She was a *pativrata* (a chaste wife). Once, when Lord Shiva was meditating, Naradji happened to arrive in Kailash. Parvatiji offered "*prasad*" to Naradji. Narad said: "The *prasad* of sweet balls are tasty, but sweet ball preparations of Sati Anusaya are tastier." Parvatiji enquired: "Who is Ansuya?" Narad said: "She is the chaste wife of *Rishi* Atari." Parvati said: "Is she more exalted than me and more loyal to her husband than I am?" Just then Lord Shiva arrived, being through with his meditation. Parvati bowed to Lord Shiva and prayed to him that he should go and test Ansuya.

Narad then visited Vishnu Lok. He called upon Laxmiji and said: "Vishnu Lok was considered to be great previously, but not so anymore with Ansuya's Ashram". Laxmiji too requested Lord Vishnu to put Ansuya's chastity to test. Saraswatiji made a similar request to Brahmaji.

Lord Shankar, Lord Vishnu and Lord Brahma all arrive at Sati Ansuya's Ashram, donning the robes of mendicants and seeking alms. Ansuya emerged out from her hermit to distribute the alms, but the Gods disguised as mendicants refuse to accept alms unless she stripped herself. Ansuya pondered: "If I strip myself I shall be compromising with my chastity, and if I don't feed them I shall be deviating from my duty."

Ansuya therefore, meditated and found out that these three Sadhus were actually Lord Shiva, Lord Vishnu and Lord Brahma. She, therefore, took some water and sprinkled it over them. And Lo! Behold! All the three Sadhus become young children. Such powers inhere in *pativrata* ladies!

Here, Parvati, Laxmi, and Savitri were desperately looking out for their husbands, as they had not returned home. All the three *devis* arrived in Chitrakut where they happen to meet Narad. Naradji: "Now tell me who is great, you all or Ansuya"?

All the three *devis* replied in a chorus: "Ansuya".

Naradji advised them: - "Visit Sati Ansuya's Ashram. You will find your husbands there, swinging in the cradle". The three *devis* are reluctant to go out of fear of being cursed.

Naradji emboldened them: - "You all could nurture jealousy, but Ansuya is not mean minded like you".

All the three Devi's approached Ansuya and requested her for their husbands. Ansuya then made them take an oath, that henceforth they would never harass any *pativrata* wives. In the mean time, Aatri Rishi arrived and enquired as to who these three children were. Ansuya replied that these three were her children and these three were their wives. She then sprinkled water over them and all the three Lords returned to their original form.

Fable 17: Control the sensual desires

Sage Vyas was composing “Srimad Bhagvat”, comprising the divine tales of Lord Krishna. After penning each verse he would pass on the same to his devotee, Sage Jaimini for editing. While editing he came across a verse, which mentioned that the senses are powerful. He thought that Vyasji had perhaps committed some error in composing these verses. The verse read: “The senses are not controllable by even the great Sages and Saints.” He felt that the verse should have read: “The senses are only controllable by the great Sages and Saints.” He brought this discrepancy to the notice of Vyasji. Vyasji maintained that what was written by him was correct.

One evening it was pouring. The winds were blowing with its earthy fragrance. On the perimeter of his cottage, Sage Jaimini saw a young lady getting drenched in the rains. Out of sympathy he invited her within the cottage. The lady said: “Men are rogues and crooked, how can I rely upon you”? Jaimini said: “I am no ordinary man. I am Sage Jaimini, if you can not trust me then you can trust no one”.

The lady thus accepted the invitation, went within the cottage and dried herself.

Jaimini enquired: “Are you married”?

The lady replied: “No”

Jaimini then proposed to her.

The lady replied: - “My father has taken an oath that my would be husband should be willing to let me ride over his back and carry me to the temple of “Goddess Ambaji”. I too had promised my father that I shall blacken the face of your would be son-in-law and then only shall I marry him.” Jaimini readily accepted the proposal. Jaimini blackened his face, the lady rode over him and they soon arrived at the temple. Sage Vyas was already at the temple. Seeing the mockery, he enquired: “Was the verse about the senses, as written by me, right or wrong?”

Jaimini immediately came to his senses and said: -

“What ever you had written was correct”.

And for this reason Bhartuhari has said that, when a great Sage like Vishwamitra fell for Menaka, Parasara could not control himself while in the company of Matsyagandha, Nahushan could be won over by Indrani; Rohini attracted Moon, then how could ordinary mortals expect to control their senses.

(ii) Sage Parasar had reached an exalted spiritual state. He had attained a great number of spiritual powers through his tough penances. Once, whilst in the course of his journeyings he arrived at banks of the river Ganga in the evening. He had to somehow cross the river Ganga that very night itself. He, therefore, approached a fisherman for help. He requested the fisherman to ferry him across. However, the fisherman declined stating that his boat had been moored and it was already suppertime. Sage Parasar was, however, persistent. Seeing this, Matsyagandha, the fisherman's daughter suggested: "This old man appears to be some sage. If you permit me I can ferry him across." Looking to his whitebeard and age, the fisherman saw no harm in granting permission. Sage Parasar and Matsyagandha thus board the boat. When the boat reached midstream, the sage saw the beautiful face of the girl shining in moonlight. The Sage was, thus, very much attracted towards her beauty. He, therefore, urgently solicited the girl's company for a while. The girl was shocked and she resisted. She tried to dissuade the Sage saying that the moon was watching them. But the Sage was unrelenting; through his spiritual powers he covered the moon and did what he had to. The girl broke down at the Sage's outrageous behaviour. The Sage, however, consoled the girl saying that she would give birth to a glorious child who would author many scriptures. . Ved Vyasa, the great Sage, the author of Mahabharata, Srimad Bhagvat etc, was thus born to Matsyagandha.

Fable 18: Thoughts at the end of your life are the reflection of your deeds in your life

There was a businessman who traded heavily in stock. He would buy when the market was bearish and sell when the prices were bullish. He was in this business right since he was young. Every day morning, the first thing he is used to do was to look at the stock prices in the newspaper and decide upon the trading strategy for the day. Even while bathing he would phone the brokers instructing them to sell and buy shares, while having meals too he used to discuss the share prices with his children. If some one met him on the way to his office he would discuss shares alone. So involved was he in his share business that he found absolutely no time for divine remembrance. In his dreams, too, he would visualize the trading session at the stock exchange. In sleep, too, he would at times mutter the share prices.

His entire life thus passed away in buying and selling shares. His heart and soul was in the share business. He soon turned old and fell sick. The children, who had now taken over the business, advised their father to leave the business matters to them and instead concentrate on prayer and worship! But he could think of only shares and nothing but shares. When the children returned home in the evenings he would enquire about the market.

One day his health deteriorated. He began running high temperature. In spite of all the efforts the fever was not receding. The doctor opined that the chances of his survival were slim. He was advised full rest. But this old man would just not listen to any one. He had purchased shares of a particular company at the rate of Rs. 95/- and there was a downslide. He, therefore, remained very much upset.

The doctor took the temperature and informed his children that it was now 105. The old man mistook this for the share price. He immediately instructed his son to sell of the shares that they had purchased at Rs. 95/-. He spoke thus and breathed his last.

Our scriptures, therefore, tell us that we should incessantly chant the Lord's name. This should be done to such an extent that the name spontaneously emerges from one's lips, in whatever state one is. While waking, working, God's name should remain on the tongue. Lord Krishna has said clearly in the Geeta: "If my devotee remembers me whilst dying, he shall attain me." But, my friends do not be under impression that it is easy to chant God's name at the dying stages unless you have done so

throughout your life. For at the time of death one undergoes an unbearable pain, equivalent to a bite of a thousand scorpions.

(ii) There was an aged lady about 70 years old. She had three sons, all married. There was a joint family and they lived together happily. The three sons were engaged in the family business. By the grace of God, the wives of the three brothers were very understanding, co-operative and hard working. They, therefore, stayed together like three sisters would. There was no quarrel on any issue whatsoever. The old lady, though 70 years of age, was still quite active. She would take a keen interest in both household as well as business matters.

She was well respected in the family. At the start of the day she would distribute the household chores to her daughter-in-laws. She would decide the menu for the meals. Nobody could step out of the house without her permission. She would even visit her sons' business establishment and go through the account books. She was a hard taskmaster. She would never rest or sleep during the daytime and would not allow others also to sleep. One day her daughter came from her husband's place, to stay with her mother for a few days. Finding her mother slaving even at this age, she advised: "My dear mother! This is not the age for you to interfere in petty household work. You should devote your time in praying and worshipping God. You should visit the temples instead of visiting your son's shops." But the old lady didn't take kindly to this advice, she turned furious.

Once she took ill and was bed ridden. Her illness notwithstanding, she sought account of all household as well as business matters.

One day, her health deteriorated further. The sons closed their shop for the day and were by her side. She then enquired: "Where is Mohan"? Mohan said: "Mother, I am here." Next, she enquired: "Where is Ramesh"? Ramesh replied: "Ramesh is right by your side." Her next question: "Where is Ganpat"? Ganpat: "Mother I am also here"? This enraged her and she remarked: "If everyone is here, who is managing the store. Your staying here will not stop my death." She then chided her daughter-in-laws: "Has any body bothered to close the kitchen window, lest the cat should come and drink the milk."

Lastly she advised her sons: "If I die, let not that greedy Purohit Gaurishankar perform my last rites. He will charge you a lot. You may, instead, call Manishankar. I had given him a bagful of groundnuts only last week. He will, therefore, demand no charges. I have already made arrangements for firewood; they are lying in the corner of our plot. So, do not buy any additional

firewood.” Saying so, she breathed her last. She could not, thus, remember the almighty even in her dying stages, as she had no practice to do so in her lifetime.

Fable 19: Food donation is excellent amongst donations

There was a Marwari businessman named Vaibhavdas. He was very fond of money and by the grace of God he was earning also very well. But so greedy was he, that he never donated any thing nor did he go out for an outing and nor did he allow his family members to do so. His only aim was to amass wealth. At the end of the day, he would count the bucks earned during the day and put it in a safe-vault. In the morning, before opening the shop, he would again count the bucks to ensure that nothing had been stolen. For money's sake he would even skip his meals, at times.

One day his childhood chum, Ghanshyamdas, happened to visit him. Looking to his friend's miser nature he advised him: "Our scriptures state that one should donate at least 10% of one's earnings." But Vaibhavdas was in no mood to listen. Vaibhavdas shot back: "Can you prophesize how much wealth would I be able to amass." Ghanshyamdas replied: "Enough to last you for 10 generations." Ghanshyamdas believed that the reply would please Vaibhavdas and that he would agree to donate. But instead Vaibhavdas started bemoaning: "O Lord! What will become of my 11th generation?" After much persuasion Ghanshyamdas could convince Vaibhavdas to donate 1% of his earnings.

Thus, both of them purchased some meals and began donating it to some poor pavement dwellers. The pavement dwellers satiated their hunger and blessed Vaibhavdas from the bottom of their hearts.

Then, they then approached a Brahmin and requested him to accept the meals. But the Brahmin declined saying: "Sorry, Shethji, but I have already finished my meals". To this, Vaibhavdas suggested that he could take the meals the next day. The Brahmin replied: "I never worry for to-morrow. I am 70 and I have yet to sleep hungry on any day."

This statement made a tremendous impact on Vaibhavdasji's mind. He arrived at the shop and ordered his *Munim* to donate Rs.1 lakh to a hospital, Rs. 2 lakh to a orphanage, Rs. 2 lakh to a schools etc. The *Munim* was surprised at the sudden change in the Sheth's attitude. When he enquired, the Shethji replied: "When a poor Brahmin, 70 years of age, doesn't worry for to-morrow, why should I worry for my next generation." The blessings of the poor, perhaps, brought about a change in the Sheth's attitude.

Fable 20: One may conquer the world but not the destiny

There was a pious and a spiritual king, who was very popular amongst his subjects. By the grace of God his family too was well cultured. He had a lovable and an affectionate queen. He had three sons, all very obedient, intelligent and courageous. All his three daughter-in-laws too were very well behaved and well mannered. He had two daughters who were also happily married to the princes of the neighbouring kingdom. The king, by the virtue of his strength and popularity, had no enemies. The King's life was thus suffused with bliss and happiness. Even a ray of unhappiness dared not to enter the King's life. He was very healthy too and had not been afflicted with any illness throughout his life.

Soon, he became old, his hairs started turning gray. Realizing his end was near; he commenced arduous penances to propitiate Lord Shiva. Pleased with his penances Lord Shiva appeared before him. He asked him to seek a boon. The king said, "I am leading a very happy life, please grant me immortality." Lord Shiva replied: "It is not possible to grant you this boon as it would be violating the nature's law. But any way, let us approach Lord Vishnu to see if he could help you out."

Thus both Lord Shiva and the King arrived at Vaikunth. They met Lord Vishnu and the king put forward his request.

Lord Vishnu replied: "It is not within my purview to grant you this boon. This is within the jurisdiction of *vidhata*. The *vidhata* alone decides the life span of all the creatures depending on their "karmas" of the past several births". Lord Vishnu, therefore, suggested that they approach *vidhata* to see if he could help the king out. Thus Lord Vishnu, Lord Shiva and the king met the "*Vidhata*". The king put forward his wish before the "*Vidhata*". The "*Vidhata*" said that he could do no more other than permitting the king to read out the books of accounts of his Karma, which would tell him about his life span. The "*Vidhata*" handed over the book of accounts to the king. The King commenced reading the pages of his account and he came to the last sentence of the page, which reads as under: "The king would visit "*Vidhata*" along with Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu on such and such date and time. As soon as he would finish the last sentence of the page he would breathe his last".

Alas! This came true.

Can any one thus change the destiny? No; not even Lord Shiva, Lord Vishnu or the "*Vidhata*".

Fable 21: A man conducts himself in accordance with his gunas

The day on which Gautam Budha died he was in a small village. A poor villager had offered him meals, which comprised of a curry known as the “Cat’s Top”(mushroom). Unfortunately, this particular mushroom was of the poisonous type, which the poor villager wasn’t aware of. He had lovingly served Gautam Budha the aforesaid dish. The vegetable tasted bitter, but Buddha did not say anything. Consequently, the poison spread all over his body and Buddha died in the evening.

Buddha did not say any thing, for he considered that his speaking would have displeased that poor man who had served the meals with love and affection. He thought that he had to cast off his body one day or the other, so why unnecessarily displease that poor villager. The Vegetable was bitter and poisonous, but both the guest and host were very joyful. Buddha knew that poison would not affect him, the conscious Self; it would only affect this body of his.

That poor villager acted in accordance with his Prakruti. Poison worked as per its Guna (Prakruti). Buddha’s body reacted to the poison in accordance with its Guna (Prakruti), while Buddha pardoned the person in accordance with his prakruti (nature) saying: “Who can be more lucky than the one who has given the last meals to me”. A person like Buddha takes an incarnation after thousands of years. The person who gives the last feed to Gautam is equally lucky as her mother who gave him the first feed through her milk. Had Buddha accused the poor villager, the people would have probably killed him or set his hut on fire. A fine illustration of Buddha’s merciful nature and how Prakruti plays its part.

One more illustration can be given in this respect. One day a Saint was sitting by the riverside when he saw a scorpion drowning. He tried to save the scorpion and in the process he had to lift the scorpion 10 times. And every time the Saint lifted the scorpion, it bit him. If a scorpion couldn’t deviate from its nature of biting, then how could a Saint too deviate from his nature of being merciful? Had the Saint left his nature and killed the scorpion then in the court of God, the scorpion would have won and the saint would have lost. But the saint’s nature of mercifulness proved more powerful than the scorpion nature of biting.

Fable 22: What ever happens is for good

King Akbar had a council of ministers to advice him on various matters. Birbal, being highly intellectual and an able administrator, was selected as the Chief adviser to Akbar. Birbal, in course of time, became Akbar's right hand man. They used to frequently take a walk together. Birbal used very often remark that whatever happens is for good alone. One day while promenading in the garden Akbar suddenly tripped, he injured his hand and started bleeding. At this juncture, too, Birbal reiterated: "Whatever has happened is for good alone". Akbar was very furious when he heard this comment. He, therefore, immediately issued orders for Birbal to be put behind bars for seven days. He was asked to substantiate the statement: " Whatever happens is for good alone".

After a few days Akbar went out to the Jungles for a hunting expedition. Some how he got lost in the jungle and was separated from his party. As he was searching his way out a tribal party seized him. The tribals were in search of a person to be sacrificed at altar of their Goddess. He was nabbed by the tribals, tied up and taken to the temple of the Goddess. As a part of the sacrificial rite, his head was to be chopped off and offered to the Goddess. But as per their custom, the person who was to be scarified had to be free from bodily injuries. While doing a check on him they found out that Akbar had injured his hand. He was, therefore, released immediately and allowed to go.

He came back safely to his palace and narrated this incident to Birbal, who had been by then released from the prison. Birbal immediately remarked: "Jahapana! Now you have the proof about the veracity of my statement."

Akbar did not follow and requested Birbal to elucidate further. Birbal clarified: "Jahapana! Had you not fallen you would not have injured yourself. And had you not injured yourself you wouldn't have been set free by the tribals. Further more, my going to prison was also useful. Otherwise, I would have accompanied you and the tribals would have seized me as well. I would have been beheaded at the sacrificial altar as I had no injury on my body."

Akbar was pleased with Birbal. Birbal was suitably honoured and rewarded.

Fable 23: The wicked have to repent ultimately

King Akbar had a council of ministers, which advised him on various matters of the state. Birbal was highly intellectual and had a good administrative Knowledge. He was very proficient in tackling the problems of the state and was, therefore, close to the king. There were some vile ministers in the council who were jealous about Birbal. They once met together and resolved to eliminate Birbal by hook or crook. They, thus, hatched a conspiracy and involved Sukhram, the royal barber in the conspiracy. The conspiracy was set into motion. Once, when Sukhram was trimming Akbar's hair, he made a suggestion to the King that someone is sent to the heavens to enquire about the well being of his forefathers. He further suggested that Birbal was the right man for the job and the way to send him to the heavens was to put him on a pyre.

Akbar immediately agreed, as he remained concerned about his forefathers. He summoned Birbal, asked him get ready to go to heavens, meet his forefathers, enquire about their well being, come back and report. Birbal was very smart and realised the entire game plan of those wicked ministers. He had no other alternative but to agree. He then worked out a strategy to counter the game plan of those jealous ministers. He requested the king to give him ten days vacation, before he proceeded to the heavens, so that he could spend some time with his family members.

Akbar granted him the permission. During this period Birbal got a tunnel dug up below the pyre. The tunnel led to a hut located some distance. On the scheduled day Birbal was placed in the pit below the pyre. As soon as the pyre was lit Birbal made his way to that close-by hut. He stayed in this hut unnoticed, by any one, for about a month. The wicked ministers were overjoyed and they were about to suggest to the King that a replacement for Birbal is found. When this was being suggested to the king, Birbal dropped in and stood before the king. The king enquired: "Birbal, are my forefathers all happy?" Birbal replied: "Jahapana! By the grace of God every body is hale and hearty. But their only complaint is that their beards and hairs have overgrown. As there are no barbers in the heaven, they have requested you to send the royal barber along with a team of ministers to supervise the work." Akbar immediately ordered that barber and the ministers leave for heaven. Realising that their game plan had boomeranged they now started sobbing before the king. They were extremely repentant. The King sought the complete details from Birbal. On learning the facts the king decided to severely punish those ministers.

Fable 24: You leave your worries to God! And God! Will worry for you

At the end of the ninth day of the Mahabharat War, when Duryodhan found that Kauravas were loosing heavily and that Bhishma was not putting his heart and soul into the battle, he closeted with Bhishma. He gave vent to his bitter feelings of disappointment over the way the battle was going. He uttered words, which were like the sharp spears and pained Bhishma greatly, but the latter was patient and said sadly: "Like a ghee on the sacrificial fire I am pouring my life for you. Why do you seek to mortify me even though I am doing my very utmost for you? You speak like a man of no understanding, not knowing what is right and what is wrong. It is said that, when a man is nearing his death, the tree appears to him made of gold. You see things now, not as they are, your vision is clouded. You are now reaping the harvest of the hatred you deliberately sowed. However, I take a vow now that in tomorrow's battle I shall not return back without killing Arjun."

When Lord Krishna learnt about Bhishma's vow; he rushed to Arjun's tent. Arjun was enjoying a sound sleep with absolutely no trace of worry on his face. Lord Krishna shook him and informed him about Bhishma's vow. He said: "Death is knocking at your door and you are least worried".

Arjun said: "My lord! When I have left all the worries to you and when you are still awake, why should I bother?" Lord Krishna then went to Draupadi and asked her to get ready and accompany him to Bhishma's tent. At 3.30 a.m., Bhishma regularly sat for his penances and at 4.00 a.m daily, Duryodhan's wife used to visit Bhishma. Bhishma used to bless her: "May your husband survive in the day's battle." Krishna was aware of this routine, so he took Draupadi to Bhishma's tent before Duryodhan's wife actually arrived. Both Krishna and Draupadi reached Bhishma's tent at 3.30.a.m. In order to keep this visit secret and to ensure that no body saw them, he asked Draupadi to remove her sandals and hand them over to him. He asked her to walk bare footed. Just watch how the Lord loves his devotees! The sustainer of the entire universe is lifting the sandals of his devotee! Draupadi entered Bhishma's tent and made a jingling sound through her bangles. Bhishma thought that this was Duryodhan's wife, so he blessed Draupadi saying that in tomorrow's battle no harm would befall her husband. When Draupadi said "Pranam", Bhishma opened his eyes to find Draupadi instead of Duryodhan's wife standing in front of him. He immediately realised that this was the brainchild of Lord Krishna. He enquired: "Where is Lord Krishna"? Krishna immediately entered Bhishma's tent and enquired, "What will prevail into tomorrow's battle, your vow or your blessing?" Bhishma said: "Definitely both!" He didn't kill Arjun instead he allowed himself to be killed by Sikhandi, thus fulfilling both his blessings and the vow.

Fable 25: Forget the past; leave worrying for future and work in the present

The past is like a glass of milk spilled on the ground. You cannot retrieve any milk from the ground; you cannot do anything about the bygones. At the same time you should not worry about future as every thing is in the hand of the Lord! the creator of this world. You should, therefore, remain and work in the present. There is an interesting parable to explain this:

A king who was curious to get the answers to the following three questions:

- (1) What is the best time to do a thing?
- (2) Who are the most important people to work with?
- (3) What is the most important thing to do at all times?

The king issued a decree throughout his kingdom, announcing that whoever could answer these questions would receive a huge reward.

Different people replied differently, but the king was not satisfied. He therefore decided to visit a hermit, who was staying in the nearby hills. He went there in a disguise along with his bodyguard. The bodyguard was asked to wait at the foot of the hill. When the king arrived at the hermitage, he found the hermit planting some saplings. The king put the above three posers to the hermit, but hermit continued with his digging work. The king observed that the hermit was perspiring and tired, so he offered to help the hermit. In response, the hermit passed on one spade to the king. The King too started digging. Whilst they were digging, a person came rushing towards them. The person was bleeding profusely. He came closer and fell down at the King's feet. The king and the hermit carried the injured person to the hut and bandaged him. The person soon regained consciousness. And the first thing he did upon regaining consciousness was to thank the king profusely. He said: "Thank you very much. Had you not treated me I would have probably died." The king then enquired: "Who are you? And how did you receive the injuries?" The person replied: " I am your one time enemy and having received the information that you are coming over here, I hatched a plan to assassinate you. But on the way, your bodyguard spotted me and inflicted these injuries upon me. Badly wounded, I rushed towards the hermitage for help. I am repentant for my actions and seek your pardon." The king pardoned the person and immediately made arrangements to send him to a hospital.

The king then repeated those 3 questions. The hermit replied: "Your questions have already been answered." Since the king did not follow, the hermit elucidated further:

“(i) The best time is the present moment (ii) The most important person is the person in front of you. (iii) The thing in hand is the most important thing. Had you not stayed in my garden (*the present moment*) to help me (*the person in front of you*), your enemy would have killed you and had you not treated your enemy (*the thing in hand*) he would have died.”

The hermit continued further that most of us talk about social service, service to the people, service to humanity, and service to others who are far away, helping to bring peace to the world; but often we forget that it is the very people around us for whom we must live first. If you cannot serve your wife or husband or children or parents how are you going to serve the society? If you are not able to make your own parents happy, how do you expect to be able to make others happy?

The above illustration has been picked up from Leo Tolstoy’s collection of short stories.

Fable 26: The sensual desires are such that the more you enjoy the more they increase

There once lived a King named Yayaati who lived for a full one thousand years, enjoying all the pleasures a King of his position could command. Guru Shukracharya's daughter Devayani was his wife. Guru Shukracharya cursed him to become old because he had intimate relations with a maidservant named Sarmistha. He asked for forgiveness. Shukracharya took pity on him and favourably modified his curse, so that Yayaati could regain his youth if anyone of his sons is ready to get his old age in return. He had still a great desire to enjoy all royal pleasures for some more years, he asked each of his sons (Yadu, Turvasu, Druhyu and Anu), one by one, to take upon himself this oldage and give him his youth in return, assuring that after one thousand years he would return the youth and take back his decrepitude. Not one of them was willing to accept the offer except his youngest son named Puru. Puru gave his youth to his father and got in return old age and its consequent weakness. Yayaati, being exceedingly delighted with his new youth, began to indulge again in sensual pleasures. He enjoyed himself to the full limit of his powers and as much as he desired without violating the precepts of religion. He was very happy, but only one thought troubled him. And that was the thought that the one thousand years would come to an end. He was not satisfied even when the fixed time came to an end. He came to his son Puru and addressed him thus: "O son, I have enjoyed with your youth to the full limit of my powers and all pleasures, according to their seasons. But desires never die. They are never satiated by indulgence. By indulgence they flame up like the sacrificial fire with ghee poured into it."

He said, "If one becomes the sole lord of all the earth, with its paddy, oats, gems, beasts and women, still it will not be considered by him enough. Therefore, the thirst for enjoyment should be abandoned. The thirst for enjoyment which is difficult to cast off by the wicked, which does not fail even with failing life, is truly a fatal disease in man. To get rid of this thirst is real happiness. Yayaati's experience is very useful to mankind. He continued, "My mind was attached to the pleasures of life for full one thousand years. My thirst for them, however, without being abated, is daily being increased."

Yayaati said, "My son, therefore, I shall get rid of it. I shall fix my mind on Brahman (supreme consciousness), and becoming peaceful and having no attachment, I shall pass the rest of my days in the forest with the innocent deer." So saying he installed Puru on the throne after giving him back his youth and retired into the forest to lead the life of an ascetic. Puru's dynasty was named Paurav in which Janmejaya, the son of King Parikshit was born.

Fable 27: Achieve Salvation from where you are

Bhakta Prahlad was blessed with the darshan of the lord at his house itself, without having to resort to the forests. The atmosphere in his house was not conducive to devotion, even then he managed to continue with his worship. Wherever you go the following six enemies of the mind will follow you: -

(1) Lust (2) Anger (3) Greed (4) Attachment (5) Pride (6) Envy

If you don't fall a prey to these six enemies, you can very well worship God whilst residing at your house. If you decide to go to the jungles, these six enemies may even follow you there and create an obstruction to your prayers.

Bharatji was an ardent devotee. As a King, he performed a great number of "*Yagnas*"(fire sacrifices) and offered all the "*Punya*"(merits) of the *Yagna* to Lord Krishna. One day Bharatji decided to renounce all the worldly pleasures. He decided to do so as he felt that the burden of kingship was creating obstruction in his devotion. He left the queens, the palace and all the family members and went to the jungle. He used to take a bath daily, early in the morning, at a river. On one such morning, a pregnant female deer came to the river to sip some water. As she was sipping water, she heard the roaring of a lion. The pregnant female deer turned panicky and tried to leap across the river. In the process she delivered a baby, which fell in the river. Bharatji rescued the baby and out of pity took her to his hut. He tended the baby very well. His entire day would pass in taking care of this fawn. In his previous birth, he had played with the children a lot and thus in this birth he was attracted towards the fawn. One day the fawn went to the jungle, but didn't return. He was, therefore, very much worried and upset. In the mean time he fell sick and was in his dying stages. But even in his dying stages, Bharatji's mind continued to dwell upon the fawn. So the next birth he was born a deer. Lord Krishna has declared:

"Arjuna, thinking of whatever entity one leaves the body at the time of death, that and that alone one attains, being ever absorbed in its thought." (Gita 7.6)

Bharat left the house to remain aloof from the world, but in the jungle he got attached to a fawn (baby deer). Bharatji was a very learned and a spiritual person, but he could not overcome attachment so he had to be born again as a deer.

Fable 28: God! Is Omnipresent

In a small village, several devotees would gather in the evening and render devotional songs. This program was getting conducted at “Gorakumbhar”, the village potter’s residence. Muktabai, a lady devotee, suggested that “Gorakumbhar” should test the devotee’s by lightly tapping their heads with a mallet (potter’s test their pots with a mallet). On hearing this, Saint Namdeo was hurt and he said: “I commune directly with God! I am the most beloved devotee of God. Why should I be tested?” Notwithstanding the protest Gorakumbhar began tapping everyone’s head. When Namdeo’s head was tapped he was furious. Gorakumbhar then pronounced his verdict. He declared that one pot viz. Namdeo was green (undeveloped). He needed further spiritual indoctrination.

Namdeo was upset; he went running to Lord Vithoba and narrated the entire incident to him. Vithoba said: ““Muktabai” and “Gorakumbhar” are right. You need further spiritual indoctrination. Though you believe that you are perfect, you have no idea and vision about God’s infinite nature as you do not have a Guru. It is my suggestion that you visit village Mangalvedha where one of my devotees “Visoba Khachar” is residing. Accept him as your Guru. He will impart you with true spiritual knowledge.”

Thereafter, Namdeo went to Vishoba Khachar. At that particular time, Vishoba Khachar was reposing in the temple of Lord Shiva. He was surprised to find Vishoba sleeping in the temple with his legs on the “Ling” of Lord Shiva. Vishoba had prior information about Namdeo’s visit, so he was playacting. Namdeo thought to himself as to what spiritual knowledge could this person impart to him? He did even know how to respect Lord Shiva. Namdeo requested Vishoba to remove his legs from Shiva Linga to which Vishoba replied that he could shift his legs and place it where there was no ShivLinga. Namdeo turned the direction of his legs, but wherever he placed his legs he found Shivalinga. He rotated Vishoba’s legs in all the directions and everywhere he saw Shivalinga.

Namdeo was surprised and asked Vishoba: “What is this I am observing ?” Vishoba said: “What Gorakumbhar said was correct. You are not able to see God everywhere. God is present everywhere in the minutest of the minute form. Try to see God in every one that is all you are required to do, then you will be perfect in your spiritual knowledge.”

He thus started seeing God everywhere. While returning he sat under a tree. While he was eating his meals a dog came from behind and picked away his chapati. Nameo ran after the dog with a

glass of ghee shouting: “Vithoba! Please stop, I have still not applied Ghee on that chapati. Please return that chapati, I will apply Ghee and give you back”. He thus saw God even in the dog.

If every one were to believe God’s omnipresence, then there would not be any scope for any one to commit a sin. It is not only enough to know that God is everywhere, but your behavior should also reflect this attitude.

- ii) Lord is watching whatever you are doing! There was one Hermit. He had two followers. Both were very learned. Hermit felt that after his death there could be a tussle over his seat. To avoid this he decided to nominate a successor. He therefore, called for two apples and gave one to each of them with an instruction that go and eat this apple but ensure that no body watches you as you do so. One of his followers went at a far off place and entered a house thereat and ate the apple, while the other follower came back without eating apple saying that Guruji there was no place where he couldn’t not be seen, as he saw the presence of God everywhere. Guruji realised that the second disciple had digested whatever had been taught as he considered God to be omnipresent. So he was nominated the successor.

Fable 29: Act as per the bidding of your conscience

There was a small village, in which lived one old man and his young son. They would often visit the near by town on their pony to shop for the house hold items.

It was a grueling hot summer afternoon and both father and son were on their way to the town. Seeing both father and son riding over the horse, the passerbys commented: “How cruel and wretched are these people? Two people riding over this poor horse in this hot weather.” The father felt that the people were right, so he dismounted from the pony letting the son ride. Then further away some people saw the son riding the horse. Looking to this, they commented: “How foolish is this young boy! Making this old man walk in this hot summer and himself enjoying a ride?” The boy felt ashamed and requested his father to ride over the pony. The father complied. After they had hardly walked some distance they met yet another group of people, who commented: - “How idiotic is this old man making his young son tread on foot in this hot summer.” The father felt sorry and so, he too got down from the horse. Now nobody was riding over the horse. After they had walked some distance, they encountered yet another group of people who commented: “How senseless are these people. The horse is without any rider and both of father and son are walking it out?”

Thus different people commented differently. This is the case with our entire society and not just with these few villagers. The society has no one voice or no single opinion. People speak something for the sake of speaking. The wise men, therefore, never act as per the counsel of the society but they work according to their conscience.

Fable 30: The Lord can go to any extent to save his devotee

The truth of this statement can be seen from a story in Mahabharat, in which Lord Krishna himself intervened to fulfil Arjuna's vow.

Jayadrath had joined hands with the Kauravas, to fight the Pandvas in the Mahabharat war. Lord Krishna was Arjuna's charioteer in this war. Abhimanyu, the son of Arjun, was killed unfairly in the battle and Jayadrath was party to his death. On hearing that his son had been unfairly killed, Arjun made a terrible vow: "If I do not kill Jayadratha tomorrow, before sun set, I would enter a pyre and end my life."

However it so happened that Arjun could not kill Jayadratha on the appointed day, as he was too well guarded by the Kauravas. Lord Krishna, realising this, created by his will a magical veil over the sun so that it appeared the sun had set. Kaurava troops began to rejoice, thinking that now the appointed day had passed for killing Jayadratha, and that Arjun would now have enter the pyre in order to keep his resolve.

Kauravas collected logs of wood and set them alight. As Arjun prepared to enter the pyre, Krishna said: "Oh Arjun! As you walk into the fire, keep your bow and arrow fixed and ready, and enter like a hero". Now, while this was happening, Jaydratha lifted his head in the crowd to see whether Arjun had entered the fire or not. At one moment when his head was visible, Lord Krishna withdrew the veil, that he had put across the sun by the means of his powerful will and said: - "Oh Arjun! There is still time as the sun is still seen and not set yet. Full fill your resolve and send out your arrow now." Arjun, saw the sun. So, he lifted his arrow, carefully aimed it at the Jayadrath's head and killed him.

This illustration clearly shows, how the Lord uses his will to protect or full fill the vow of his devotee.

Fable 31: The Almighty at times puts you through a tough test to heighten your glory

When there is an adversity we get disheartened, nervous and frustrated. Think of it this way: You are given adversities since God wants you to be qualified for some thing great. For example, when Goldsmith wants to purify the 20 karat gold to 24 karat gold he subjects it to intense heat and hammers it till it is converted in to 24 karat gold. The same applies to the metal in your personality. If the gold within your personality is to shine more, nature must put you to severe tests. The greater the severity of these “tests” the shiner will become the metal within your personality.

So, instead of considering that your bad luck has brought these adversities upon you, you must realize that God has chosen you for something great. If God denies what your ego wants, then understand that God has a much more interest in you. Therefore, develop strength to wait and watch.

There is a story that speaks of this theme: Once upon a time in ancient India, in the time of Lord Krishna there lived a Brahmin. Over the years, he lost every one in his family and was all alone. He was only left with a milk cow, which he would milch daily. Not only did this cow provide him with milk, she was also a companion to him because she was his pet, and she was the only association he had.

One-day cow became sick and died. Arjun heard about it and asked “Krishna”. “Why is it, oh Krishna! that this Brahmin, who has been such a great devotee of yours, has lost the one little thing that gave him some consolation? Why did you take away his cow?”

Krishna answered, “I did it because he is a great devotee of mine. He had given up everything else in his life except the cow, which happened to be only attachment that was obstructing his spiritual movement. I did not want his mind to remain attached to such a small thing”.

The idea behind this is that there are two ways of looking at things. If you look at things egoistically, you are bound to become miserable. If you look the things from god’s point of view, you are pleased by his plans for greater things. The more trouble he puts you through and greater is his interest in you. This is the type of feeling and understanding one should develop in the days of his adversity.

Fable 32: No time limit should be set for self realization

There were two spiritual practitioners each engaged in a different kind of practise. There was one who practiced intense austerity in the form of “Panchagani Tapas”. He would sit under hot sun, completely surrounded by fire in the middle of the summer in India, silently enduring the extreme heat. The yogi knew that if he practiced this kind of tapas for a certain number of years he would attain certain psychic powers.

One day Sage Narad happened to meet this yogi and said: “I am going to Lord Vishnu. Do you have any message for him?” The Yogi replied: “I do have a message for Lord Vishnu. I have been practicing this type of austerity for a long time. I would like to know how much longer it would take me to behold him.” Narada noted the message and proceeded ahead.

Soon he met another devotee, who was not practicing any austerity, but was relaxing under a tree, occasionally dancing and chanting devotional songs. Narad said: “Oh devotee! I am going to Vaikunth, Lord Vishnu’s abode. Do you have any message for Lord Vishnu?” The devotee answered: “Yes, I do have the message I would like to know when I will have the vision (Darshan) of Lord Vishnu?” Narada noted this message as well and proceeded ahead.

Narada got the replies from Vaikunth and he returned back to prithvi. Naradji had to say the following to the yogi practicing austerities: “Lord Vishnu has said that it would take five years of that kind of austerity sustained on a daily basis until he would appear.” The yogi was upset with the reply and he jumped away from the fire saying: “I can not endure this for five full years I can not go on suffering like this. It is too much.”

Narada then went to the devotee practicing devotional chanting. Naradji conveyed the following reply to him: “Well, do you know how many leaves are there on this tree? It will take you as many years as the number of leaves you see before you behold Lord Vishnu.” When the devotee heard this, he began to dance with great joy, thinking, “How wonderful will be that moment when Lord Vishnu’s gives me a darshan!” The moment he expressed this sentiments, Lord Vishnu manifested before him. He did not have to wait.

The theme of the story is that you should not set any limit or condition for attaining self-realization. Try to understand that your true nature is sachidanand swarup. And when you develop this form of understanding you will experience an indescribable bliss.

Fable 33: Cultivate positive thinking

This is a parable from the Mahabarat:

There was a gigantic tree in a forest. This tree had many branches, and it was laden with many beautiful flowers. It happened to be the healthiest and most majestic tree in the entire forest. All the other trees adored this particular tree. The tree thus turned haughty. As its branches swayed it boastfully spoke: “I am the most powerful tree in the world. Even the wind God is afraid of me”. Soon all the other trees began to whisper amongst themselves this boastful claim and eventually these proud words reached the ears of wind God.

When the wind God learned that a certain tree had developed great pride and considered himself greater than him, he said: “I am going to take care of that proudly tree. I will blow upon it with my mighty force early tomorrow morning just as the first rays of the sun begin touching the tree”.

Again through the whispers of the trees, the message was quickly conveyed to that gigantic tree. Once the tree learned that the wind God was going to unleash his might upon him next day early in the morning, it became terribly frightened. It trembled and shivered the whole night and became so miserable that it shed all its leaves. Many of the huge branches even broke down and by morning the tree was the very embodiment of gloom.

When the wind God came sweeping the forest and saw the tree he was surprised. He said: “Oh tree! I never intended to put you in this state. I would have just come and simply shaken some of your branches. Why did you worry so much? There was no reason for you to put yourself in this tragic predicament.”

The message is that the human mind is adept at exaggarating the misery that has yet to come. When you start worrying, you make it hundred times worse. The actual misery is much less. What happens actually in the world is never as terrible as the mind imagines it. You may make a list of the miseries / adverseries you had undergone. Jot down the results you had predicted and compare these results with the actual sufferings you have undergone. You will definitely find out that the actual miseries you had undergone were much less than you had anticipated thus creating unnecessary tension not only for yourself but for the entire family as well.

Fable 34: Do not seeks a life of comfort; but develop a habit of making sacrifices

(i) A wonderful example of this can be seen in Mahabharat. The great warrior Bhishma Pitamah, the heroic grandfather of the Pandavs and Kauravas was laid down in the battlefield, his body being ridden with arrows. He did not die because of *iccha mrityu vardan*. Pillows were brought to comfort him. But he would not accept them. Then Arjun shot three arrows into the ground, upon which Bhishma rested his head. He was overjoyed to receive this pillow, for only this was suitable for a hero like him. The message of this anecdote is that an aspirant should be a constant warrior in the battle of life; he should not turn to a life of comfort and luxury, for such a movement is unheroic and cowardly.

When you become too conscious of comforts for your body dictated by an egoistic mind, it indicates that you lack the strength of spiritual will. This spiritual will could lead you to the wonderous horizons of peace and illumination.

(ii) After the sad and sudden demise of king Dashratha, Bharat and Satrugna, the two sons of Kaikeyi were summoned to Ayodhya. On reaching Ayodhya, Bharat enquired with Kaikeyi: “Mother! Why is there a pall of gloom in the entire city?” Kaikeyi replied: “My dear son! When I was young I had once accompanied your father to the jungles on a hunting expedition. I had then saved his life at the risk of my own life. Pleased with my action, he requested me to ask for any two favors. But I refused and said: ‘if you so desire, I shall do so at a later date.’ Now when I understood that an arrangement was being made to coronate Lord Rama and to imprison us, I remembered those two favors, which the king had asked me to seek. So, I demanded that my son Bharat should be made king and not Rama and secondly Rama should be asked to go into exile for 14 years in the jungles. My dear son, these two favors upset him so much that he could not bear the pain. He has breathed his last and has left for his heavenly abode. You see my son, he has lived a very long and happy life and you should not now worry about this. Please get ready for the coronation for which all the preparations have since been made.”

Hearing this sad and shameful story from his own mother, Bharat was infuriated. With burning red eyes, he thundered like a lion and asked Kaikeyi, “Who told you that I ever wanted to become the king? How did you assume that I shall take charge of the kingdom? As per our custom, only the eldest son can take charge of the kingdom. Why did you not die while making such demands from my

father? Where is that wretched person who rendered such cruel advice to you? You have not come to Raghuvansh family as a queen but you have come here to destroy our family. You have now not remained worth being called mother. From right now our relations of mother and son are done with. Never call me your son. I hate you and would not like to even see your face. For your shameful act, henceforth, no one in the world shall ever name his or her daughter as “Kaikeyi”. I hereby take a vow that I shall bring back Lord Rama, Laxman and Sitaji and never become the king of Ayodhya”.

Uttering these bitter words, he proceeded to the palace of “Mate Kaushalya”. On seeing Bharat, Kaushalya said: “Your mother has cleared the way for you to become the king of Ayodhya, so please get ready to attend the coronation ceremony. And please do make necessary arrangements to send me to the jungle, where I can stay with my son and daughter-in-law.” These words hurt and pained Bharat a lot; it was as if a pinch of salt had been added over the deep wound, which was made by Kaikeyi. He bowed down and at the feet of Kausalya. With tears in his eyes and with a throbbing voice he said: “I had no idea at all of this conspiracy. I had never even dreamed of becoming the king of Ayodhya. My dear mother, if you still feel that I was a party to this conspiracy, then let God give me all the punishment that is reserved for a slayer of thousand Brahmins. Further, if you feel that I had even dreamed of becoming the king, then let God give me all the punishment that is reserved for a slayer of thousand cows. Mother, if you feel that if I had inspired some one to plan this conspiracy, then let God give me all the punishment that is reserved for a slayer of a thousand orphan children”. After listening to all these assertions from Bharat, Kausalya lifted Bharat’s head and hugged him. She asked him to get prepared to perform the funeral rites of his father. Bharat vowed never to become the King of Ayodhya. He promised to bring back Rama and Laxman.

Bharatji performed the last rites of his father, left Ayodhya along with the citizens of Ayodhya and in few days reached to Chitrakut, where Lord Rama had camped for a few days. On seeing Lord Rama, Bharat turned terribly emotional. He bowed down and touched his brother’s feet. He could not speak anything, he could only mutter “Brother”, he then started crying like a child fetched away from his mother. When Lord Rama saw Bharat with a locked matted hair and wearing a bark garment, he asked him, “My dear brother! Why you have come here in such a dress leaving our father alone”. Bharat replied after mustering all courage, “My dear brother, our father could not bear the pain of your separation. He is now no more with us”. When Lord Rama heard this he fell down in a swoon, like a tree that is felled with an axe. He then started weeping. With great difficulty he got up and went to Sitaji to say: “Sita! I have lost my father and you have lost your father-in-law”. Laxman who was also

standing close heard this and all of them started crying, so much that even birds, trees and animals in the jungle hearing them cry became quite, as if the sky had fallen down.

Bharat then narrated the entire story to Lord Rama. He said, “Brother! I am innocent. I have taken a vow not to return to Ayodhya till you come back and take charge of the Kingdom.” Lord Rama replied: “Bharat, I am duty bound to fulfill the promise our father has given to “Mate Kaikeyi”.” There were a lot of discussions, arguments and counter arguments. Ultimately, Sage Vashista suggested that Lord Rama should hand over his ‘Paduka’ (sandals) to Bharatji. Bharat would place the Paduka on king’s throne and rule over the kingdom in the name of Lord Rama. As he was leaving, Bharatji remarked, “Brother, I shall wait for you for a complete 14 years and if I do not see you on the first day of Nutan year, I shall give up my life.” Bharatji carried with him the ‘Paduka’ of Lord Rama and returned to Ayodhya. He placed the ‘Paduka’ on the throne and ruled the kingdom from Nandigram, on the outskirts of the city, staying in a hut, wearing a garment of bark and with matted locked hairs. He thus left all the comforts of the life he would have enjoyed as a king and made a great sacrifice. Today what do we hear? Brothers go to the court to get a share of their father’s property. They do not even hesitate to kill each other. What a sea change? What a tragic state of affairs? What a strange parody?

Fable 35: Death is inevitable

The whole world is going towards death, every thing dies. All our progress, our vanities, our reforms, our luxuries, our wealth, our knowledge, has that one end and i.e. death. That is all that is certain. While birth is an accident, the death is a reality. Cities come and go, empires rise and full, planets break into pieces and crumble into dust, to be blown about by the atmosphere of other planets. Thus it is going on from time without beginning. Death is the end of every thing, death is the end of life, of beauty, of wealth, of power, of virtue too. Saints and sinners die, kings die and beggars die, clever and fools die, honest and wicked die, rich and poor die, master and servants die. Even various incarnations of God have died. Those who are born have to die. Those with a name have to die.

Once upon a time an old lady lost her only son. She was in a state of shock and nobody could console her. In the mean time, a saint came to her house and said, “ I can revive your son”. Hearing this the lady immediately got up and bowed down to touch the feet of the Saint, the sSaint further said: “ well I can do this provided you can get me a glass of water from a house where no death has occurred at any time”. Hearing this an old lady got up and started running from house to house asking for a glass of water and also enquiring if there was any death in the family at any time. But every house she goes she gets a reply: “Sorry, we can not give you a glass of water since our family is not without any one’s death.” At the end of day after roaming from street to street and house to house, she returns home late in the evening. The saint was still waiting for her. The saint asked: “Could you bring a glass of water”? An old lady replied: “ Sorry, Maharaj! I could not get it as there was not a single house where there was no death.” The lady then understood the message given by the saint and prepared to perform the final rites of his son.

Death is stalking day and night over this earth of ours but, at the same time we think we shall live eternally. A question was once asked to king Yudhistir, “What is the most wonderful thing on this earth?” And the king replies, “ Every day people are dying around us, and yet men think they will never die.”

Fable 36: God takes an incarnation to protect the “Dharma”

When Lord Krishna reached Dwarka, after slaying Sisupala, he learnt for the first time of the events at Hastinapura, the game of dice and the exile of the Pandavas. At once he set out for the forest where Pandavas were living.

They all were terrified and shocked when they heard of Duryodhan’s perfidy. They cried out that surely the earth would drink the blood of such wicked people. Draupadi approached Sri Krishna and, in a voice drowned in tears and broken with sobs, told the story of her suffering: -

She said: “I was dragged to the assembly when I had only single garment on my body. The sons of Dristarashtra insulted me most outrageously and gloated over my agony. They thought that I had become their slave and accosted me and treated me badly. Even Bhishma and Dhritarashtra forgot my birth and breeding and my relationship to them. Oh Krishna! Even my husbands did not protect me from the jeers and insults of those foul ruffians. Bhishma's bodily strength and Arjuna’s Gandiva were alike of no avail. Under such supreme provocation even weaklings would have found strength and courage to strike these ruffians dead. The Pandavas are renowned heroes and yet Duryodhan lives!”

I, the daughter-in-law of emperor of Pandu, was dragged by my hair. I, the wife of five heroes, was dishonored. Oh Madhusudan! Even you deserted me”. She stood trembling, unable to continue, for the grief convulsed her.

Lord Krishna was deeply moved and he consoled the weeping Draupadi. He said: “Those who tormented you will be stricken to death in the bloody war. Wipe out your tears. I solemnly promise that your grievous injustice shall be amply avenged. I shall help the Pandavas in every way. You will become the empress. The heavens may fall, the Himalayas may split in twain, the earth may crumble or the boundless sea may dry up – but, I tell you firmly, my words shall stand, I swear this”, and Krishna took a solemn vow before Draupadi. This vow, it will be seen, was in perfect accord with the purpose of the Lords incarnation, as described in the scriptures: “For protecting the righteous, for destroying the wicked and for firmly upholding the law, I am born on this earth age after age”.

Fable 37: The 21 Virtues required for Salvation

- (i) One should be humble and polite in behaviour with others.
- (ii) One should not hurt the feeling of others either through body, mind or words.
- (iii) One should display tolerance.
- (iv) One should be straightforward in one's dealings with others.
- (v) One should cultivate wisdom.
- (vi) One should diligently serve the parents and the Guru.
- (vii) One should exert self-restraint over the sense organs.
- (viii) One should be devoid of ego.
- (ix) One should be resolute.
- (x) One should know that "you reap as you sow" i.e. theory of karma.
- (xi) One should work without any expectation.
- (xii) One should remain in "Sansar" like a lotus in a lake or butter in the buttermilk.
- (xiii) One should be equanimous in all circumstances.
- (xiv) One should constantly remember God with faith, love and affection.
- (xv) One should be forgiving in nature.
- (xvi) One should stay at a place where there is a peace of mind.
- (xvii) One should remain away from the sensually craving people.
- (xviii) One should be compassionate.
- (xix) One should try to see presence of God in all creatures.
- (xx) One should be truthful.
- (xxi) One should lead a simple life.

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Table 38: You do nothing, which you perform, and nothing belongs to you in this world

Our personality is mainly formed of two elements viz (i) soul and (ii) body. The soul is immortal and indestructible and supplies the energy or spirit to the body, which works only as an instrument. As T. V. or refrigerator or washing machine draws the energy from the power house and perform their respective function, in the same way various bodies draws the energy from the soul and perform their function. The body does the work of writing, dancing, acting, talking, walking, hearing and all other activities but due to our spiritual blindness we say that, “I am writing; I am walking; I am talking”. We do not realise that the activities, which we perform is due to energy we receive from the soul. When the soul stops supplying energy to the body we declare that a person is dead. The use of letter ‘I’ i.e. developing the impression that all the activities being done by the body is termed as ego. A person without a soul is like a piece of wood or a stone.

Now why God does not love the person with a “ego”. It is like this you are working in a factory as a ordinary worker, but you go on boasting to the owner of a factory that it is ‘I’ who is running the factory. This will naturally hurt the feeling of the owner of the factory. If you want to get a blessing from God you should first remove “ego” from your mind and try to understand that God controls every thing and that nothing is in your hand.

If you allow this “ego” to grow to what extent it can go? There is a short story illustrating this parable. There was a Mullah named Mohammed who had tamed some 8-10 hens. The hens made a croaking sound early in the mornings i.e. just before the sun rose. The Mullah therefore, formed an ego that his hens croak and thus the sun rose. He once threatened the villagers: “Look! I will go away with my hens and I will see then, how the sun rises in your village?” He therefore, left the village along with his hens and went to the other village and here too the Sun rose as soon as the hens croaked. He started boasting in this village as well. One villager then pointed out to him: “Mullah! Please go to your village and see whether the Sun has arisen there or or not. The Mullah went there and found out that the Sun had arisen there also without his hens.

You should, therefore control your ego, and try to understand and assert, “Nothing which exists, belongs to me; nothing which is done, is done by me”. There is a thin and transparent wall between our ego of “I” and “me” and God. As a matter of fact we just get a feeling of such a wall because of our spiritual blindness. Once this wall is removed you will see presence of God everywhere and in all creatures. For cultivating this feeling, you are required to break this wall.

Fable 39: Never try to mock or torment a saint or sage

Sant Tukaram used to visit Lohagaon in the state of Maharashtra very frequently, since his maternal grand parents lived there. Here, every day evening Tukaram would sing devotional songs and many people from surrounding villages would also come to Lohagan to take part in the singing.

Shivba Kassar, a politician, envied Tukaram and would scoff at him saying, “What does this saint have?” Some one told Kassar, “ You spit so much venom on Tukaramji, but he never criticizes you, visit him at least once”. One day because of people’s persistence, Shivba Kassar visited the “Kirtan Satsang” of Tukaramji and he got so enthralled that he started visiting this program daily.

Shivba Kassar, with criminal records, was reformed into a devotee in the company of Tukaramji. He started saying: “I experience an indescribable bliss and peace in Kirtan-satsang”. Seeing this sudden transformation, Shivba Kassar’s wife was extremely scared and had an apprehension that one day her husband may desert her. She, therefore, decided to avenge Tukaramji.

One day Shivba invited Tukaramji for singing devotional songs at his residence. Tukaramji accepted the invitation and went to his house. Shivba’s wife got the opportunity to avenge Tukaramji. It was winter and Tukaram always used to take a bath before starting devotional songs. Shivba’s wife took this opportunity and poured hot boiling water on his back. Tukaramji did not say anything to her, but prayed to God to relieve him from the unbearable pain. Tukaramji did not say anything but the Lord could not tolerate it. The boiling water fell on Tukaramji’s back, but blisters erupted on that unchaste woman’s back.

One, who takes the shelter of saints, is blessed; but who begins criticizing saints is trapped into cycle of birth and death. He loses his peace of mind and equanimity.

Shivba Kassar tried all sorts of medicines, but this didn’t provide any succor to his wife. One person therefore, advised Shivba that he approach Tukaramji. He should then give Tukaramji a bath with cool, soothing water and pick up the mud wetted by this water and apply to his wife’s back. This shall cure her ailment.

Shivba Kassar did the same and the blisters on his wife’s body were cured. Shivba Kassar’s wife realised her mistake and fell at Tukaramji feet, requesting for forgiveness. Thereafter, she spent her whole life in devotion to Vithal.

Here though Tukaram did not curse Shivba's wife but Lord Vithal looking to his devotees condition, punished Shivba's wife. Thus Lord takes care of his devotees, wherever, he may be.

(ii) After the Mahabharat War, Krishna ruled over Dwarka for almost 36 years. During this period, one day, a group of Saints came to Dwarka. The arrogant and mischievous Yadavas played a prank with the Saints. They dressed up one of their young men like a woman and presented him to these Saints and said, " Maharaj! Tell us whether this lady will have a boy or a girl".

The Saints saw through the irreverent joke and said in anger: "This person will deliver neither a boy or a girl, but he will deliver a mace. The mace will destroy your entire tribe." Saying so, they departed from Dwarka.

The foolish and arrogant Yadavs were rather perturbed. And indeed the next they were surprised to see Samba, who had impersonated, developing labour pains and giving birth to a mace! They were, therefore, very much worried about the curse that they had received. They deliberated long and finally decided to ground the mace to a fine powder and scatter it in the sea. When they did that they thought that they had disposed off the danger.

Nothing happened for some time. Seasons passed and it rained on the beach where they had spread the fine dust of the awful mace. There sprang up a dense crop of rushes. When Yadavas saw this, they were curious and amused, for they had forgotten all about the curse of the revered Saints.

One day, long after, the Yadavas went to the beach for a picnic and spent whole day in dance, drink and revelry. The liquor began to work. They picked up a quarrel amongst themselves. They came to blows, which swiftly developed into a free fight. They plucked the tall rushes, which fringed the beach and soon there was an indiscriminate slaughter. The Saints curse had begun to work. The rushes grown out of the mace powder became a mace each. The doomed men in their drunkard condition plucked it. They used them on one another with deadly effect and soon all of them were destroyed.

Balram saw all this and passed away into the ocean. Thus ended the avatar of Narayan in Balram. Lord Krishna learnt about Balram's departure. He pondered, "The time has come for me to go". Saying so he lay down under a tree and fell asleep.

In that wooded beach a hunter, prowling for game saw Vasudev lying on the ground below the tree. Mistaking him for a wild animal resting on the ground he shot an arrow at the prostrate figure. The arrow thus pierced the feet of the Lord .The arrow was attached with a left over piece of mace that had been swallowed by a fish, which happened to have come over to this hunter. Thus did the great “Vasudev” depart from the world of men and the curse given by those Saints came true as entire tribe was thus destroyed.

Fable 40: Physical appearance or age is not important in life?

Janaka, the king of Mithila, used to perform *Gyan Yagya*, in the course of which the assembled scholars would debate on the *Sastras*, *Vedas*, *Upnishads* etc. A condition set in the *Gyan Yagya* was that the defeated person would have to drown himself. Court pandit Vandī was considered to be a great scholar and he had defeated many such scholars. Kagola, the father of Ashtavakra, on one ill fated day, provoked contest with vandī and having got defeated, was made to drown him self.

Ashtavakra, it is said, knew the *Vedas* and *Sashtras* while he was in his mother's womb. When Ashtavakra, who was named that way as he had eight crooks in his body, happened to visit the court scholar of king Janak at Mithila, accompanied by his uncle Swetaketu, they came across the king and his retinue. The attendants of the king stopped their entry in the court of scholars. Ashtavakra then said: "A royal attendant and even the king, if he is righteous, has to move and make way for the blind, the deformed, the fair sex, person bearing loads and Brahman's learned in the Vedas. This is the rule enjoined by the scriptures"

The king who heard this was surprised at these wise words of the Brahman boy, accepted the justness of the rebuke and instructed the attendants: "What this Brahman stripling says is true. Fire is fire whether it is tiny or big and it has power to burn".

Ashtavakra and Swetaketu entered the sacrificial hall. The gatekeeper again stopped and said: "Boys can not go in. Only old men learned in the Vedas may go into the sacrificial hall." Ashtavakra replied: "We are not mere boys. We have learnt the Vedas. Those who have learnt the Vedanta will not judge another in mere consideration of age or appearance".

The gatekeeper said: "How a young boy of your age could have learnt; and realized the Vedanta?"

The boy said: "Size is no indication of knowledge, or worth, nor is age. A very tall old man may be a tall old fool. Let me pass". At that moment the king himself came there and recognized Ashtavakra, whom he had met before. The king asked: "Do you know that my court pundit Vandī has overthrown in argument many great scholars in the past and made them to be drawn into the sea. Does not that deter you from this dangerous adventure?" Ashtavakra replied: -"Your eminent scholar has not encountered men like me who are proficient in the Vedas or Vedanta. I can undoubtedly vanquish Vandī, whom you will see crumble up like a broken wheel cart. Please summon him."

Ashtavakra met Vandi. They took the debatable thesis and started an argument, each employing his utmost wits and learning to confound the other, and at the end of assembly it was declared that Ashtavakra was victorious and Vandi was the loser. Vandi bowed his head and offered himself to be drowned in the sea.

The king then realized that it is wrong to assess the greatness of a man on his physical appearance or age. External appearance is deceptive.

Fable 41: The wicked are never satisfied

Many Brahmans visited the Pandavas during their exile. One such Brahman returned to Hastinapur and went to see Dhrutarashtra, who received him with due honour. The Brahman told him that Pandavas, who had royal blood running in their veins, were undergoing great hardships. Dhrutarashtra was probably sorry to hear this but he was helpless. He very well knew that Arjun had returned from heaven with divine weapons. He feared that one day the anger of Pandavas might break its bounds and overflow in a devastating flood. Otherwise, what would tempt Arjun to bring divine weapons from heaven but the craving for vengeance? These thoughts would haunt him and give him no peace.

On the other side, Duryodhana, Sakuni and Karna were exultant and congratulated each other on their success. Duryodhan thus one day suggested to Karna: “O Karna it would be the joy of joys to see with our own eyes the sufferings of Pandavas and bring their sorrow to a climax by a display of our happiness.” He therefore, suggested that they go to forest where the Pandavas were camped. But he was afraid that Dhrutarashtra could forbid them going to the forest and meeting them..

They, therefore, found a way out to go to Jungle by telling Dhrutarashtra that they would like to go to Jungle for the annual stock taking of the cows. Accordingly they sent the leader of cowherds to the king to secure his permission. But the king did not give his assent initially as he sensed danger. But he was ultimately persuaded.

The Kauravas reached the jungle with a huge army and a band of followers. They inspected the herds and carried out the stocktaking. While thus roaming in the jungle they reached an attractive pond near the hermitage of the Pandavas. Duryodhana ordered a camp to be put on its bank.

Chitrassen, the king of the Gandharvas, and his attendants had already encamped near the pond and they prevented Duryodhan's men from putting up their camp. A great fight, therefore, ensued between the Gandharvas and Duryodhan's army in which Karna and other Kaurav heroes lost their chariots and weapons and had to retreat in haste and ignominy. Duryodhan alone remained in the battlefield but Chitrassen soon seized him. He placed him in a chariot, bound his hands and feet and blew his conch in a sign of his victory. At that moment, a cry of agony from Duryodhan reached the Pandava Camp; Yudhistir was greatly moved and asked his brothers to rescue Duryodhan. At the

request of Pandavas, Chitrasen released Duryodhan and other prisoners saying that all he wanted was to teach a lesson to these arrogant Kauravas.

Duryodhan, in great shame and dejection, felt it would have been better if Chitrasen had killed him. Karna in a fit of rage burst out: “This does not befit heroes of Kuru race. I shall conquer the Pandavas one day”.

Fable 42: By penitence and punishment one can be freed from deadly sins

In the days of yore, at a little distance away from Mithila, there used to live a Sage named Gautam along with his wife Ahilaya. Both of them would spend their time in prayer, meditation and divine contemplation. Sage Gautam would get up early in the morning, take a bath at the river and then sit for his meditation.

Indra, the Lord of Devas, was attracted by the charm and beauty of Ahilya. Knowing fully well the routine of Sage Gautam, Indra arrived in disguise of Sage Gautam to his Ashram as soon as Sage has left for his bath. Filled with an unholy desire of charming the beautiful Ahilaya, he requested the lady for urgent solicitation. She was not deceived by the impersonation, but vain for her beauty and proud that it had won her love of lord Indra, she lost her judgement and yielded to his desire.

After committing the sin, Ahilaya realized her mistake and afraid of the fierce spiritual energy of her betrayed husband, she warned Indira of a terrible peril and begged him to leave the ashram immediately.

But unfortunately for Indra, who was running away in guilty panic, he almost bumped into the Sage Gautam who was just returning from the river after his bath. Pretence was hopeless before that all seeing wisdom and Indra tried to apologize and threw himself at the mercy of Sage Gautam. The Sage looked at him with wrath and cursed him:

“Lustful beast, as you are dead to all truth and righteousness, may your manhood fall away from you”.

Indra at once became an eunuch and went back to Devas full with shame and sorrow.

Then sage turned to his erring wife and prescribed a long penance for her. He said:

“Living on air here, you shall assume the form of stone unseen by anyone. After a long time, Lord Rama, the son of king Dashratha will pass this way. When he sets his foot on you, then only you will be free from the curse; welcoming him as a guest you will then recover your lost virtue and get back your own beauty”.

“The Sage Gautam then left his violated Ashram to Himalaya to engage himself in austerities there”.

While Rishi Vishwamitra, along with Lord Ram and Laxman, was going to Mithila, he came across this violated and deserted Ashram. Giving the background to Lord Rama he said:- “Rama! Please touch your foot to this stone and bring redemption to cursed Ahilaya and rekindle the light in her as the Sage promised”. As Rama set foot on the stone, the curse was lifted and Ahilaya stood before them in all her beauty. Lord Rama and Laxman touched the feet of Sage’s wife made pure by penance. The lesson from this episode is that, however, deadly one’s sin, one may hope to be freed from its consequences by penitence and punishment.

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Fable 42(A): Meditation helps you to make your mind stable

Your mind is like a drunken monkey. You can never expect a monkey to sit at a particular spot on one branch even for a while. He will jump from branch to branch and from tree to tree and ultimately damage the trees. Monkey by nature is fickle and over that if he has consumed some wine than you can imagine his state. The state of your mind is, similarly, unstable and wavering. So as to make your journey in the life more pleasant and comfortable, you should first learn to stabilize and purify your mind.

The following six weaknesses of your mind are considered to be your worst enemies:

(1) Desire (2) Anger (3) Greed (4) Attachment (5) Ego (6) Jealousy. If you can conquer these enemies you will be able to open the gate to the path of salvation and liberate yourself from the cycle of birth and death.

Now the question arises as to how to stabilize and purify the mind and control its six enemies. The meditation is an art to achieve above things. Many of us do not have a clear picture or meaning of meditation. How to practice meditation is, therefore, explained briefly here as under:

- (1) Take a cushion or a pillow and sit over it in such a way that you rest your buttock only on the pillow, while your legs remain supported on the woolen Aasan spread on the ground. By this method the load of the entire body will be distributed on three points and you would not strain your back much and you will be able to sit longer.
- (2) Having adjusted your body as said above; place your left foot on right thigh and the right foot on the left thigh. This is generally known as “Lotus” posture.
- (3) Next you hold your right knee with right palm of your hand and left knee with the left palm of your hand with both the hands straight like a stick. This can be done by stretching your back as much as you can.

- (4) Keep your back straight. This is very important. The neck and head should be aligned with the spinal column; they should be straight but not stiff or wood like. After doing this try to relax your entire body by loosening it. Lastly, try to bring half smile on your face.
- (5) Close your eyes and try to stabilise your eyeballs and lids. This can be done by visualizing a white- bright spot or a dark spot in front of you, or visualizing rising Sun from the sea or setting Sun in the sea, or visualizing a God's image. Once your eyeballs and lids have stabilised try to stabilise your hearing. For this you can concentrate on some very light and smooth noise from a far off distance like ticking of clock or your heart throbs or a thin sound coming out from your left ear.
- (6) Once your hearing gets focussed, try to stabilise your breath. Watch your breathing process. Let your breathing be normal. Once your breathing has stabilised, start counting your breaths. When you breathe in - count one; when you breath out- count 2, when you breath in next- count 3 and when you breath out next- count 4 and continue so till you have reached 20.
- (7) Then observe your mind and try to keep it calm and quiet as much as you can, without any thoughts. If any thoughts do arise, become a witness to these thoughts. Observe the thoughts like a pedestrian watching the flow of traffic on the road.
- (8) If thoughts persist you can again switch over to counting your breaths. You will observe that the counting process will overshadow your thoughts. Try to take breath as deep as possible and release it slowly.
- (9) You can continue the processes under item no. 7 and 8 above alternately at least for 20 to 30 minutes in the beginning. With a view to avoid bothering about time, you can set up your alarm clock suitably or tell your family member to inform you as soon as the set time is over

You should to meditate in this manner at least once a day gradually increase the frequency to at least 3 to 4 times a day. Combine this meditation with japa. After a continuous and a regular practice you will observe that your mind has stabilized and is under your control instead of mind controlling you previously .You will be thus able to conquer the six enemies as stated above and open the gates to salvation. You will thus reach a stage when you will feel totally

surrendered to God. You will realize that this entire world is a divine plan and that nothing is accidental here .Not even a leaf of tree is moving without God's wish!

You will start realising the divine purpose behind the apparent adversities in your life, you will not misinterpret these as problems in life.

You should, therefore, practice meditation every day. A distracted state of mind is the source of all problems. When you practice concentration and meditation, you begin to reach the sub-conscious and un-conscious depths of your mind. Meditation is nothing but controlling your mind without stress or tension.

Fable 43: The wound made by the sword heals, but not those made by curt speech

Dronacharya, one of the heroes of the Mahabharata war, was the son of a Brahmin named Bhardwaja. After completing his study of the *Vedas* and *Vedangas*, he devoted himself to the art of archery and became a great master. He was married to the sister of Kripa and had a son Aswathama. He was very attached to his wife and son. When his son once asked for a glass of milk in the night, his mother could not satisfy his son's demand due to poverty. When the son continued with his demand and started crying for milk, his mother took some flour of wheat and mixed it with water and satisfied the child's demand.

Dronacharya, on seeing this pitiable condition thought, what was the use of learning *Vedas* and *Vedangas* when he was not able to give even a glass of milk to his son. He then remembered his childhood friend Drupada, the son of the king Panchala. Drupada and Drona were classmates. During their student days Drupad had promised to give Drona half of his Kingdom.

Drona therefore, went to Drupada to remind him of his promise made during the student days. But Drupad being intoxicated with power refused to recognize Drona and said: "What friendship can there be between a king and a wandering beggar like you? How can a pauper be the friend of a wealthy man?" Drona was turned out of the palace with scorn in the ear and he therefore, made a mental vow to punish the arrogant king.

While he was moving in Hastinapur in search of some employment, he came across the princes who were trying to retrieve a ball fallen in the well. Drona helped them take out the ball from the well. The princes were pleased with Drona and narrated the incident to Bhishma who immediately recognised the Drona from the description the princes had given. Bhishma, therefore, engaged him as an instructor to train the princes in the art of archery. On completion of their course the princes requested Guru Drona to demand the some thing as a gift. Guru Drona took his opportunity and demanded that Drupad be taken captive. Arjun launched an assault on Drupad's Kingdom, Drupad was made captive and brought to Guru Drona. Drona smilingly addressed Drupad: "You told me that a king alone could be a friend of a king. Now, I am a king, having conquered your kingdom, I return to you half the kingdom and thus regain your friendship" Drona thus took a revenge for the insult he had suffered.

Drupada's pride had been humbled and he decided to seek revenge. The king, therefore, performed tapes, underwent fasts to be blessed with a son who would slay Drona and a daughter who would wed Arjun. He was thus blessed with a son named Drishtadyumnu and a daughter named Draupadi.

Draupadi weds Arjun. Later in the Mahabharat war Drishtadyumnu stayed Guru Drona Thus hatred born out of arrogant speech, and the wound made by it, continues its chain.

Fable 44: Blessed are those who believe that God is omnipresent

Sant Kabir used to live in Kashi. He used to criticize both Pandits and Mullahs, with the result he had to undergo lot of difficulties and harassment. When Emperor Sikander Lodi visited Kashi, all these Mullahs complained to him that Kabir criticizes not only temple and Pandits, but also namaz and Roza too. He advocates that God is within one's own heart and one need not go to a temple or a mosque.

The emperor was thus infuriated and summoned Kabirji. Kabirji came to the emperor, but did not greet him in the way as others do. He did not even bow before the emperor. Kabirji was asked, "Why did you not bow before the king?" Kabirji replied: "All religions agree that there is only one God and that one should not bow before any one other than Him".

Instigated by Mullahs and Maulavis, the emperor ordered: "Tie Kabir's hands and feet and throw him in the river Ganga". The orders of the king were executed and Kabirji was thrown in the river with his hands and legs tied. Kabirji saw the images of God everywhere in the river. The furious waves of river Ganga broke away the chains around Kabirji and he swam across safely to the banks of the river.

Having still not realised what Kabirji was saying, the Mullahs and Maulvies continued to provoke Sikandar Lodi: "Your Majesty! Kabirji is a big magician and he is extremely dangerous and unless he is done to death our religion will come to an end."

Sikander Lodi ordered another sentence, "Set alight a pieces of wood and throw Kabir in to the fire." Kabirji prayed to God, "I have no one in the world. Whether it is water, land or fire. You alone pervade through all things. Let thy wish be fulfilled, O Lord!"

Just as waves subsides and become one with the ocean; so too Kabirji became one with God and emerged from the fire unscathed, all happy and cheerful.

The Mullahs–Maulavis again instigated, "Look your Majesty! What hypnotic power Kabirji has!"

Sikander this time got very wild and said: "Let him be trampled under the feet of an elephant."

Kabirji was tied up and the mahout started instigating a mad elephant to climb over him. Kabirji threw a glance at the elephant and said: "O Lord! You are an elephant too. My Lord! Let thy

wish be fulfilled.” Despite all the instigation from mahout the elephant did not move even an inch forward.

Sikander Lodi felt ashamed; he went to Kabirji, bowed his head like an offender and said: “You are a great Fakir, you have merged your ‘I’ with that of the Lord. I was unable to recognise you. I seek your divine grace. Please pardon me”. He said: “That which causes your heart to throb, causes other hearts to throb as well. Call him Ram, call him Rehman, call him God or call him Allah.... all are but one. ‘Hindus and Muslim’ are a figment of human imagination. The one God resides in all.” God showered his grace through Kabirji. It is said Kabirji lived 120 years. Blessed are those who believe Allah or Ishwar to be omnipresent.

Fable 45: No one can escape from enjoying the fruits of his/her deeds

In his young age king Dashratha had gone to a jungle to hunt along with Kaikeyi. At that time the king made a vow to give two gifts to Kaikeyi whenever she desires. Later, when Kaikeyi knew about the arrangement being made to hold a coronation ceremony to install Lord Rama as the king of Ayodhya, she got perturbed and demanded following two gifts from king Dashratha as instigated by Manthara-

- (i) Bharat, the son of Kaikeyi should be crowned as a king and not Rama.
- (ii) Rama should be asked to live in a forest in the dress of “Sanyasi” for 14 years.

Hearing these two demands, king Dashratha was shocked and fell down. The news spread like wild fire in the palace and Rama, Laxman and Sitaji set out for exile in the jungle. When the king knew that Lord Rama had left for the jungle, it was a bolt from the blue for him as he was very attached to Lord Rama. When he realised that he was now not to live any more he remembered the sin he had committed in his young days. He started narrating the incident to Kaushaliya who was by his side at that time.

“When I was young, I had a skill to kill an animal by simply hearing their sound. For the pleasure of exercising this skill, I thus accidentally killed an innocent young boy once. One night, I went for hunting on the banks of the Saryu. I heard a voice of some animal drinking water. I took aim by the ear and shot my dart without seeing. Like a Venomous Serpant, swish went my dart and hit the object. I heard a man crying in pain. I went to him and found that he was a young boy named “Shravan” who was taking their blind old parents to the pilgrimage. On the way his parents felt thirsty, so he came to the bank of river to fill his pitcher with water”.

He asked me, “Why did you kill me? What crime have I committed? My parents who are old and blind do not know that I lie here bleeding and helpless. Now at least go to them and tell them what have you done. Prostrate at their feet and beg for forgiveness, lest their anger reduce you to the ashes”.

Dashrath continued: “Having committed the sin and seeing the young man dying, I cleaned the pitcher filled it with water and went to his parents who were curiously waiting for their son. The old man, hearing my footsteps said, “Why this long delay, my dear son. Quickly give me some water to drink. Your mother too is thirsty. Why are you silent? Indeed you are more than our life to us; why are you

still silent? Are you angry with us?” Dashrath said, “I trembled in fear when I told them that I am king Dashrath and by mistaken identity, I have killed your son. I have committed a horrible sin. I throw myself at your mercy. I await your judgment”. Tears rolled down from their sightless eyes and the old man said, “King, your sin is indeed horrible, but you have done it with ignorance and come by yourself to tell us so you shall live, but you too will die of grief when parted from your son”.

Then they ascended to the funeral pyre prepared for his son. Dashrath then said, “This is the fruit of the sin I have committed and the curse I got from that old and blind couple”. Our “Karmas” always follow us and we have to undergo the punishment whenever they are ripe.

Fable 46: Mind is the root Cause of all worries

First of all let us understand what is the mind?

Mind is that which goes on making desires after desires with no end at all. If one desire is fulfilled then the mind starts seeking the fulfillment of another desire. If a desire is not fulfilled one starts worrying. Thus salvation is achieved not by the death of a body but by the death of mind. The soul is not to be liberated as it is already liberated. When the mind is liberated from all sensual desires in the world then one is called liberated and is one with God! Mind can never be one with sensual desires of world because world as it is, is without any “Chaitanya”, while mind has or it is part of “Chaitanya”. Oneness can be achieved between two things having similar characteristics e.g. milk can be mixed with sugar but not with pebbles. God itself is Chaitanya and therefore, mind can merge only with Chaitanya. The body of the past birth dies, but mind goes with its desires along with “Jivatma” in whatever new form it takes according to its past deeds (karmas). It is, therefore, very important to keep your mind purified and this can be done only if it is under your control instead of mind controlling yourself. If anything gets spoiled it can be purchased but if mind is spoiled it can never be purchased.

Mind does not die till it continues to make sensual desires. Just as a “Deepak” will not blow off as long as there is oil within. But if the same mind continues to think of God then it can achieve God. Mind always thinks of sensual desires and gets trapped in them. This can be well illustrated by the story of monkeys and its hunters. The hunter keeps a pitcher with a small opening filled up with groundnuts. The monkey puts his hand in the pitcher and grabs some groundnuts in his fist, but he is not able to take out his fist because it is full with nuts. He is thus trapped and then caught by the hunter. Similarly we all are trapped in this world in the form of pitcher and desires in the form of groundnuts. The mind, which is like the monkey does not want to leave sensual desires and thus get s trapped in “Sansar”.

One day a king declared that one who takes his goat to the jungle for grazing till the goat is satisfied then that person will be rewarded with a precious gift. One day a person came and took the goat to graze for the whole day and brought back the goat to the king in the evening. The king put a fresh bunch of grass in front of a goat and the goat starts eating again. The king then asks, “How do you say that the goat has grazed to its satisfaction? ”. Next day another person would come and he would take the goat in some farm that has fresh green grass and brings back the goat in the evening. The king puts a bunch of grass in front of the goat and the goat as usual starts eating again. The king again argues in the same way, pointing out that the goat is still not satisfied fully. Such incidents continued for many days but nobody was qualified to get the reward.

Then one day a person comes and takes the goat to a jungle for grazing. The moment the goat starts grazing, that person would hit the goat with a stick on the neck and goat would stop grazing for some time; and then again the goat would lower its mouth for grazing and again that person would hit it on the neck. This process continued till late in the evening when goat realised that if it puts its mouth down it will be beaten. So the person then brings back the goat to the king who asks the person, “Have you allowed him to graze to its satisfaction? ”. The person replies, “Yes, sir”. The king then offers a fresh bunch of grass to the goat but the goat refuses to lower its mouth to eat the grass knowing well that if it tries to eat grass it will be beaten.

Our mind is like a goat. It can never be satisfied. One who takes the goat for grazing is the “Jivatma” and the king is like God. So the lesson to be learnt from this illustration is to try to control your mind by hitting, if necessary in a humble way so that it does not manufacture any desire. Once all your all desires die you are liberated and merged one with God, just as when all the oil is consumed “Deepak” will blow off.

Fable 47: Never doubt the efficacy of a boon

Shri Krishna's grandfather, Sura, had a daughter named Pritha who was famous for her beauty and virtues. Since Sura's cousin Kuntibhoja was childless he adopted Pritha as her daughter and since then she was known as Kunti after her adopter father Kuntibhoj.

During her childhood days a sage named Durvasha came to stay as a guest in Kuntibhoj's family. Kunti served the sage Durvasha with all care, patience and devotion. He was so pleased with her that he gave her a divine mantra. He said: "If you call any God repeating this mantra, he will manifest himself to you and bless you with a son equal to him in glory".

The young Kunti doubted the efficacy of this Mantra and decided to test it. She repeated the Mantra and invited the Sun God. The Sun God immediately approached the beautiful princess Kunti and said, "Dear Maiden, I am the sun I have approached you by the power of son giving Mantra that you have uttered". Kunti said, "I only wished to test the power of the boon given by the sage Durvasha. I am still unmarried. So please forgive me and go back". The sun God however, reassured her, "After bearing my son you will regain your virginity".

Kunti conceived by the grace of the Sun God. Divine births take place immediately without nine month's weary course of mortal gestation. She gave birth to Karna who was born with a divine armour and earrings as bright and beautiful like the sun. She wondered what she should do with the child. To hide her fault she placed the child in a sealed box and set it float in a river. A childless charioteer happened to see the floating box and upon opening it was surprised and delighted to see within it a beautiful and charming child. He handed over the child to his wife who was very glad and lavished mother's love on it. Thus Karna, the son of the Sun God, came to be brought up as a charioteer's child.

When the time came for giving Kunti in marriage. Kuntibhoja invited all the neighbouring princes and held a Swayamvara for her to choose her husband. Kunti placed the garland on the neck of king Pandu. The marriage was duly solemnised and she accompanied her husband to his capital Hastinapur.

On the advice of Bhishma and in accordance with prevailing custom, Pandu took a second wife Madri, the sister of king Madra. Pandu later on died due to curse of some sage.

Kunti thus tried to test the power of boon she had received from sage Durvasha and gave a birth to a child who was left floating in the river as she was then still unmarried and had no other alternatives. So one should never doubt the efficacy of the boon.

Fable 48: “BHISMA” connotes the one who undertakes a formidable vow

King Santanu of Hastinapur had earlier married Goddess Ganga. Goddess Ganga however left the king as he asked her the purpose of throwing all their seven newborn children in a river. The goddess had left the king along with her eighth child. Thereafter, the king gave up all sexual pleasures and ruled the kingdom in a spirit of asceticism. One day when the king was wandering along the banks of the Ganga, goddess Ganga revealed herself and presented the eighth child which she had carried along with her and requested the king to look after him now as she had brought him up till now. His name was Devavrata. She said: “He has mastered the art of arms and equals Parsuram. He has learnt the Vedas and Vedanta from Vasishtha.” She then blessed the child and disappeared.

The king was thus very joyful and crowned the Devavrata as Yuvraja. After few years when the king Santanu was wandering in the Jungle he happened to meet a divinely beautiful maiden and on seeing her he lost the control over his sexual desire and it filled him with a overpowering desire. He asked her to be his wife. The maiden said, “I am a fisherwoman, the daughter of the chief of the fishermen. You must therefore, get his consent first. The king called the next day the maiden’s father and asked for his daughter’s hand in marriage. The father said: “O king, my daughter is to be married to some one and you are indeed worthy of her. However, you have to make a promise to me before you are married with her”. Santanu said, “Well, it is just a promise I shall make it”. The fisherman said, “The child born of my daughter should be the king after you”.

This was not an easy matter as it meant setting aside godlike Devavrata, the son of Ganga and making the son of a fisherwoman the king. He came back to his palace, sick with a battled desire. He did not reveal the matter to any one and languished in silence.

One day seeing his father’s condition Devavrata asked, “ My father, something is worrying you. Why do not you tell me the fact”. The king replied, “My son what you say is correct. Though you are equal to hundred sons, still those who are well read in scriptures say that in this is a transitory world having only one son is the same as having no son at all. Therefore, I desire the perpetuation of our family. This is the cause of my anguish”.

The wise Devavrata thought that there must be a secret cause and to know the fact he asked the king’s charioteer and through him he came to know that his father had a meeting with the fisherman. He

therefore, goes to the Chief of fishermen's house and sought his daughter's hand on his father's behalf.

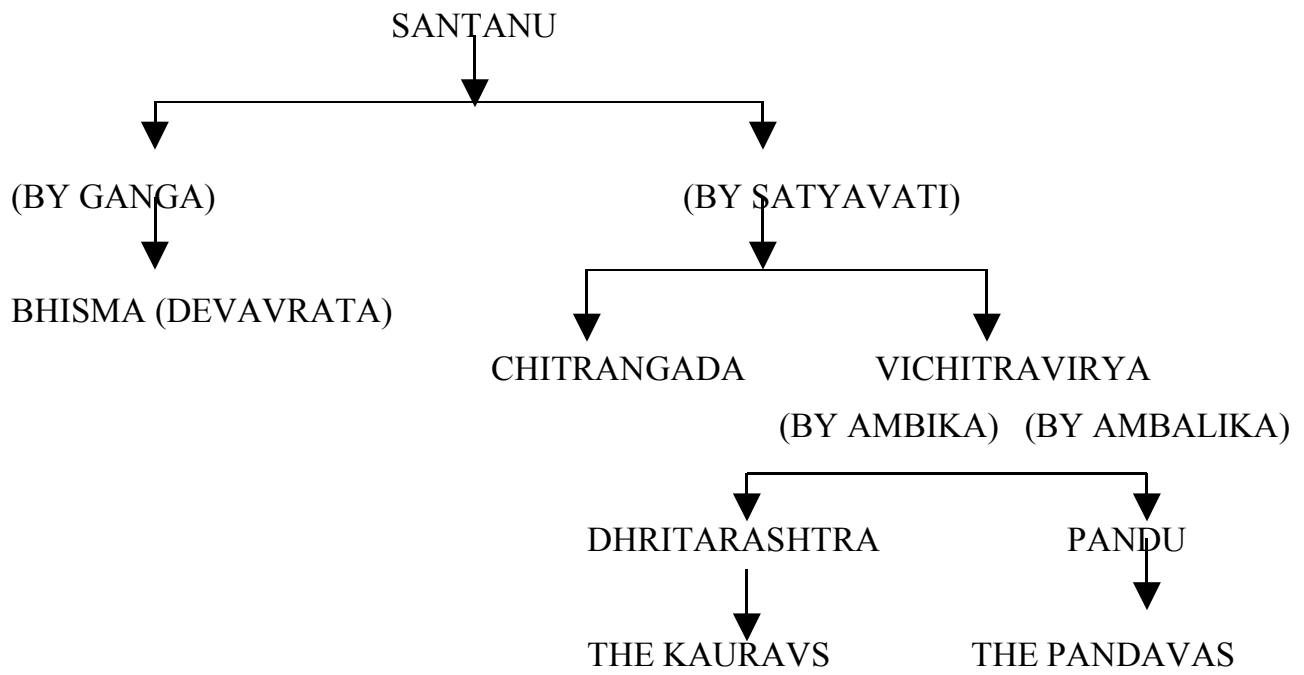
The fisherman was quite courteous but firm and said, "I can do so, if the child born by my daughter is only made the king after your father's death and that you shall not have any claim in the kingdom".

Devevrata replied, "I give you my word that the son born of this maiden shall be the king and I renounce my right in his favour" and he took a vow to that effect.

The fisherman not still satisfied put up a further condition that the child born of you also should have no right.

When he heard this knotty condition he was surprised but to fulfill his father's desire made his supreme renunciation. He vowed with an upraised arm to the father of a maiden, "I shall never marry and I dedicate myself to a life of unbroken chastity". And as he uttered these words of renunciation Gods showered flowers on his head and cried "Bhisma", "Bhisma" which resounded in the air. "Bhisma" means who undertakes a terrible vow and fulfills it. That name became the celebrated epithet of Devavrat from that time. Then the son of Ganga, Devavrata led the Satyawati, the fisherwoman to his father. Bhisma lived a long life and died in the tenth day of famous Mahabharat war. The annexed family chart of king Santanu will make the reading more interesting.

FAMILY CHART OF KING SANTANU



Fable 49: You lose by lying

In Ahmedabad there was a couple with an 8 year old son. His name was Santosh and his father's name was Harishchandra. One day they were to visit Bombay to attend a marriage ceremony. Harishchandra decided to take his son along with him. They had to catch early morning train so both of them got up early and took a heavy breakfast. The father then instructed his son, "If any body asks you your age then you tell them that you are 5 years old"! But the son said, "I am 8 years old, then why do you want me to lie". The father says, "That is O.K., it is not necessary for you to know. You do as I tell you, that is all".

Both father and son came to the Ahmedabad station and occupied their seats in the train. As soon as the train started as usual a hawker selling apples and banana came by. The son requests his father, "Daddy I want 2 apples and 2 bananas". The father says, "My son, you have just taken heavy breakfast then how will you eat 2 apples and 2 bananas"? The son adamantly replies, "I want means I want, otherwise I will tell 'that thing' to every one". The father hearing this from his son calls the hawkers and purchase 2 apples and 2 bananas". After some time train reaches Bharuch and the boy saw the hawker moving with Ice cream. He again says, "Daddy I want ice cream". The father advises him not to eat so much otherwise his stomach will get upset. The son again says, "I want means I want, otherwise I will tell 'that thing' to every body". The father thus submits and gets him the ice cream. Then again the train starts and reaches Surat, where the boy demanded a bottle of milk. The father refuses as usual and the son threatens as usual. This way at every station the drama continues, the boy demands and the father refuses, the boy then threatens and father then submits.

Another co-passenger watching this asks Harishchandra, "Bhai Saheb, if you do not mind can you tell me "What is 'that thing' by which your son was threatning every time and you were fulfilling his demand". Harishchandra said, "Babuji, it is a very minor matter but this boy took advantage of it and compelled me to fulfill his desires. Actually he is 8 years old but being very thin and small in stature, I was tempted to purchase only a half ticket for him to save Rs. 10/- and, therefore, instructed him at the home that if anybody asks you about your age you say "I am 5 years old". That is all for saving Rs. 10/-. I have spent Rs. 20/- for his snacks etc in front of you and it is 'that thing' which he used to satisfy his requirements". This story tells us that in telling a lie you always lose and never gain, and therefore, it is considered to be a sin and hence one should avoid telling lies.

Fable 50: Service to poor and old people is also a service to God

About 200 years back there was a saint named Jalaram in a village called Virpur (in the state of Gujarat). He was very religious, pious and compassionate right from his childhood. He used to help his uncle in the grocery shop but his mind always used to remain with Lord Rama. He was so compassionate that many a times he used to give grocery free of cost to the poor people who had no money to pay.

At the age of 18 he got married and luckily his wife was very compassionate and pious and started giving a helping hand to her husband. They used to serve food free of cost to the people who were passing by this village. Once upon a time at midnight a person riding on the horse came to their house and requested for shelter for a night. But Saint Jalaram would not allow anyone to go to bed without food. He insisted to the traveler to have food and then go to sleep. He asked his wife to prepare food at midnight and served it to the traveler with love and affection. The traveler was so tired that he went to sleep immediately as he lay down. Then the saint thought that if the traveler who rode the horse is so tired, then what must be the condition of the horse? He, therefore, goes to the horse to wash his legs with lukewarm water. Such was his compassionate nature.

One day an old man came to their house and Saint Jalaram requested the old man to have some food. But he said, “I am not hungry and do not need food”. Saint Jalaram then said, “What can I do for you? Please do not hesitate to tell me if I could be of any help to you”. To this the old man replied, “First give me a promise that whatever I demand, you would give me”. Saint Jalaram said, “Maharaj! Please tell me without any hesitation, I shall definitely fulfill my promise”. The old man then said, “Look baba! I have become very old and there is nobody to look after me, so what I want is your wife to serve me”. Saint Jalaram was first taken aback and shocked but immediately recovered and went to his wife and tells her the demand of an old and sick person. Immediately she said: “I have no objection to go along with old man to serve him”. She got ready and accompanied the old man. After they had walked some distance, the old man handed over his bag and stick and said, “Lady! Please take care of my bag and stick as I am going to answer nature’s call”.

The poor lady waited for a long time for the old man and there she heard a voice from the sky saying: “I am Lord Rama who had come to both of you to test your devotion and you have passed in my test

and that your desire to feed the poor and old people shall be continued by your followers even after your salvation”. Saint at his house heard the same voice and he went to look for his wife. Both of them went back to their house and were very much pleased to have a vision of Lord Rama in the form of an old man. One can see even today that bag and stick handed over by that old man, in the Jalaram temple at Virpur.

Fable 51: It is due to a curse that women are not able to keep secrets

After the Mahabharat war was over, Narad appeared before Yudhishtira and congratulated him for his victory in the war against Kauravas. But Yudhishtira was not happy and said, “Oh Naradji, we took our own brother Karna as an enemy and killed him. He on the other hand, kept the promise he gave to her mother and abstained from killing us. I am a sinner who murdered his own brother. My mind is troubled greatly at this thought.”

Naradji replied, “This was the result of the curses Karna had received on various occasions

1) Once Karna approached Drona with a request to teach him how to wield the Brahmastra. But Drona declined and there upon he went to Purochana's Ashram where he was practising his bow in the forest and killed a Brahmin's cow accidentally. The Brahmin was angry and gave a curse that in the battle, your chariot wheels will stick in the mud and you will be killed like this innocent cow.

2) Purochana taught all the archery and use of Brahmastra. One day, after noon, Purochana put his head on his disciple Karna's lap and slept. During this time an insect bit a hole into Karna's thigh and Karna was in acute pain, but did not move, lest Guru Purochana should wake up. The warm blood trickling from the wound woke up Purochana and he realised that Karna was not Brahmin but Kshatriya as no Brahmin would be able to bear such pain and said, “Karna! You have deceived me and learnt all the art of archery, but I give you a curse that your knowledge of archery will fail you when you will need it most in the hour of crisis”. Thus said Naradji, “Karna's pledge to his mother that he would not kill more than one of five of you, Purochana's curse, the Brahmin's curse and Lord Vasudeva's stratagems, all these combined were the cause of Karna's death.

So do not grieve under the impression that you alone caused his death.”

His mother Kunti also said, “Do not blame yourself, son, for Karna's death. His father, the sun Lord himself begged of him to give up the wicked-hearted Duryodhan and join you. I too tried hard. But he would not listen to us and he thus brought his end himself.”

Yudhishtira not convinced of all such reasons said, “Mother, you deceived us by hiding the secret of his birth from us. You thus became the cause of this great sin. I, therefore, curse all women that they would never be able to keep any thing secret henceforth”. Thus according to the legend women can never keep any secret.

Fable 52: Positive thinking keeps you in a happy situation

In order to avoid negative thinking, one should try to realize that the world is a divine plan. You did not create the world, you did not create even your body, you did not create the air you are breathing, you did not create the sun which is giving you light. The creator knows what is best, just as a head of the nation (i.e P.M. or President) knows what is in the general interest of the nation. Even when certain conditions seem difficult or painful, you must still have faith that there may be some purpose behind such happenings in life. You must have conviction that nothing can really go wrong. The world has been fashioned by divine intelligence with tremendous compassion. There is always a divine purpose and try to realize that what is happening is for something good.

There were two friends, one named Santosh and another named Vinod. Both of them were educated. However, one remained ever contented and the other Vinod remained discontented. They both grew up. Santosh became a train driver while Vinod became a shopkeeper.

Though Vinod had a very good business he was always had a habit of complaining that he has to get up early in the morning to open the shop in time, take the inventory of all materials, order the materials in time, deal with different types of clients and so on. He paused for a while and then said to Santosh, “However, you are more unhappy than me”. Santosh asked, “How”? Vinod, the shopkeeper replied, “You have to remain packed in that ghastly black engine, endure the heat, always keep moving to and fro etc. Santosh! Your life is really a miserable one.”

Santosh was a contented fellow and had positive thinking. He, therefore, said, “No, no my dear friend! I operate the train from Ahmedabad to Delhi. When the weather is hot, I stand in the doorway and enjoy the open air. When the weather is cold, I stand near the boiler. I travel free and get the opportunity to see new places, where as the passengers have to pay to do the same thing. Besides, I get a salary. Who else could be happier than me?”

Santosh, the driver was in the habit of feeling happy where as Vinod was in habit of cursing his lot. Thus days passed by. By some ill luck, the driver once met with an accident while crossing the railway tracks. He lost his leg. He was treated in a hospital. He started walking using crutches. Vinod, the shopkeeper friend visited him and said, “Oh dear Santosh! What a tragedy has befallen you? What a miserable life you will have to pass”?

Santosh retorted, “Why tragic? You will not find anyone happier than me. As many days as I have been here, I get hot meals, good care, and my salary as well. Earlier when I used to go home on Sundays, I had to go to the flourmill to get the flour processed. Now I do not have to do that. Now I

have only one foot, earlier, I had to wear shoes on both feet, now I have to wear it only on one foot.”. The driver possessed the proper way of thinking i.e positive thinking, and transformed a sorrowful situation in to a happy one. There is yet another parable to explain this theme in a simple way.

There were two neighbours, one had a quarrelsome wife and always used to create problems in the house with her husband, so he used to pass most of his time visiting temples and religious discourses, doing social service etc. He used to therefore, pray to God and say, “How lucky I am to get such a quarrelsome wife that I am able to go to temple, do social service etc.”

On the other hand, another neighbour’s wife was very spiritual and pious. She had a very understanding nature. They both sat at home to pray and hold discussions on religious matters, sing the devotional songs etc. The husband used to say, “How lucky I am to get a spiritual wife so that we are able to sit for prayer and penance together and not require to go out to the temple etc.”

Yet there is another person named “Narsinh Mehta” who was born in Junagadh some 400 years ago in Gujrat state and was totally devoted to God and was a great saint. When his wife died he said, “How lucky I am to lose my wife, now be able to devote more time in prayer and penance.”

This is how one should look at the life and moulds his future.

Fable 53: What is necessary for self-realization is to control your sexual desires and not abandon your responsibilities

Sexual desires are main obstacles in your path of salvation. They are so powerful that they will follow you wherever you go. It will not be correct to say that if you are in the jungle you have no

desires. There are many examples where people have achieved self-realization by remaining with family. Bhakta Prahlad had a vision of God by practicing penance and prayer at home. Similarly Saint “Narsinh Mehta” from Gujrat, Meerabai from Marvad, Saint Jalaram, Saint Eknath and many others have achieved self-realization by remaining at home. Almost all our ancient sages like Vasishta, Valmiki, Sandipani, Gautam were all married and yet achieved self-realization. What is required is to control your sexual desire. There is a good story of one ascetic illustrating the above theme.

There was an ascetic longing to achieve self-realization and thought that his wife and children were creating hurdles and, therefore, not able to concentrate on his penance and prayer. He, therefore, one day decided to leave the house and go to the Jungle. He left the family without informing them and left the members of the family at the mercy of God. He came to a river passing through a Jungle where he prepared his hermitage and a small temple. By his strong penance and prayer he achieved some spiritual powers. He had sacrificed everything in the life. He was just wearing a small underwear to cover his front-bottom part and nothing else. He used to eat fruits and leaves etc. Due to his spiritual powers many people from the near by villages started visiting him to solve their problems. Some used to visit him to get his blessing to succeed in examinations, some used to come with a hope of succeeding in securing a job, while some used to come with the hope for success in business. Since his blessings never failed people had a lot of faith in him. One such businessman offered to construct a temple near his hermitage and this was done. Yet he used to live a very simple life. He was, therefore, known as “Langoti Baba” in the villages. He used to wash his underwear (Langoti) during the night and wear it in the morning when it dried up. But it so happened that the rats around the temple tore up the “Langoti”. Some one, therefore, suggested taming a cat to kill the rats. He did so, and the rats disappeared. The cat used to remain hungry, so some one suggested taming a cow, which will give milk for the cat. He did so.

He used to milk the cow and feed the cat. One day it so happened that one young widow lady comes to him and requested to allow her to sleep in the temple as the villagers were harassing her being widow and beautiful and, therefore, she suggested, “Baba, I will look after your cow and cat and clean the temple and compound etc.” Baba thus agreed and allowed her to sleep on a platform outside the temple. The days passed on like this. On one full moon night when the entire atmosphere surrounding the temple was full with fragrance of flowers and cold breeze was blowing, the baba happened to pass by the young lady who was sleeping on the platform. As he saw her face shining in the moonlight could not resist his desire and approached her. The lady initially resisted but ultimately

submitted. Having once fulfilling his desire, as usual, his desires kept growing. Later on it was found that the lady was carrying a child. The lady informed the “Baba” who had no alternative but to accept the situation. Then started a full-fledged family and the hermitage was converted into a house. In the course of time he became the father of three children. He, therefore, stopped wearing the “Langoti” and started wearing Dhoti-kurta and cap etc. He was thus changed from “Sanyasi” to “Gruhasti”.

One day the businessman who had donated the money to construct the temple came to this temple and inquired about “Langoti Baba” from that “Gruhasti” who was playing with his children outside his home. The “Gruhasti” felt ashamed and narrated his entire story.

Thus his very purpose of leaving his house and family was defeated, as he could not control his sexual desire even by staying in the jungle.

Fable 54: Do not wait for devotion to God till your all desires are fulfilled

It is said that creator has created 84 lakhs creatures. Of these the human creation is considered to be unique in as much as it is human being that only can pray and worship God, Other activities like eating, sleeping, and reproduction etc. are done by all other creatures also. We have not been gifted this life just to earn few rupees or enjoy wordily pleasure. We have been given this life to realize the supreme soul. If you are richest person in the world but do not have a treasure of spirituality, you are nothing but mere beggar. When a person dies he would not be able to take any wealth with him, but on the other hand if he has spiritual treasure he will be able to carry it with him in the next birth. The knowledge of Medicine, knowledge of Engineering, Computer science, Dancing, Music and all other knowledge will remain here only after death. It is the spiritual knowledge only which goes along with the “Jivatma” and mind. And he has to start the spiritual knowledge from where he had left and not from the search as in case of other knowledge.

The senses are attached to the mind, and the mind is attached to the intellect. The intellect gets the power from the self i.e. soul or chaitanya. That is why your knowledge of senses changes your thinking of mind changes and the decision of intelligent changes but, the soul or “chaitanya” does not change even when there are modifications in senses, mind and intelligent. It observes every thing as a witness only and supplies the power. During your childhood, your intellect was different, as you grew up and under took studies, your intellect changed, After marriage, it undergoes further changes and when you become spiritual it further changes, when you attain self realization, the intellect will become pervasion. The intellect changes but the witness of the intellect which is known as “Atma” remaine the same. So what is required is to know the “Atma”.

There were two friends one named Shivshankar and was doing the profession of vaidya (Aryurvedic doctor). The other friend was named Manichand and had his own business. While vaidya Shivshankar made good of his wealth and remain absorbed in the True self, Manichand remains engrossed in accumulating wealth and went on increasing his desire after desires. He purchase one car, then second car, then flat, second flat and that way his desires had no end.

Vaidya Shivshankar used to get up early in the morning, meditating on God, performing his puja etc. to God and then goes to his dispensary to treat his patients. He used to treat the poor patient free of cost.

One day Manichand, a businessman visited Shivshankar who looking to the greedy nature of Manichand started explaining him to devote everyday some time in prayer and penance, as your wealth will not come along with you when you leave this world. To this Manichand got furious and said in the life money is every thing. Look, I have two flats, two cars and yet I am going to buy third flat and third car thereafter, in the old age I will stay peacefully and pray God and go on pilgrimage etc. The Vaidya friend said: “Look Manichand this way your desire will never end and you will never get time to worship God.” But the Manichand did not agree, so Vaidya friend looked at his business friend Manichand and said: “Manichand I want 5 kg. of frogs for preparing some medicines and I will give you Rs. 100 per kg. but with the condition that weighing should be done properly and exactly 5 kg. in front of me and then only I will pay you. Manichand, thus one day brought a bag full of frogs and started putting the frog one by one on the pan of weighing scale. Just as he lifts the scale a frog will jumps out, when he puts that frog back again, another frog jump out, when he put it back, yet third will jump out. Like that he continued weighing till evening but could not weigh 5 kg. of frogs and was exhausted. Then Vaidya friend explained to Manichand that your desires are like this only and that you will never be able to satisfy them. All our ancestors have left the world unsatisfied. At the stroke of death even emperors and kings have been reduced to ash. So now you realize the fact of the life and start praying God daily for some time without leaving your business. You wake up in the morning, sit on your bed and resolve: “To-day I shall forge ahead on the path of spirituality. To-day I shall perform noble needs.” After making such resolutions re-pose in the self, which is beyond contemplation. If you do it before getting out of your bed, you will certainly meet unmitigated success in your worldly affairs, experience an improvement in health and make spiritual progress. Devote at least 5 to 10 minutes for prayers every morning. Sincerely and faithfully perform “Japa”. This is an internal form of spiritual practice which increases divine bless and peace.

In order to discover one self, seek solitude some time and perform self-inquiry, as to “who am I”? ‘I’ was here even before the body existed; ‘I’ am here whilst the body is and ‘I’ will remain even when the body no longer remains. Who am ‘I’ that? How am ‘I’ that? Such knowledge of our being is self-knowledge.

The knowledge of the Lord! is the knowledge of God, which can be attained through selfless service and devotion to God without leaving your routine works required to be done to maintain your family.

Fable 55: Equanimity under all circumstances whether bad or good will keep you happy

Life is like a film. The script is written beforehand, and the film proceeds. Every day the sun rises in the morning and sets in the evening. The earth is rotating around its axis continuously. There is ebb and tide in the ocean, the wind is blowing, the various seasons sets in according to the pre-determined time. In the same way in our life also there will be ebb and tide i.e. happiness and misery. These are all acts of creator and we can simply cannot do anything. We are just helpless. All, which happens in your life, should be accepted as a blessing or act of God. Nothing is accidental in this world. Not even a sparrow will come and sit on the window of your house without the desire of God. Once you have realised this you will attain Self-realization.

There was an old lady in a village. She had lost her husband at very young age and had only one son who was too young to share any responsibility of the family. The only means of her livelihood was two buffaloes. She had devoted and surrendered totally to God. She neither desired happiness nor sorrow. She neither had attachment to a friend, nor she nurtured ill will towards any one. She neither became grieved when slandered nor happy when praised. If she had any attachment it was towards Lord Rama. While working or walking, her mind always used to remain with Lord Rama. She remained equanimous in worldly dealings.

As you know the Lord always try to test his devotee to see that his devotee is qualified for salvation. So one day the Lord came to the ladies house in a form of an astrologer and said: “ Oh lady! There is lot of grief in your destiny. You have undergone a great deal of agony and misery in your life. You lost your husband at a very young age leaving behind young son. You had lot of suffering from your in laws too”.

The old lady replied: “Yes I do, what does it matter?” The astrologer replied: “ Still there is bad luck waiting for you, the snake will bite to your son and he will die. It is inevitable”. The lady asked: “ Can anything been done to avoid this”? The astrologer replied: “ No, madam, nothing can be done to prevent his death”.

The lady replied: “If that is so what is the use of my worrying?” The setting of the sun is a certainty. Do we lament this fact? if it is predetermined, then why unnecessary grieve?”

The astrologer thought, this lady was fully enlightened and there was no need to test her further and he was ready to take her leave. But an old lady requested, “Maharaj! please have some food in the form of

Prasad and accept this five rupee as Dakshina”. The astrologer, however, left the house and her son comes in and goes to feed a bundle of grass to their buffaloes. There was a snake hiding in the bundle of grass. It bit the boy and he died instantly.

The lady thought, “ What will be the use of giving any treatment now? The astrologer has already prophesized this what was destined has happened,” The villagers came and started mourning.

Just then the Lord comes in again in the form of Sanyasi and said: “ Look, there goes the snake, Lady! Tell me, shall I kill the snake? It has bitten your son, should I kill it! Tell me.”

The old lady replied, “Maharaj! Killing the snake will not bring back my son. It is only the body of my son that has died. He is immortal conscious self; he is pure consciousness. Maharaj! I have totally surrendered to God and realising his presence in my body there is total peace in my chita (inner conscious). Worldly people strive for happiness, yet remain unhappy; where as I am happy without making any effort. This is nothing but the grace of God.”

The Sadhu reacted: “ Oh! Lady your mind has gone off balance.” The lady replied: “Yes Maharaj! it has, those whose minds are not off balance fall prey to the material world However, those whose minds go off balance attain your abode” Baba was taken aback and replied:” My abode?

The lady replied: “ Yes Maharaj! Your abode. I know very well who are you”?

The Baba also responded: “I too know who you are? You are but an embodiment at me”

Thus saying the Sadhu goes away. To enable us to face the difficult times in our life we should try to realize the supreme soul residing within the lotus of our heart.

Fable 56: There is no “brother’s love” like Bharat’s love for “Lord Rama”

King Dashratha of Ayodhya had four sons (i) Lord Rama (ii) Laxman (iii) Bharat (iv) Shatrughna .Lord Rama was born to Kaushaliya, Laxman was born to sumitra and bharat and shatrughna to Kaikeyi. All the three queens of Dashratha were of very understanding nature and were staying together with all love and affection to each other like three sisters. All the three queens were also treating the four sons like their own sons. All the family was thus living very happily.

As the time passed off, one day Dashratha thought of retiring and hand over the kingdom to his eldest son Lord Rama, as per the tradition then prevailing. However, Kaikeyi at the instigation of her hand servant Manthra objected to this proposal of Dashratha and asked him to send Rama for exile in the jungle for 14 years and Bharat should be made king of Ayodhya, Dashratha was very much attached to Lord Rama and, therefore, could not bear this improper demand of Kaikeyi and because of shock he takes his last breath and goes to heavenly abode.

At this time Bharat was at his maternal uncle’s place and was summoned immediately to Ayodhya for coronation. He is quite unaware of the sad demise of his father and said to his mother Kaikeyi. “ I must go to my father first and tender my respect.” Kaikeyi then said: “My dear son, your father had fully enjoyed his life. His fame was great. He performed all the sacrifices enjoyed by the tradition. He has now entered the higher world and joined the gods and this too on a simple reason that I told him to crown my son Bharat as the king and that Rama should be sent for exile in the jungle for 14 years”.

On hearing this, Bharat fell down uttering a cry and his arms stretched long out on the ground and wept like a child. Kaikeyi is consoling him that whatever I have done is for you only. After lamenting long, he got up and said: “ when I went to my uncle’s place I had hoped that Rama’s installation as Yuvaraja would come off soon and that on my return I would see the great festive ceremonies. How differently have things turned out! How am I to bear this calamity? No more shall I see my fathers face”. Overwhelmed by grief and anger, he could not control himself and his grief grew wild and hurled cruel words at her Mother. “what have you done?” He cried.” Did you ever hope to make me accept the kingdom? Deprived of such a father and such a brother, do you think I will take the power ? After causing the death of my father and banishment of Rama, you ask me to take their place and rule the kingdom. This is like pouring oil into the fire of my grief. How unfortunate was my father to have

chosen you as a wife! And did you not know how much I loved Rama? How do you expect me to rule the land in the absence of Lord Rama.

How did you think even that I would agree? Never your wish be fulfilled through my co-operation. I no longer regard you as my mother and never address me as your son”.

He continues:- “Murderess of your husband! You are not the daughter of the good king Asvapati. You are a Raakshashi. To what hell should you go, you, who banished the only child of mother Kaushalya? And sending him to forest, hoping that you and I could be made happy!”.

“I shall do the obsequies and go to the forest and fall at the feet of Rama and bring him to his kingdom. And then, to cleanse myself of the sin and the shame you have brought on me. I shall live the life of an ascetic in the forest.” Saying this he rushed to Kaushalya apartment, to find a better place to give vent to his sorrow.

Seeing Bharat Kaushalya said in a low voice: “Bharat, the kingship is made secured for your sake by Kaikaeyi. You need not fear any hindrance from us. Take it and all happiness be yours. Only one boon I crave of you is to allow me to join your father on the funeral pyre”.

Unable to bear all these words of Kaushalya and unable to speak, Bharat fell down. After a while he got up and said: “Mother, why do you thus torture me when I am innocent? You know I was far away and knew nothings going on here. Do you not know the love I bear for Rama? May all the sins similar to those killing thousand cows descend on me, if I have thought of such thing even in my mind? May all the sins similar to killing thousands Brahmans descend on me, if I have ever dreamt of such thing? May all the sins similar to killing thousand innocent young children descend on me, if I have ever even mentioned of such thing to any one? I had nothing to do with this conspiracy. I have no desire to reap its fruits?” Bharat could only swear his innocence again and again, Indeed such a thought was hardly less cruel and unjust than Lord Rama’s exile! He could never accept the crown, which was his beloved brother’s birthright.

Now Kaushalya was convinced that Bharat’s heart was completely free from stain. The obsequies of the dead king were duly performed and then Bharat decides to go to the forest where Lord Rama had gone and bring him back.

He along with Satrugan, Vashishta and Sumanthra come to the place where Lord Rama along with Laxman and Sitaji was residing. Bharat while seeing Rama, he forgot all his points in the great love he had and surged forward to the spot where Lord Rama was seating. He could not utter any word beyond “Brother” and fell in his feet and sobbed with hands clashed in supplication, with matted locked hairs and in garments of bark. With grief and fasting, his body had grown lean and he was tanned with fatigue and exposure. Rama embraced him and kissed on his head and said: “ Beloved brother, why did you leave the kingdom and our father’s side and come all this way into the forest? Bharat was speechless and after an interval gathered strength and gave answer, “ why question me about the kingdom, brother? What connection is there between the kingdom and myself? When you are rightful king. How could I call myself king? Or rule over the land? Come with me to Ayodhya , wear the crown and shower your grace on our family and people. The father unable to bear separation has entered swarga.

When Rama learnt that his father was dead, he fell down like a tree felled by an axe. Bharat consoled Lord Rama and embraced him and said all the good my mother has got from her evil plan has been that she has become a sinner and a widow. Rama said:- “ Bharat do not blame any one, destiny rules everything. Return to Ayodhya and rule the kingdom”. After lot of persuasion Bharat appealed to the people who had accompanied him. Citizen of Ayodhya! I am not substitute for Rama. If the king’s words should be fulfilled, let me stay in forest in place of Rama. Let him fill my place and rule in Ayodhya”.Both Lord Rama and Bharat were firm in their decision and neither of them was prepared to reconcile. The sage Vasishta found a solution and said:- “Oh Bharat! rule the kingdom under Rama’s authority and as his deputy, no blame would attach to you then and the pledge would be kept”.

Bharat at last agreed and said: “Brother, you are my father and my God please give me your sandals as a token. They shall reign in Ayodhya till you return. And for 14 years I shall stay outside the city and discharge the king’s duties in your place, paying reverent homage to your sandals. At the end of that period, you will return and accept this kingship”.

“So be it” said Rama. He placed his feet on the sandals and handed them to Bharat who prostrated led himself on the ground and accepted them and put them on his head.

Accordingly, Bharatji stayed in Nandigram and with the help of ministers ruled the kingdom till lord Rama returned to Ayodhaya .

This was the love Bharatji had for lord Rama .It has become so much synonymous that many people say that you have a brother like Bharat.

Fable 57: Try to have tolerance in your life

Tolerance has been given a most important place in the virtues of saints and sages .It is the first sign of saint or sage, and then comes mercifulness. If we look back to the life history of saint Eknath, Tukaram, Surdas, Narsinh Mehta, Meerabai we find that all them had to tolerate too much from the society.

(i)Eknath Maharaj was staying in Paithan in Maharashtra state. There used to stay one Pathan in the way to river Godavari. This Pathan was to harass to all Hindus who were going for bath in the river Godavri. Eknath Maharaj was also going from the same way everyday for taking bath in the river. Pathan used to harass Eknath Maharaj also but he used to tolerate all this. One day, Pathan decided that unless I make this Maharaj angry I would not go away from here.

One day Eknath Maharaj was returning after taking his bath, then that pathan spit over Eknath Maharaj. Eknath Maharaj without uttering a single word goes back to the river for taking bath again. Pathan again spit over Maharaj, the Maharaj again goes for the bath. Like this it continued for a quite long. Maharaj thus went to river again and again 108 times. At last pathan got tired and bowed down and caught the feet of Eknath Maharaj and said: “ You are really a great saint, I could not recongnize you, please forgive me” “Eknath Maharaj said: “ what is there to apologies you? Because of your this behaviour I could go the river Godavari 108 times to take bath”. One who tolerates too much becomes saint. In the days of misery also one who does not loose faith in God and tolerate too much is a great devotee of God.

(ii) There were two brothers. An elder was named Daneshwar and the younger was named Shantilal. Daneshwar was very kind hearted and used to donate and help the poor people, as much as he could do. While Shantilal was quite opposite and he was very greedy. He had no mercy for the poor or old people.

One day Daneshwar invited one saint Mahatma for a dinner to his home. Seeing Daneshwar along with this saint Mahatma and knowing that he has been invited for a dinner, Shantilal shouted at saint, “Maharaji! Please go back. This is not a charity home.” Maharaj simply smiled and returned .Seeing mahatma going back,Daneshwar goes back and requested Mahatma not to feel bad about what his brother has said. He is like that only. Please come again and take the dinner. Mahatma just smiles and again returns. Again the younger brother is insulating him. Mahatmaji simply smiles and again returns. Thus going and coming drama was performed for 32 times. But throughout the drama Mahatma continued to give smile without loosing temperament. Then at last Shantilal realised his mistake and

bowed down and touched the feet of Mahatma and said:- “Mahatmaji: I am sorry, I could not recognize you. Please forgive me”. Mahatamaji blessed him and goes after taking dinner.

Fable 58: Devotion to God should be without any expectation

You can not remain without doing any work. Even if you are sleeping you are doing the work of sleeping; if you are just sitting and thinking you are doing the work of thinking. If you have helped the poor person you have done good work and if you have robbed some body you have done evil work. The God has given you full liberty in doing whatever type of work you want to do; but to enjoy the fruit of your work God! has not kept the power with you. If you do good work, you enjoy good fruits, while if you have done evil work, you have to under go the punishment according to the severity of the sins you have committed. In the court of God! there is no addition or subtraction of the good works and evil works. It is not that you kill a cow and feed thousand Brahmins and your sins get washed out. You have to undergo the punishment of killing a cow and enjoy the fruit of feeding thousand Brahmins separately. If you have done lot of good works you go to heaven, but when the fruits of good works are exhausted you have to come again on the earth to undergo the punishment of evil works done by you. One can never do only good works and no evil work at all because whenever you do some good work you are definitely carrying even slightest of evil work. Thus the fruits of good and evil works are accumulated and to enjoy the respective fruit. You have to taken another birth. Thus the cycle of doing Karma and taking births after deaths goes on. Then how to come out of this cycle? Nobody desires to continue rotating in this cycle since pains and miseries of life are simply terrible. Every one, therefore wants salvation i.e. freedom from the cycle of birth and death.

This can be achieved only if the fruit of your good works becomes Zero and also the fruit of your evil work becomes zero. This is possible only when you do your work without any expectation and offers its fruits, whatever it may be, to the Lord! Only on the simple logic that of whatever you are doing is with the power and spirit of God only. Just as a son hand over his pay pocket earned after doing his work for a month to his father, the pay pocket belongs to father and it will be father's responsibility to run the house and fulfill all the requirements of his son. In the same way once you hand over the fruit of your work to the God it becomes the God's responsibility and not yours. To illustrate this there is a good story knitted with the Lord Krishna's childhood days.

There used to stay a Malan (Gardner) named Sukhiya in Vrindavan where Nanda Baba along with his family and friends had shifted there from Gokul. Once this Sukhiya comes to have a vision of Lord Krishna Nand baba's house, but she is not allowed. Every day she comes and stands before Nandbabas house, but Lord Krishna – then known as Kanaiya –is not coming out. Ultimately after some days she gets tired and goes to one Brahmin who advises her that she should give 108 rounds to

the Nandbabas house continuously for three years with a basket of fruits. She agrees to this suggestion and starts performing the rounds. After doing so for a period of three years, lord Krishna (Kaniya) comes out and stands before the Malan who thought that if she gives the fruit then he will run away immediately and she will not have a vision to her satisfaction. She thus tells “Kanaiya”:- “I have not come to give the fruit but I have come to sale the fruit and I want some grain in return”. “Kanaiya” immediately goes inside the house and bring some one pot filled with rice. Malan gives the fruit and puts the rice in her basket of fruits. Then Malan request Kanaiya to sit on her lap for a while before he goes inside the house.

Malan then goes to her house and opens her basket and finds the basket full with diamonds one who offers the fruits of his Karma to the Lord! ,who shall in return fill the brain in the form of basket with a self knowledge (Tatvagan) in the form of diamonds.

Fable 59: Ego and bad virtues are fellow companions

In his childhood days Kanaiya was very attached not only to Yashodaji but also to all others milkmaids (Gopis) in the village. Kanaiya used to visit all such milkmaid's house along with his friends and take away the butter made from the buttermilk, whenever these ladies are not at home. He was the leader of the Gang. Every morning all these kids used to meet at one place and decided which house to break and steal the butter. Kanaiya was distributing butter thus stolen to all his friends. It is said that Lord Krishna (Kanaiya) in his previous incarnation of lord Rama could not do any thing for the monkeys who had helped Lord Rama to trace sati Sita and bring her back from the grip of Ravana. So in this birth he decided to feed the butter to all his friends his all friends, who were considered to be monkeys in their previous birth, butter. He thus used to select any house to steal the butter. We do not know in which form the Lord comes to you. Sometime in the form of an old man, some time in the form of a poor man, some time in the form of beggar. God has not one form. He can transform himself into any form he wants at a time at a different places. He is without shape and with also shape. This Jivatma is sleeping all the time so he is not aware of all these things. Here the meaning of sleeping is spiritual blindness.

All the milkmaids are thus going to Yashodama and complaining about Kanaiya's mischief. At the same time they would get upset, if Kanaiya does not come to their house. Such hide and seek in stealing butter was however going on for many days

One day, milk maid named Prabhadevi who was very egoistic, challenged the other milk maids that to-day I shall catch Kanaiya red handed and hand him over to Yashoda. Accordingly by hiding behind some tree she caught Kanaiya's hand with a pot of butter milk. She caught Kanaiya's hand tightly and was dragging him to Yashodaji's house. On the way Prabhavati's own son meets her mother taking away Kanaiya and said to her mother:—"Mother! It is not Kanaiya but I who have stolen the butter from our house, so please leave him." Then Kanaiya is telling prabhavati "Aunty! My this hand is paining so please catch my other hand" Prabhadevi agrees and leaves his hand, in the mean time her own son but his hand in Prabhavati's hand which she is not able to see as her face was covered by her sari. She remains under the impression that she has still caught Kanaiya's hand and goes to Yashodaji's house. In the mean time Kanaiya had already reached the house. When Prabhdevi is calling Yashodaji to show Kanaiya to tell that look here your Kanaiya whom I have caught red handed. But to her surprise when Yashodaji is telling her to find out whose hand she had caught, she

realized that it was his own son and Kanaiya was all ready in the house .To this, she was so much ashamed that she simply ran away from the scene. She had a lot of ego and caught the Lord's hand tightly and thus causing injury to the Lord which shows her bad virtue. But Lord Krishna teaches her a lesson.

Fable 60: Your offerings to God should be with pure love and affection

God has no desire and no expectation from any one. He has no desire to eat. Every thing belongs to God, then what does one offer him ? What the Lord wants is only love and affection in the same way as the parents want love and affection rather than a piece of cloth or some sweets. What ever you are offering belongs to God already. Your affection will be seen from the way in which you offer the things to God. Before taking meals pray to God that, “I am eating only whatever you have given to me.”

The story of Satyabhama goes as follows. Satyabhama thought of herself as the most respected wife of Lord Krishna. One day Naradji came over to her and she requested Naradji, “Please show me some way that I can get a husband like Krishna in my all births.”

Naradji said: “If you donate the thing which you like most then you will get the same thing in next births”. Satyabhama thus donated to Naradji, the Lord Krishna, under the false impression that Naradji would never carry away husband physically. But to her surprise Naradji physically carried away Lord Krishna along with him. She, therefore, requested Naradji to hand over her husband back. Naradji replied, “Donated things are never returned, but I can do so if you give me gold equivalent to his own weight”. Satyabhama agreed and all of them came back to the palace. Lord Krishna was placed on one pan of the weighing balance and on the other side she put all her ornaments, but nothing would balance the weight of Lord Krishna. Satyabhama was worried. In the mean time other all Queens gathered there and offered to place their ornaments also. All of them emptied out all their ornaments and put them on the side of scale with all the ornaments but that did not make any difference in tipping the scale at all.

Ultimately, Satyabhama requested Rukhsamani for help. Rukhsamani looked at the mountain of ornaments and laughed. She said: “Wait I will put some thing in the pan and Lord Krishna would be lifted”. Rukhsamani went and brought out a leaf of Tulsi with her full love and affection and immediately Lord Krishna was lifted. One who could not be lifted by thousand kg of gold, was lifted by a single leaf of Tulsi as it was offered with pure love and affection.

The theme of the illustration is that whatever you offer to the Lord should be offered with pure love and affection. The value of the offering is not of any importance because every thing, which exists on this earth, belongs to the Lord only.

Fable 61: A healthy mind in a healthy body

For a long time we have accepted the phrase: “A healthy mind in a healthy body”. And that physical health is a prerequisite for peace of mind. But now there are compelling evidences to suggest that it is the other way round. Our thoughts exert a significant influence on health. Our brain is a complex net work of interacting chemicals called “Neurotransmitters” termed as messengers of the nervous system. A number of experiments have proven beyond doubt that the way we think changes the quality and quantity of these chemicals. These exert their actions on the organic systems of our body, result being a change in our health.

The message is clear. If we are aiming for a healthy body, the best of diets and exercise are not enough. We have to go deeper into the mysteries of mind. We must discipline our mind to be happy. We know that happiness or sorrow are nothing but reactions of the mind to external stimuli. So if we can train our mind to react positively to any situation, then there is no doubt that it will exert a positive influence upon our health.

According to Psycho-immunology science, there is strong relation between thoughts and the body’s immune system. Some psychiatrists emphatically stress that our thoughts are responsible for our health.

It was observed in one hospital that had two patients, one named Mr. Atmaram and the other named Mr. Dhaniram who were admitted few days apart. Both suffered from a breathing disorder, asthma, but their outlook on life was poles apart.

Mr. Atmaram took life in his stride and would always look at the brighter side of things. He thought that his hospital stay was a good in a way, at least he was getting a short vacation.

But, Mr. Dhaniram was different. When he smelt flowers, he would think about a coffin. He always grumbled about how bad the world was. He always thought that there are always cunning people around him. All except him are dishonest. He was in habit of criticizing every body.

After seven days of stay, Mr. Atmaram was discharged hale and hearty while Mr. Dhaniram languished for two months. Similarly a study has been made in cancer patients that those with a fighting spirit live as much as eight to ten years more than those without.

The theme of the study is that, try to keep your mind calm and cool and always try to think good, look good, do good which will inspire good thoughts in your mind. Our spiritual science, therefore, advises to leave jealousy, anger, prejudice, hatred as all such elements aggravate bad thoughts in your mind which ultimately results into disturbed mind and a disturbed mind does effect your health.

Fable 62: It is impossible to escape punishment from the court of God

In our society if some one has committed a crime, he/she can escape the punishment, if there isn't enough circumstantial evidence. But this is not the case in God's court. The following event which is based on a real case is quite illustrative of this:

In one of the towns in Gujarat about 60 years back, a court Judge had gone to answer the call of nature in a jungle out side the town limits. In good old days this was the system as there were no toilets in those days. Even people of high status had to go out their way to answer the call of nature. The said Judge, one day while attending the call of nature saw a very tragic incident happening in front of him. Two middle-aged people were quarreling with sharp instruments with both of them. One person had a beard while another person was without a beard. The Judge was sitting behind the tree so he was able to see these two people clearly, but those two people were not able to see him. He clearly saw the person with a beard murdering the other person.

It so happened that the same murder case came for a hearing in this Judge's court after some time. The police produced one person in the court with charges of committing murder. There were lot arguments by the respective lawyers. The police produced such a strong evidence in the court to prove that an alleged person was the real murderer. As you know, as per our system of law, the judge has to give his judgement on the basis of circumstantial evidences. In this case the judge was quite sure that the person brought before him was not a real murderer but an innocent person. He was, however, helpless, as all the evidence produced was sufficient enough to punish him.

Before the judgement, the judge, however, desired to interview the alleged murderer and therefore, called him in his cabin. He asked that person: " Look, my dear friend! I know very well that you have not committed this murder, but I am compelled to punish you because all the evidences are sufficient to prove you guilty. Can you, therefore, enlighten me in this aspect". The alleged murderer replied, "Sir, what you say is true, I am not at all involved in this case, but few years back I had actually committed a murder, but was declared innocent as there was no circumstantial evidence to prove that I was guilty. I could escape that punishment as the fruits of my evil "Karmas" had still not ripened and I was still enjoying the fruits of my good Karmas. Now since my fruits of evil Karmas have ripened, I have to undergo this punishment even though I am innocent". He thus said, "Sir, I can escape from the punishment in your court, but not in the court of God".

This is a good example to all of us to believe in the “Theory of Karmas”.

Fable 62(A): The knowledge which cannot be used at the time of your last breath, is no knowledge

If you have good health, a beautiful wife, lot of wealth and status in society but if you have no blessing of God, then what are you going to do with all these things! It is like number of zeros without a leading 1. It is well known that high status in society, wealth or good knowledge does not come to your rescue at the end of your life.

Once upon a time some very learned people from a very high society were traveling in a boat asked the fisherman, who was sailing the boat: “Have you studied History?” The boatman replied: “No, Sir”. “Have you studied Geography?” The boatman replied “No, Sir”. “Do you know who is the president of India?” The boatman replied: “No Sir”. “Do you know who was Rabindranath Tagore?” The boatman replied: “No, Sir”. These learned folks then said: “You do not know all these important things, really a quarter of your life is wasted and has gone down the water”. The learned folks then asked, “What is the population of Bombay?” The Fisherman replied, “I do not know Sir”. Then they said, “Half your life is wasted and gone down the water”. They further asked: “Have you read the dramas written by Shakespeare?” The fisherman replied: “ No, Sir”. They said, “Then three fourths of your life has been wasted and gone down the water”.

In the meantime, there was a great cyclone in the sea and boat started sinking. Then the fisherman asked: “Sir, Do you know swimming?”. The learned folks replied: “No”. Then fisherman said, “Your entire life is wasted and you all are going down soon in the water”. Then boat sunk, throwing everyone on aboard into the sea. The fisherman who knew how to swim, swam to safety but all those learned people died.

In the sameway this “Sansar” is also a Bhavsagar (Ocean) and one who knows how to swim this Bhavsagar, is the real learned person. To swim this Bhavasagar, worship the God and take his blessing- that is the only real knowledge. One who has not achieved that knowledge but learnt all other things and possesses an ego is surely to sink down in this Bhavsagar. The knowledge, which cannot enable you to have a vision of the Lord at the end of your life, will not save you but will cause you to sink.

Fable 63: Human birth is rare indeed

In ancient days, there was a saint in Vrindavan. By his prayer and penance he had great spiritual power to convert one creature to another creature. One day when the saint was performing his prayer, a rat came and sat in his lap. The saint was very merciful. So he asked rat: “What you would like to be”? He said: “I want to be cat”. The saint poured some water over the rat and the rat was converted into a cat. One day a dog ran after the cat and the cat thus being afraid of the dog requested the saint to convert him into dog. The dog one day was roaming in the jungle when a lion followed the dog. The dog thus being afraid of the lion approached the saint and requested to convert him into a lion. One day the lion came to saint and thought that if this saint again transforms me into rat then I will be nowhere. So, he decided to jump over saint and kill him once and for all. The saint read the lion's mind and immediately converted him into his original form of the rat.

This is not a story of a rat or a cat, but story of all of us. This “Jivatma” was once a rat, cat, dog, lion etc and then became human. After taking birth as a human being he says that I do not believe in God, I have no faith in religion, what is God? Where is God? But God says: “Look, man, I will make you a rat or a cat again. One who fails to worship God or realize God he is preparing for his next birth as a rat or cat.”

After going through so many births in lower creatures and undergoing so many sufferings this “Jivatma” gets a birth as human being. Initially the “Jivatma” is very small like a water bubble. Then it grows and starts moving in the womb of the mother. Undergoes lot of pains in the mother's womb. After the seventh month he forgets his past birth and then requests God, “Oh Lord! Oh God! Please take me out from this horrible condition and I shall never forget you God!” But the moment he takes the birth and grows older and older he forgets and says who is God! Where is God?

The pain and suffering at the time of birth and death are horrible and unbearable. But due to its past Karmas the human being is not able to come out from this cycle of birth and death and does not try or even think of Salvation.

Fable 64: God loves his devotees more than even himself

One day Naradmuni came to Vaikunthlok and was surprised to see the Lord Vishnu in meditation. Naradji, therefore, asked Lord Vishnu, “Oh my Lord! The entire world is worshipping you, but whom are you worshipping?”. Lord Vishnu replied: “I am worshipping my devotees”. Naradji said: “Are your devotees so supreme that you are required to worship them?”.

Lord Vishnu replied: “Yes they are superior to me also”. Naradji said, “My Lord! I cannot believe this”. Lord Vishnu said: “Then, Naradji, you tell me who is supreme in this world?”. Naradji said, “The Earth is supreme”.

Lord Vishnu said: “How is the earth supreme? The Earth is supported on the head of a king snake”. Naradji said: “Then the king snake is supreme”. Lord Vishnu says, “How is the king snake supreme? Lord Shiva has kept the king snake on his neck”.

Naradji said: “Then Lord Shiva is supreme”.

Lord Vishnu says again: “Why is Lord Shiva supreme. Ravan had lifted Shivji along with Mountain Kailash”. Naradji said: “then Ravan is supreme”.

Lord Vishnu said: “How can it be? Sugriv kept Ravan in his armpit and meditated”. Naradji said, “Then Sugriv is supreme”.

Lord Vishnu said, “But Surgriv was killed by Lord Rama”.

Naradji said, “Then you are supreme”. Lord Vishnu says: “No, I am not supreme, my devotees are more superior to me. Because I hold the entire universe in my heart but I am in my devotee’s heart. They keep me in their heart and worship me. Such spiritual (Gnani) devotees are superior to me. Because such devotees do not even desire for salvation. What they want is my worship only”.

Fable 65 : Those who have the least expectation can be broad-minded too

Lord Shiva has no expectation at all from his devotees. There are no restrictions for going to his temple. You can go to Lord Shiva's temple at any time. More over, any one can go to his temple. Whether he is a Brahmin, Vaishya, Shudra, Deva or a Danav. At the temples of Lord Rama one will find Hanumanji standing with his mace to ask the devotee: "Whether you have love for your brothers like Lord Rama? Whether you have control over all sensual desires". If you follow all the teachings of Lord Rama then only can you get entry in his temple. You cannot have his vision after 12.00 midnight. Krishna says if you want to come to my temple, you will have to come with love and affection as shown to me by Gopi's (milk maids). But in case of Lord Shiva there is no such restriction.

Here is a story about Lord Shiva. One day Kuber asks Lord Shiva, whether he could perform some service for him. The Lord Shiva advises him to chant: "Narayan, Narayan". Then Kuber requested Parvatiji: "Mataji, how can I be of service to you?". Parvatiji said: "You may construct a golden palace for me". Accordingly a golden palace was constructed. But without an opening ceremony, one cannot enter the palace, so Ravan is called for performing opening ceremony.

After the religious ceremony was over Lord Shiva asked Ravana: "Please tell me what should I give you for performing this ceremony so nicely". Ravana said: " I want this golden palace". Lord Shiva said: "All right take it away". Then Lord Shiva again said, "O.K. now do you want anything further?". Ravana said: "I want Parvati". Lord Shiva said: "If you want you can take her too".

While Ravana was carrying away Parvati on his shoulder, Parvatiji remembered Lord Krishna and requested him to release her from the clutches of this Demon. Immediately Lord Krishna met him on the way where Ravan was carrying Parvatiji. Lord Krishna asks "Whom are you carrying?".

Ravana replied: "Lord Shiva has given me Parvatiji as a gift". Lord Krishna replied: "How straight forward and gullible you are". Lord Shiva has hidden the real Parvatiji in "Mrutyu lok". Hearing this, Ravan was astonished and leaves Paravatiji behind. This story shows the kind and large hearted nature of Lord Shiva.

Fable 66: Ladies should always respect their husbands

According to our old Sashttras, Puranas and epics like Mahabharata, Ramayan, Shivpuran it is very clear that ladies should not do anything against the wishes and desires of their husbands. The following two illustrations, one from Ramayan and the other from Shivpuran will make the message more explicit and clear :

(i) During their 14 years exile in the jungle, Lord Rama, Laxman and Sitaji established an Ashram in the Dandaka forest. One day, Soorpankha, Ravan's sister happened to come near the Ashram of Lord Rama and seeing the glory of Rama she expressed her desire to marry Lord Rama. But after lot of arguments, Laxman took up his sword and maimed Soorpankha and drove her out. Thus insulated and injured, she goes to her brother Ravana and complains about Lord Rama and Laxman. She asks him to take revenge by kidnapping Sita and bring her to his palace as his queen.

Ravana was furious with anger and decided to kidnap Sita with the help of Mareecha who had magical powers of converting himself to any form he desires. He therefore, suggests Mareecha to transform himself in the form of a golden deer and roam in front of Rama's asharam. True to the character of a woman Sitaji asks Lord Rama to go after the golden deer. When Rama is away Ravan said: "I will pick up Sitaji and fly to Lanka".

According to this plan Mareecha converted himself into a golden deer and goes near Lord Rama's Ashram. Seeing this deer jumping and dancing in front of Sitaji she calls both Rama and Laxman and says "This deer is so nice. Soon we shall have to return to the city so it would be better to take some rare thing from the forest to Ayodhya". Both Lord Rama and Laxman had suspected some trick of some Rakshasas who were experts in converting themselves into such form and, therefore request Sitaji not to insist for them having to catch that deer. This made her more determined to persuade Rama to get the deer for her. In spite of Lord Rama's persistent request to Sitaji, she remained stubborn and ultimately Lord Rama had to go out to hunt that deer. Lord Rama suspecting something afoul asked Laxman to remain near the Ashram to look after Sitaji. After sufficiently drawing away Lord Rama the deer got killed by the arrow of Lord Rama but before dying shouted by simulating Rama's voice "Ah Seeta! Ah Laxman! Please come to my rescue". Hearing this simulated voice Sitaji insisted Laxman to go to the rescue of her beloved husband. As soon as Laxman leaves the Ashram, Ravan comes and kidnaps Sitaji who repents a lot for not heeding the advice of her husband.

(ii) In ancient days there was a big religious function known as “Brahmshastra”. In this function Lord Shiva was the presiding diety. Lord Shiva was meditating so he was not aware of who came and went in the function. In the meantime parvatiji’s father Daksha Prajapati came to attend the function. All the Gods get up to pay their respect to Daksha Prajapati, but Lord Shiva did not get up. Daksha prajapatiji therefore felt hurt and started criticizing Lord Shiva.

To take the revenge of this insult Daksha Prajapati arranges a Yagna and said that in this Yagna he would worship Lord Vishnu but not Lord Shiva. All Gods advised him not to do this and said if he does not worship Lord Shiva the Yagna will not be successful. But Daksha Parajapati did not listen to their advice and went ahead with the Yagna. He invited Lord Vishnu, Indra, Varun, Brahma and all other Gods except Lord Shiva just to insult him. Lord Vishnu, Brahma did not attend this function knowing that Lord Shiva is purposely not invited. However all the other Gods go there just to see the fun.

Parvatiji knew of the celebration of this Yagna at her father’s place and requested Lord Shiva to allow her also to go there. But Lord Shiva tells Parvatiji, “Devi! we have no invitation and, therefore, it is not proper to go there”. But Parvatiji does not listen to her husband’s advice and goes to her father’s place to attend the function.

On reaching to the “yagna” Parvatiji is not even welcomed by her father instead he turns his face away from her. She again goes in front of her father but this time too her father neglects her. She is very annoyed by this and especially so after noticing that all the other Gods present there were worshipped.

Fable 67: Any work performed without attachment is considered to be “Niskama Karma”.

There are two types of Yogis:-

1st Type:- They offer their organs of knowledge like hearing, seeing etc. as sacrifice in the fire of restraint.

2nd Type: - They take in all their sense perceptions as oblations made in the fire of their respective senses.

In the 1st type, yogis carefully restraint their sensual desires. They avoid watching movies, eating at restaurants or visit dance clubs etc. Mahavir, Gautam Budha fall in this category.

In the 2nd type, Yogis allow their sensual desire to roam about but they do not get attached to any thing and have, therefore, no desires left.

Lord Krishna, sage Durvasha belong to this type.

In the month of Shravan one day sage Durvasha visited Gokul and so Lord Krishna got delayed in attending the dancing program with the Gopis (Milk maids) as he had gone to see him. Gopis asked Krishna: “Why are you delayed.” Krishna replied: “My Guru sage Durvasha had come over here so I had gone to meet him”.

The Gopis said: “We want to host the dinner for your Guru. How can we miss such an opportunity?” Krishna said: “My Guru does not eat but if you serve him with true love and affection he will eat”.

Gopies prepared a variety of food items, but they are not able to reach Sage Durvasha’s Aashram which is on the other side of river Yamuna which is flooded with water. They pose a question to Lord Krishna: “How can we reach sage Durvasha in this condition?”. Krishna said: “Go to river Yamuna and say that if Krishna is a perfect Bachelor (Bal Brahmachari) then give a way to cross the river”. The Gopis followed Lord Krishna's instructions. Immediately, Yamunaji gave way and the Gopis reached the Sages Aashram Gopis requested the sage: “We have brought dinner for you, so please accept it”.

Durvasha said: “I am not hungry, but if you feed me I shall eat”.

Gopis are thus feeding Sage and every thing goes into his stomach. Nothing is left.

Gopis asked Durvasha: “Bapaji! Are you satisfied with dinner?”. Durvasha replied: “What dinner? I fast daily, I do not take meals. While going to your place, tell Yamuna that if Durvasha fasts daily give us a way to cross the river.”

Gopis did so and Yamunaji gave way.

Gopis were surprised to see that Krishna who had so many queens considers himself a bachelor and Durvasha having eaten so much food considers himself to be fasting..

Durvasha ate a lot of food but has no attachment or desires and has not enjoyed any taste of the food. Durvasha feels that he is Narayan and consider Gopis also as Narayan. He has a feeling of oneness. There are no two of us, so who will feed whom?

Similarly, Krishna had so many queens but he had no attachment with any one.

For them internal vision is different from external vision. In spite of enjoying the sensual desires they are desireless as they did not keep attachment with anything and did not expect any fruit. They remain in society like a lotus in the lake, which has grown in the lake but does not allow the water to touch it. They are like butter in the buttermilk, which remains aloof from the buttermilk though within the buttermilk.

Fable 68: Any unrighteous work done in the “overall interest of the society” is not considered a sin.

The saying of Karna and Drona in Mahabharata war is quite illustrative for this theme.

(i) During the Mahabharata war, when Drona died, the prince of Kaurav army installed Karna as the commander in chief. On the very first day of his commandership. Bhima said: “ I shall today redeem my promise to Draupadi. My oath has waited too long for performance”. Then followed a great battle. Karna sent a dazzling arrow, which spat fire and headed straight for Arjun like a serpent with its flaming double tongue out. Then Krishna, Arjun Charioter, at the nick of time, pressed the vehicle down five fingers deep in the mud, so that the serpent shaft just missed Arjuna’s head but struck off his helmet. Arjuna was furious and fixed a dart on his bow to make an end of Karna. And Karna’s fated hour had come. The left wheel of his chariot however, suddenly sank in the bloody mud. He jumped down on the ground to lift the wheel up from the mud. He shouted: “Wait a minute, my chariot has sunk in the ground and according to righteous path you should not fight with a enemy when he is without a weapon. Arjun was thus hesitant but Lord Krishna intervened and said: “Karna! It is good that you too remember that there are things like fair-play and chivalry! Now that you are in difficulty, you remember them indeed, but when you and Duroyodhana along with Duhsasan and Sakuni dragged Draupadi to the assembly hall and tried to rob her dress, how is that you forget all these things so easily?. You helped invite Yudhishtir to play a game of dice (gambling) and you cheated him. Where was your fairplay gone then? Was it a fairplay to refuse Yudhishtir to return his kingdom after twelve years of exile in forest and thirteenth year incognito were duly completed? What had happend to righteous path all that time? You made a plan to burn Pandavas alive when sleeping in the palace of war into which they had been lured. What happened to righteous path all that time? When Draupadi was being robbed of her dress, did you not say- Your husbands have left you unprotected, go and marry another husband? The tongue that was not ashamed to utter that abusive language now talks of chivalry. When a mob of your army surrounded the young Abhimanyu and shamelessly slew him, was that generosity? Wicked man, do not talk of generosity and fairplay, for you have never honouerd them!”

Krishna cried: “Arjuna! Waste no time, send your Shaft and slay your wicked enemy”. Arjuna accepted the advice of Lord Krishna and sent an arrow, which cut and severed the head of Karna. Thus slaying of Karna though unrighteous is not considered a sin since it was done in the overall interest of society and as adviced by Lord Krishna the epitome of equanimity in all.

(ii) As Mahabharata continued, Drona spread fear and destruction in the Pandavas army by his relentless attacks.

Krishna said: “O Arjuna! there is none that can defeat Drona; fighting according to the strict rules of war we can not cope with him unless righteous path in is discarded. We have no other way open. There is but one thing that will make him desist from fighting. If he hears that Aswatthama is dead, Drona will lose all interest in life and throw down his weapons. Some one therefore, must tell Drona that Aswatthama is dead”.

Arjuna shrank in horror at the proposal, as he was not able to lie. Those who were nearby with him also rejected the idea, for no one was ready to be a party to deceit.

Yudhishthira stood for a while and said: “I shall bear the burden of this sin”.

Bhisma lifted his iron mace and hit it hard on the head of huge elephant called Aswatthama and it fell dead. After killing an elephant Aswatthama, Bhima went near the division commanded by Drona and roared in a way that all might hear. “I have killed Aswatthama”! Drona heard these words as he was in act of discharging brahmastra. Dronacharya asked: “Yudhistir, is it true?”. Thinking that he would never utter lie even for kingship of three worlds. Yudhistir said aloud: “ Yes it is true that Aswatthama is killed”. But as he was saying it, he felt the urge to speak the complete truth and added in a low voice- “Aswathama, an elephant”, words which were drowned in the din and were not heard by Drona. When Drona heard that his beloved son had been slain, all his attachment to life snapped, all his desires vanished as if it had never been there.

Bhim then said: “You Brahman, abandoning the function of your varna and taking the profession of kshatriya have brought ruin to the princes. You teach that non killing is the highest dharma. It is our misfortune that you descended to this sinful life.”

These taunts by Bhima caused terrible pain to Drona and he threw his weapons away and set down in yoga posture on the floor of chariot. At this moment Dhristadyumna, the son of Drupad took a sword and climbed on the chariot and swepted off the old warriors head and fulfilled his destiny as the slayer of Drona.

Thus though Drona was slayed by adopting unrighteous path, it is not considered a sin as this was done in the overall interest of the society.

Fable 69: A self-realized son can get his 21 generations liberated

Bhakta Prahlad achieved self-realisation at the very young age and had a vision of God. God was pleased with the prayer and hard penance he had undertaken at a very young age and asked Prahladji to ask for some blessing from him as he was pleased with his Bhakti. Prahladji did not ask for anything as his Bhakti was desireless. He never wanted any wealth or kingdom.

God insisted: “Prahlad! Please ask for something, at least to please me. Prahlad then tells him: “My God! If at all you desire to give something, I request you to give my father salvation”. This is called a real son who demands a spiritual favour for his father. Narsingh Swami (incarnation of God) blessed him: “O.K. your father will get salvation. Because of a son like you, 21 generations get liberated from the cycle of birth and death, 7 from the father’s side, 7 from the mothers side, and 7 generations from the father-in-laws side. If the child is on a righteous path and spiritually advanced, their parents get salvation even if they were on the unrighteous path but, if the son is not on righteous path, then their parent’s soul do not rest to peace even if they adopted righteous path.”

One male and female swan were staying happily in the jungle. The female swan was very beautiful. After wandering all day long they took shelter at a crows nest in the evening. The crow allowed them to stay but next day crow told them: “This female swan belongs to me and I will not allow her to go”. The male swan says: “No, she is my wife and I will take her”. Both of them go to a third party to get fair judgment. The judge said: “I will give my judgment only after hearing both the parties. Crow thus goes to the judge and tells him privately: “If you will give the judgment in my favour then I will tell you where your forefathers are”? The Crow is known as the pitrudevta, so the judge was tempted to know about his forefathers conditions.

Next day the judge gave the judgment that who ever caught the female swan he would possess the female swan. The Crow caught the female swan and there judge said: “This female swan belongs to the crow”.

Then judge said: “Please tell me now where my parents are?” The crow took him near the heap of garbage and said that the fly going over there is your father and that rat running over there is your mother. The judge was ashamed and said: “How this is possible?”

The crow said: - “One whose son gives such false judgment their parents gets only such births”.

The parents who do not give good culture to their children are not their parents but enemies. They have not spoiled their children's life but also their future life.

Fable 70: God accepts the invitation of his devotee if made with love and affection

When Lord Krishna was still a child, Yashodama invited their family purohit named Gargacharya for Krishna's name ceremony. Just to test this purohit, Shri Krishna sat on the lap of Rohini while Balram sat on the lap of Yashodaji. But Gargacharya correctly identifies the one who is in the lap of Rohini as Yashodaji's son. He added that Sri Krishna will attract the mind of every one. His horoscope was excellent. He will be a great-learned person; he will be Mahayogi. He will have many wives. Nanda baba said: "One Brahmin has told me that, he would have 16,108 queens".

Gargacharya said: "He will be like Narayan".

After the naming ceremony was over, Yashodaji requested Gargacharya to prepare "Kheer" for himself.

Gargacharya accordingly prepares "Kheer" for himself and prays: "O Narayan! Vaikunth pati! Please come and have this prasad of Kheer", and continues chanting the Lord's name. Kanaiya who was in the cradle, came out and ate the Kheer. Gargacharya shouted: "Maiya! look your son has eaten away my Kheer". Yashodaji scolds Kanaiya: "Why have you done this?". Kanaiya says: "Mataji, if he calls me how can I refuse?"

Gargacharya prepares Kheer again and while sitting for his meal, he prays: "O Narayan! O Vaikunthpati! Please come and have the prasad. Lord! It is yours and I am offering it to you, please do come and have the prasad".

Hearing this prayer Krishna thinks, how can I refuse when he invited me with true love and affection? He, therefore, orders "Nidradevi" to make Yashodaji to sleep. Accordingly, Yashodaji falls asleep. Sri Krishna eats the Kheer once more. Lord Krishna then thinks to himself, how long should I keep him under a false impression? He, therefore, shows Gargacharya his original form with four hands, mace and lotus in hands. Gargacharya felt very happy that day and tears rolled off from his eyes. He thought that day his life was successful.

Gargacharya said: "Maiya, you are very lucky. Lord Narayan has come to you in the form of your son". Krishna thought, if Maiya remained under this impression he will not get that mother's love from her and therefore orders "Maya" to change the mind of "Yashodaji".

Table 71: Why God's incarnations are only in Arya i.e. Bharat?

Under stanza 7 and 8 of Fable four of “Geetaji” Lord Krishna tells Arjuna as under:

“Yada Yada hi dharmasya
Ganir Bhavati Bharatal
Abhyultthanam adharmasya
Tadatmanam Srijamyaham!

When ever there is decline of dharma and ascendance of adharma, then O scion of the Bharata race! I manifest (incarnate) myself in a body.

“Paritranaaya Sadhunam
Vinasaya ca duskritam!
Dharma – Samsthapanarthaya
Sambhavami yuge yuge II”.

For the protection of the good, for the destruction of the wicked, and for the establishment of Dharma, I am born from age to age.

It is said that the Lord has taken 23 Incarnation some of them are as under and that too all in Bharat only:-

- (1) Matsya Avtar (Incarnation in the form of fish)
- (2) Kurma Avtar (Incarnation in the form of Tortoise)
- (3) Varah Avtar (Incarnation in the form of Pig)
- (4) Narsingh Avtar (Incarnation in the form of neither man nor animal)
- (5) Vaman Avtar (Incarnation in the form of Child)
- (6) Parshuram Avtar (Incarnation in the form of Brahman)
- (7) Ram Avtar (Incarnation in the form of Kshatriya)
- (8) Krishna Avtar (Incarnation in the form of Vaishnav)
- (9) Budha Avtar (Incarnation in the form of Yogi)

As you know emperor Akbar had a council of ministers to advice him in various matters of administration. Birbal being a well knowledgeable, learned, ready witted and expert in solving all types of problems was thus appointed as a chief advisor of the emperor. He was considered to be right

hand of Akbar. Akbar had a habit to ask various types of questions to Birbal who used to reply all such questions normally by showing physical examples.

One day Akbar thus asked Birbal: “Birbal! How is it that your God is required to take incarnation frequently and that too in India only? Are you people harassing him too-much?”.

Birbal replied: “Jahapana! Your question is rather difficult and, therefore, I request that you give me seven days time,” Akbar said: “O.K., but if you fail to reply, your head would be separated from your body”. Birbal said: “Agreed, Jahapana!”

Then after few days Birbal arranged a boat ride where all his family members along with the children are also invited. Birbal gives one of the “Akbar’s child” in secretly to a housemaid with the instruction that the housemaid should throw this child in the river as soon as he gives signal to do so.

After the boat had reached mid-stream, Birbal gave a signal to that maidservant to throw that so-called “Akbar’s child” in the river. The maidservant accordingly swiftly threw the child in the river. There was hue and cry on the boat. Every body was shocked and started crying “please save the child!, please rescue the child! It is Akbar’s child”. Hearing this Akbar immediately jumped in to the river without waiting even for a moment and brought back that so-called child in the boat and to his surprise he found that it was not his child but only a dummy child. Akbar got furious and shouted to Birbal: “What is all this non-sense Birbal”?

Birbal said: “Jahapana! It is not a non-sense but it is my reply to your question that why our God takes incarnation frequently and that too in India only? Akbar did not follow what Birbal meant and therefore, asks him to be more explicit.

Birbal said: “When that tragedy occurred you were under the impression that it was your own child and, therefore, jumped in to the river without losing even a moment, similarly, our God treats us as his own children and, therefore, jumps in this Sansar in the form of ocean to save his children who are in trouble”. Birbal further asked to Emporer: “Jahapana! Where does it rain more, in the desert or the forest?”. Akbar replied: “Definitely, in the jungle where there are more trees and not in desert where there are no trees”. Birbal concluded: “Jahapana! In the same way our God goes where there are more number of his devotees and not where he has no devotee”. Akbar was thus very pleased and gave him a good reward.

Fable 72: Importance of love in life

In English or Hindi or Gujarati there is only one word to indicate your affection for others i.e. we call it a love. But in Sanskrit it is said there are 116 words to indicate different types of love, It is mother's love, father's love, son's love, teacher's love, student's love, friend's love, wife's love, employer's, employee's love and so on. Each love has its own importance and place in the life. But, one thing is certain that as each creature needs air, water and food to live, love is also equally important to live the life.

A study has shown that most of the people who have lost their parents in their child hood or have been thrown away from the house due to poverty by their parents have turned out to be criminals. A students' performance also very much depends on the love and care they receive from their parents. It is also observed that those parents who are busy with their own business or social activities, visiting dancing clubs, cinema houses, going to kitty parties etc. their children perform poorly in school. The following events will be classic illustrations for this: -

(i) There was a young boy studying in std. 5th in one of the best schools in Bombay. His parents were very well off and used to give full attention to their son. But as destiny had it, he lost his mother because of cancer and thereafter within few days he lost his father in a car accident. The boy was, therefore, being looked after by his distant relatives. In the 6th std, the teacher of the boy observed that his performance was getting worse day by day, but she did not bother to find out the root cause of the problem.

As it was usual in the Christmas party all the students used to bring some valuable gifts for the teacher. But this young boy could hardly bring a broken piece of lipstick and broken small mirror left over by her mother. At this time teacher got more curious and asked the boy: "How is your mum and dad?". The boy with grief on his face replied: "Teacher, I have lost my mother due to cancer and my father too in a car accident during a very short interval. The Teacher having known this background started taking personal care of this boy. She used to move her soft hand over his head, hug and get him some sweets and presents on different occasions. Thus the boy who was starving for love all these years all of sudden started improving his performance. This was the effect of love.

I strongly believe that whether in your business or office or with your family members, whatever work you can not abstract by scolding or ordering you can do so by using sweet words with love and affection.

(ii) About 30 to 35 years ago I had an occasion to visit the principal of one big school along with my friend who was a very junior teacher in the school. The moment the principal saw me, who may be in his early sixties, coming along with his assistant teacher he got up immediately from his chair and came to greet us and smiled and welcomed both of us very well. He then requested my friend to introduce me. After my introduction he started chit chatting with us in such a friendly way without making any difference in age. I was so impressed by his behavior that even after 30 years or so I am not able to forget this incident. He calls for a cup of tea and started talking with my friend. He had a habit to put suffix of “saheb” to all the members of his staff. He used to address or call all the student by saying “Beta”. He always used to put his hand on the shoulders of all peons. He then addressed my friend: “Bhatt Saheb, our exams are starting from Monday, so we should start putting the seat nos. on the benches. Please tell me what time is convenient to you so that I can also accompany you.” My friend said: - “Sir, it is not necessary for you to come, I will manage the things”. Then he said: “How shall we make sitting arrangement?”. He looked at me and seek my advice. “Mehta Saheb, What do you think?”. I just kept quiet, as it was not proper for me to give advice in the subject in which I have no knowledge. He himself then said: “I think one student per bench would be better.” Like this his instruction continued right from sitting arrangement to distribution of Question papers and handing over answer books to the respective teachers but no where did his instructions look like an order but it appeared like friendly talk. I later on understood that because of such sober and humble nature he was very popular in the entire town that once when he submitted his resignations on the ground of his poor health, the entire town observed a strike to prevent him from submitting the resignation. Ultimately the love and affection, which he had showered upon his staff and students, re-bounded and he had to bow down to the request of the students, citizen and teachers.

(iii) During my 38 years of service I once came across a middle aged clerk who always used to come late by 15 to 20 minutes. I never bothered to ask why he was always late as he was very good in his work. But because of jealousy, other staff members started complaining to me that if that fellow can come late why we cannot come late?

I had therefore, to call him in my cabin and ask for the reason of his delay. He started narrating his story. He said “Sir, I have got a young daughter who is 20 years old. She is crippled and has lost her both legs due to polio in her childhood. She is attending some physically handicapped school. My self and my wife together have to help her in giving her bath, preparing and taking her down from the 2nd floor right up to the bus stop and that I come from a far off place and as such if I miss one train I am delayed by 15 to 20 minutes.” When I heard him I got tears form my eyes, I wiped out my tears, got up from my chair and placed my hand over his shoulder and said: “You now need not worry, your worry is now my worry. If anybody questions you it will be I who will reply and not you. Not only this but if you need any financial or any other kind of help please fill free to come to me”.

My words of sympathy worked like magic on his mind. He came next day with a suggestion that, sir, by whatever time I come late, I will sit late in the evening so that you have no chance to complain against me.

This is the importance of love and affection in the life. It does not only apply to human beings but it is equally true for animals also.

Fable 73: Importance of performing “Yagnas” daily in life

There are various types of “Yagnas” which we are supposed to perform daily in our life. When the child is in the mother’s womb it undergoes tremendous agony and pain. It is lying in the womb with its head down and legs up. Depending on the mother’s food intake it gets terrible pain in its stomach. Up to seven months it remembers its past birth and prays to God with folded hands that O my god! Please relieve me from this agony. Now I shall never forget you, I shall always remember you and remains yours. At the time of birth the child cries, “uva”....”uva”....”uva”....”uva” i.e. you are there I am here now. I will do as I wish and not as you expect.

After the birth as he grows young he starts running after all physical happiness of life. He runs in the opposite direction where the path is very slippery and with many ups and downs. What he is required to do the most he does the least and what he is not required to do he is doing most.

Now the question arises, what is he required to do? He is required to perform five “Yagnas” daily in his life. Normally, it is the impression of most of the people that “Yagna” means burning of firewood, pouring ghee into the fire and throwing some grains like wheat, til, and rice. No, this is not correct. Of course, that is also one type of Yagna, but what we are talking of here is some different type of “Yagna”.

“Yagna” means any work done without any expectation, without any attachment or jealousy, or without any ego, for the benefit of the society or for the love and affection to God. There are thus five types of “Yagnas” and for performing these “Yagnas” God has already given the following five materials required to do so.

- (1) Wealth “Yagna” (Draha Yagna)
- (2) Austerity “Yagna” (Tapo Yogana)-God has given body for this
- (3) Yoga “Yagna”(Meditation)-God has given mind for this.
- (4) Religious discourses “yagana” (wisdom)-God has given intellect for this
- (5) Gyana “yagna” (God has given a soul to realise thy self).

God has given all materials and ability to perform these “Yagnas”. These should be performed daily to express our love and affection to God

Any body, he may be a collector or a peon, he may be a industrialist or a skilled worker, he may be a car owner or a bicycle owner, he may be Brahmin, Vaishya, Khsatriya, he has to perform these five “yagnas”. If he does not perform these “Yagnas” he will be answerable to God. The following are these five yagnas:

- (i) **Draya yagna:-**This can be done by giving cash to deserving people .You may feed the poor people, You may give old clothes, old pair of shoes, umbrella, blanket or any such thing to the poor and needy person. Give books, notes etc. to the poor students.
- (ii) **Tapo Yagna:-** This you can do by doing social service by which your body has to undergo some strain. You may help blind person to cross the road .You can remove banana skin from the road so that no one can accidentally slip and fall on the road .You may lift some heavy luggage form an old or crippled person.
- (iii) **Yog Yagna: -** To keep your mind joyful and in equilibrium in all circumstances. You can do meditation to achieve this state of mind. Meditation means concentration and attention without tension.
- (iv) **Religious discourses: -**To discuss religious and spiritual matters for the benefit of the Society.
- (v) **Gyana yagna: -** To think about the form of and condition of soul with prayer and penance .

The above five yagnas can be performed easily by any one

Fable 74: God has created this world for you to enjoy and not to suffer

We are enjoying the worldly pleasures, but we are forgetting the creator of this world. The world is with you and within also. So where will you go by leaving this world? Do not look at the world from the enjoyment point of view, but try to have a vision of the creator of this world. You will feel happy if you just change your vision. It is not possible for you to improve the entire world. Try to, therefore, improve yourself only.

(i) In ancient days there was a emperor. One day his queen was loitering in the garden and she happened to injure her leg with a prick of some sharp object. The emperor thus got furious and ordered his secretary to cover the entire land of his kingdom with leather. The secretary was worried since he wasn't sure how to find such a huge quantity of leather to cover the entire land of the kingdom. Thus he thought instead of spreading leather on the entire land of the kingdom, why not put leather below the queen's legs only? And thus got the idea of preparing leather shoes for the queen. If she wears the shoes then how will the sharp object prick her feet ?

In the same way there are going to be pricks at many places in the world. How are you going to remove all these pricks? It will therefore, be enough for you if you just wear the shoes in the form of worship and prayer to God and then no prick in the world will be able to injure you.

God has made this world for your pleasure and not for your miseries. It is up to you how you carry out your journey of life in this world. If you take the benefit of this world meaningfully and carefully with all courtesy and limitations, then there are no miseries for you.

(ii) In a small village there was a shortage of water so one philanthropist constructed a well for the benefit of the villagers at the cost of about Rs. 25,000/-. The villagers blessed him for providing this well. But one day it so happened that a young boy while playing fell into the well and died. The father of the son went to that philanthropist and started abusing him that you made this well to kill my son only. Just think! Would the philanthropist construct the well to kill that boy? No, it was not his intention.

His intention was to reduce the difficulties of the villagers. He would have never desired that the boy fall in the well and die. In the same way God has not made this world to make you unhappy. You should know how to make the benefit of it and be happy. For that purpose do not allow your

mind to be trapped in the worldly pleasures and for that what is required is worship and prayer to God!

Fable 75: Sensual desire is the greatest enemy of Mankind

Under stanza 60, Fable 2, of Geetaji, Lord Krishna says to Arjun:

“Son of Kunti! The turbulent senses violently draw away the mind of even the highly spiritual and learned person who is earnestly on the spiritual path”.

Just as a powerful dacoit robs away the wealth of a rich person and utilizes it for wrong reasons, the sensual desires forcefully carry away the mind of a person and encourage or tempt it to enjoy the sensual desires. Even the great sages and saints like Vishwamitra and Parasara were no exceptions to this. Vishwamitra after thousands of years of penance was tempted towards Menka. Similarly sage Parasara who was so spiritually powerful that he could cover the moon with a cloud while soliciting the hand of Matsyagandha to prevent the moon to witness over such an act of the sage.

Those who have totally surrendered to God and constantly remain busy in prayer and penance of God, automatically get prejudiced against such sensual desires, having brought their mind under control. Bhakta Prahlada, Dhruva, Meerabai, Tukaram, Eknath are examples of devotees who could win over their sensual desires.

People do not want to leave sensual desires and they say that we do not get pleasure in praying the God.

There was a businessman whose only son was trapped in love with a girl from a dance club. The father advises him that if he could leave the company of this girl then he could marry a girl from a good family. But the son says even though I get married to a good girl from a cultured family I will not leave the friendship of this girl from the dance club. This is not a story of a father and son but this is fact. We do not want to leave the enjoyment of sensual desires and say that we are not getting pleasure in prayer and worship to God.

If one who constantly thinks over sensual desires, inclination towards them is generated which develops into desire and desire begets anger. Anger generates delusion and delusion results in loss of memory, which brings the destruction of intelligence and loss of intelligence spells ruin to a man.

To avoid such destruction there are following three ways:

- (i) Controlling the mind by meditation.

(ii)Controlling the mind by constant prayer and penance to God.

(iii)By both meditating, prayer and penance to God.

Fable 76: If you have means to achieve God, then God, himself will come to you

Just as you have a screwdriver in your hand and put it in the slot of the screw, rotate the screwdriver in correct direction and within minutes the screw will fall in your hand. In the same way, if you have a means to achieve your goal, you should not leave this means and run after your goal. The following events will be quite illustrative to explain this moral.

Some centuries ago there was a saint named Pundlik, in Maharashtra. He was very conscious towards his duty to his parents. His parents were quite old and ill Pundlik left no stone unturned to serve his parents. The old parents due to sickness and old age some times became angry with Pundlik, but Pundlik without taking anything to his heart, continued to serve the parents as usual. He got up early in the morning, prepared the food for himself and his parents. Then gave bath to his father and mother, applied medicinal oil to their bodies, took them to the temple whenever they desired, came back and served food to them and performed all the rituals till they went to sleep in the night.

Dwarkanath (Lord Krishna) desired to see this Pundlik who was serving his parents more than the Lord himself. He therefore comes to the residence of Pundlik and stands outside the hut. Lord Krishna says: “Pundlik! I am pleased with your service to your parents and have come to give you my vision”.

Instead of running out of the hut to have a vision of Lord Krishna, Pundlik replies: “My Lord! I am busy in serving my parents right now, and there is not enough space in my hut to offer you a seat, so please wait for a while there. I shall come out to have your vision as soon as I am free from serving my parents. Pundlik throws one brick out so that Lord Krishna can stand comfortably on the muddy water”.

Pundlik thinks for a while: “Lord Krishna has come to me to give his vision, having been pleased with the duty I am performing towards my parents, then why should I leave my duty and go to the Lord! To have his vision?”. Pundlik correctly came to the conclusion that when a means to have a vision of God was in his hands at that moment then why should he leave that means and go to have a vision of God. Pundlik thus got delayed in coming out, and the Lord was standing out with his hand on his waist. Pundlik after serving his parents went out to have a vision of God and God pleased with his service to his old parents, blessed him and disappeared. Till this day we find a statue of Lord Krishna standing on the brick with a hand on his waist.

Fable 77: Even tolerance has a limit

The slaying of Shisupal by Lord Krishna is quite illustrative to make this theme very clear.

After the slaying of Jarasandha, the Pandavas performed Rajsuya Yagna with great pomp and splendour. Yudhishtir assumed the title of “Emperor”. According to the custom Pandavas invited many kings in the celebration of this grand yagna. The question arose as to who should be honoured first. Bhishma was emphatic that Sri Krishna, the king of Dwarka, should be honoured first, which was supported by Yudhishtira also. Accordingly Sahadev offered the honours enjoined by tradition.

Shisupal, the king of Chedi, who hated Krishna, could not tolerate it and started saying:

- (i) “How ridiculous and unjust it is that the man who is gave advice was born in illegitimacy (this was an insulating allusion to the sons of Kunti)
- (ii)The man who gave advice was born of one who ever declines from high to low. (This was reference to the fact that Bhishma was born to Ganga, the river naturally flow from higher to lower level).
- (iii)One who is doing the honours was also illegimately born (this has reference to Sahadev).
- (iv)One who is honoured is fool by birth and a cowherd by breed (this has reference to Lord Krishna).
- (v) You have paid royal honours to a cowherd boy ignoring the many Kings and Heroes who are here by at your invitation.
- (vi) Vasudeva, the father of Lord Krishna was but a servant of Ugrasan.
- (vii)Yudhishtira! How did you dare to honour Krishna who was not ever merit of age?
- (viii)Yudhishtira! How dare you honour Krishna, the cowherd boy when the aged and most learned peopl like Drona, Vyas, Bhishma and Kripacharya and Aswatthama are present here.
- (ix)Among the princes here, there is Duryodhan and Karna the disciple of Parsuram and you selected the cowherd boy to be honoured? What was the reason to honour that this Krishna killed Jarasandha in an unjust manner?
- (x) Krishna! What made you accept this undeserved honour or is it a case of a dog snatching at a remnant of food, which no body cared to claim.
- (xi)Giving honour to Krishna is like mockery of showing beautiful things to a blind man. Lord Krishna, unable to tolerate all these nonsense got furious and slay Shisupal with his Sudarshan Chakra as there is a limit for a tolerance too.

Fable 78: As you reap so you sow

It is the law of nature that a rubber ball, a stone, a flower, an abuse, a blessing, love or jealousy rebounds and comes back with the same force and in the same form.

(i) There was a lawyer who advised his client that in the court if any body ask him anything he should behave like a mad person and just utter “Miauo! Miauo!”. He did as instructed by the lawyer and he was declared mad and released unpunished. Thereafter, the lawyer asked him to pay his fees. Then also he uttered to the lawyer “Miao! Maio!”. The lawyer’s wrong advice rebounded back to him, with the same force. Thus if you see the world in the form of God then the world will also see you in the form of God.

(ii) There was a family consisting of a husband, wife and a son aged about 10 years. After the husband’s father retired he came to stay with his son. The father being an old person falls sick. The son is not willing to keep his father with him but instead prepares to send him to some old men’s house. He therefore, instructs his young son to make two pieces of blanket to give one piece to his father and one piece to be kept for himself. But the young and innocent boy makes three pieces. The father of the young boy asks him: “I told you to make only two pieces, why have you made three?”. The young boy replied. “The extra piece I have cut for you so that I can give it to you when I send you to the old men’s home, when you become old”.

(iii) There were two friends one Brahman and the other ‘Baniya’. Both of them decided to start a business and each of them invested Rs.1 lakh in the business and their capital increased to Rs. 4 lakhs in a very short period. Both these friends were traveling in the train one day for a business trip and they were standing near the door of the compartment to enjoy the cool breeze. In the mean time the train passed through a big river when Baniya friend got a very evil thought in his mind: “If I push this Brahmin and throw him in the river, I can become the sole owner of the business and can thus get all of the Rs.4 lakhs. Accordingly, he pushed the Brahman friend and threw him out in the river and he died. As the destiny works he got a son after a year or so.

When his son was about 10 years old, he fell seriously ill. He spent a lot of money for his treatment but there is no recovery. One day the son spoke: “Daddy! Do you remember one day about 10 years

back you killed your partner and grabbed his money amounting to Rs. 2 lakhs. You have already spent approximately that much for my treatment and only Rs. 100/- is now left to clear the account. So, please give me an injection now costing Rs.100/- so I will go on my way and you go on your way”. The father realized the sin committed by him earlier and that his son had come to settle the account.

Fable 79: Whose death is worth mourning?

When king Dashratha passed away, Bharatji who had gone to his maternal uncle's place was summoned to Ayodhya to attend the coronation ceremony. When he came to Ayodhya and gets the news of the sad demise of his father, king Dashratha, he cries like a child. It was a bolt from the blue for him. Bharatji is not able to reconcile. Sage Vasishtha then tries to console him and says: "Bharat! King Dashrath has lived a long life. He ruled the kingdom as a perfect king. He was very philanthropic, religious and well respected by the people of the kingdom. Death is certain for every one as this is the law of nature. Moreover, he has been liberated from the cycle of birth and death and thus it is not worth weeping and mourning his death. The death of following categories of person is worth mourning and not for the person like king Dashratha:

- (i) One who is borned in the Brahmin family and even though does not worship God.
- (ii) One who is wealthy but does not donate.
- (iii) One who does not welcome and treat his guest properly.
- (iv) One who has lust for the worldly pleasures and does not perform his duty.
- (v) One who has no aptitude for spiritual knowledge.
- (vi) One who is wicked
- (vii) The ladies who are wicked and jealous.
- (viii) One who is wasting time and wealth.
- (ix) One who has lust for his body only

It is not proper to mourn the death of king Dashratha who has achieved lot of respect, love and affection from the people of the kingdom.

Fable 80: Remain equanimous towards all

When the Mahabharata war inevitable, Lord Krishna suggests to Yudhistira that they should still make all attempts for a peaceful solution so that the world would have no cause to accuse them of not doing everything possible to avert war. Yudhistira agreed and suggested that Krishna was the only right person to undertake this peace effort.

Lord Krishna thus arrived at Hastinapur and in the assembly he turned to Duryodhana and said: “Duryodhan you are the descendent of a noble line. Pursue the path of Dharma. Because of you, this famous line is in danger of being destroyed. Make peace with Pandavas by giving them at least five villages”. Duryodhan replied: “Madhusadan! You wrong me out of love for the Pandavas. I am utterly blameless. I will not give the Pandavas an inch of land, not even a needlepoint of it.

Dhritarashtra then intervened and suggested Vidura to “bring far sighted Gandhari here, it is possible that Duryodhan may listen to her”.

Gandhari was, therefore, called upon and requested her to urge her son to come to a peaceful solution but Duryodhan said “no” and walked out of the assembly with his eyes red with anger and plotted to seize Lord Krishna with the help of his friends. But Govinda who had anticipated all this, laughed and disclosed his divinity. Krishna rose and with Satyaki and Vidura in either side of him, left the court. He went to Kunti and reported the outcome of the meeting. Kunti said: “War is thus quite a certainty, may you protect my son”.

Krishna goes back to Dwarka after briefing Yudhistir and advising him to start preparing for war. To prepare for the war, Arjun comes to Dwarka to seek the help of Lord Krishna. When he comes Krishna was fast asleep. Arjun thus stands waiting near the feet of Lord Krishna. At the time the shameless Duryodhan who had plotted a plan to arrest Lord Krishna also arrives to Dwarka and comes straight to Lord Krishna. When Krishna opens his eyes he first saw Arjun who stood in front of him and then turned to Duryodhan and welcomed him too, forgetting how he was treated by him few days back.

Krishna asked both of them as to what help he could render to both of them. While Duryodhan is prefers to take the help of army of Yadavas, Arjun being a wise person prefers to take the help of Lord

Krishna himself. This is how Lord Krishna shows his equanimity to Duryodhan who had insulted him just few days back.

Fable 81: We are unhappy because we make others unhappy

Under stanza 11 of Fable 4 of Geetaji Lord Krishna has stated that:

“Ye Yatha mam Prapadyante
Tams tathaiva bhajamy ahma|
Mama vartam anuvartante
Manusyah Partha Sarvasah ||”
“Partha! Whosoever worships
me through what so ever path,
I verily accept and bless them in that way.

Lord Krishna says that those who leave their worry to me, I worry for them. Those who are eager to have my vision, I am equally eager to see them. Those who are not able to bear my absence, I am not able to bear their absence. Those who offer me everything, I too offer everything to them. Those who love me like friend, I too love them like a friend, and those who love me like a son I remain with them like a son. Whatever eagerness we have for the Lord the same eagerness the Lord has for you. Lord is not any dumb existence. If you see the world in a form of matter, the world will also see you in the form of matter. If you worship the world in the form of God, then it will be seen in the form of God. That is why with a spiritual person even a stone gets a life. The world will look at you in the same way you look at the world. Therefore, try to see the presence of God everywhere.

There was one poet who used to wear his shoes as if shoes have got a life . To close the suitcase he will do so as if suitcase has a soul. If he touches the stone he will do so as if he is touching God. He used to love all animals in same way he used to love his wife and children. This poet has never seen unhappiness in his life. We are unhappy because we are making others unhappy, because others are also in the form of God

Those who have got lust and anger can never see the God. Then where is the question of achieving God? Those who see wealth will get wealth only and not God.

Fable 82: Curses from saints are some times a blessing in disguise

Kuber had two sons, one named “Nal” and another named “Manigriv”. They were very wealthy because of their father’s property. When wealth increases the three evils viz. gambling, debauchery and alchoholism automatically comes in. Wealth and good virtues can never stay together.

Under the influence of wealth, these two sons had lost their senses. One day after drinking lot of wine they came to the river Ganga and started harassing the young girls who were taking bath there at. In the mean time Devarishi Narad happens to pass over this spot and saw these two boys harassing the girls. Naradji feels that this human birth is for worship and prayer to God. People forget that at last this body will be converted into a heap of ash.

How many people put their claim on one body. Son says this body belongs to me. Mother says I have given birth to you, therefore, you belong to me; father says I have given you education so you belong to me; wife says I have left my father’s house to get you so you belong to me. The fire says after the soul has left this body, you are handing over the body to me so I have right over that body. Sometimes even dogs and vulture put their claim on this body.

No body, therefore knows whom this body belongs to. At last God gives the judgment that I have given the life to this body and I am the creator of this body. So it is my body.

In short, we have received this human birth only by blessing of God! But we fail to control our sensual desires and while enjoying these desires we forget God, the creator of this body. God has given us eyes, tongue, ears, hands, legs, mind to worship him but we fail to make use of all these organs and start using them for other purposes. One who uses his body only for enjoying worldly pleasures they have to take next birth as a tree. The birth as a tree is for undergoing punishment. It has to undergo the effect and violence of various seasons.

Naradji, therefore gives curse to these two boys that both of you become a tree. They repent and apologize to Naradji, so Devarishi Naradji says that you will grow at Gokul in the Garden of Nandababa and when Lord Krishna’s leg will touch you then you will be liberated. Can we call this a curse or a blessing? Lord Krishna in his childhood days touched these two trees with his feet and “Nal” and “Manigriv” get liberated

Fable 83: Human birth is for prayer and worship to God but we do something else

There was a gentleman who did not eat unless he had served food to the poor or saint. Once it so happened that a saint Mahatma came to this gentleman's house. He worshiped the saint Mahatma and invited him to take the prasad. But unluckily, there was no milk in the house on that day so he asked his servant: "Please go immediately and bring some milk as soon as possible". But the servant goes and come back to ask his master: "Should bring buffalo's milk or cow's milk?". Master replied: "Please bring cow's milk". The servant again comes back and asks: "Should it be a old cow or a young cow?". The Master replies: "Any cow's, whether young or old will do but bring it soon". The servant comes back once more and asks: "Should it be of a white cow or a black cow?". The Master then lost his temperament and scolded the servant, "I asked you to bring milk and you start talking about buffalo, old cow, young cow, white cow or black cow!".

This is not the story of master and servant but the fact of the life of all of us. Milk is symbolic of God in the above story and that's what we want but we start talking about all other matters.

Shankar Swami says: "It is a pity that all of us mostly talk about food, restaurants, dancing clubs, purchase of cloths, house etc but rarely talk about God. All are the part of God. There is presence of God in all creatures. That is why our all God and Goddesses have kept animals as their vehicles. Dog is vehicle of Bhairavnath. Mouse is vehicle of Ganpati, tiger is the vehicle of Goddess Amba Mata, Garud is the vehicle of Lord Vishnu; Bullock is the vehicle of Lord Shiva, Peacock is the vehicle of Goddess Saraswati etc.

(ii) Once a mother asked his son: "My dear son, please go to the market and bring some vegetables quickly". The son goes out but on the way he sees some street dancers and stands there to watch these street dancers till the evening.

We all are like this son, we have been sent here by God to perform his worship and prayer, but instead we have started seeing street shows.

Fable 84: God comes to you in the same forms as you pray him

There was a saint Mahatma in Vrindavan. He had no children. The Mahatma thought that as long as he was in meditation, it was possible to control his mind, but whenever he was not in meditation his mind did not remain under his control and engaged in wordly pleasures. He therefore, planned a trick to forget worldly pleasures. He thought of “Kanaiya” as his son. “I am Nand and Kanaiya is sitting in my lap and Kanaiya is pulling my beard”. Just like that he treated Kanaiya as his son and enjoyed life.

The Mahatma has thus forgot the worldly pleasures by engaging in a constant relationship with the Lord. He gave all his love and affection to Kanaiya as if he was his own son. He offered everything to Lord Krishna by mind and the Lord accepted everything.

One day the Mahatma expressed his desire to his disciples to go for a bath in river Ganga. Then he thought to himself that Kanaiya was telling him. “Baba! I am still young, please do not leave me alone and go away for a bath in river Ganga”. Then the Mahatma tells his disciple: “My Kanaiy is not letting me go as he is still young. How can I go to pilgrimage by leaving my Kaniaya alone here”. Like that the Mahatma got old and one day died while chanting religious songs. His disciples took the body for cremation. All preparations were made to put the body on the pyre. Then all of a sudden, a young boy aged about eight years appears there with Ganga water. He says: “He is my father, and as his son I want to light his pyre and give him bath with Ganga water. Then that boy gives him a bath with Ganga water, offers the flowers, bows his head and lights the pyre. After performing this ceremony the boy disappeared. Then every body realized that the Mahatma had no son at all. He was unmarried and the boy who came and performed all rituals was nobody but Lord Krishna himself.

The Mahatma had a feeling that Lord Krishna was his son. Thus God does not forget his true devotee even at the time of death and goes to him in the form in which his devotee has prayed to him in.

Fable 85: A great person always acts in the larger interest of the society even at the cost of their own respect

There was a king, Narkasur, who ruled over the state of Prag Jyotish. He was very unrighteous and committed debauchery. He had kidnapped young and beautiful daughters of many kings and kept them under house arrest. Thousands of such young girls were captured and kept by him. When Lord Krishna knew of such a sorry state of affairs he invaded the kingdom of Narkasur and got all the young girls released.

Those kings who were waiting for their daughters all these days were very happy to learn this news, but declined to accept their daughters. The condition of these young girls became very precarious since their parents were not ready to accept them and no body was prepared to marry them. There was, therefore, no alternative for these girls. Either they had to commit suicide or work as prostitutes.

Lord Krishna, therefore, decided to marry all these girls and kept them with him in his palace. People critisized Lord Krishna that because he had lust for these girls, he invaded the kingdom of Narkasur to possess these young and beautiful girls. Such people were really fools and shameless. As a matter of fact, Lord Krishna did a huge favour to the entire society in slaying such a lustful beast and adopting these young girls. But he never bothered about any criticism directed to him.

At present, in the so called reformed society whenever such kidnapped girls are released they are placed in a very difficult situation, as their parents are not ready to accept them and no one is willing to marry them.

The release of these girls had happened on “Chaturdashi”. So even after thousands of years we celebrate this day as “Narak-Chaturdashi”. As a symbol of Narkasur people buy a bitter fruit, put it at the entrance of the house and kick it out.

Many people till today do not know this background and argue that if Lord Krishna had kept 16108 queens, why we can not keep 16 wives? Lord Krishna’s virtues and social services are really beyond any comparision. We have no words or language to express these good virtues. Mahatma Gandhi is a relatively recent illustration of someone who went to jail several times for the sake of the country even though going to jail was considered disrespectful for such a great man.

Fable 86: No one should ever forget the sacrifices made by their parents

Lord Rama's love and affection towards his parents is an ideal illustration for all of us. He left the kingdom and accepted the 14 year exile in the jungle to enable his father to fulfill the vow he had given to Kaikeyi. Lord Krishna's duty towards his parents is also a unique example for all of us. He had a lot of love and affection to his parents knowing fully well that his parents Vasudeo and Devaki are under arrest. He refused to accept Akrur's invitation to stay in the palace and prefers to stay outside Mathura. In the world parent's love towards their children has a special status. One who does not do any thing to hurt the respect of their parents, is a real son. Today the son gets married and is changed and does not remember the obligation he owes to his parents. He obeys the order of his wife and does not bother about the feeling of his parents.

After slaying Kansa, the first thing Lord Krishna does is that he sees his parents. He breaks the chains by which the hands and legs of Vasudeo and Devaki were tied, bowed his head and touched the feet of his parents. While at Dwarka, he used to first pay his respects to his parents immediately after entering the palace. In spite of his busy schedule, various problems and activities he never forgot Nanda and Yashodaji. He invites Nanda and Yashodaji at Prabhash and the love and affection with which he treated them cannot be described in any words.

After the Mahabharata War he returned to Dwarka. At this time his courage, power and respect were at their peaks. Everywhere he went he received a warm welcome. He had a special status in the hearts of every one either due to love or fear. After defeating very strong and powerful enemies he had returned home and he first went to his parents to pay his respect. This is called true love for father and mother. Today the father after returning from the office first asks his son: "Beta where is your mother gone?".

The real love and duty towards parents is that nothing should be done that may hurt the feelings of parents. To satisfy the feelings of parents, to ensure that their life does not become miserable and nothing should be altered which may displease them is the real duty of the son. The sacrifices made by the parents in the childhood are inexpressible. Lord Krishna had performed all such duty towards Vasudeo and Devaki as well as Nanda and Yashodaji. The present generation should take the example of Lord Rama and Lord Krishna before sending their parents to the old men's home.

Fable 87: For a person of self respect an insult is as bad as his death

During the Mahabharat War, once Yudhishtira was exhausted and unable to face Karna's repeated attacks; he returned to his tent to take some rest. In the mean time Lord Krishna and Arjun arrive in his tent in search of Yudhishtira. Yudhishtira sarcastically asks them: "You have killed Karna you come now ?".

Arjun replied: "No, brother".

Yudhishtira got very furious and shouted: "I hate you and your bow and arrow. You are just useless and good for nothing". Arjun had taken a vow in his youngage that he will slay any one who would hate his bow and arrow. Arjun thus got up and was ready to kill his elder brother, but Lord Krishna pacified him and stopped him from taking such Ghostly action. If Lord Krishna had not intervened we cannot imagine as to what would have happened to entire Mahabharat War. He explains to Arjun that "You accompanied your brother for 13 years in the jungle and you would kill him now?. Yudhishtira is a very pious, religious and a honourable person. Before fullfilling your vow you should think over the issue calmly. Any way, what was to happen has happened, now listen to me. For a respected and honorable person an insult him is as bad as and equivalent to his death. So you just abuse him and insult him till you are satisfied".

Arjun thus started abusing Yudhishtira and insulted him a lot. Then another problem arose. After insulating and abusing elder brother, Arjun repents a lot and was about to kill himself. Then Lord Krishna again intervenes and explains "Arjun! You are really a fool. As you know suicide is a great sin and you have become ready to commit suicide?. One who praises himself is as good as having died. So just start praising yourself which would be as bad as having death. Arjun is convinced of this and started praising himself". If Lord Krishna would not have been there and used his acumen the "Mahabharata" war would not have become the "Mahabharata" war. For his practical approach and high acumen there is no one so far who could be compared to him.

Fable 88: Some time you are placed in such a situation that you are going to be blamed anyways

The following two illustrations will make an interesting reading with reference to above theme.

(i) This is an event which took place in England some thousands years before. There was a lady Mayor of one town. She was in charge of protecting the town. One day her enemy attacked the town and the security of the town was in danger. She wanted to have a treaty with the enemy and so she sends a message to the commander of the enemy. The commander replies: “If you want to save your town, come and stay with me for one night”.

The lady was placed in such a situation that if she went to the commander’s place for a night people would talk about her character and say that God protected the town. On the other hand if she did not go thousands of people would be killed and people would brand her as a selfish lady. To save her character, she allowed thousands of people to be killed.

(ii) There was a king Arla Liyodrik who was very cruel and committed debauchery. On the other hand his wife was very pious, religious, spiritual, affectionate and kind hearted. She treated her husband as God but she could not bear to see the merciful condition, trauma and suffering of the people, particularly that of the young ladies. She, therefore, once went to the king with folded hands and requested him to stop this unrighteous path of harassing the young girls in particular. The king replied: “My dear! I can stop doing all these if you agree to move during the day from street to street without any clothes on your body and fully naked!”.

This was such a situation that if she moves naked, people would say “Whatever may happen to the town, but where was no need for her to lose her character like this”. On the other hand if she did not move naked, people would talk about how selfish she was, in order to save her character that she allowed the other thousands of girls to be robbed of their character.

But those who are broad minded and always keen to serve the society do not care for themselves, but first think about the larger interest of the society.

Fable 89: The key to popularity is that people should feel that you are one of them

One who can forget his supremacy and mixes with the people is the only one who can win the hearts of the people.

A famous Russian writer Maxim Gorkiye has written the following about Lennin:

“There is no doubt that Lenin was a very learned, intellectual and a selfless worker. Hearing his popularity, I too went to hear him in one such public meeting. I thought let me listen to a person who has won the hearts of the people. There was a big crowd gathered to hear this leader. People were waiting for their popular leader to arrive. I thought, before he comes there will be police car with a siren followed by number of security guards and then Lenin’s car will arrive. But to my Surprise I found that he was sitting in one corner with few workers.

When it was time for Lenin to speak, one person went on the stage and requested Lenin to come on the stage. As this announcement was made, Lenin who was sitting in one corner along with some workers got up and climbed the stage. I was very surprised to see this.

How humble and noble he was even though he was very powerful and capable. He always thought that “I am one of you” and not different. He had achieved a lot of closeness with the people and from that very day I had all respect for him. My love for him knew no bounds.”

People will respect learned people, they will be afraid of powerful people, they will be eager to see the people who have performed the toughest job and will look upon them with respect, they will thank the people who have relieved them from troubles. But no one will offer them everything of their love and hearts. If you want to win the hearts of the people then enter their hearts and treat them as your own.

Fable 90: Wealth should be earned only by righteous means

After the Mahabharata War Yudhishtira was made the emperor of the state. He was so religious and pious that he ruled and protected the people with equanimity. He gave attention that everybody got a proper education with high culture. He believed that as long as people do not get cultural education with love and affection, there is no progress in the society. With cultural education, morality and honesty will be adopted. When people start thinking of wealth as everything the downfall in society starts. With the downfall in the society bad elements will increase. He practiced as he preached, with the result there was no immorality and dishonesty amongst the people.

A Brahmin got a piece of land in donation. While ploughing his land, he found an earthen pot filled with golden coins. Immediately he went to the donor to hand over this earthen pot filled with golden coins. But the donor said: "This land has already been donated to you so whatever you get from this land becomes your property". The brahmin said: "You have given only the land in donation and not this earthen pot filled with golden coins". The matter finally goes to Yudhishtira who gave a judgment that as whatever grows in the land after ploughing becomes the property of Brahmin, whatever he retrieved while poughing also becomes the property of Brahmin. This is how Yudhistir has spread the message that one should earn the wealth with morality and adopting righteous path only.

What grand morality. Compare today's greedy Brahmins and those that have a feeling of sacrifice in those days. Today there are no such donors and no such donees. Even if someone has to donate Rs. 5/- he will think for a week and the Brahmin will take whatever he gets. In those days people never left humanity or morality for sake of money.

While going to Dwarka after the Mahabharata War, Lord Krishna had warned Yudhishtira that he would be the center point of culture and morality in society and that is why he would have to always remain alert. Immoral people would attack without notice hence he advised Yudhishtira to be on guard at all times.

Fable 91: Never use the money offered to God for worldly pleasures

This is a story written in the days of Lord Rama. One day a dog came weeping to Lord Rama's court with the complaint that one saint injured his leg by throwing a stone at him. Ramji asked the saint: "Why did you injure this dog?".

The saint replied: "My Lord I was going to bring buttermilk from a house. While bringing the buttermilk this dog followed me. I thought that it would take away my buttermilk and so I threw a stone at him and he got his leg injured".

Ramji said: "You have committed a crime in injuring this dog without any reason, and you will have to, therefore, undergo a punishment as desired by this dog".

The dog replied: "Make this Saint a Mahant of a big temple". Everyone wondered whether this is a blessing or a curse?

The dog then explained: "I was a Mahant of a big temple in the past birth and I used all the wealth offered to God for worldly pleasures. I had, therefore, to take the birth of a dog. If this saint becomes a Mahant of some big temple, he too will be tempted to use the money offered to God for worldly pleasures and then he will have to take birth of a dog. It is therefore, said, that things donated are never taken back and wealth offered to God is never used for worldly pleasures.

Fable 92: A Bachelor should not poke his nose in the family matters of a married person

One day Maharshi Naradji desired to visit Lord Krishna's family. He wondered how Lord Krishna must be live with his 16108 Queens. Whom he does he meet when? When must be eating? With whom would he be talking and how? Naradji entered the palace of Rukshmani. Lord Krishna jumped form his bed and hugged Maharshi Naradji. Naradji goes to other palace. There he found Lord Krishna playing cards with Vdhavji.

Naradji goes to various palaces and somewhere Lord Krishna is found playing with children, somewhere he is found taking his dinner, somewhere he is found worshiping, somewhere he is found taking rest while somewhere he is found listening to religious discourses.

Naradji then realised that the Lord is omnipresent and made a mistake in recognising him. With this event Lord Krishna also tried to show that when a guest comes to your house, he should be treated with respect and love. Looked at in another way, Lord Krishana may have wanted to convey to Naradji that a bachelor should never try to poke his nose in the family of a married person.

Fable 93: If you do not control your mind then your mind will control you

The mind is very sensitive. It is like a monkey having a wine. It cannot remain idle even for a moment. If you do not control it you will have to dance as per its desires. Therefore, do not allow your mind to remain idle. When the mind remains idle then sinful thoughts enter the mind. Keep your self active in doing some social work. In the morning and at night, keep a practice of chanting God's name. Attend religious discourses. If it remains idle it will start thinking about sensual desires and worldly pleasures. Constantly think of God. Hear religious discourses and devotional songs through the ears, try to have a vision of God through the eyes, try to see wonders of nature through the eyes, sing devotional songs and chant mantras with the tongue. Surround your mind from all sides only then would it come under your control.

There was a Brahmin who had lost his wife. She had left for the heavenly abode leaving behind young children with nobody to look after them. A friend suggested: I shall give you a mantra. If you repeat the mantra then a genie will appear and do anything that you ask it to. The Brahmin did as he was told and the genie appeared. The genie said that it would do anything the Brahmin asked him to do but should never be allowed to remain idle. If it remained idle, it would eat the Brahmin up- that was the condition. The genie was very efficient in finishing all the work assigned to it, and would come back to the Brahmin asking for more work every few minutes.

The Brahmin mentioned this problem to his friend who suggested that the Brahmin put a pole in his backyard and ask the genie to go up the pole and then down again. The genie realized that the Brahmin probably has some Guru who gave him this advice and subsequently didn't bother the Brahmin.

To know yourself you will have to first know your mind, otherwise, it would not come under your control. You may meditate alone but prayer in the evening should be done with all the family members for at least for half an hour. By doing so your home will become a temple. There are three types of prayer i.e. prayer by chanting God's name (i) prayer by discussing God's virtues (ii) prayer by thinking of the wonders of nature.

Fable 94: Lord Krishna will come to you in whatever form you have worshiped him

King Bhismak of Vidharbha state had a son named Rukmi and a daughter named Rukshnani. The king wanted his daughter marry to Lord Krishna, while his son Rukmi wanted his sister to marry Sishupal, the son of Jarasangh. When Rukshmani knew that his brother wanted her to marry Sishupal forcefully, she was very upset. Knowing fully well about the vigour, power, acuemanship and morality of Lord Krishna she had already decided to marry Lord Krishna else not to marry at all.

She knew that Sishupal had already been invited to marry her. Rukshmani sends a letter, via a Brahmin named Sudeo (who was staying in Aantapur) to Lord Krishna (who was at Dwarka). Sudeo came to Dwarka with a letter from Rukshmani. Seeing this Brahmin Lord Krishna got up and welcomed him. Sudeo said: “My Lord! I have specially come to deliver this letter from Rukhsmani”. In the letter Rukhsamani addresses Lord Krishna as “Bhavan Sunder”. The letter is very nicely written. It contains seven Stanzas. In first six stanzas she describes the good virtues of Lord Krishna and the last stanza she writes about her total surrender to God! The letter reads as under:

“Bhavan sunder”

My Lord! I have heard from various saints and sages about your all you good virtues and I have since decided to marry you only. By the qualities of virtues you posses. You have won both my heart and mind. Having heard all your virtues my mind I have become shy. The fault is, therefore, of your virtues and I am not to be blamed for this. I have offered my soul to you. You are omniscient and very well know my feelings.

I have observed many fasts and done a lot of prayer and penance. I have donated a lot to poor people. This is my wealth and I will come along with this wealth and not alone. I will make you happy. Please accept me.

All arrangements have been made here for my marriage with Sishupal against my wishes and desires. So please do not delay in coming here and in taking me with you. I hope you will accept me. On the day of marriage, I shall be visiting the temple to worship goddess Parvatiji. Please wait for me with your chariot behind the temple and carry me with you.

If you will not accept me, I shall consider that as my misfortune. I shall, therefore keep taking births till I marry you.

Lord Krishna was touched by Rukhsamani's straightforward letter. He said: “As this girl desires to marry me, I too desire to marry her. Even since I read that this girl is being forced into marriage with Sishupal, I have become disturbed”.

Lord asks his charioteer Dwarka to take him to king Bhismaks place. He thanked the brahmin Sudeo and requested him to accompany him. Then he prays to Lord Ganapathi for success in his work.

He thus conveys to the world to pray to Lord Ganapathi before starting any activity. Sudeo goes to Rukhsamani and informs her privately that Krishna has already arrived with his chariot and was waiting for her behind the temple. Rukhsamani prays to Lord Krishna and says that she would always remain under his obligation for his bold and courageous act.

Rukhsamani thus goes to the temple, pretending that she is going to worship Goddess Parvatji. As pre-planned she sits in the chariot with Lord Krishna who drives her away in his chariot to Dwarka. Thus if you prayer to the Lord Krishna with all firmness then he comes to you in whatever form you have prayed to him in.

Fable 95: To take away credit from others is not only a crime, but also a sin

After slaying Kansa, Lord Krishna hands over the kingdom to Ugrasen. He then goes to sage Sandipani for further study in Vedanta, Upanishad etc. At the very first sight of Krishna, sage Sandipani's wife remembered his son and started crying. Sandipani consoled his wife that one who entire world in his hand has come over her, so she need not worry now. "You will definitely get your son back." With Krishna at the Aashram, the entire atmosphere has become cheerful and joyous. Krishna due to his knowledge and power becomes the leader of all the students. He also becomes the blue-eyed boy for sage Sandipani.

One day, Sandipani had to go out to some other place. He therefore handed all the responsibility to Krishna and left the ashram. One day it so happened that there was no firewood in the Ashram and the sage's wife found out about this only in the evening. She therefore asks some students to bring firewood from the jungle immediately. Lord Krishna got ready to go to the jungle and bring firewood. Other students tell Lord Krishna: "Krishna! You are still new and our leader also, so you need not come. We will go and come back with firewood, you need not worry".

Lord Krishna said: "How is this possible? I have been kept in charge of the ashram so I must come along". He further said: "I do not want to be great based on the efforts of others. As a matter of fact it becomes my responsibility to perform this task".

These words of Lord Krishna are worth nothing. Today people want to become leaders by making others work but not lead by their own examples.

In the mean time sage Sandipani returns to the Ashram late one evening. When he knew that Krishna, who was still new to the jungle was sent to bring the wood, he got angry with his wife. He asked his wife: "Why did you allow him to go when you knew that he is still new to this area?".

His wife replied: "Whatever he has done is O.K.; you made him the leader, so knowing his responsibility he went himself. I did tell him not to go and so did the other students, but he refused to listen to us saying that as a leader it was his responsibility to perform this work."

Thereafter, everybody went into the jungle to search for him. Sage Sandipani saw Lord Krishna bringing the firewood and was relieved. He said: "Krishna, you now know everything which was to be learned in the life and nothing more is now left for you to learn". He then hugged Krishna and said:

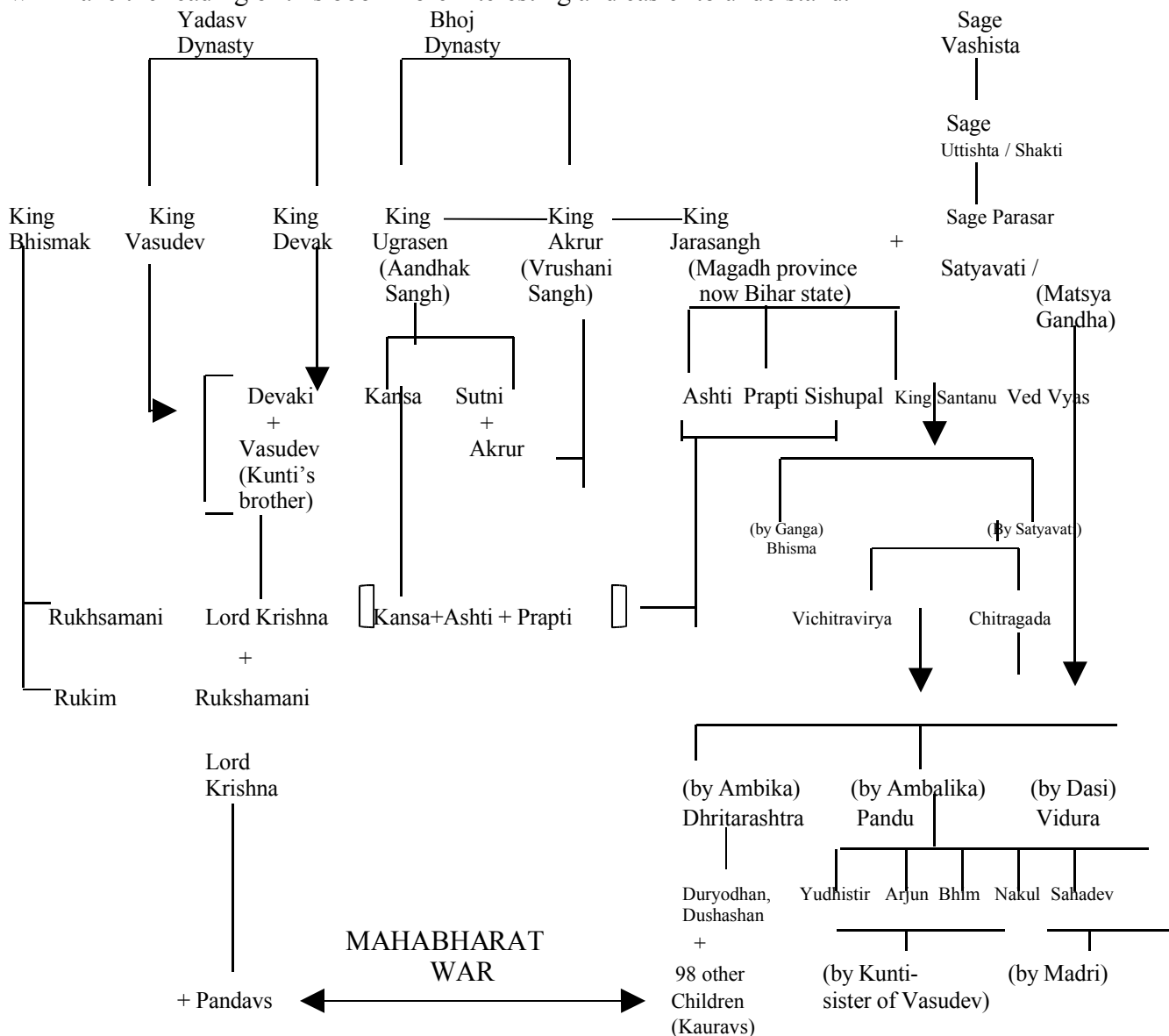
“You have passed in my exam”. Lord Krishna has thus set an example for all of us on how to live life. One who understands his own responsibilities is a real leader.

Fable 96: A daughter's marriage should never be set up on the basis of self-interest of the family or that of the society

While reading epics like Mahabharata, we get the impression that a daughters marriage was fixed up in the ancient days on the basis of self interest of the families or the society in general but not on the merits, desires and consent of both the boy and the girl.

The king of Magadh province (now Bihar state), Jarasangh, had already invaded 86 kingdoms and was preparing to invade the Yadav and Bhoja dynasty. With a view to facing this challenge, the Yadav and Bhoja dynasty decided to unite. For this purpose king Ugrasen got his daughter sutai married to Akrur, while king Devak decided to get his daughter Devaki married to king Vasudeo, brother of Kuntidevi. To counter the strategy of Yadav and Bhoja dynasty, King Jarasangh got her two daughters Ashti and Prapti married to Kansa who had a socialist nature. Rukim the son of king Bhismak wanted his sister Rukhsamani to marry Shisupal, son of Jarasangh, to improve the relation between two kingdoms. But Rukhsamani was not willing to marry Shisupal and got courage to write a letter to Lord Krishna to carry her away. Lord Krishna thus prevented a forced marriage by taking Rukhsamani away. The above picture will be more clearer from the family charts of various kings seen below:

A chart showing the family trees of various characters involved in the Mahabharata war. Reference to this chart will make the reading of this book more interesting and easier to understand.



N.B. :- As vichitravirya was not able to get their wives conceived, due to some health problem , the queen satyavati was therefore worried that if vichitravirya does not get any son the dynasty of king santanu will end here, Chitrangad having died at very early age without any children. She therefore requests her illegitimate son, ved vyas to help Ambika, Amalika and their dasi to conceive by the Niyog system . Highly spiritual people have the power to help a woman conceive just by their sight; this is known as the “Niyog System” . The reader should not ,therefore, misunderstand the event of getting children to Ambika, Ambalika and dasi by ved vyas.

Fable 97: Nobody is immortal in this world, not even incarnation of God

Life is a journey from the womb to the tomb. There is death after birth and birth after death and this cycle of birth and death continues. After death there is a birth depending upon the “Karma” you have accumulated. It is said in our legend that there are 84 lakh creatures. In spite of the advanced science and technologies it is said that even scientist have so far been able to identify only 65 thousand of creatures. What a wonder of God!

What is Sansar?

“Sansar is a caravan of various living beings (84 lakh as stated above) moving in vehicles in the form of their bodies with a fuel in the form of “Maya” and energy in the form of God. While playing the game of reproduction this caravan moves from time immemorial and how long it will continue to move only its creators know”.

Someone else says:

“Sansar is like a river. As a river changes its form and path every moment, this Sansar also changes its form and size at every moment. But the flow of Sansar continues just as flow of river continues. In a river two particles of sand move together for some time and then get separated and never meet again. Similarly in this Sansar also two Jivatmas meet together for sometime then get separated and never meet again” .

Another definition “sansar” is:

“Sansar is like a stage where all characters come on the stage, perform their predetermined roles and go away. In the same way, in this Sansar, various creatures come, perform their predetermined roles and go away”.

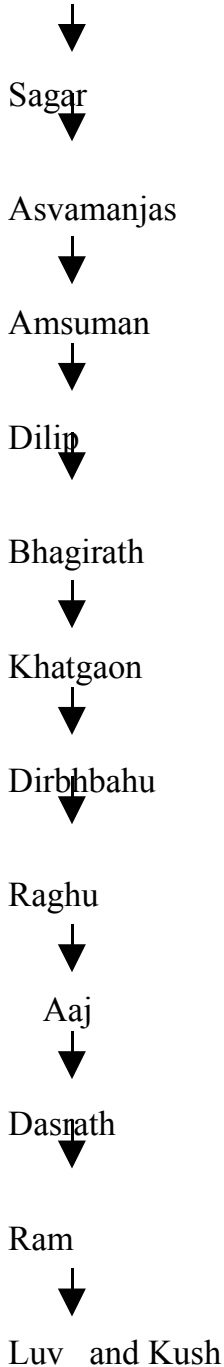
Yet another definition of “Sansar” is:

“They say Sansar is like a railway train and the engine is like God. The compartments are like bodies and Jivatmas are passengers. Just as passengers get in and get out of the train compartments at their predetermined stations, the Jivatmas also get in get out of their bodies at the pre-determined destination.”

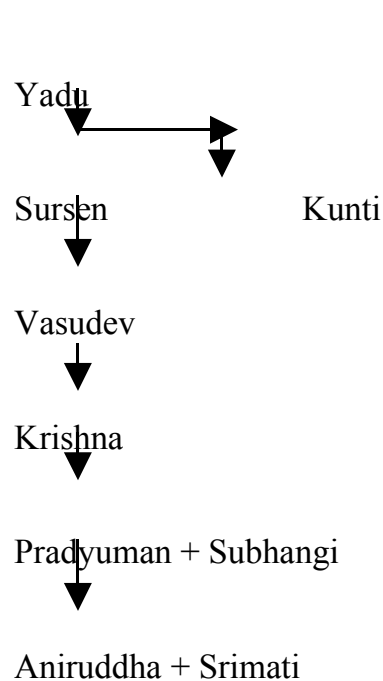
No body is an exception to this cycle of birth and death. Those who exist today were not there about 100 years ago and those who exist now will not be here after a 100 years. Even the incarnation of God is not exempted from this cycle of birth and death.

The attached chart of the Raghuvans dynasty and the Yadav dynasty in which Lord Rama and Lord Krishna were born shows that the flow is continous and that life goes on.

“Raghuvans Dynasty”



Yadav Dynasty



Fable 98: All the creations of God are simply wonderful and beyond the realm of our understanding

What are the creations of God?

- (i) The sun rising every day in the east and setting in the west.
- (ii) The moon shining regularly every alternate fortnight
- (iii) The innumerable stars flickering in the sky.
- (iv) The tides and ebb in the sea under the affect of the moon
- (v) The various seasons setting on the pre-determined time
- (vi) Crores of gallons of water being vaporised daily and form the clouds in the sky
- (vii) The air we breath in and out every second (which is not even visible).
- (viii) Innumerable catagories of animals.
- (ix) The birth of a baby.
- (x) The death of an animal.

These are just few of the many such wonders created by God. Though scientists have been able to land on the moon. They have not been able to see the form of soul or how it leaves the body and where it goes.

Knowing the above wonders fully well there are still some people who question the existence of God. They are nothing but spiritually blind people. As science and technology advances the number of such spiritually blind peo are increasing. They want proof of every thing. Behind every creation there is a creator. There is a photographer behind every photo, there is an artist behind every picture, there are masons and carpenters behind any building, there is a shoemaker behind a pair of shoes. There is a textile worker behind each piece of cloth you wear. Just name any thing and there is a creator. Then how can the above listed creations be without a creator ?

No, they are still not satisfied. They say if God is there, why can we not see him? Can we say we can see the sweetness in milk? Can you see electricity running through the wires? Can you see the air you are breathing? Can you see the hunger? There are many things like these that we cannot see but we can feel.

No, they are not still satisfied. They say if God is there where is he? Which side is he facing ? What does he eat? What does he do all day long? I say God is everywhere just as “Akash” is there

every where. Just as the candlelight is facing all sides, God also faces all sides. God eats our egos and makes a rich person out of a poor person and a poor person from a rich person.

No they are still not satisfied, as they want some solid proof. Then we have to be blunt and ask such spiritually blind people that what is the proof that xyz is your father and not ABC. Have you seen your father becoming your father? Your mother says “Beta! He is your daddy, he is our papa”. Then you accept him as your father without asking any proof from your mother. Similarly our saints and sages after thousands of years of penance had a vision of God and they say God is there and we accept it. Whether you call God Rama, Rahim or anything you would like to say but there is some super power that is behind this creation.

Fable 99: Consolation from a great person gives a lot of courage to the person in agony

After 13 years of exile in the jungle and one year in disguise, the Pandavas were sitting at a potter's house. Lord Krishna, without any invitation, arrives at this potter's house.

A person so powerful, with a towering personality, charisma and without any ego comes to see the Pandavas; this shows his greatness and kindness. One who has taken a birth for the benefit of society - why he should show any greatness? Pandavas felt a lot of joy upon seeing Lord Krishna so suddenly. They were so pleased that they had no words to express their gratitude to Lord Krishna. The Pandavas were already highly cultured and humble but seeing Lord Krishna suddenly like this, made them even more humble and noble. They said: "Lord Krishna! We shall always remain indebted to you for the kindness you have shown in visiting us here". They have never done any work without the advice of Lord Krishna and or against his desire.

Pandavas had many good virtues and they also knew the greatness of Lord Krishna. As a result when such a great personality comes to their hut and gives a big hug to every one, their hearts melt in joy and with folded hands all of them stand before Lord Krishna with all nobility.

He goes inside the hut and bows his head before Kuntidevi who is his father sister (Fufi). Lord Krishna puts his hand over the back of each brother and said: "Do not worry, keep courage, you are the children of a person who was like a lion in strength and you have been born to remove injustice from society, establish a kingdom with morality and bring the people on righteous path. I am with you. We are closely related. You all are sons of my honorable fathers' only sister. Do not think that you are alone. Within few days you will get co-operation from king Draupad asking draupadi to get married to Arjun. With the help of Yadavas and panchal Naresh you will be more powerful and you will be able to turn the tables in your favour. There is no doubt that you will be able to get your rights and fulfill your vow very soon."

When such a few words of sympathy come from a person like Krishna, one cannot imagine how much courage, strength and consolation the Pandavas might have gotten. For Pandavas who were mentally broken down by living 13 years in forest and again roaming around for a a year in impersonation, these words from Lord Krishna were very precious. Pandavas thus got lot of

encouragement and confidence and came out more powerful in the end. How can one repay such a debt to a person who comes and stand by them in the days of their agony?

Fable 100: Lord Krishna's love for his elder brother was unique and has set an example for all of us

Lord Krishna and Balram were two brothers. Balram was well respected by Lord Krishna as he was elder to him. In the Mahabhrata war, Balram was in favour of helping Duryodhan and said to Lord Krishna: "For us both Pandavas and Kauravas are equal then why are you in favour of the Pandavas?". Lord Krishna was, however, did not take such a statement of Balram seriously. He simply listened to it. Because of Lord Krishna's attachment to Pandavas, Balram did not support Kauravas but remained neutral and went out of Dwarka for pilgrimage.

After the Mahabharata war was practically over, it was decided to have a "one to one" fight to defeat Duryodhan. Bhima was selected to have the "one to one" fight against Duryodhan. Balram was selected as the referee to give a judgment on the result of the fight between these two warriors. Balram felt that Bhim has broken a rule of the fight when he hit his mace on the head of Duryodhan when he was lying on the ground. Balram was therefore, furious, and tried to hit Bhim with his plough. At the nick of time Krishna rushed and hugged Balram. Balram calmed down seeing Krishna hugging him like this. He requested Balram: "It would be better if you do not hit him". Bhim was saved because of the love and affection Balram had for Lord Krishna.

When the Yadava dynasty was finished (thr internal fights), Lord Krishna never enquired about his sons or grand sons. He was only searching his elder brother Balram. Krishna shouted: "Where is my elder brother?". Balram replied: "I am going now". Lord Krishna says: "You cannot do that. If you go I shall also come with you. I am handing over the responsibility of all the ladies of the Yadav family and will accompany you". Saying so Lord Krishna went to Arjun, handed over the responsibility of all the ladies of Yadav dynasty and come back. He saw that Balram already ended his life. Lord Krishnas life also became powerless. He thought to himself, if there is no Balram, what is the use of living this life. He therefore, decided to wind up his all activities and left the physical body. Where can you find such ideal love between two brothers ?

This has set up a very good example for all of us. But today we find a brother fighting against a brother and goes to the court for a piece of land left behind by their father. What is true for Lord Rama and Lord Krishna is true for all dynasties. Really I do not know what pleasure God, The creature of this Sansar, gets in keep moving this caravan of life? Only God knows its purpose.

Fable 101: Try to search for peace within yourself

Once king Yadu went to Guru Dattareya and asked him: “My Lord! I see people running after peace in this material world and I see you sitting here calmly and quietly with total peace and brightness on your face. What is the reason?”.

Guru Dattareya replied: “Look my king! I have come to a conclusion that there is no pleasure or peace in this material world. I therefore, look within myself and meditate and feel peaceful. I have also come to a conclusion that there is a presence of God in all materials and animals also. I, therefore, try to adopt good virtues of all such animals and materials Rajan! Pleasure is not outside, it is within you. I have no ego I have forgot the 'I' element. I have not one Guru but 24 such Gurus”.

- (1) “Earth” is my 1st Guru because I learnt from her to tolerate. The earth tolerates so much.
- (2) “Breeze” is my 2nd Guru because I have taken a lesson of giving satisfaction to others.
- (3) “Sky” is my 3rd Guru as I learnt that like the sky, God is also everywhere.
- (4) “Water” is my 4th Guru as I have learnt from water to remain pure and cool.
- (5) “Fire” is my 5th Guru as I have learnt from fire that how to remain pious.
- (6) “Moon” is my 6th Guru as I learnt from the moon to remain equanimous in all states. i.e. equanimity in full moon and half or quarter moon state.
- (7) “Sun” is my 7th Guru as I learnt from the Sun to be benevolent but not egoistic.
- (8) “Owl” is my 8th Guru as I learnt from him not to get attached to anything and not to weep after death.
- (9) “Python” is my 9th Guru as I learnt from him to remain satisfied with whatever you get.
- (10) “Sea” is my 10th Guru as I have learnt from it not to overflow (i.e. to show ego) and not to be shallow (i.e. not to be narrow minded)!
- (11) “Butterfly” is my 11th Guru as I learnt from her not to be blinded by brightness (i.e. do not get attached to beauty)
- (12) “Big black bumblebee” (Bhamer) is my 12th Guru as I learnt from him that try to take taste from everything but without attachment (Bhamer gets trapped in lotus while continuously sucking the sweetness from it).
- (13) “Elephant” is my 13th Guru as I learnt from him not to get tempted by anything.
- (14) “Honey bee” is my 14th Guru as I learnt from him not to accumulate as

both the accumulator and the accumulation both get destroyed.

(15)“Deer” is my 15th Guru as I learnt from him not to get attracted by musical songs.

(16)“Fish” is my 16th Guru as I learnt from her not to get trapped by the taste of food.

(17)“Prostitute” is my 17th Guru as I learnt from her that it is better to please God
than to please a romantic person.

(18)“Sparrow” is my 18th Guru as I learnt from her that there is no happiness in
acceptance.

(19)“Child” is my 19th Guru as I learnt from a child how to be innocent.

(20)“Unmarried girl” is my 20th Guru as I learnt from her to live alone in loneliness.

(In a poor Family the young girls pound rice with only one bangle on else guests would know
that the family does not have rice flour. Having two bangles would make a sound)

(21)“Blacksmith” is my 21st Guru as I learnt concentration from him. The blacksmith
remains so concentrated in his work that even if a procession were to pass through his shop
he would not know.

(22)“Snake” is my 22nd Guru as I learnt from him not to remain alone and keep moving.

(23)“Spider” is my 23rd Guru as I learnt from him that God creates the world by his
Maya and then destroys it.

(24) “Worm” is my 24th Guru. Due to constant fear of thinking of a black fly the worm gets
converted into black fly. Similarly if you constantly think about God you may achieve God.
Thus try to find peace within yourself.

Fable 102: Lord Krishna never remains under the obligation of his true devotee

Sudama was Lord Krishna's very close childhood friend. They were studying together at sage Sandipani's Ashram. Sudama settled at Porbunder in Saurashtra. His wife's name was Sushila. She possessed all the virtues according to her name. Sudama had taken a vow not to demand any help from any one. He was very pious and spent most of the time in prayers and worship to God. His condition was so bad that Sushila had only one pair of clothing and that many a times their children had to go to bed without meals.

Sushila, therefore, one day requested Sudama to visit Lord Krishna at Dwarka and see if he can find some solution and take them out of poverty. Sudama agreed but said: "It would not be proper for me to go to him empty handed". Sushila, therefore, brings some backed rice (Pauva) from her neighbour and ties it up in a piece of cloth and gives it to Sudama.

Sudama begins his journey on foot from porbunder to Dwarka. He was so weak that he was not able to finish his journey and became unconscious. Lord Krishna knew this and immediately ordered "Gurud" to lift him up and place him in the palace. Thus a journey of 20 hours was completed within 20 minutes, which he came to know after he regained consciousness. Lord Krishna comes upto the entrance of the palace to greet him and hugged him.

He was so happy to see his childhood friend that he had tears in his eyes. He washed his legs with warm water. Sudama's feet were pricked with many thorns and Lord Krishna pulls them out one at a time. While pulling out one such deeply embedded thorn Lord Krishna asks: "My friend! What gift Bhabhiji sent for me?". Sudama felt shy to offer such a small gift of Pauva, but Krishna pulls out the bag from Sudama, eats away all the pauva and says that the pauva was really tasty.

After a few days of stay with Lord Krishna, Sudama seeks permission to go back to Dwarka. Krishna requests him to stay with him for a few more days. But sudama does not agree to stay any more. During their few days together they talked about their child hood days at Sandipani's Aashram.

Lord Krishna goes upto the palace's gate to bid farewell to Sudama. After a few days journey Sudama reaches porbander but he is not able to locate his hut. Sushila comes out from a palace, which was converted from a hut that belonged to Sudama. Both of them entered the palace and Sudama said that "He did not say anything to Lord Krishna but he has given them so much. It is a thousand times more

than what I had given him. I pray to the Lord to make me his devotee in all future births”. Such is the love of God towards his devotee.

Fable 103: Lord Krishna respects only those who surrender him without any ego

One day Rukhsamani felt that the Lord Krishna was very attached to her. She thought to herself that Lord Krishna loves me more as I am very beautiful. Rukhsamani thus had an ego and was lax in serving Lord Krishna. Lord Krishna realized that Rukhsamani has more interest in her beauty and make up rather than himself. He, therefore, decided to remove her ego. He said to Rukhsamani: “Devi! You are white and I am black! You are princess while I am cowherd boy! Our combination is, therefore, not proper. Why did you marry me leaving all those great kings? It is still not too late. You can still marry some king and be happy. I have no expectation”. Upon hearing this Rukhsamani got nervous and said “O my Lord! Please do not leave me”. She could hardly say this and fainted. Lord Krishna thought that a stronger than desired dose of medicine was given. Therefore, lifted Rukhsamani and put her in the bed and fanned her. When Rukhsamani regained consciousness he said: “Devi! I was just joking. I love you more than my breath. Rukhsamani realized that the Lord played this trick just to remove her ego. She thinks to herself “I thought that he was attached to me but as a matter of fact he has no attachment to any one”. Rukhsamani said: “My Lord! You correctly said that our combination is not proper, where am I? and where you are? Fools worship me while intellectual and powerful people worship you. From today I shall remain in this house as a maid and not as a queen. I have not married you to have worldly pleasure but because egoless”. When she had ego, the Lord said: “I am not fit for you”. When the ego vanished Rukhsamani said: “I am not fit for you. I shall remain as your maid servant”.

When Lord heard this he developed a lot of respect for Rukhsamani. The Lord gives a lot of respect and love to those who surrender to God without ego.

Fable 104: Devotion to God with love is better than that with wisdom

After slaying Kansa, Lord Krishna first releases his parents, Vasudeo and Devaki and then hands over the kingdom of Mathura to Ugrasen, father of Kansa. Ugrasen, however, insists that Lord Krishna be the real king and that Ugrasen himself shall be so only for namesake. Lord Krishna, therefore, stays back at Mathura in a palace.

Lord Krishna gets all the comforts in the palace as a great king would get. However, everyday evening Lord Krishna goes on the terrace of the palace and stands with a sad face and looks towards Gokul. Udhav, his personal secretary who was a man with all the wisdom, one day dared to ask Lord Krishna: “O Lord Krishna! Can you tell me the reason as to why you come to the terrace everyday evening and look towards Gokul with all sadness on your face?”

Lord Krishna said: “You are the only person who is asking me why I am unhappy in Mathura. “Udhav! I remember my mother Yashodaji, who fed me daily by keeping me on her lap with all love and affection. Udhav! I remember my father Nandababa who used to take me along with him for grazing cows. Udhav! I remember my childhood friends who used to come to me early in the morning to play. Udhav! I remember all the milk maids (Gopis) who used to always love me and invite me to their residence to have butter. Udhav! I remember my cows. Udhav! When I jumped into the river Yamuna to kill the king snake, everyone gathered there wept like children. Udhav! You all have made me king here and I have all the comforts, but I am not getting that love and affection which I was getting at Gokul. Udhav what I want is love, not honor or respect. Udhav! I am not able to forget the people of Vrindavan.”

Udhav was a man with wisdom but did not know the importance of devotion with love. The wisdom, which is not achieved by the blessing of any Guru, always brings ego. Udhav (having such a ego) advised Lord Krishna that this was all right when he was young, but now since he is king it does not befit him to recall the past in this manner.

Udhav was not aware to whom he was actually giving advise to. Lord Krishna, therefore, decides to let down the ego of Udhav and suggests him to go to Vrindavan and find out what all these people were doing? Whether they remember him ever?

Udhav said: “I am prepared to go there but will all those uneducated people be able to understand the elements of my wisdom?”

Lord Krishna said: “These people need to be taught some elements of Tatvagnan and no one except you can perform this job”.

Udhav goes to Vrindavan and tells all the milk maids (Gopis): “Your Krishna is now the king of Mathura and I have come with his message for all of you.”

All Gopis said: “Are you a fool? Our Krishna is here and you say he is in Mathura”. We see him in the river, we see him in all trees, and we see him everywhere our vision falls. One Gopi got so excited that she saw Krishna in a tree and gave the tree a hug.

Now Udhav realized his mistake that it is one thing to have wisdom and Tatvagnan, but quite different to recognize the omnipresent Lord Krishna. He had just read in the books that God is omnipresent, but the people here had experienced it.

Udhav then goes to meet Radhaji and requests her to give the knowledge of devotional love. Radhaji takes a flute in her hands and starts singing devotional songs. All Gopis get so emotional that Lord Krishna came from Mathura and sat with all Gopis. Udhav watching Lord Krishna amongst Radhaji and other Gopis is surprised and starts thinking who am I? Where am I? Now his ego disappeared and realized that Lord Krishna is not away from all Gopis, whose devotion to Lord Krishna is full with love and affection and not like people at Mathura.

Fable 105: The “Disappearance of unhappiness” is taken as “achievement of happiness”: a misconception

In the Bhagvad Gita Lord Krishna has stated “unperformed and undiluted, a knower of Brahman, who is established in him, neither rejoices at pleasant experiences nor gets agitated at unpleasant ones”.

There is nothing in this world, which can give you permanent happiness. Any material thing, any person or any animal, which you like at one place and at one time the same thing you will dislike at another place or another time. As long as you do not get something you have an attraction. E.g. the first few years of your married life your joy has no limits but as time passes your joy starts withering.

While taking your dinner you feel satisfied and happy while eating first sweet ball. But when you eat the second and third sweet ball your happiness is lesser. If someone still insists that you have another sweet ball you will have tears in your eyes and pushed further you may feel like vomiting. Now think: you are the same person, you have the same sweet ball but your happiness goes on changing. Then what is the use of such temporary happiness? That is exactly why knower of Brahmin remains unperturbed in all circumstances. They say how can one rely on such happiness that comes and goes at any time. It is only internal peace, which is permanent.

There was a family where a first son was born and they invited entire village for dinner because their hunger for a child had partially disappeared. When they got a second son, they invited only close relatives. With the birth of the third son they did not invite any one because the father created a new worry of the responsibility of all children. Now how to rely on happiness?

In this world no matter how much effort you make and how much you earn you will never be satisfied. There would always be some unfulfilled desire. While God being perfect, whenever you achieve Him you will achieve full satisfaction.

Fable 106: One should not be proud of his/her looks

Our body below our skin is full with blood, bones, flesh, urine and feces. Never, therefore, judge anyone by the surface. If you think about the skin you are deciding your next birth as a shoemaker. A sage would never look at the body but at the creator of the body. What are important are the virtue, culture and knowledge of a person. The example of saint “Ashtavakra” will be quite illustration for this. He was very ugly but very knowledgeable, full with good virtues, quite noble and firm in his thoughts and action.

By seeing the beauty of a body, your mind gets activated and results into unwarranted desires. If you think about the creator of the body your mind will be peaceful. It is better to have a clean and pure mind than a beautiful or handsome body.

On Mahashivratri day Nandbaba has gone for a pilgrimage of Ambikavan along with Yashodaji and Kanaiya. During the night all were sleeping at the bank of river Saraswati when a python came to Nandbaba to swallow him. But just at the touch of Kanaiya’s leg that python died and the python transformed into a living person.

Lord Krishna knew this but still asked: “Who are you”?

The transformed person replied: “In my last birth I was a Brahmin and was very proud of the look of my body. I would laugh when I would see an ugly person. One day I saw one black and ugly saint. His name was “Angira Rushi”. Looking at his ugliness I started laughing so he gave me a curse that since you are laughing at my ugliness you will born as a python in a next birth. But when I expressed my sorrow and apologies for my crime. He said- You will be transformed into a man again at the touch of Lord Krishna”.

After completing a pious deed Nandaba was sleeping and therefore, the python seizing the opportunity come to swallow him. This shows that even after performing a good and noble deed one should remain alert as people start admiring you of your having carried out the noble deed and then the ego in the form of python comes to swallow you.

While sleeping pray to Lord that:

“O God! What ever noble work was done by me today was not done by me but by you only and that is why I offer you the fruits of these karmas to you”.

After doing any such noble work you should think that God made me to do this work and I was just an instrument for it. This is the only way to remain away from ego.

Fable 107: how much eagerness and anxiousness is required to have a vision of God!

A disciple once asked the above question to his Guru. “This is not the subject of words and, therefore, can not be expressed in words”, said the Guru. He further stated “This is the subject of experience and I will explain it you at the proper time”.

After few days both of them went to a river to take a bath. As soon as disciple dove in the water, Guru caught his head and pressed it in the water. As he was not able to breathe-, he started moving his hands and legs and tried to come out quickly. The guru then released him immediately and the disciple said: “Guruji! I thought I would die if you did not relieve me soon”. The Guru said: “You have now have the reply to your question. As eager and anxious you were for a breath of air, the same eagerness and anxiousness you need to have for the vision of God!

- (i) There was an old man staying at a remote place in Gujarat. He had a long cherished desire to go for pilgrimage to Badri-Kedarnath to have a vision of God. Accordingly, one day he started for this pilgrimage. Though he was very old, he had tremendous will power and desire to have a vision of God. He could reach Badrinath with great difficulty. However, due to some problem while traveling he was slightly delayed in reaching Badrinath. Due to unfavorable climatic condition and due to the heavy snowfall it is a practice to close down these temples for a certain period of (say) 6 months.

The old man was just a few yards away from the temple when the attendants (Pujaris) of the temple who were young boys met this old man and said: “Dada! Now the temple is closed for 6 months. You should come after six months when the temple will reopen”.

Dadaji requested: “My friends! I am an old man. I come from a far off place to have a vision of God and to offer some money at the feet of the Lord from my life long savings. If you can open the temple just for a few minutes, I shall be very obliged to you”.

The temple attendants (Pujaris) however, could not understand the feeling of this old man and said, “Sorry we can not open the temple now. You have to come after 6 months.”

The old man said: “What! 6 months, I cannot wait even for a second. I will go up right now and have a mental vision of the Lord from outside and place my offering at the entrance”. Saying thus,

the old man proceeded towards temple and those attendants (Pujaris) started climbing down. By the time this old man had reached the temple, one “Sadhu” with a long beard and saffron color dress met this old man and said: “Babuji! It has now become dark and it is not desirable to climb down; let us stay here overnight. We shall have religious discourses, chant some Bhajans and play some games. By the time the sun will rise and we shall climb down. An old man agreed and said: “O.K. Sadhu Maharaj! As you say.” Both of them had some religious discussions, chanting of devotional songs and played some games. By the time it was morning and the Sadhu Maharaj said: “I am now going Babuji” and disappeared soon.

The old man took his way for going down from the same way he had climbed up. Hardly he had walked some distance and he met the same temple attendants (Pujaris) practically at the same place they had earlier met. The temple attendants (Pundits) thinking that this old man has come again said: “Dadaji come on now six months are over. We shall open the doors of the temple and you can have a vision of the Lord”. The old man immediately realized that the Sadhu Maharaj who played with him, chanted devotional songs etc. for a so-called period of six months was nobody but the Lord himself! The Lord in the form of the “Sadhu Maharaj” did not allow him to realize that six long months had passed in one night.

When he told this entire story to than temple attendants (Pujaris), they too were surprised and said. “Dadaji! We are sorry, we did not allow you to have a vision of the Lord, and so the Lord himself came to you and gave the vision not for a minute but for six long months. How lucky you are!” The old man who was so eager and anxious to have a vision of the Lord that he could not wait ever for a second and came to the temple whose doors were closed. The Lord therefore, came himself to his true devotee to give him the vision not for a minute but for a period of six months. This is the eagerness needed to have a vision of the Lord.

Fable 108: At last what?

With the advance of science and technology, there is a continuous flow of various items of luxury and there is also a heavy rush by the people to purchase such luxurious items. Right from the birth of a child there are a number of toys like a dancing monkey, a roaring lion, an elephant or a moving crocodile etc. that are just dumped around the child probably so that he has a vision of his previous birth! No, it cannot be for this, it may be just out of love and affection. What I want to say is that from the childhood days itself the child is tempted or taught to run after this material world.

As the child grows to 7/8 years age the parents take them to a cinema house to show him movies that are probably not worth showing him. They take him to a restaurant to taste food, which is not worth eating by the children. They admit them to a school where there is not a lesson even to give a good culture to the students.

When the boy crosses his adolescent age, he starts visiting beer bars and dancing clubs. I have come across families where daughters come the house late after midnight and parents are not able to ask them a single question as to why they are coming so late? And where they were? Yes, naturally how they can ask? Because they themselves have shown such bars and dancing clubs and they too have visited such clubs.

When they have thus completed their study, they have multiple affairs. Then they get married and here the race of running after wealth starts. It may be due to social competition or the environment under which they have grown up. Their run towards wealth is just like a thirsty persons run in the desert after the oasis. Just as the thirsty person never reaches the oasis to satisfy his thirst, people running after material wealth are never able to satisfy their desire to earn wealth. If they have one car, they will purchase 2nd car, they have one bungalow /apartment they will purchase 2nd one and thus the rat race continues. But their running is quite in opposite direction. They have taken human birth to run say in north but they run in south. What they need to do the most, they do the least. Thus they forget God! God, who has given this human birth that, is considered very precious, as this is the only birth in which you are able to pray to God. Otherwise, all other activities like sleeping, eating and mating are done by other creatures also.

When they forget God, people adopt the unrighteous path in the lust of wealth, woman and wine, which result into increase in the number of antisocial elements in the society, and there is total chaos in this society, which we experience today.

People start fighting for a piece of land or property (wealth); young boys start fighting for a common girl friend (women). The people from the so-called high society, under the influence of alcohol, fight for wealth or women

The classic illustration for this is the Mahabharata war, which was fought for a piece of land. The war with Ravan was fought to get back Sitaji. Hitler started the war for a piece of land. Japan fought for a piece of land. India is fighting with Pakistan for a piece of land.

What is the result? The death of millions of people. Duryodhan who was the main culprit for the Mahabharat war died without taking with him even a fist of earth from the land for which he was fighting. Ravan who caught Sitaji and brought her to his palace, ultimately died even without having glimpse of Sitaji. Hitler committed suicide without taking even a fist of earth with him. Dhritrashtra who was the main force behind the Mahabharata war ultimately decided to leave this martial world and retire to the forest for prayer and worship to God. But alas! It was too late. Gandharvi and Kunti who had also accompanied him in the forest died within 3 to 4 days after coming in the forest due to huge fire in the forest. On the other side all the five Pandav brothers along with Draupadi die on their way to the Himalayas. Only Yudhistir (Dharmaraj) is able to reach the heaven. Japanese surrendered after getting millions of people killed in the nuclear war. What did they achieve finally?

Emperor Sikander after invading so many countries and becoming the supreme power gave an order to his family members that when he dies both his hands should be kept out of the coffin with his fists open to show the people that “I had come into this world empty handed and also leave empty handed”.

When the person dies he is not able carry with him even a single car or a sofa set or ball pen or even a needle. There is a nice story illustrating this-

There was a king who had number of queens, sons, grandsons and grand daughters. He had become very old but still had a lust for material world. When the messengers of Yamraj came to take over his soul, he requests Yamraj: “My Lord! Please allow me to live still some more time, as I have still not enjoyed my life fully. Please at least give me 6 months extension.” Yamraj said, “O.K. I am giving

you a six-month extension but with one condition that when you come here please bring a small needle for me to enable me to stitch my kurta, which is torn for quite a long time. Thus he was just taking his last breath and spread his hand to his relations who had gathered there saying, “Needle please. Needle please”. The relatives immediately brought the needle and put it in his hand.

The king then takes his last breath. His body is taken for cremation and placed on the pyre, which is lifted by his son. Next day his sons come to the cremation ground to collect the bones (which we say Ashti flower). They are searching for such flower but surprisingly they found that needle shining in the heap of ash. The moral of this story is that when a person dies he is not able to take along with him even a needle.

Then what goes along with the Jivatma? Only the culture, pious works done, if any, spiritual knowledge gathered, if any, and bundle of sins accumulated, if any. It is said that all the knowledge achieved in this birth remains here only- may be medical, engineering, scientific or political. Only spiritual knowledge and good culture go along with Jivatma. In the next birth he has not to start from scratch for this spiritual knowledge but he has to begin from where he had left.

There are very few persons like Shankaracharya, Gautam Buddha, Swami Vivekanand, Sant Tukaram, Meerabai, Narsinh Mehta, Eknath, Vinobabhave could remain away from the lust of this material world and got them liberated from the cycle of birth and death. Otherwise for ordinary persons like us- at last what? Simply death and nothing else.