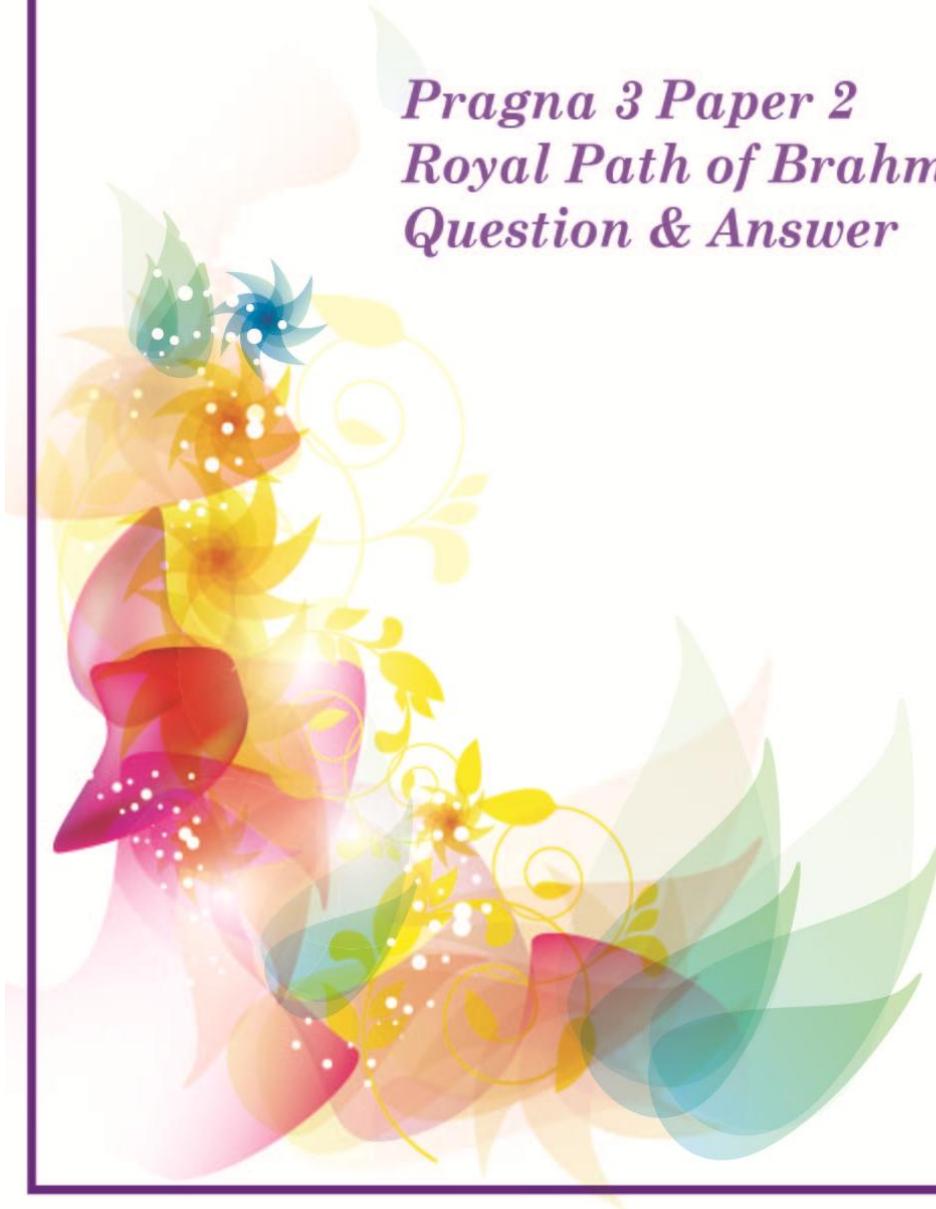


Satsang Exam



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Pragna 3 Paper 2 Royal Path of Brahavidya Question & Answer



Humble Offering

With the divine inspiration of our Guruhari Pramukh Swami, we have created a reference guide for Pragna Satsang Exam students in English. This effort has been made successful due to the efforts of BAPS National Karyalay leads, UK Satsang Mandal and fellow volunteers, who have offered their precious time to do translations. Translations are done using reference of Swamini Vaato, Vachanamrut and other Satsang Exam syllabus books. We sincerely wish that our compiled reading material is of significant help to Satsang Exam students; who will work hard to earn Param Pujya Pramukh Swami Maharaj's rajipo and strengthen their understanding of Bhagwan Swaminarayan's, Swamishri's and the Sanstha's mahima. We kindly request feedback from Satsang Exam reference users to further improve the content. Please convey your feedback to the satsang exam lead in your center.

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Select correct options

Please mark next to correct answers from the options given (Total marks 6)

Note: There could be more than one options that can be correct for each question. You will only get credit for getting all of them correct.

July 2015

1. Solutions to eradicate desires and swabhavs

- To check one's own self through introspection
- To firmly decide on eradicating desires
- To do bhakti through mahima and understanding
- To keep self-interest for kalyan from Bhagwan and Sant

2. Satpurush prasang according to Gunatitanand Swami's vato

- Internally, I have kept distance of thousand miles to them
- only act per Satpurush's agna
- always sing glory of Bahgwan
- never let effect of being atheistic with your faith in Bhagwan

3. Sadhna through Actions

- Sacrifice Kusang
- Do Satsang sometimes only
- Do Satsang daily
- Kusang in Satsang

Answers:

1.2,4 (19-21)

2.1,3 (37)

3.1,3 (6)

March 2015

1. Insistence to stay cautions

- One is very cautious about one's own work and actions
- One only acts according to one's own dharma cautiously
- One only acts according to one's described niyams cautiously
- One is very cautious about serving santos

2. Loss due to lack of detachment (Vairagya)

- One cannot achieve priti and Aatmanishta
- Without knowledge, there is no glory of bhakti
- Without Dharma, there is no glory of bhakti
- Without Vairagya, there is no glory of bhakti

3. True sense of faith in Unity (Sampnishta): Suradbhav

- One stays hungry, but takes care of everyone, donates money to others
- One stays hungry, but feeds others and gives clothes in donations
- Looks at only good things in others.
- does not ever look at others' faults

Answers:

- 1.1,3 (127)
- 2.1,4 (101)
- 3.2,3 (112)

July 2014

1. Success of Swaminarayan Sadhna

- 1. Develop understanding of Aatma-Paramatma
- 2. Maya is not able to interfere
- 3. Develop ability to stay strong and stable even in worldly disturbance
- 4. Bhagwan and Satpurush takes one to Akshardham at the end of life

2. True sense and necessity of Swadharmanishta

- When one completely imbibes detachment, love towards world lessens
- When Bhakti comes, roots of desires get eradicated
- When one develops ekantik bhakti through mahima, one's mind gets detached from good taste and greed
- When one completely imbibes Dharma in life, then only ego is eradicated

3. Sadhna by Parbrahma Purushottam Narayan himself

- Bhagwan is all doer and sarvopari
- Bhagwan knows everything and sees through everything
- Only upasna through one's own dharma (swadharma) is proper
- Bhagwan accepts seva from all devotees

Answers:

- 2,4 (19-21)
- 1,3 (37)
- 1,2(6)

March 2014

1. Doubtless and true Sadhna

- developing that very samjan will ensure we understand Aatma-Paramatma (Sarangpur 4)
- Poor and weak understanding is does not bring happiness (Sarangpur 4)
- Will receive blessings from God and will achieve atyantik moksha (Sarangpur 11)
- Even after million years, you will still have to develop this understanding (G-II-21)

2. Moksha by only understanding the true form (Swarupnishta)

- Even if God wishes well for him, it does not do him well (G-II-72)
- Without Bhakti in life, one cannot achieve success (G--56)
- You will not have to worry about anything else (G-II-13)
- Only by performing Bhakti, one can achieve Moksha (Swamini Vaat 1/307)

3. Loss due to not having understanding oneself as Aatma (Aatmanishta)

- One loses patients due to being engrossed in desires (G-I-61)
- Without Sant samagam, one loses his wisdom (G-III-1)
- Without Aatmanishta, one loses his wisdom (G-III-1)
- Due to being engaged in panch-vishays, one loses patience (G-I-61)

Answers:

2,3 (9)

1,3 (33)

1,3(89)

July 2013

1. The essence of all scriptures- Sadhna

- Dislike towards five senses
- I swear on all the Brahmins
- These talks support everyone's life
- Even in my dreams, I do not let worldly desires take over my mind

2. Insistence to stay cautions

- Less cautions you are, more crying you will do
- More careless you are, more crying you will do
- If you are careless, more faults you will have
- Less cautious you are, more faults you will have

3. Which Sankalps should be firm and strong?

- Now we only have to reach Akshardham
- Want to be very detached from this world
- Want to attain the understanding of Aatma-Paramatma
- Want to attain moksha and reach Akshardham

Answers:

1,4 (4)

2,3 (126)

1,4 (27)

March 2013

1. Shreeji Maharaj's purpose to do Kalyan of all Jivs- Shreeharicharitamrutsagar

- I want to make those pure who have accepted my shelter
- I want to make those knowledgeable who have accepted my shelter
- To give moksha to all is my purpose
- I want to make all devotees Brahamarup

2. Ideal and the best example of Sadhna: Gunatit Satpurush

- Guide, teacher and helper
- Teaches sadhak to do proper sadhna
- Brings difficulties to sadhak's sadhna path
- HIs life inspires effectively

3. Insistence for Unity

- Suradpanu is my life
- We must keep Samp, Suradbhav, Ekta
- Until we have imbibed Suradbhav, there are problems till Prakurtipurush
- Until we have imbibed Suradbhav, Maya is heavy on us

Answers:

- 1,3,4 (7)
- 1,2,4 (18)
- 1,2,4 (119)

July 2012

1. Solutions to keep Unity by P. Pramukhswami Maharaj

- Tolerate
- Let go of your swabhavs
- To help others
- Let go of what your mind wants/control mind

2. Benefits of Agna- Anuvrutti

- Eradicate swabhavs, imbibe good qualities and become Brahamarup
- To obtain Aishwarya
- Earn rajipo from Bhagwan and Satpurush
- Bhagwan and Satpurush show love towards devotee

3. Thoughtful Sadhna

- Thought of pleasing
- Thought of Aatma
- Thought of Tap
- Thought of Sankhya

Answers:

- 1,2,3,4 (122)
- 1,3,4 (45)
- 1,2,4 (186-187)

Exercise

1. Sadhna by Parbrahma Purushottam Narayan himself v b

- Shreeji Maharaj is supreme of all Avatars
- Shreeji Maharaj is the reason of all reasons
- He is Aanadi Mukta
- He is all doer

2. Success of Sadhna

- Strong faith towards goal (Dheynishta)
- Strong faith towards form (Swarupnishta)
- Strong faith towards group (Sanghnishta)
- Cautiousness

3. Loss due to lack of bhakti through listening (Shravanbhakti)

- A great loss to our body without listening to discourses
- without these discourses, kalyan is not possible
- Without these discourses, one cannot achieve "Parbhav"
- Satsang for this Jiv is not possible

4. Nirdoshbudhdhi per Yogiji Maharaj

1. Nirdoshbudhdhi is true Para bhakti
2. No other seva like Nirdoshbudhdhi
3. No other bhakti like Nirdoshbudhdhi
4. Nirdoshbudhdhi is true Bhakti

5. Shreeji Maharaj's discourses per his own experience

1. G-III-13
2. G-III-39
3. G-II-50
4. G-I-28

6. Nurture of Bhagwat Dharma

1. one's dharma (swadharma)
2. Knowledge (gnan)
3. detachment (vairagya)
4. Bhakti with Mahima

7. Solution for doing bhakti with mahima

1. Tap-Vairagya
2. Company of sadhu such as Shuk-Sankadik
3. Company of enlightened Purush
4. Niyam-Dharma

8. Types of Kusang

- external kusang
- kusung in Satsang
- Internal kusang
- kusang in behavior

9. Benefits of Sevabhakti

1. Increase of money
2. Increase of Dharma
3. Increase of bad swabhavas
4. Attain moksha

10. According to G-I-48, there are 4 types of kusangi

1. Kunda Panthi
2. Shaiv Panthi
3. Pure Vedanttti
4. Aesthetic (Nastic)

11. Solutions to keep unity by Swamishree

1. let go your Swabhavs
2. to help others
3. to tolerate
4. let go of what your mind wants/control mind

12. Examples that show how to do Satpurush's Prasang

1. Oil-water
2. Milk-Sugar
3. Kathy Val
4. beads of rosary

13. Ideal times for Mansi Puja

1. rajbhog
2. Sandhya
3. Madhyan
4. Prath

14. External kusang

1. bad friends
2. those who consider Satpurush as ordinary sadhu
3. TV
4. Good Sadhu- creates issues among devotees

15. Number of Vachnamruts read by one devotee in front of Gunatitanand Swami

1. G-II-23
2. Ahmedabad- 3

- 3. G-I-30
- 4. G-II-45

16. Swaminarayan Sadhna

- 1. Created and followed by Bhagwan Swaminarayan
- 2. Imbibed by Gunatit gurus
- 3. Spoken by Nar-Narayan Dev to Naradji
- 4. followed and spread by Nirgun Swami

17. Amazing power of Sankalpnishta

- 1. Sankalp means desire to do or feeling
- 2. Clear understanding of goal and strong faith
- 3. Achieve predicted results
- 4. Achieve great success

18. Benefits of keeping strong faith in Aatma (Aatmanishtha)

- 1. One with dharma fearless of death
- 2. does not develop faith anywhere else
- 3. develops faith anywhere else
- 4. keeps patience even due to other worldly desires

19. Shreeji Maharaj's heartfelt principals

- 1. all the unhappiness is due to Karanbhav
- 2. all the unhappiness is due to Dehbhav
- 3. Aatma is untouched by other things
- 4. Body is untouched by other things

20. Benefits of keeping strong faith in Aatma (Aatmanishtha)

- 1. No manushyabhav towards anyone
- 2. No manushyabhav towards Bhagwan
- 3. Feel fulfilled and satisfied
- 4. Believe to be ekantik

21. Sadhna through Actions

- 1. Sacrifice Kusang
- 2. Do Satsang sometimes only
- 3. Do Satsang daily
- 4. Kusang in Satsang

Short Q & A

July 2015

- 1. What does atmavichar mean?**
 - Believing the Satpurush, in whom God resides in totality, to be one's own atma is atmavichar. (pg 132)
 - 2. According to SNV 8.248, what harm is caused by kusang?**
 - If one maund of opium is mixed into a hundred maunds of sugar, then that sugar will taste bitter, likewise, encountering the slightest bad company can pollute a satsangi. (pg 178)
 - 3. In which Vachamruts, Maharaj has explained the need for maintaining satatya in prayers?**
 - In vachamrut G I 48 and P 3 Maharaj has explained the need for maintaining satatya in prayers (pg 251)
 - 4. 'Dasna das thaine, vali rahe chhe satsangma...' is written in which scripture?**
 - 'Dasna das thaine, vali rahe chhe satsangma...' is written in Bhakta Chintamani. (pg 95)
 - 5. According to G II 10, what is the disadvantage of not having Bhakti?**
 - Without Bhakti one cannot understand that God has a form. (pg 49)
-

March 2015

- 1. Which four elements are essential to imbibe in life?**
 - Dharma, gnan, vairagya and bhakti are four elements which are essential to imbibe in life. (pg 46)
 - 2. What is Shriji Maharaj's primary agna?**
 - "Nijatmanam brahmarupam" is Shriji Maharaj's primary agna (pg 130)
 - 3. According to Pramukh Swami Maharaj, what does atmavichar mean?**
 - Believing the Satpurush, in whom God resides in totality, to be one's own atma is atmavichar. (pg 132)
 - 4. What did Shriji Maharaj said in G I 63, 72; P4 for means to strengthening divinity? (pg 56)**
 - As a means to strength divinity, Shriji Maharaj has said to have conviction of their [God and his Sadhu] true form, understand the reason for their human incarnation and have clarity in why God takes on human attributes.
 - 5. According to SNV 12.78 what loss is incurred without spiritual discourse? (pg 74)**
 - Without spiritual discourse, deficiency will remain in the jiva.
-

July 2014

- 1. Our birth is for accomplishing what two aims?**
 - Our birth is for accomplishing two aims, one is to become aksharup and second is to become attached to God. (pg 30)
- 2. Satsang can be spread by what three means?**
 - Satsang can be spread by three means: unity, fraternity and oneness. (pg 160)
- 3. According to G II 10, what tendency do people tend to have?**

- All people have a tendency such that on seeing an enticing object, their affection for any object that is not enticing will naturally diminish. (pg 139-140)
4. **What is the greatest and most steadfast means to eradicate one's worldly desires?**
 - Bhakti coupled with the knowledge of his greatness is the greatest and most steadfast means to eradicate one's worldly desires. (pg 103)
 5. **According to G III 5, how can one to develop bhakti coupled with knowledge of God's greatness?**
 - Bhakti coupled with the knowledge of God's greatness arises in one's heart by serving and profoundly associating with eminent sadhus like Shukji and Sanakadik. (pg 103)

March 2014

1. **How many types of agna are there? Which ones?**
 - There are two types of agna: 1] Nitya agna and 2] Naimittik agna.
2. **According to Yogiji Maharaj, when can Satsang taste as sweet as Kesar mango?**
 - According to Yogiji Maharaj if one is untouched by the sour taste of fault-finding, then the bliss of satsang tastes as sweet as Kesar mango.
3. **According to V 11 what is the means to strengthen divinity?**
 - According to V11 having intense love and attachment for God and the Gunatit Sant is the means to strengthen divinity.
4. **On what basis should one think about the glory of our attainment?**
 - On the basis of Extra-ordinary Tasks
 - On the basis of Liberating Virtues
 - On the basis of their Form
 - On the basis of Being rare to Attain
5. **How did Shriji Maharaj define vairagya in Shikshapatri?**
 - Vairagya is non-attachment to all objects other than Shri Krishna.

July 2013

1. **According to G III 39, What guidance does Shriji Maharaj give on how to offer love to God?**
 - Eradicate mundane attachments and love with a pure heart. (pg 68)
2. **Which is the hardest of the hardest sadhana?**
 - To constantly focus one's mind on the form of God is the hardest of the hardest sadhana.
3. **According to Gunatitanand Swami what is disservice?**
 - According to Gunatitanand Swami, to perceive faults in others is disservice.
4. **Without what thoughts Satsang is said to be half complete?**
 - Satsang is said to be only half complete without sankhya thoughts.
5. **According to G I 8 and G I 18 what loss is suffered by an aspirant due to non-observance of Dharma?**
 - According to G I 8 and G I 18, Antahkaran becomes polluted due to non-observance of dharma.

March 2013

1. **According to P 1, Which resolve does Shriji Maharaj talks about firmly imbibing?**
 - Now we want to reach only the abode of God; we do not want to be tempted by the vain pleasures of the panchvishayas along the way'. (pg 31)
2. **According to Shrihari Charitamrut Sagar, which eight parts of the body should a devotee use to bow down to God?**
 - According to Shrihari Charitamrut Sagar, devotee should bow down to God using—legs, hands, knees, head, chest, eyes, mind and speech.(pg 93)
3. **According to Yogiji Maharaj, what is brahmabhav? (pg 59)**
 - According to Yogiji Maharaj, brahmabhav is not to lapse in obeying any agna, small or big.
4. **According to K 10, why should one perform austerities?**
 - According to K 10, performing austerities earns God's pleasure.
5. **In L 18 what has Shriji Maharaj commanded for Satatya?**
 - In L18, Shriji Maharaj has commanded that one should discuss this principle of mine routinely, at least once a day—this is my command. (pg 245)

July 2012

1. **According to G I 33, among the innumerable spiritual endeavours to please God, which one is so powerful that it alone earns as much pleasure of God as is earned by performing all spiritual endeavours combined? (pg 12-13)**
 - Accepting the firm refuge of God is the single, greatest endeavour amongst all spiritual endeavours for pleasing God. (pg 13)
2. **Write two characteristics of one who has love towards God (pg 68)**
 - (1) Constantly remembers God, (2) Does what God wishes; does not disobey his agna, (3) Does not perceive faults in God; believes him to be totally divine, (4) Has no affection for worldly objects
3. **Our birth is for accomplishing what two aims?**
 - Our birth is for accomplishing two aims, one is to become aksharrup and second is to become attached to God. (pg 30)
4. **In G II 33, what does Shriji Maharaj swear by the lives of paramhansas?**
 - "From the day I was born to this very day, I have never harboured an improper thought regarding women or wealth, either in the waking state or in the dream state." (pg 4)
5. **All four virtues are mutually dependent but which virtue is predominant over the other three? (pg 48)**
 - All four virtues – dharma, jnan, vairagya and bhakti – are mutually dependent, but that devotion to God is predominant over the other three.

Exercise

1. What does Gunatitanand Swami say in SNV 2.133 about prohibition of avgun?
2. What are the four methods to develop firm atmanishtha?
3. How many types of archanam bhakti are there? Which ones?
4. What does Shriji Maharaj mention about doubtless and unfailing sadhana in G II 21?
5. Why doesn't Shriji Maharaj like even one who is as virtuous as Naradji?
6. What are the two main types of manushyabhav ?
7. Why can't one become brahmarup even by having faith in Satpurush?
8. What two factor leads to breaking of satatya?
9. Ekantik dharma is attained through what type of satpurush?
10. Instead of the term Satatya, what words has Shriji Maharaj used in Vachanmrut?
11. Daspanu is cultivated by what understanding?
12. What does Shriji Maharaj say about seva in Vachanamrut G II 59?
13. What are the three exmples which the author use to descried the drawbacks without samp?
14. What plays a major role in perceiving human traits in God and Sant?
15. One may be as bright as a full moon, but if one highlights flaws of devotees, how does one become?
16. What is Shravan Bhakti?
17. What is the definition of Samp-suhrudbhav-ekta collectively ?
18. According to Yogiji Maharaj, how should one live with the satpurush?
19. What are the five 'M' of Samp?
20. Out of the four pillars of Ekantik Dharma, what does jnan signify or mean?
21. Without Atmanishtha what deficiency does Shriji Maharaj say in G I 20?
22. What three thoughts should one must be firm in relation to the teachings of sankhya?
23. What is premlakshana bhakti?
24. What is the definition of Dharma as described in Shikshapatri by Shriji Maharaj?
25. How many and what are the types of archanam bhakti?
26. By understanding who's true form does the desire to indulge in the world and the panchvishays reduce?
27. According to G II 10, explain the disadvantage of not having God's bhakti.

Topic heading of the reference

March 2016

1. **“Detachment is an axe to remove attachment.”**
Answer: Necessity of Vairagya
 2. **“Would a car work if all the parts of a car did not perform in unison; would the car work if there were mutual divisions?”**
Answer: Drawbacks without samp
 3. **“If his Ishtdev were to give a command that would force him to stay far away, he would stay there happily.”**
Answer: Qualities of devotee with Dasatva bhakti
 4. **“By thinking about the defects of a devotee of God, the jiva is defiled.”**
Answer: Loss due to abhav, avgun and droh
 5. **“Gunatitanand Swami says: “The senses and inner faculties are all bad company.”**
Answer: Inner Kusang
 6. **“Never allow any lapse in the observance of non-egotism and other vows.”**
Answer: Satatya in dharma
-

July 2015

1. **"What is the worst of all? The one who attributes human traits to this Sadhu - there is nothing worse than this."**
Answer: Drawbacks of Attributing Manushyabhav
 2. **"For a person who has attained satsang, realization of his jivatma does, indeed, lie in his own hands."**
Answer: Association with the Gunatit Satpurush
 3. **"God's abode cannot be obtained even after tens of millions of years, but is attained by merely folding one's hands to such a God0realized Sadhu."**
Answer: Powerful and accessible sadhna
 4. **"If one does not have such conviction then even a great renunciant will falter from his liberation."**
Answer: Only sadhanas do not lead to ultimate liberation – Renunciation
 5. **"To do as the Sadhu says is best. To do as per one's own wish is worst."**
Answer: Benefits of Following Agna-Anuvrutti
-

March 2015

1. **“You will experience bliss, peace and happiness.”**
Answer: Benefits of Dharma
2. **“One should always be wary of such kusang and one’s inner enemies.”**
Answer: Satatya in Savdhani
3. **“If human faults are perceived in Bhagwan, then one will not attain liberation.”**
Answer: Drawbacks of attributing Manushyabhav
4. **“A devotee of God would perform mental worship of God daily.”**
Answer: Mansi Puja
5. **“The mind of a devotee who has such loving devotion becomes so bound to God that God is unable to free Himself from him.”**
Answer: Atmanivedi Bhakti

July 2014

1. **“Dharmo gneyaha sadacharaha shrutismrutypaditaha.”**
Answer: Significance of Dharma
2. **“This is the very essence of all of the shastras, i.e. the Vedas, the shastras, the Purans, the Itihas, etc.**
Answer: Sadhnas which are the essence of all shastras
3. **“If one does not bear an aversion towards the Sant, one develops profound love for the Satsang fellowship.”**
Answer: Benefits gained by not taking abhav avgun
4. **“Therefore, intense love for the Satpurush is the only means to realizing one's *atma***
Answer: Need for the gunatit Satpurush
5. **“Those who are complacent will be adversely affected by time and place.”**
Answer: Remain very vigilant

March 2014

1. **I have delivered this discourse having experienced it directly myself.**
Answer: Authentic spiritual sadhana based on personal experiences
2. **One destined to become enlightened in this very birth, will have to take a hundred births if he keeps improper company.**
Answer: Harm caused by kusang within satsang
3. **Serving a sadhu in need is superior to the manifest experience of the *murti* of God in meditation.**
Answer: Importance and necessity of seva

4. **You will be disgraced if you are complacent.**

Answer: Remain very vigilant

5. **"If ever you perceive human attributes in the manifest Satpurush, then know that your boat which has reached the shore, has sunk (i.e. final *moksha* has not been attained)"**

Answer: Drawbacks of Attributing Manushyabhav

July 2013

1. **If one believes God to be above maya , then one will also become above maya.**

Answer: Advantages of Perceiving Total Divinity

2. **"Firm conviction in God is the reason for liberation."**

Answer: Liberation only through Swarupnishtha

3. **"Our *jivash* have previously indulged in the *panchvishays* through countless bodies, as deities, humans, etc."**

Answer: No fulfillment from the indulgence in the panchvishays

4. **And by chanting the Swaminarayan mantra while moving around, or walking, sins are absolved**

Answer: Benefits of kirtan bhakti

5. **Two people with the same inclination are equal to thousands and hundreds of thousands**

Answer: Benefits of Samp

March 2013

1. **Detachment cultivates enmity towards material pleasures**

Answer: Necessity of Vairagya

2. **Even if basal nature like lust is eradicated from root, one must not deter from *niyam-dharma*.**

Answer: Consistency in Dharma

3. **Devotion is to utilize human body per the wish of God.**

Answer: Significance of Bhakti and its types

4. **The more complacent you are, the more you will suffer.**

Answer: Remain very vigilant.

July 2012

1. **"Not seeing flaws in the great Sadhu is like having performed ten million pilgrimages."**

Answer: Benefits of not perceiving faults

2. **Maintaining profound love towards such a Sant also opens the gateway to liberation."**

Answer: Need for the gunatit Satpurush

3. **Maharaj and the other incarnations to be alike, believing the ekantik Sadhu and the ordinary sadhu to be the same**

Answer: Identifying kusang within satsang

4. **"By preserving fidelity [in bhakti], one will go straight to Akshardham."**

Answer: Fidelity in bhakti

Exercise

1. "Vadu ver valvane kaj, sabada e sahu thaya, mota motani levane laj, take chhe teha rahya."
2. "By preserving fidelity [in bhakti], one will go straight to Akshardham."
3. "One constantly remains in contact with sadhus."
4. "Listening to this sadhu's talks destroys the sins of the ears; and engaging in his darshan destroys the sins of the eyes."
5. "Devotion does not shine in one who does not possess vairagya."
6. "That there is happiness in worldly objects has not been stated by any of the great."
7. "One should feel deep restlessness, regret or grief for making a mistake."
8. "You must maintain mutual unity and friendship. Even if the other doesn't keep, we should."
9. "Human traits are seen in God and his Sadhu due to our swabhavs and attachment to the panchvishays."
10. "His love is especially on us. That is why he himself came down to earth for us."
11. "Staunchness in observing niyam-dharma can be maintained by shunning the company of anyone who discourages observance of niyam-dharma."
12. "Devotion does not shine in one who does not possess *vai- ragya*"
13. "Listening to this Sadhus' talks destroys the sins of the ears; and engaging in his darshan destroys the sins of the eyes."
14. Engage in Sankhya thoughts on a regular, daily basis as a rule (SNV1.279).
15. "Even by spoiling ten million tasks improve your *moksha*. In case ten million tasks are improved, but *moksha* is spoiled, what is achieved?"
16. "If one does not have such conviction then even a great renunciant will falter from his liberation."
17. "Such bhakti is itself the highest state of enlightenment. It is this type of bhakti that is greater than jnan and vairagya."

Brief note on the topic

Write the main points on the following. (In 15 lines.) [10]

July 2015

1. The Art of Listening to Spiritual Discourses (76-78)

Listening to spiritual discourses is an art. Playing the table and harmonium, drawing sketches or making sculptures, are all example of art. As with any art, regular study and practice is required to improve and master the art of listening to spiritual discourses. Following the guidelines below will help to master the art of listening to spiritual discourses. (1) Listening to Katha with Concentration: Sometimes, although we are physically present in katha, our mind wanders elsewhere, engaging in other thoughts. Consequently, this lack of concentration prevents us from understanding and remembering the messages relayed in the katha. Thus, it is vital to listen to katha with utmost concentration. (2) Manan and Nididhyas: Having heard the katha, to mentally ponder over it, remove that art of the katha which is fit to be removed to retain the portion which is to be retained is known as manan, or contemplation. Manan after listening to katha is extremely important. It includes thinking about where, how, when and why to apply which talk. The practice of continuously recalling the talk day and night is known as Nididhyas. Without manan and Nididhyas after listening to katha, we are unable to experience its fruits. Shriji Maharaj emphasizes this in Vachanamrut S. 3 by saying that even after thousands of years of listening to katha, if a person does not practice manan and Nididhyas he will not reap its fruits. (3) A sincere effort to live according to the words of katha: By simply diving into a well full of nectar you will not become eternal; for that you actually have to put a drop in your mouth. Similarly, to experience the benefits of nectar in the form of listening to katha, practicing manan and Nididhyas, we have to sincerely persevere to imbibe the words of katha in our life. Gunatitanand Swami in his talks has said: “There may be a 100-maund pile of grains outside, but hunger is only satisfied by eating 500 grams from it; similarly, one will experience happiness only when one beholds and acts according to the spiritual talks” (SNV 13.187).

2. Knowledge of Atma and Paramatma (141-143)

Shriji Maharaj has explained in the following Vachanamruts that if true knowledge of the form of atma and Paramatma is developed then one develops vairagya towards worldly pleasures and interest in them ceases. G. I-73: “After, developing knowledge of the atma and thorough jnan of God’s form, one should think, ‘I am the atma, characterized by eternal existence, consciousness and bliss, whereas the body and the brahmand are mayik and perishable. How can they compare to me? Moreover, my Ishtadev is Purushottam Bhagwan, who transcends even Akshar – the supporter of countless millions of brahmands. I have the firm refuge of that God.’ Vairagya cultivate from such thoughts is said to be compounded with jnan. It is this vairagya that is never destroyed. For example, a burning flame is extinguished when water is poured over it. However, the vadvanal fire that is in the ocean cannot be extinguished even by the waters of the ocean itself. Similarly, vairagya compounded with jnan is like the vadvanal fire and the fire of lighting – it is inextinguishable. Without that jnan though, other

forms of vairagya cannot be trusted.” S 1: “One way to defeat the vishays is atma-realization, and the other is the realization of God coupled with the knowledge of atma and Paramatma is such that it eradicates that desires of the pleasures of all vishays.” He has also spoken in a similar manner in other Vachanamruts, such as L. 10, 17, G. III-24, and G. III-39.

3. Knowledge of Sankhya:

How vairagya can be developed through the knowledge of sankhya is explained by Shriji Maharaj in Vachanamrut G. I-24: “A devotee who is resolute in yoga keeps his vrutti constantly fixed in the form of God. A devotee who is resolute in sankhya understands the extent of human pleasures, as well as the extend of the pleasures of the realized yogis, charans, vidyadhars, gandharvas, deities, etc. In addition, he appraises the pleasures of the 14 realms and believes, ‘These pleasures are only so much’; moreover, he also appraised the miseries that subsequently follow these pleasures. AS a result, he develops vairagya towards those misery-filled pleasures, and thereby maintains profound love only for God. So, such a person who is resolute in sankhya possesses the strength of understanding.” Without learning the principles of sankhya, a person cannot turn away from the worldly pleasures. That is why Gunatitanand Swami says: SNV 1.2: “Learn the principles of sankhya. Without learning the teachings of sankhya, faults such as greed, lust, taste, attachment and ego, and the tree miseries – due to adhyatma (mysteries of the mind), adbibhut (physical illnesses) and adhidaiv (natural disaster) – cannot be removed. Without sankhya, satsang is said to be only half complete. Thus, to remain happy learn the principles of sankhya.” SNV 1.279: “Swami talked at length about engaging in the thought of sankhya: Engage in sankhya thoughts on a regular, daily basis as a rule. And satang is said to be only half complete without sankhya thoughts. Without sankhya there is no happiness, since sankhya is like the eyes. With it everything can be seen. Dattatreya practiced sankhya and he knew how to be happy. Therefore, if one slowly practices sankhya, it can be attained. So what is sankhya? That this world and objects of pleasure are all false [perishable]; and the atma is real and unaffected like the sky, and is not influenced by the boy, senses and inner faculties.” SNV 13.228: “If pleasures are negated through sankhya, then no value for them remains whatsoever. To transcend maya, one should believe everything to be perishable with the thoughts of sankhya...it is a must, even if it is done after a hundred years.” Thus, to eradicate the attachment for worldly pleasures, it is necessary to regularly reflect on the principle of sankhya. As mentioned below, one must be firm towards three thoughts in relation to the teaching of the sankhya: 1. The boy and this world are perishable. 2. The panchvishays are worthless, temporary and the cause of misery. 3. There is no fulfillment from indulgence in the panchvishays.

4. Authentic Spiritual Sadhana based on Personal experiences (4-6):

Talks by one without personal experience of spiritual sadhanas may be full of references from shastras, seem logical and have key messages, but are likely to lead one astray and deflect one from the true spiritual path. In fact such talks can jeopardize one’s liberation and result in misery (V. 12). Shriji Maharaj was more than just a knower of the shastras; he had actually accomplished endeavors. He has not simply spoken about the shastras in an intellectual or logical manner, but has imparted teachings distilled from his own experiences. In the Vachanamrut, Shriji Maharaj has narrated: G. I-64: “I have delivered this discourse having experienced it

directly myself. Therefore, there is not a trace of doubt about it.” G. II-13: “Indeed, this principle which I have revealed before you is the very essence of all of the shastras, and it is my own firm experience; I have talked to you having seen it with my very own eyes. In fact, I swear by all of you paramhansas that I have seen these facts with my own eyes.” G. III-39: “I deliver these discourses to you not from any imagination of my mind, nor to display any sort of aptitude. I have experienced all that I have spoken about. In fact, I speak in accordance to what I practice.” Shriji Maharaj’s experience of the sadhanas is genuine and credible, and he further reinforces this truth by taking an oath. Moreover, he affirms that one who engages in such spiritual endeavors will attain the highest spiritual state, by saying in G. II-13: “Whosoever realizes this form will, like me, never be drawn towards that pleasures of the vishays. In fact, you also see this form of God, but you do not comprehend it fully. However, when you come to comprehend this fact, you will encounter any difficulty in subduing the desires for the panchvishays and swabhavs such as lust, anger, etc.; they will be subdued easily.” If hundreds of people have been cured by the medicine prescribed by a medical expert, then we will naturally develop faith in the treatment and medicine he prescribes. Similarly, the medicine in form of spiritual endeavors prescribed by Shriji Maharaj has enabled numerous aspirants to attain the highest spiritual state and transcend the vicious cycle of births and deaths. Thus, there is not the slightest doubt in the teaching imparted by him.

5. Kusang in satsang: internal (Indriyas-antahkaran) kusang (187-188)

This kusang is the most harmful in comparison to the other two types of kusang mentioned. External kusang and kusang within Satsang are physical, whereas internal kusang is subtle. That is why it is a very arduous task to recognize it and be spared from it. The indriyas and antahkaran unite to form this internal kusang. Gunatitanand Swami says: “The senses and inner faculties are all bad company” (SNV 1.10). They both function with each other’s cooperation. The antahkaran cannot function without the support of the senses, and without the cooperation of the antahkaran, the senses cannot connect with the outer pleasures. Hence, both play a part in causing internal kusang. Yet, the mind and intellect play an even greater role in causing internal kusang. Inappropriate, inauspicious and wicked actions of the five cognitive senses (ears, skin, eyes, tongue and nose), five conative organs (speech, hand foot, excretion and procreation) as well as the four antahkaran (man – generates thoughts and desires, buddhi – consolidates thoughts, chitta – repeated contemplation and ahamkar – sense of being/ego), which are prohibited by the shastras, are considered kusang. Gunatitanand Swami has talked about internal kusang: SNV 8.143: “The kusang of the inner faculties is that it cannot hold back thoughts or desires nor refrain from listening or seeing.” SNV 10.106: “Internal kusang is if a husband desires another woman apart from his wife. It is if a sadhu who has forsaken the eight types of associations with a woman, has thoughts of breaking this niyam. It is also to have evil thoughts towards God and his Sadhu and to see the ekantik Sadhu and an ordinary sadhu as the same.” Generally, the following three incorporate the inappropriate acts, or kusang, performed by the senses and antahkaran: 1. Attachment to the panchvishays and base natures such as anger, lust and others. 2. Highlight the negative traits or base natures of fellow sadhus and devotees. 3. Attributing human traits to God and his Sadhu.

1. Devotion with Understanding of God's Greatness (102-103)

Understanding God's incomparable and unique greatness when offering devotion to him is imperative. Shriji Maharaj explains the benefits of understanding the greatness of God and detriments of no understanding it in various Vachanamruts: G. I-78: "If a person thoroughly understands the greatness of the manifest form of Shri Krishna Purushottam then he remains unflinching in the nine types of bhakti towards God, i.e. listening to talks of God, singing devotional songs, etc." V. S-5: "Although one may appear to have intense bhakti, if it is not coupled with the knowledge of God's greatness, it will ultimately be destroyed. "Furthermore, if person has bhakti for God in his heart coupled with the knowledge of God's greatness, then even though he does not possess any other redemptive virtues, they will still develop in his hart. Conversely, if a person does not have bhakti in his heart coupled with the knowledge of God's greatness, then even though he possesses redemptive virtues such as tranquility, self-restraint, etc., they are as good as being absent because they will ultimately be destroyed. Therefore, even if one possesses only bhakti coupled with the knowledge of God's greatness, the worldly desires which one harbors will still be eradicated, and all of the redemptive virtues will develop and reside within one's heart. Therefore, bhakti of God coupled with the knowledge of greatness is the greatness is the greatest and most steadfast means to eradicate one's worldly desires." G. III-5: "One who has bhakti for God coupled with such knowledge of his greatness encounters no obstacles in any form. on the other hand, one who offers bhakti without realizing the greatness of Go, perceiving worldly attributes in him, does encounter obstacles." Thus, understanding God's glory is indispensable for resolute bhakti to overcome any obstacles; in other words, one should offer bhakti coupled with the knowledge of God's greatness.

2. How to Develop Bhakti Coupled with Knowledge of God's Greatness:

In the following Vachanamruts, Shriji Maharaj guides us in how to develop unmatched devotion that is coupled with the immeasurable greatness of God: V-3: "Of the four types of eminent spiritual people just described, if a person serves one who is like lightning or the vadvanal first – by thought, word, and deed, while staying within the tenets of one's dharma – then bhakti coupled with the knowledge of God's greatness develops in the person." G. III-5: "Bhakti coupled with the knowledge of God's greatness arises in one's heart by serving and profoundly associating with eminent sadhus like Shukji and the Sankadik." Thus, association of the Satpurush is essential for an aspirant to develop bhakti coupled with the knowledge of God's greatness. Only through the Satpurush can one's bhakti be preserved, nourished and increased. In swadharmanishtha, we have learnt about the various types of bhakti in ekantik dharma. We will now elaborate on the other aspects of ekantik dharma, such as dharma, jnan, vairagya and others.

3. The success of Swaminarayan Sadhana (22-23):

The main aim of Swaminarayaniya sadhanas is to gain the rajipo of Parabrahman and his realized Sadhu, the Gunatit Satpurush. Aspirants who correctly perform Swaminarayani sadhana will certainly attain the full 100% rajipo of Bhagwan Swaminarayan and Pramukh Swami Maharaj. With their grace and rajipo, aspirants can become free of innate natures and desires, attain ekantik dharma and realize the liberated state in this very human body (jivan mukti). If the fruits of

Swaminarayaniya sadhanas is rajipo and in turn if the fruits of rajipo is liberation, then the ultimate fruit of sadhanas is to experience the state of liberation in this human body (jivan mukti): Realization of atma and Paramatma (G. I-23, G. II-8 and 62). Stability in dualities such as happiness and misery (V. L-10, P-1, G. II-1). Experiencing the bliss of Akshardham in this very body (G. II-28, G. III-2 and 7). Akshardham is present here and the Master of Akshardham is not separated for even a fraction of a second and is not even an atom's distance away (V. S-10). The attainment of the state of liberation whilst being alive is the true measure of success of Swaminarayaniya sadhanas. Aspirants must realize that not experiencing such a state indicates that their endeavors are imperfect or incomplete. Therefore, aspirants should attempt to make continuous improvements in performing spiritual sadhanas. After experiencing the state of liberation when alive, Akshardham is attained at the end of life – videha mukti (G. I-1, 12 and 21). This is called atyantik mukti – ultimate liberation. The soul then remains untouched by worldly miseries (A 2). It is freed forever from the cycles of birth and death. However, it is important to note that if aspirants, for whatever reason, are unable to reach the state of liberation while alive but continue to persevere, then God and his Sadhu will still grant them videha mukti – ultimate liberation at the end of life (G. I-70). Furthermore, if aspirants do not preserve with sincere efforts, then Shriji Maharaj will thereafter give them a birth in satsang to complete their sadhanas and ultimately attain Akshardham. Ideally, aspirants should persevere to earn the innermost 100% rajipo of the Satpurush and attain the highest spiritual state.

4. What is Manushyabhav? And what is manushyabhav in Relation to the Swarup (Form)? (212-214)

What is Manushyabhav?: In Vachanamrut L. 18, Shriji Maharaj defines manushyabhav: “What is meant by perceiving human traits? Well, it is when all of the feelings of the antahkaran – i.e. lust, anger, avarice, infatuation, arrogance, matsar, desires, cravings, etc.; and all of the characteristics of the physical body – i.e. bones, skin, faeces, urine, etc., as well as birth, childhood, youth, old age, death, etc.; and all other human characteristics are perceived in God.” To believe the divine God and Gunatit Sant to be human like us mortals in manushyabhav. Even though they always possess complete supremacy, godly powers, luster, bliss, divinity, etc. within them, we are unable to see them, and believe that they do not possess such virtues – this is manushyabhav. Also, at any time in the past, present or future they do not possess in their form any of the human feelings of the antahkaran or body, as mentioned in the Vachanamrut above. However, believing that they, too, possess them, is manushyabhav. Only for the liberation of jivas, do God and the Sant suppress their divinity, and assume and show human feelings. To believe that they do not possess divinity because they do not show it; and consequently, believing that they possess natural human feelings because they show them is manushyabhav. There are mainly two types of manushyabhav as stated below:

Manushyabhav in Relation to the Swarup (Form): To have doubt in the swarup of God and Gunatit Sant is manushyabhav in relation to their swarup. Those who have such manushyabhav have the following doubts: is Maharaj really the supreme God or not? Is Gunatitanand Swami really Aksharbrahman or not? Are Bhagatji Maharaj, Shastriji Maharaj, Yogiji Maharaj and presently Pragat Brahmaswarup Pramukh Swami Maharaj actually Aksharbrahman incarnate or not? Is Shriji Maharaj actually present through Pramukh Swami Maharaj or not? Are Shriji Maharaj and all the Gunatit gurus really divine, Gunatit and above maya since eternity? Are they really all-powerful, possessing a diving form, all-knowing, present everywhere, all-

pervading, all-doer and all governing? In this way, to have certainty towards their swarup or any type of doubt in their swarup is perceiving manushyabhav in their divine form.

5. Predominance of Bhakti in ekantik dharma (47-48):

In G. I-19, Shriji Maharaj elaborates on how dharma, jnan, vairagya and bhakti are mutually dependent: “In this manner, atma-realization and the other three virtues are dependent upon each other.” In this way, Shriji Maharaj has asserted several times that all four virtues – dharma, jnan, vairagya, and bhakti – are mutually dependent, but that devotion to God is predominant over the other three: V. G. II-10: “Bhakti has a lot of power; and while jnan and vairagya also have such power, it is not as much as that of bhakti...Such bhakti is itself the highest state of enlightenment. It is this type of bhakti that is greater than jnan and vairagya.” G. II-32: “In this, atma-realization, vairagya and dharma are merely helpful auxiliaries in offering bhakti to God. Without the bhakti of God, though, vairagya, atma-realization and dharma alone are not capable of allowing the jiva to transcend maya. In fact, even if one does not possess intense dharma, atma-realization or vairagya, if one possesses only bhakti towards God, then one would still attain liberation and transcend maya. Such is the superiority of bhakti over dharma, atma-realization or vairagya.” As such, bhakti is distinctive in comparison to the other virtues, and therefore Shriji Maharaj states in G. II-26: “For a devotee of God, if jnan of the atma, vairagya or dharma are a hindrance in this bhakti towards God, then he should suppress even them and thereby maintain the predominance of bhakti only. If however, they are supportive in offering bhakti, then they are fine. Only one who has such an understanding can be called a full-fledged devotee of God.” In this way, swadharmo, meaning ekantik dharma, has four aspects which are mutually dependent. Nonetheless, Shriji Maharaj has clearly affirmed that bhakti is foremost.

July 2014

1. When Can Agna and Anuvruti Be Followed? (61)

To fully observe the agna and anuvruti of God and his Sadhu, we should imbibe the following in our lives: (1) Clarify and firm conviction in the final goal of life. Always be eager to please God and his Sadhu. (2) Total faith and trust in God and his Sadhu and their words. (3) Firm conviction in God and his Sadhu coupled with understanding of their glory and that they are totally divine (G. I-63, V. L-3). (4) Intense love and attachment for God and the Satpurush (V. K-11, G. III-29). (5) Courage to follow every wish of God and the Satpurush. (6) Remember and contemplate on the incidents of devotees who have observed agna-anuvruti in adverse circumstances; especially incidents from the life of the Gunatit Satpurush. (7) Shed the bad company that makes us transgress agna. (8) Regular prayer with a pure heart to God and his Sadhu to give us strength to instantaneously and fully follow their agna-anuvruti; and to protect us from bad company and worldly temptations.

2. Shravan Bhakti: Insistence on Listening to Spiritual Discourses (74-76)

Shriji Maharaj and the guru parampara have advised aspirants to cultivate a desire for spiritual discourses due to its advantages and the detrimental effects due to its deficiency. In Vachanamrut G. II-49, Shriji Maharaj has said: “My mind never becomes satiated with spiritual discourses, devotional songs, talks related to God or

mediation of God. All of you should also do the same.” Insisting on listening to spiritual discourses, Gunatitanand Swami has said: SNV 1.31: “Satsang will grow ten million-fold and there will be ten million times more mandirs, but these talks and discourses will not be attained again and administrative duties will predominate. Therefore, only do that which comes naturally. These workshops (for building mandirs, pilgrim rest houses, etc.) will continue as long as the universe remains. So, cultivate the practice of listening to and giving spiritual discourses.” SNV 12.199: “Just as one does not tire of eating, one should not tire of listening to the spiritual talks. Engage in other activities outwardly, but spiritual talks should be primary.” On the same note, Yogiji Maharaj narrated: “Have an addiction for spiritual discourses. If one is so addicted, one will not be able to live without them. If someone senior is talking and you are not present, your heart should burn with a feeling of loss. Listening to spiritual discourses gives tranquility. So, learn how to grasp the discourses. Do not allow even one word to go in vain. Remember new and fresh sermons. Only then can you be called a listener. So become a true listener.” Pramukh Swami Maharaj also emphasizes the importance of listening to spiritual discourses: “Not listening to spiritual discourses is the primary reason for our non-progression. It does not matter if we perform less in other areas, but we must have a desire for this [listening to and delivering spiritual discourses]. Our sadhus and devotees have progressed due to this and not because of external activities. Gunatitanand Swami used to have eight puranis (scriptural readers). Wouldn't others feel bored? Even if you get bored, there is no option but to do. You may choose to do it today or later, but there is no option but to do! Shastriji Maharaj and Yogiji Maharaj had continuously delivered discourses. If we want to progress – if we want to truly progress – and sincerely desire to serve this Akshardham Purushottam Sanstha, Shastriji Maharaj and Yogiji Maharaj, then certainly insist on [listening to and giving] spiritual discourses. Only then will your seva be counted as true, and you will earn the innermost blessings of Shriji Maharaj. Cultivate a keen desire for spiritual discourses; only then will you progress. The primary cause of progress in the past, and the cause of all future progress is spiritual discourses. For this, whatever is not done will result in misery and whatever is done will bring benefits. We have benefitted and will be able to serve thousands of others and the Sanstha. Thus, properly think about this and make a firm resolution in this matter such that it never changes and you do not have to be told again. Have constant awareness. Insist on spiritual discourses – constantly remember this.”

3. The means to attain vairagya: Knowledge of Sankhya (141-143)

How vairagya can be developed through the knowledge of sankhya is explained by Shriji Maharaj in Vachanamrut G. I-24: “A devotee who is resolute in yoga keeps his vrutti constantly fixed on the form of God. A devotee who is resolute in sankhya understands the extent of human pleasures, as well as the extent of the pleasures of the realized yogis, charans, vidydhars, gandharvas, deities, etc. In addition, he appraises the pleasures of the 14 realms and believes, ‘These pleasures are only so much’; moreover, he also appraises the miseries that subsequently follow those pleasures. As a result, he develops vairagya towards those misery-filled pleasures, and thereby maintain profound love only for God. So, such a person who is resolute in sankhya possesses the strength of understanding.: Without learning the principles of sankhya, a person cannot turn away from the worldly pleasures. That is why Gunatitanand Swami says: SNV 1.2: “Learn the principles of sankhya. Without learning the teaching of sankhya, faults such as greed, lust, taste, attachment and ego, and the three miseries – due to adhyatma (miseries of the mind), adhibhut (physical

illnesses) and adhidaiva (natural disasters) – cannot be removed. Without sankhya, satsang is said to be only half complete. Thus, to remain happy to learn the principles of sankhya.” SNV 1.279: “Swami talked at length about engaging in thoughts of sankhya: Engage in sankhya thoughts on a regular, daily basis as a rule. And satsang is said to be only half complete without sankhya thoughts. Without sankhya there is no happiness, since sankhya is like the eyes. With it everything can be seen. Dattatreya practiced sankhya and he knew how to be happy. Therefore, if one slowly practices sankhya, it can be attained. So what is sankhya? That this world and objects of pleasures are all false [perishable]; and the atma is real and unaffected like the sky, and is not influenced by the body, sense and inner faculties.” SNV 13.228: “If pleasures are negated through sankhya, then no value for them remains whatsoever. To transcend maya, one should believe everything to be perishable with the thoughts of sankhya it is a must, even if it is done after a hundred years.” Thus, to eradicate the attachment for worldly pleasures, it is necessary to regularly reflect on the principle of sankhya. As mentioned below, one must be firm towards three thoughts in relation to the teachings of Sankhya: (1) The body and this world are perishable. (2) The panchvishays are worthless, temporary and the cause of misery. (3) There is no fulfillment from indulgence in the panchvishays.

4. Methods to Attain Ekantik Dharma (149-150)

Shriji Maharaj explains the means through which ekantik dharma can be attained, realized and nurtured: Sakshad Bhagavatataha sangat tadbhaktanam cha vedrusham; Dharmo hyekantikaha pumbhihi praptyate na nyatha kvachit. Meaning: That devotee can only attain ekantik dharma by associating with the manifest God or ekantik Bhakta, but by no other means can he ever attain ekantik dharma (Satsangijivan, Ekantik Dharma, 34). G. I-60: “Ekantik dharma can only be attained by following the commands of a Purush who is free of worldly desires and who has attained the state of God-realization; it cannot be attained merely by reading books. Even if a person were to attempt to restate those talks exactly, having merely heard them, he would not be able to do so properly. Therefore, one can attain ekantik dharma only from someone who has already attained the state of ekantik dharma.” G. I-54: “Bhagwat dharma is upheld by maintain profound love towards the Ekantik Sant of God, who possesses the attributes of swadharma, jnan, vairagya, and bhakti coupled with knowledge of God’s greatness.” Gunatitanand Swami also shows the way to acquire righteous virtues by stating: “An aspirant who wishes to attain ekantik dharma, and thus, by becoming aksharrup, forever remains in the service of Purushottam Narayan, must associate with such a sadhu without keeping any barriers. But he cannot attain ekantik dharma by merely learning the shastras with his own intelligence. As stated in Vachanamrut G. I-60, one can attain ekantik dharma only from someone who has already attained the state of ekantik” (SNV 8.15). Bhagatji Maharaj says: “Ekantik dharma is perfected with the help of one who is already ekantik. It is attained when one associates with the ekantik by thought, word and deed, understanding him to be free from faults and omniscient. Apart from this, it cannot be attained even by a million other means” (Brahmaswarup Shri Pragji Bhakta: Life and Work, p. 356). Thus, ekantik dharma can only be accomplished through the Gunatit Satpurush, the upholder of ekantik dharma.

March 2014

1. Means to develop Swarupnishtha (43-44)

In the Vachanamrut, Shriji Maharaj has primarily advised that faith in the shastras and association with the Satpurush help to develop firm conviction in God: S 13: “Only one who has faith in the scriptures is able to develop unshakable faith in God.” G II-13: “Such discourses regarding the nature of God cannot be understood by oneself even from the shastras. Even though these facts may be in the shastras, it is only when the Satpurush manifest on this earth, and one hears them being narrated by him, that one understands them. They cannot, however, be understood by one’s intellect alone, even from the shastras.” Furthermore, the following habits help to develop firm conviction in God: (1) Becoming a true aspirant and have inquisitiveness to understand the true knowledge of Purushottam Narayan. (2) Having complete conviction in all the shastras, especially the Vachanamrut – which is the quintessence of all the shastras – the Swamini Vato and the words of the Gunatit Satpurush. (3) Regular reading of and contemplating on the Vachanamrut, Swamini Vato and the biographies of the Guru Parampara. (4) Associating through thought, word and deed with Aksharbrahman Gunatitanand Swami, Bhagatji Maharaj, Shastriji Maharaj, Yogiji Maharaj and Pramukh Swami Maharaj, who have understood the true form of Bhagwan Swaminarayan. (5) Gaining the rajipo of Pramukh Swami Maharaj, in whom Bhagwan Swaminarayan manifests in totality, by making an honest effort to live our life in accordance with the edicts given by him. (6) Humbly praying to Bhagwan Swaminarayan and the Gunatit Parampara with a pure heart. If we endeavor as detailed above, then with the grace of Bhagwan Swaminarayan and Pramukh Swami Maharaj, we will certainly attain a firm conviction in their forms and experience fulfillment on the spiritual path.

2. What to have Sankalpnishtha in? (31-32)

In the following Vachanamruts, Shriji Maharaj has explained what we need to maintain firm conviction in: G. I-21: “All of our satsangis should develop the following singular conviction: ‘We also wish to join the ranks of the aksharrup muktas and go to Akshardham to forever remain in the service of God. We have no desire for the temporary and vain worldly pleasures; nor do we wish to be tempted by them in any way.’ Keeping such a firm conviction, one should offer ekantik bhakti to God.” V. P-1: “Now we want to reach only the abode of God; we do not want to be tempted by the vain pleasures of the panchvishays along the way.’ So, please keep such a firm resolve. Because what I have told all of you is my principle, please imbibe it firmly in your lives.” Gunatitanand Swami truly understands these words of Shriji Maharaj and therefore has said: “Our sole wish should be that we want to go to Akshardham” (SNV 1.301). Daily, we should think in the following manner to strengthen our conviction. At any cost and anyhow with this human body I want to: (1) Become completely free of desires. (2) Eradicate innate natures such as lust, etc. (3) Become brahmarup. (4) Realize atma-Paramatma. (5) Attain jivan mukti. (6) Attain Akshardham. In the previous chapter we learn that to attain the highest spiritual state, earning the innermost rajipo of Shriji Maharaj and the Satpurush is essential. Their rajipo is capable of granting us the highest spiritual state. Thus, when performing any action we should think: “In any circumstance, at any cost, in this birth, I was to truly please Bhagwan Swaminarayan, Gunatitanand Swami, Bhagatji Maharaj, Shastriji Maharaj, Yogiji Maharaj and Pramukh Swami Maharaj. This is my sole goal, I want to please them, I want to please them, I want to please them.”

3. Satatya in Sampnishtha (248-249)

Satatya in the fourth principle of sampnishtha is necessary to successfully complete spiritual sadhanas. In the Vachanamrut, Shriji Maharaj has used the word 'paksh' to mean 'samp': In G. III-7, Shriji Maharaj insists on maintaining paksh under any circumstances: "One should also remain absolutely loyal to the Bhakta of God. But in no way should one abandon one's loyalty to God and his Bhakta, even if while keeping that loyalty one's reputation increases or decrease, or one is honored or insulted, or one lives or dies. In addition, one should not allow an aversion to develop towards them." Furthermore, in some Vachanamruts (K-9; G. II-60, 63), Shriji Maharaj talks about avoiding enmity, which is a hindrance to unity. He has indirectly spoken of maintaining unity by forsaking swabhavs and avoiding fault-finding in devotes, which are leading factors in breaking unity and increasing disunity. Besides, he has advised us (G. I-53, G. I-26, L. 5) to practice looking at the virtues of sadhus and devotees in order to strengthen unity. Also, in G. I-24, K-9, L-16 and G. III-28, he has instructed us to understand the greatness of fellow sadhus and devotees within the Satsang. In short, the essence is that, from the Vachanamrut, the aspirant can realize Shriji Maharaj's opinion of maintaining unity, fraternity and oneness. Subsequently, the Gunatit gurus have greatly insisted on satatya in sampnishtha.

4. Fruits attained by the Ekantik Devotee (151-152)

The fruits for one who attains ekantik dharma are not worldly praise, greatness, reputation or fame; one gains the happiness and grace of God and the Gunatit Sadhu. Attaining their rajipo is no ordinary matter. True accomplishment in life lies merely in their rajipo. The devotee who has realized ekantik dharma attains the immense bliss of God (G. I-21 and G. II-66), but also feels an intense desire for God whilst alive. AS previously mentioned, his whole life becomes immersed in God. A single second does not lapse without the thought of God. This means that he attains a rapport with God and ultimately attains Akshardham (G. II-38 and G. III-3). Speaking about what an ekantik devotee attains after death, Shriji Maharaj states in G. I-21, "After such an ekantik bhakta leaves his body and becomes free of all influences of maya, he attains Akshardham via the archimarg...a devotee who has reached Akshardham attains qualities similar to those of Akshar and forever remains in the service of God." IN this way, if aspirants firmly imbibe ekantik dharma in their lives, then as a result of their spiritual sadhanas, they are sure to attain the highest state of spirituality.

July 2013

1. Drawbacks without Samp (157-159)

If there is no unity, fraternity and oneness, then any person, family, organization, society or county, or the whole world will suffer in many ways: (1) Quarrels, disputes, fighting and wars take place. (2) A lot of time and energy is wasted. (3) Unrest and anxiety within the individual and group; the atmosphere remains tense and everyone's minds are disturbed. (4) Worldly or spiritual development is obstructed. (5) Failure results on the worldly and spiritual path. (6) One may end up losing everything. (7) Sometimes may result in complete destruction, including loss of one's own existence. (8) We are not able to please God and his Gunatit Sadhu. The greatest problem in today's world is disunity; there is lack of unity, fraternity and oneness. Today, unity is scarce. When there is scarcity of water, kerosene, diesel or petrol, many difficulties arise. We can understand the grave circumstances that arise

because of their scarcity, but we do not seem to understand the problems due to deficiency of unity. This is a global problem and until it is solved, peace will never prevail within individuals, families or the world. In this way, disunity can cause harm in worldly pursuits, but more harm is caused in spiritual sadhanas. It results in obstacles in our spiritual sadhanas and we do not gain the rajipo of God and his Sadhu. They become helpless and the aspirant loses their association. Despite being together, the inner feeling of association is lost. A wire may seem connected to a microphone externally, but if it is not connected on the inside then the microphone will not work. Similarly, even if God and his Sadhu are with us physically, if we have lost that inner connection, then it is of no use. There is no spiritual progress even though we are in satsang. Our life does not develop in the correct way. We cannot become as God and his Sadhu want us to be and so do not experience God's bliss or peace. Many problems are created within the family, Satsang mandal, mandir or Sanstha due to lack of samp. It causes the entire system to malfunction. Would a car work if all the parts of a care did not perform in unison; would the car work if there were mutual divisions? What if there was no unity among the musicians and singers in a musical concert? How would the musical concert sound if each sang or played in his own way, to his own rhythm, tune or tone? Who would enjoy listening to those bhajans? Similarly, if there is no unity, this is what happens in a family, Satsang mandal, mandir or Sanstha. No task cannot be completed successfully. Thus, the lack of unity, fraternity and oneness causes harm individually and to a group. But it is God and his Gunatit Sadhu who suffer the most difficulties. Due to these divisions, they have to tolerate physical, and, even more, mental burden. However, if divisions are eradicated, and unity, fraternity, and oneness are truly imbibed, then God or guru does not have to endure any burdens. This regarded as sincere devotion of a true aspirant or devotee.

2. **Benefits of vairagya and drawbacks due to lack of vairagya (138-140)**

Benefits of vairagya: Shriji Maharaj describes the fruits of vairagya (detachment): Eradicates desire for sense pleasure (V. S 1). Other than God all worldly forms are negated with spiritual understanding. Only God's form is accepted as eternal (G. III-1). Can remain within dharma (G. III-29). Can attain the highest state (V. K 7). Gunatitanand Swami also explains the importance of vairagya: SNV 1.20: "Detachment cultivates enmity towards material pleasures." SNV 5.1555: "One does not become attached since through detachment everything is seen as perishable." SNV 14.102: "Detachment is an axe to remove attachment." Likewise, to dissolve desires for and attachment to the panchvishays, to enable one to remain detached from worldly difficulties, and to prevent hindrances in our devotion, Shriji Maharaj has in many Vachanamruts (G. I-60, S 1, L 1, G. II-1) explained the need to have atma-realization, understanding of God's greatness and detachment, and awareness that this world is perishable. In addition, he has highlighted vairagya and other methods, to help one to continuously engage one's mind on God (G. II-36), overcome the indriyas (G. III-11) and remain eternally happy (G. III-8).

Drawbacks Due to Lack of Vairagya: Shriji Maharaj states the drawbacks experienced by an aspirant who does not possess vairagya: Even the great would be swept away by worldly objects (G. I-34). One will also develop love for worldly objects in the same way that one has love for God (G. III-1). One cannot eradicate the predominance of the world from one's heart, nor can one develop love for God (G. III-2). One cannot perfect atma-realization and love for God (G. I-19). Even if one has the determination to eradicate one's faults, still they are not eradicated and

one does not acquire the virtues of saintliness (G. II-7). In other Vachanamruts (V. S 1, 15 and V. G. III-1), Shriji Maharaj has explained that many deficiencies can remain due to lack of vairagya and atma-realization. The drawbacks for an aspirant without vairagya have been mentioned by Shriji Maharaj in the Shrihari Charitamrut Sagar: “Just as food, pots and ornaments cannot be made or improved without first, likewise the path to liberation cannot be perfected without developing vairagya. Inner filth in the form of sins is burnt by vairagya. Without igniting fire, nothing happens just by merely writing ‘fire’ on a piece of paper. In the same way, without developing vairagya, merely talking of vairagya cannot destroy the sins. Without vairagya, having a desire for liberation is useless” (Pur 1, Tarang 63). “Devotion does not shine in one who does not possess vairagya” (Pur 1, Tarang 64).

3. Benefits of Shravan Bhakti (69-73)

Shravan bhakti aids in the development of premlakshana and other types of bhakti in one’s heart, and also nurtures other aspects of an aspirant’s devotion towards God. In G. III-24, Shriji Maharaj has asserted: “In fact, out of the nine types of bhakti mentioned in the shastras, the bhakti of listening to spiritual discourses is considered to be the best. Therefore, one who possesses that form of bhakti will attain all of the various forms of bhakti up to and including profound, loving bhakti.” In the Vachanamrut Shriji Maharaj describes the very important role and benefits of shravan bhakti, in the form of listening to spiritual discourses, in one’s sadhanas for attaining ultimate liberation: K 12: “If a person who is strongly overpowered by lust, anger, etc. were to listen to these discourses with faith and persistence, then that person would no longer be capable of indulging in the panchvishays.” G. III-24: “One develops an aversion for the world in proportion to that attachment one has for listening to the talks and discourses related to God.” Gunatitanand Swami also explains the extensive glory of listening to spiritual discourses in his talks: SNV 1.15: “The jiva is certainly purified through the nine forms of devotion and other endeavors, but not to the extent it is purified by the talks of God’s holy Sadhu. There is nothing as powerful as the words of the Satpurush.” SNV 1.33: “One can become brahmarup through these talks. Then there will be an equal attitude towards young and old women, dust and gold – and one will not even like to look at these. You may say, ‘We listen to these talks, yet why does this not happen to us?’ But if you plant a mango sapling today, how can mangoes grow by tomorrow? But ten years later that mango tree will give mangoes. This is what happens.” SNV 1.50: “When we set aside all work and become free to listen to these spiritual discourses understand that we are doing tens of millions of tasks. What are they? Through these tasks one’s destiny for hell and rebirth is obliterated. But do not think we are sitting idly.” SNV 3.67: “And this fact [God’s form] is superior than ten million meditations.” SNV 1.226: “Tens of millions of spiritual sadhanas may be performed, but they are not equal to delivering and listening to these spiritual talks.” SNV 6. 195: “Even if one performs austerities for ten million births, still one would not get the benefits that arise from these spiritual talks, if one has such inclination.” Yogiji Maharaj said: “By association [of the Satpurush], our body and thoughts change and life becomes peaceful. The highest spiritual state can be attained by imbibing the teachings of satsang. Listening to discourses with intense vigor and faith can be life-changing.” “By listening to spiritual discourses the jiva doesn’t become inert. Love and friendliness develop. Miseries do not remain. This place is an arena for spiritual discourses; Shastriji Maharaj built mandirs to facilitate this. Even one, young or old, who does not understand anything in satsang, but listens to these spiritual discourses will benefit from them. Darkness in the form of ignorance

and worldly desires will be uprooted. You naturally shed the smaller object on receipt of the bigger one.” The benefits of listening to spiritual discourses, as described by Shriji Maharaj and the guru parampara, are summarized below: (1) The ultimate goal of life becomes clear and firm. (2) One understands the correct spiritual path for attaining the ultimate goal. (3) One understands the true form and glory of Bhagwan Swaminarayan and the Gunatit Gurus, who are the key to ultimate liberation. The belief in their total divinity becomes stronger. Any thoughts perceiving human attributes in them are eliminated. (4) Intense love and attachment develops towards the manifest form of the guru, Pramukh Swami Maharaj. (5) One can understand how to earn the innermost rajipo of Shriji Maharaj and Pramukh Swami Maharaj. (6) One understands the agna, anuvruti and ruchi of God and his Sadhu, and obtains strength to live accordingly and perform spiritual sadhanas. The determination that ‘What cannot be done for God and his Sadhu?’ is strengthened. (7) Necessary virtues for spiritual sadhanas, such as courage, faith, trust, enthusiasm, love, patience, etc., will increase daily. (8) The glory of the sadhus and devotees of God and the Satpurush is understood. One will not perceive faults in others and if one does so accidentally, they can be easily removed. AS a result, there will be no ill feelings towards each other. A divine environment of unity, friendliness and oneness will prevail. (9) One gains inspiration from the lives of devotees and sadhus of past and present to engage in spiritual sadhanas. (10) The body becomes strong and is nourished by eating food. Similarly, listening to spiritual discourses is food which nourishes the atma. The atma is strengthened to rise above maya by fighting against maya and innate natures and winning them over. (11) Spiritual discourses awaken us, present us from performing bad actions and, like a shield, protect us so that our innate natures do not become obstacles on the path of spiritual sadhanas. They alert us to our disruptive natures such as ego, anger, jealousy, envy, ill feelings towards others, etc. when engaged of not letting such natures become a part of our life. (12) Discourses encourage us to withdraw our senses from worldly pleasures and introspect. We become aware, vigilant and constantly think: Who am I? Who do I belong to? What is the purpose of my existence? Does this befit me? We analyze our progress in spiritual sadhanas: what has been accomplished and what still remains to be done. What deficiencies remain and efforts are made to overcome them. Efforts continue until the deficiencies are removed. (13) Our foundation in satsang becomes stronger. Our satsang does not falter even in the most troublesome circumstances. (14) Discourses enable us to maintain stability and equanimity in favorable or adverse circumstances, such as honor and insult, happiness and sorrow or success and failure. (15) Due to firm understanding of satsang, we will be happy and enthusiastic even in adverse circumstances. Worldly sorrows will not disturb our inner joy. (16) There is constant improvement in the quality and intensity of our spiritual sadhanas. As our drawbacks decline and virtues increase, we progress in satsang and can attain the ultimate brahmarup state.

4. Thinking About the Glory of Our Attainment (255-256)

Just like the body remains strong by the intake of food in the morning, afternoon and evening, likewise, if the glory of what we have attained is thought of at intermittent intervals throughout the day, then strength, courage and enthusiasm remains in performing our spiritual sadhanas. If we have an electrical supply to our house, then we can make sue of appliances such as light bulbs, tube lights, fans, fridge, televisions, etc. Similarly, if satatya in this thought is maintained, only then are all other spiritual sadhanas nurtured and strengthened. Hence, there is no weakness in the spiritual sadhanas. One who has understood the greatness of power, wealth and fame and

wishes to acquire them has awakened enthusiasm, faith, trust, passion, attachment and vigor in his life. As a result, he strives with hope throughout his life, against whatever obstacles and oppositions that may arise. In the same way, if an aspirant understands the true glory of God and the Sant, then: Faith and trust become resolute. Enthusiasm awakens and becomes firm. Passion, attachment and vigor increase. If, as a result of understanding the glory of God and the Sant, these three attributes are imbibed firmly into one's life, then satatya in one's spiritual sadhanas would never break. For this, it is necessary to reflect upon their glory daily. This can be done in the following four ways: (1) On the Basis of Extraordinary Tasks: We can understand the greatness of Shriji Maharaj and the Gunatit gurus by thinking about the many extraordinary works they have completed. (2) On the Basis of Liberating Virtues: We can also understand the greatness of Shriji Maharaj and the Gunatit gurus by reflecting on their divine and liberating virtues. (3) On the Basis of their Form: One should reflect on the form of Shriji Maharaj and the Gunatit gurus in the following ways: Shriji Maharaj is supreme, the avatari of all incarnations. Gunatitanand Swami is Mul Aksharbrahman incarnate. Bhagatji Maharaj, Shastriji Maharaj, Yogiji Maharaj and Pramukh Swami Maharaj are Aksharbrahman incarnate. Shriji Maharaj is totally manifest through them and they are the gateway to liberation. These forms are eternally above maya, Gunatit and divine. Maya is not present in them in the slightest. (4) On the Basis of Being Rare to Attain: How rare is it to attain Bhagwan Swaminarayan the supreme God and Pramukh Swami Maharaj, the manifest Gunatit Satpurush? We can think about the rarity of our attainment from excerpts from various shastras of the Sampraday and incidents relating to Shriji Maharaj and the Gunatit gurus.

March 2013

1. The Need to Eradicate Desires and Swabhavs (190-192)

Attachment to the panchvishays and our swabhavs are a hindrance in the spiritual sadhanas for the realization of atma-Paramatma. This in itself slows the aspirant in his spiritual sadhanas, and also causes him to fall back or divert from that path. Instead of gaining profit, one suffers losses. Instead of experiencing permanent peace, one goes through pain, unrest and tension at all times. One does not earn the pleasure of God and his Sadhu, and as a result, roams in the cycle of infinite births and deaths, instead of making this the last birth. Mundane desires and swabhavs ruin everything. They wash away everything achieved. It is like driving a hundred ton roller over a recently planted field, which destroys our efforts. Everyone works hard toward their spiritual sadhanas, but because of mundane desires and swabhavs, they end up regressing instead of progressing. They ruin the inner and outer atmosphere. The divine atmosphere becomes ordinary. Inertia spreads to the mind and intellect. Darkness overshadows and one becomes foolish. There is no comprehension as to what is to be done and what isn't. One finds it difficult to understand the wish of God and his Sadhu, and only what pleases the mind is done. Even the most powerful and influential people have succumbed to desires and swabhavs. Everywhere, quarrels are because of these two factors. Therefore, an aspirant must remain ever vigilant and understand the need and sincerely try to eradicate swabhavs and desires, so that they are not a hindrance in his spiritual sadhanas. If an aspirant wants to attain the total rajipo of God and his Sadhu, and at the end of his spiritual sadhanas, wants to experience the fruits of peace, contentment, fulfillment and attainment, then without a doubt he will have to forsake his desires and swabhavs.

For everyone, there is no other way than to forsake desires and swabhavs-whether it is done today, tomorrow, next year, after fifty or hundred years or after a hundred births. One can only experience peace, make this the last birth and attain ultimate liberation when swabhavs are eradicated. If there is no other way but to eradicate them even after countless births, then why not do it in this very birth? The more the aspirant delays in eradicating these base natures, the more misery and harm he experiences. Hence, the earlier he eradicates his desires and swabhavs, the more he benefits. That is why, Shriji Maharaj has also repeatedly insisted on eradicating desires and swabhavs: G. II-26: “Just as one forsakes an enemy, one should forsake any swabhavs that does not please God.” G. III-38: “One who desires to be happy should eradicate such swabhavs.” Gunatitanand Swami also states: SNV 14.216: “Only when we give up attachment to our body and vishays, whether it is today, tomorrow or a year later, will then we be liberated.” SNV 15.85: “There will never be victory without giving up our swabhavs.” Shriji Maharaj and Gunatitanand Swami repeatedly voice one message: let go of our swabhavs, since they only wish what is best for the aspirants. The aspirants should also strive to eradicate their swabhavs as per the expectations of Shriji Maharaj and Gunatitanand Swami. In fact, to eradicate swabhavs is also a type of sadhanas and it is also the fruit of genuine sadhanas. Pramukh Swami Maharaj says: “We have come into satsang only to remove our swabhavs. If our swabhavs have not been eradicated after coming into satsang, then we have not done satsang at all. The fruits of satsang are only attained as per our swabhavs being worn and torn.”

2. Harm caused by Kusang Within Satang (184-185)

An aspirant experiences much harm in his spiritual sadhanas from the kusang within Satsang, mainly due to the following reasons: What is to be understood is not and, on the contrary, incorrect understanding develops. What is to be done is not, instead, what should not be done is done. Shriji Maharaj is not understood to be supreme, the incarnation of all incarnations, Purushottam Narayan himself; but an incorrect understanding that Shriji Maharaj and all incarnations are one the same develops. A personal understanding that Gunatitanand Swami is Aksharbrahman cannot be consolidated. Human traits are attributed to God and his Sadhu and doubts about their true form arise. One becomes involved in fault-finding of sadhus and devotees and falls deeper into negative habits. One does not fully obey the commands of God and his Sadhu and lapses in performing spiritual sadhanas to please them. One becomes devoid of necessary virtues such as courage, patience and faith. One acquires bad qualities such as laziness and negligence. One is unable to walk completely on the path of spirituality, slows down or falls from the path. Gunatitanand Swami says: SNV 2.176: “One destined to become enlightened in this very birth, will have to take a hundred births if he keeps improper company.” SNV 5.311: “If one associates with bad company in Satang, then even if one is brahmarup, one becomes body-conscious.” Pramukh Swami Maharaj informs us of the effects of kusang and how to remain distant from it by saying: “What can kusang do to us? It can make us fall from the path of ekantik dharma, and bring laxity in our observance of dharma. Hence, we should not listen to or associate with a person who causes us to lapse in our dharma-niyam, agna-upasana, glory of God and seva. Only then will our satsang remain resolute, otherwise it will decline, we will lose the (spiritual) wealth we have. Whatever few virtues we may have will also disappear and we will see the negative traits of others.” Thus, we need to be vigilant and think about the harm caused by kusang within Satsang, and stay away from it so that it does not cause harm to our spiritual sadhanas. He who is firm and clear about

his ultimate goal and has an inner passion to sincerely please God and his Sadhu will never keep in contact with kusang, meaning improper company. Furthermore, we must regularly pray to God and his Sadhu to enable us to recognize kusang and protect us from it.

3. The Art of Performing Seva (85-86)

Performing seva is an art. If performed correctly, seva results in great benefits. The following are a summary of the main directions Shriji Maharaj and the guru parampara have given regarding seva: (1) Perform seva with an understanding of the true form and glory of Shriji Maharaj and the Gunatit Guru whilst maintaining total divinity in them. (2) Understand the glory of the sadhus and devotees, and recall their virtues whilst performing seva. (3) Perform seva with the understanding, "It is my very great fortune that I have got the opportunity to do this seva." (4) Discarding one's own wishes, do seva in accordance with the agna, anuvruti and ruche of Shriji Maharaj and Pramukh Swami Maharaj and the Sanstha; perform seva with total dedication and sincerity. (5) Completely surrender to Shriji Maharaj, Pramukh Swami Maharaj and the Sanstha; perform seva with total dedication and sincerity. (6) Any seva one performs by the agna of Bhagwan Swaminarayan and the Satpurush should not be done to fulfill one's worldly desires, for appreciation and honor, or to please others. Only perform seva for the attainment of one's own moksha and to please Maharaj and Swami. Before, during and after seva, always think, "Will Maharaj and Swami be pleased? Am I pleasing Maharaj and Swami? Have I pleased Maharaj and Swami?" (7) Do not harbor thoughts such as, "What will the Sanstha and Swami do for me?" Do seva with the thought, "What am I doing and can do for them?" (8) Do not copy someone who does not follow an agna by thinking, "He is not doing, so why should I do it?" Do not perceive faults in them or do as they do. Regardless of what others do, one should always do with the goal of attaining moksha and pleasing Maharaj and Swami. If others are not doing, then think that they have already done it, and so avoid copying them and taking their abhav. (9) Do seva with the awareness and understanding, "Maharaj and Swami are all pervading and reside in everyone's heart, including mine. They are all-knowing and are witness to all my activities." (10) Perform seva by immersing oneself in Maharaj and Swami and believing, "They are all-doers. I am capable of doing anything." Eliminate ego by understanding that it is Maharaj and Swami who are executing the activities and you are merely a medium. (11) Whilst doing seva remember Maharaj and Swami and sing devotional songs. (12) When doing seva maintain mental stability and equanimity, even amid the dualities of honor and insult, praise and criticism, comfort and discomfort, and success and failure. (13) When engaged in seva remain aware so that your innate natures such as ego, attachment, ill feelings, anger, jealousy, pride and calumny do not influence and overpower you. (13) Perform seva believing oneself to be above the three bodies and gunas and separate from base natures. (14) Without being disheartened, disappointed, stressed or worried and without being lazy, perform seva with joy and enthusiasm. (15) Do seva with unity, friendliness and teamwork. Understand the glory of others; be accommodating and of a helpful nature. Do seva humbly and with servitude. (16) Observe niyam-dharma and be alert of not violating them when doing seva. (17) Humbly pray to Maharaj and Swami, introspect and persevere for continual improvement in the quality of seva.

4. The Art of Listening to Spiritual Discourses (76-78)

Listening to spiritual discourses is an art. Playing the table and harmonium, drawing sketches or making sculptures, are all examples of art. As with any art, regular study and practice is required to improve and master the art of listening to spiritual discourses. Following the guidelines below will help to master the art of listening to spiritual discourses. (1) Listening to Katha with Concentration Sometimes, although we are physically present in katha, our mind wanders, elsewhere, engaging in other thoughts. Consequently, this lack of concentration prevents us from understanding and remembering the messages relayed in the katha. Thus, it is vital to listen to katha with the utmost concentration. (2) Manan and Nididhyas Having heard the katha, to mentally ponder over it, remove that part of the katha which is fit to be removed and to retain the portion which is to be retained is known as manan, or contemplation. Manan after listening to katha is extremely important. It includes thinking about where, how, when and why to apply which talk. The practice of continuously recalling the talk day and night is known as nididhyas. Without manan and nididhyas after listening to katha, we are unable to experience its fruits. Shriji Maharaj emphasizes this in Vachanamrut S 3 by saying that even after thousands of years of listening to katha, if a person does not practice manan and nididhyas he will not reap its fruits. (3) A Sincere Effort to Live According to the Words of Katha By simply diving into a well full of nectar you will not become eternal; for that you actually have to put a drop in your mouth. Similarly, to experience the benefits of nectar in the form of listening to katha, practicing manan and nididhyas, we have to sincerely persevere to imbibe the words of katha in our life. Gunatitanand Swami in his talks he said: “There may be a 100-maund pile of grains outside, but hunger is only satisfied by eating 500 grams from it; similarly, one will experience happiness only when one beholds and acts according to the spiritual talks” (SNV 13.187).

July 2012

1. The Necessity of Dharma (98-99)

Explaining the benefits reaped by observing dharma and the damage suffered by disobeying dharma, Shriji Maharaj has insisted on the observance of dharma. Benefits of Observing Dharma: Shriji Maharaj has described the following benefits for those who observe dharma, consisting of the panch vartmans: Earn the rajipo of God and his Sadhu (G I 25, 78). Overcome the sense pleasures, eradicate innate base natures (G. II-16, G. III-34). Protects in many ways (J. 5). Experience inner joy, happiness and peace (G. I-34, G. III-8). Attain true greatness (G. I-31, G. II-39). Thus, instead of following one’s own mind, by following the dharma prescribed by God combined with the knowledge of his greatness, and firm conviction and refuge in his forms, one will reap countless spiritual and worldly benefits. Problems Due to Non-observance of Dharma: Shriji Maharaj has also clearly explained the loss suffered by an aspirant due to non-observance of dharma: succumbs to the sense pleasures (G. II-35, G. III-33). Antahkaran becomes polluted (G. I-8, 18). Unable to master virtues such as atmanishtha and others (G. I-19). Experiences misery, restlessness and distress (G. I-34, G. II-51, G. III-8). Shriji Maharaj also talks about this in Shrihari Charitramrut Sagar: “Performing bhakti, pilgrimage or religious observances are fruitless without dharma” (pur 8, Tarang 48). “Seeking refuge of God without observing niyam-dharma is like a leaking boat [it will surely sink]. Nothing will reap benefits without following niyam-dharma” (Pur 22, Tarang 87). Bhakti without dharma is like a widow. Only if a dry tree reaps fruits will widowed bhakti be beneficial” (Pur 22, Tarang 15).

2. The means to attain Vairagya: knowledge of sankhya (141-143)

How vairagya can be developed through the knowledge sankhya is explained by Shriji Maharaj in Vachanamrut G. I-24: “A devotee who is resolute in yoga keeps his vrutti constantly fixed on the form of God. A devotee who is resolute in sankhya understands the extent of human pleasures, as well as the extent of the pleasures of the realized yogis, charans, vidyadhars, gandharvas, deities, etc. In addition, he appraises the pleasures of the 14 realms and believes, ‘These pleasures are only so much’; moreover, he also appraises the miseries that subsequently follow those pleasures. As a result, he develops vairagya towards those misery-filled pleasures, and thereby maintains profound love only for God. So, such a person who is resolute in sankhya possesses the strength of understanding.” Without learning the principles of sankhya, a person cannot turn away from the worldly pleasures. That is why Gunatitanand Swami says: SNV 1.2: “Learn the principles of sankhya. Without learning the teachings of sankhya, faults such as greed, lust, taste, attachment and ego, and three miseries-due to adhyatma (miseries of the mind), adhibhut (physical illness) and adhidaiv (natural disasters) – cannot be removed. Without sankhya, satsang is said to be only half complete. Thus, to remain happy learn the principles of sankhya.” SNV 1.279: “Swami talked at length about engaging in the thoughts of sankhya: Engage in sankhya thoughts on a regular, daily basis as a rule. And satsang is said to be only half complete without sankhya thoughts. Without sankhya there is no happiness, since sankhya is like the eyes. With it everything can be seen. Dattatreya practiced sankhya and he knew how to be happy. Therefore, if one slowly practices sankhya, it can be attained. So what is sankhya? That this world and objects of pleasure are all false [perishable]; and the atma is real and unaffected like the sky, and is not influenced by the body, senses and inner faculties.” SNV 13.228: “If pleasures are negated through sankhya, then no value for them remains whatsoever. To transcend maya, one should believe everything to be perishable without the thoughts of sankhya...it is a must, even if it is done after a hundred years.” Thus, to eradicate the attachment for worldly pleasures, it is necessary to regularly reflect on the principle of sankhya. As mentioned below, one must be firm towards three thoughts in relation to the teachings of sankhya: 1. The body and this world are perishable. 2. The panchvishays are worthless, temporary and the cause of misery. 3. There is no fulfillment from indulgence in the panchvishays.

3. Liberation only Through Swarupnishtha (40-41)

Shriji Maharaj’s clear principle in the Vachanamrut is that ultimate liberation can only be attained through having absolute conviction of God’s form, and cannot be attained by only performing other sadhanas. Swarupnishtha is described in various ways, such as knowledge of God’s form, glory of God, firm conviction or seeking refuge in God, upasana and resolute faith. Shriji Maharaj emphasizes that the jiva overcomes maya and attains Akshardham, that is, attains ultimate liberation by having firm conviction in God. The following Vachanamrut extracts highlight this: G. I-56: “Many people become realized yogis, many become omniscient, many become deities, and thus attain countless types of greatness, including the highest state of enlightenment. All this is achieved through the force of the upasana of God. Without upasana, though, nothing can be accomplished.” G. I-57: “The knowledge of God’s form and the knowledge of God’s greatness are the two extraordinary means to attain liberation.” G. II-32: “The sole cause behind the jiva attaining liberation, transcending maya and becoming brahmaswarup is its engagement in the jnan, meditation, devotional songs, spiritual discourses, etc., of the manifest form of

Vasudev Bhagwan, who is Purushottam. It is due to these that the jivas transgresses maya, attains an extremely elevated state, and also attains God's Akshardham." Gunatitanand Swami also emphasizes this principle: SNV 1.306: "Firm conviction in God is the reason for liberation." SNV 1.308: "Firm conviction is the ultimate liberation and is the state of realization." SNV 1.123: "The one who has the firm conviction in the form of God does not need to perform any more endeavors." Thus, to attain ultimate liberation, understanding a true form of God is essential. The following Vachanamruts state that if there is lack of conviction in God, even performing other sadhanas will not grant liberation: G. I-72: "A person lacking faith in God and his Sant does not benefit in any way, even if God wishes to do good for that person." G. II-13: "If one has such a firm belief in God, then even if a slight flaw remains, there is still nothing to worry about."

4. Methods to Attain Ekantik Dharma (149-150)

Shriji Maharaj explains the means through which ekantik sharma can be attained, realized and nurtured: Sakshad Bhagavataha sangat tadbhaktanam cha vedrusham; Dharmo hyekantikaha pumbhihi prapyate na nyatha kvachit. Meaning: That devotee can only attain ekantik dharma by associating with the manifest God or ekantik Bhakta, but by no other means can he ever attain ekantik dharma (Satsangijivan, Ekantik Dharma, 34). G. I-60: "Ekantik dharma can only be attained by following the commands of a Purush who is free of worldly desires and who has attained the state of God-realization; it cannot be attained merely by reading books. Even if a person were to attempt to restate those talks exactly, having merely heard them, he would not be able to do so properly. Therefore, one can attain ekantik dharma only from someone who has already attained the state of ekantik dharma." G. I-54: "Bhagwat dharma is upheld by maintaining profound love towards the Ekantik Sant of God, who possesses the attributes of swadharma, jnan, vairagya, and bhakti coupled with knowledge of God's greatness." Gunatitanand Swami also shows the way to acquire righteous virtues by stating: "An aspirant who wishes to attain ekantik dharma, and thus, by becoming aksharrup, forever remain in the service of Purushottam Narayan, must associate with such a sadhu without keeping any barriers. But he cannot attain ekantik dharma by merely learning the shastras with his own intelligence. As stated in Vachanamrut G. I-60, one can attain ekantik dharma only from someone who has already attained the state of ekantik" (SNV 8.15). Bhagatji Maharaj says: "Ekantik dharma is perfected with the help of one who is already ekantik. It is attained when one associates with the ekantik by thought, word and deed, understanding him to be free from faults and omniscient. Apart from this, it cannot be attained even by a million other means" (Brahmaswarup Shri Pragji Bhakta: Life and Work, p. 356). Thus, ekantik dharma can only be accomplished through the Gunatit Satpurush, the upholder of ekantik dharma.

Exercise

1. Remedies for Eradicating Abhav, Avgun and Droh
2. Shravan, Manan, and Nididhyas
3. Liberation only through Swarupnishtha
4. Association through the mind
5. Reasons and thoughts behind seeing Manushyabhav
6. Need to eradicate desires and swabhavs
7. How can we observe agna-anuvrutti?
8. Benefits of Kirtan Bhakti
9. Shriji Maharaj's insistence on observing dharma
10. Harm caused by kusang
11. Drawback of attributing manushyabhav
12. Benefits of vairagya and drawbacks due to lack of vairagya
13. Satatya in Sankalpnishtha
14. Benefits of dasya bhakti and the qualities of a devotee with dasatva bhakti
15. Joy of worldly panchvishays ultimately leads to misery
16. What to have Sankalpnishtha in?
17. Deficiency without atmanishtha
18. Pratyaksh puja
19. Means to firmly observe dharma
20. Means to Strengthening sankalpnishtha
21. Liberation only through Swarupnishtha
22. Only sadhanas do not lead to ultimate liberation:austerities and dharma
23. Doubtless and unfailing sadhana
24. No fulfillment from indulgence in the panchvishays
25. Kusang within satsang: internal (indriyas and antahkaran) kusang
26. Benefits gained by Not taking Abhav-Avgun
27. Satatya in swarupnishtha
28. Altruistically imparted teachings for the liberation of jivas

Detailed note on the topic

July 2015

1. Need for Complete Association with The Satpurush (Pages 223-225)

After coming into contact with the Gunatit Satpurush, the true fruits can only be attained if a genuine connection is made with him. Of what use of benefit is a powerhouse adjacent to our mandir or home if there is no connection with it? Perhaps a connection has been setup, but what if the fuse has blown? What if a patient lives with a world-renowned specialist doctor for his entire life, but does not know how to fully take advantage of him, then what benefit is this to the patient? Similarly, we have attained Pramukh Swami Maharaj, the Gunatit Satpurush, however if we do not properly bond, love or have a deep spiritual attachment with him or we do not truly associate with him, then we will not gain any benefit. Gunatitanand Swami has said the following in this context: SNV 2.41: "Swami described the method of engaging in close association, "First, attach the jiva to the enlightened Sadhu. Then, since he is engrossed in God and the virtues of God are (present) in him, the virtues of the Sadhu enter into one who keeps his company. But if the jiva is not sincerely attached (to him) then the virtues are not gained. So, whether this talk is practiced today or after a thousand births, in the end, without doing this there is no alternative." SNV 3.33: "In Satsang there is talk that the jiva becomes brahmarup. Then someone asked, 'There is such talk in Satsang, yet why does the jiva not become brahmarup?' Then Swami said, 'Because the jiva has not become attached to the Satpurush, it does not trust him.' Then someone asked, 'If the jiva has been attached with affection, why does trust not develop?' Then Swami said, 'This Jalapeño Bhakta has firmly attached his jiva to me but does not trust me.' Then he added, 'There may be trust, but one does not honestly confess. And if one is totally honest then the jiva cannot remain without becoming brahmarup. That is a fact.'" SNV 3.34: "However much an aspirant stays together with or serves (the Satpurush) and however much he does as told, still the virtues of the great are not easily attained. Then again someone asked with folded hands, 'O Maharaj, by what means are such virtues attained? And it is said at many places in the Vachanamrut that the virtues of the Satpurush are attained by the aspirant.' Then Swami said, 'Then virtues of the Satpurush are attained only if one understands him as being free of any faults, as all-knowing and if one is frank with him. Then the virtues of the Satpurush develop in the aspirant, but without this, they never develop.'" SNV 9.346: "If having met a guru, the flaws of the jivas have not been eradicated then realize that you haven't really met a true guru. Even if flaws remain after having met a true guru then realize that you haven't entrusted the jiva to the guru. Therefore, no flaws remain when the jiva is entrusted and no kind of distress remains either. Therefore, you will always remain engrossed in bliss." As mentioned, the mere significance of all the references is that, even if after attaining a genuine Satpurush, if the aspirant does not associate with him properly, he will not imbibe the virtues of the Satpurush, become brahmarup, attain the realization of atma-Paramatma or experience liberation whilst alive. Furthermore, Gunatitanand Swami says: "After talking on renunciation, detachment, observance of rules and dharma, Swami said, "What is one to do with renunciation and detachment? Whatever the type of jiva, only one has profound association with the enlightened Sadhu of God is a satsangi. Without this, what is the use even if one offers much devotion? And so what even if

he can, through grace, continuously see the murti? Only profound association with the enlightened Sadhu is satsang" (SNV 1.32). In this regard, Yogiji Maharaj said: "It is not the case that niyam, dharma, renunciation or detachment are not to be observed, but Gunatitanand Swami's principle is that profound association is the key. If by God's grace, he continuously sees the murti of God, his glory increases and people prostrate to him. However, lack of profound association with the Satpurush is a drawback as asserted by Maharaj." "No matter what the jiva is like, satsang is all about developing profound love for the devotee of God. So what even if he performs a lot of devotion? He may lift stones in the Mandir, make totals, spread satsang throughout the whole country, but of what use is it if there is no profound love, no sense of attachment to the devotee of God?" The essence do the points mentioned above by Gunatitanand Swami and Yogiji Maharaj is that if one practices all other spiritual sadhanas yet does not associate profoundly with the Satpurush, then it is a great loss. Hence, in our spiritual sadhanas, primarily, we must profoundly associate with the Satpurush.

2. Shriji Maharaj's Insistence on Observing Dharma (Pages 108-110)

On the path of spiritual sadhana, there is an utmost necessity for observing dharma. Therefore, in his teachings Shriji Maharaj has insisted that his devotees staunchly follow dharma: G I 8: "One should indulge in the vishays only as prescribed in the shastras; but one should never indulge in them by transgressing the regulations that are described in the shastras." G I 18: "In my mind I feel that I should not talk about this matter, but understanding all of you to be mine, I shall tell you anyway. The matter is such that only one who understands it and acts exactly according to it will become a mukta." At 3:00 a.m., Shriji Maharaj convened a special assembly of the paramhansas and satsangis. Then, following the above introduction, he elaborated on observing niyams and keeping one's indriyas pure: "Be wise enough to accept these words of mine. If you do so, I shall consider it to be equivalent to you having served me in every way. I will also. Less all of you and be extremely pleased with you. Why? Because thereby you will have justified my efforts. Moreover, all of us will dwell together in the abode of God. However, if you do not behave in this manner, we will be greatly distanced. Consequently, you will be reborn as a ghost or a demon, and you will have to suffer. Of course, the fruits of whatever bhakti you may have previously offered to God will be rewarded eventually, but only after much misery. Even then, you will become a mukta and go to the abode of God only by behaving as I have described." S 9: "Even in the most difficult circumstances, or even if I were to issue a command, you should not deviate from your dharma. It would not be appropriate for you to deviate from your dharma to perform puja of God. Thus, all of you should remain within your own dharma and offer puja within your capacity. This is my command, so resolve to abide by it firmly." J 4: "You should still observe the codes of dharma prescribed by me in all respects for as long as you have consciousness of your bodies." Shriji Maharaj's emphasis on sincerely observing dharma is evident from the above Vachanamrut quotes. Likewise, in G II 35, Shriji Maharaj talks about the necessity of upasana, atmanishta and remembering the divine traits of God for the liberation of the jiva. He also asserts his insistence on the observance of niyam-dharma for sadhus and householder devotees: "These discourses are for the sake of your liberation. I have told you this out of affection for all of you, so now all of you should understand it and strictly live by it. Now, if you have decided to act according to the discourse which I have delivered, then come forward one by one and touch my feet. While doing so, take an oat and pledge, "I definitely want to behave accordingly." Such was Shriji Maharaj's

compassion; for the good of his followers, he lovingly insisted that they strictly observe niyams and maintain purity of conduct.

March 2015

1. **Seva Bhakti: Importance And Necessity of Seva (Pages 81-85)**

Explaining the glory of seva, Shriji Maharaj has said in the Shrihari Chartramrut Sagar: "Having attained a human birth in the land of Bharat, if one is not able to perform the seva of God, then even if one gets the gold of the whole universe, it is worthless. One who disregards other work and serves God, earns gold equivalent to the universe every second. By serving God, his material body becomes divine" (Pur 9, Tarang 29). Serving satsang is greater than meditation and austerities. The fruits attained after ten million years of meditation and austerities are attained by only one day of satsang seva" (Pur 11, Tarang 52). "There is no test equivalent to seva. It is the root of all other sadhanas" (Pur 11, Tarang 57). "Seva is the fruit of all the sadhanas, namely samadhi, dhyan, dharma, jap, tap, tirth, daan, punya and atmanishtha. Sadhanas without seva are like trees without fruits" (Pur 11, Tarang 60). "Serving a sadhu in need is superior to the manifest experience of the murti of God in meditation" (Pur 13, Tarang 15). The importance of seva exceeds that of other sadhanas. In actual fact, seva has its own special place in the path of spiritual sadhana. Since meditation, recitation, austerities, reading shastras and other sadhanas are performed individually, they do not help in any way to eradicate innate natures, as an aspirant does not face a situation where he would have to interact with another person. In such situations, the aspirant does not even think of identifying and eradicating ego, jealousy, envy, anger, pride and the various other innate base natures. As such, seva is an incredible sadhana where an aspirant gets a chance to become aware of his innate natures and can work towards eradicating them. Shriji Maharaj held seva in the highest regards. He himself has performed abundant seva and had commanded his paramhansas to do so also. Shriji Maharaj and his paramhansas and devotees engaged in many social and spiritual activities such as operation alms houses, digging wells and step-wells, celebrating festivals, constructing mandirs and de-addicting people from their vices. Not only has Shriji Maharaj constantly engaged everyone in seva, but he also explained how to do seva and it's glory. Understanding the inner wish of Shriji Maharaj and having shunned their own wishes, sadhus and devotees performed seva with tremendous enthusiasm and sincerity. Throughout his life, Aksharbrahman Gunatitanand Swami, who understood the heartfelt talks of Bhagwan Swaminarayan, engaged in various activities of the Mandir and inspired others to do so as well. Such service was also performed by Bhagatji Maharaj, Shastriji Maharaj and Yogiji Maharaj, who also served satsang until their last breath. Pramukh Swami Maharaj, too, has carried out all forms of seva and has continually inspired and involved others in doing seva. Evidently, seva is regarded most highly by Bhagawan Swaminarayan and the Gunatit gurus. The true moulding of our lives is through bhida bhakti (tolerating hardships) in the form of seva. By avoiding such bhida bhakti, our life cannot be perfected, innate base natures cannot be eliminated and the rajipo of Bhagwan and his Sadhu is not earned. Worldly activities lead to attachment towards this perishable world, whereas spiritual activities lead to liberation. Hence, there is no option but to engage in seva. Pramukh Swami Maharaj explains the indispensability of seva: "For the sake of preserving upasana, Maharaj has relaxed the emphasis on renunciation and has built mandirs of God. If Maharaj did not wish to engage everyone in seva then he

would have commanded us to withdraw all our senses and do meditation. But why did he engage everyone in activity? Maharaj, Gunatitanand Swami, Bhagatji Maharaj, Shastriji Maharaj and Yogiji Maharaj have all done seva. No one has simply sat in intense meditation. One's ego and laziness will increase by doing only meditation. It is necessary to do meditation, atma-vichar - there is no restriction in doing so - however the most important is to do seva as per the wishes of the Satpurush. By doing so, one will experience happiness, become brahmarup and inspire others. To engage in any activity according to the wish of the Satpurush is a sadhana to become brahmarup. Gunatitanand Swami involved Bhagatji Maharaj, who had specifically gone to him to attain true knowledge, in seva. Gunatitanand Swami also made him carry heavy stones. Shastriji Maharaj, too, engaged devotees in mandir construction seva. Yogiji Maharaj also directed youths to gather stones on the farm, and clean toilets and bathrooms. All other sadhanas are contained in following the agna of the Satpurush and this is most important." "We have to attain the highest spiritual state, although not by following one's own wishes. By doing seva according to the agna of the Satpurush one becomes brahmarup. Never let the Satpurush's agna become ancillary, because brahmisthiti can only be attained by the grace of the Satpurush. Therefore, the Satpurush's agna should be at the forefront. There is no need to disregard the Satpurush's agna and perform other sadhanas as per our mind's wish." "If one does not engage in satsang activities and does not come out of one's presumed spiritual state perceived in one's mind, then one will become lost on the spiritual path. Satsang activities will assist in escaping the darkness of maya. These are not just any worldly tasks. These activities are to please God; hence engaging oneself in such activities is itself detachment. This is the seva of God, the Satpurush, and their sadhus and devotees. Such seva is of great importance for us. By such seva we can earn the rajipo of God and the Satpurush; and as a result, through their grace, attain moksha - the ultimate goal of our life." Describing its importance, Shriji Maharaj says in Vachanamrut G II 59 that only those who have accumulated a great number of merits receive the opportunity to serve God and his Sadhu, but those who have only a few merits do not.

2. Need for Satatya in Spiritual Sadhanas: Satatya in Swadharmanishtha (Pages 246-248)

To successfully attain swadharmanishtha, Shriji Maharaj has emphasized maintaining satatya in swadharma, i.e. bhagvat dharma or ekantik dharma in the Vachanamrut (G I 25 and G II 15). He has also explained to maintain satatya in the four components of ekantik dharma: bhakti in its various forms, dharma, jnan and vairagya. For example: (1) Satatya in Bhakti: In some Vachanamruts (G I 78, S 5, G III 5), Shriji Maharaj has emphasized the need to maintain satatya in devotion and its various forms so that it remains steadfast, firm and free of hindrances. In the references below, Shriji Maharajas described the satatya of devotion: Constantly offer bhakti to God (G I 25). Remember the divine actions and incidents of God (G I 3, 38, G II 35). If during meditation, even for 100 years, one cannot behold the form within one's heart, then one should still not lose courage and abandon one's attempts at beholding God's form. However, one should continue one's efforts by trying to behold that form within one's heart (G I 5, 15). A devotee of God should contemplate on the form of God while eating, drinking, bathing, washing, walking and sitting - in fact, during all activities; one should maintain one's vrutti on the form of God; one should remember God (G I 21, 22, 23). Therefore, one should daily perform the mansi puja of God (G III 23). (2) Satatya in Dharma: Shriji Maharaj also advises to maintain satatya in dharma, which is an adjunct to bhakti. For

example: even in the most difficult circumstances, or even if I were to issue a command, you should not deviate from your dharma even to perform puja of God (S 9). Even after the roots of lust have been eradicated, one should not deviate from brahmacharya and other niyams in any way (L 1). He does not believe the actions of the body, indriyas, etc., to be his own. Despite this, he does not permit even a slight lapse in the observance of the five religious vows (L 1). To strictly adhere to the niyams prescribed by one's ishtadev - to such an extent that one would never forsake those disciplines even at the cost of one's life (G II 61). Never allow any lapse in the observance of non-egotism and other vows (J 3). You should still observe the codes of dharma prescribed by me in all respects for as long as you have consciousness of your bodies (J 4). (3) Satatya in Jnan: In several Vachanamruts, Shriji Maharaj has referred to maintaining satatya in the knowledge of atmanishtha: Always behaves as the atma, which transcends the three bodies and the three states, and is characterized by eternal existence (G I 47). He has the realization of himself as being brahmarup. In addition, he also has the realization of Parabrahman - who resides within that Brahman. One who has this realization feels, 'I am the atma, and Paramatma eternally resides within me.' Such a sustained state is the highest level of atma- realization (G II 62). Gunatitanand Swami also states: SNV 1.341: "Therefore, 24 hours a day remember, 'I am not the body, but I am the atma, who lives in the body. I am brahman, akshar and within me Paramatma Parameshwar Purushottam himself is eternally present.'" SNV 6.22: "I am atma, akshar. If this is continually done, one attains the state of Akshar." (4) Satatya in Vairagya: Shriji Maharaj advises maintaining satatya in vairagya (detachment), which is ancillary to devotion: A person who has the highest level of vairagya is not affected by those activities and those panchvishays are unable to entice him; thus, his renunciation remains undiminished. Even if he were to encounter adverse places, times, etc., his understanding would not diminish (G I 2). The vairagya produced out of such profound knowledge never vanishes; and does not fade (G I 73, G III 24).

July 2014

1. **How to develop firm atmanishtha: or 'Apopu' with the Satpurush (Pages 130-135) (Since this answer is very long, please marks based on the points covered by the student.)**

Apopu with the Satpurush means to believe him to be your own form, your atma. Apopu with the Satpurush is an easy means to become brahmarup or attain bahmasthiti. It is to believe 'I am one with the Gunatit Satpurush.' Shriji Maharaj explains in Vachanamrut J 1 about having conviction of one's atma: "One should develop a conviction within one's atma that one should be profoundly attached to the Sant who has attained the incarnate form of God, and one should believe only that Sant to be one's own self... The purpose of being profoundly attached to the Sant, who is a knower of Brahman, is that he has the ability of penetrating the barriers (of maya). That is the reason of being profoundly attached to such a Sant." Here, Maharaj advises everyone to believe their form to be the Satpurush; and from this we can learn how important this talk is for the path of spiritual sadhana. To believe oneself to be the atma, separate from three bodies, three states and three gunas is ordinary atmanishtha. In reality, without the association of the living (pragat) Satpurush, conviction of atmanishtha cannot be developed simply by speaking or thinking about it. Without the association of the Satpurush, the eternal ignorance of the causal body cannot be eradicated. The Gunatit Satpurush is able to

penetrate through this layer of ignorance by believing him to be our form and can become brahmarup. In other words, firm conviction of brahmabhav can be developed. In Vachanamrut G II 30, Shriji Maharaj has said one should believe the pure chaitanya Brahman, which transcends Prakruti-Purush, to be one's own self. This is an easy and accessible sadhana. This is the true and sabij atmanishtha. The sadhana is to realize the Satpurush as divine and free of flaws, and to believe him to be one's self. In this way, by mental association with the manifest form of the Satpurush, we can imbibe his virtues. Bhagatji Maharaj also says: "It is not that one should try to remain like the atma - which is gender less and pervasive. As it is impossible to perform actions in such a state, without the body's support. Instead, contemplate repeatedly on one's atma and keep the belief that only this Satpurush is my atma. Then as the feelings of the body and senses are destroyed, one begins to behave completely within the state of Brahman - recognizing the characteristics of Brahman, understanding that this one's true form, forgetting one's own feelings and imbibing the feelings of the Satpurush into oneself. When all this is achieved, then just as a maggot transforms into a wasp aided by other wasps, in the same way, the mukta becomes brahmarup through the Satpurush's association" (Brahmaswarup Shri Pragji Bhakta: Life and Work, pp. 420-1.) Yogiji Maharaj explains that believing the Satpurush to be one's atma is itself spiritual sadhana: "Sabij atmanishtha means to believe the Gunatit Satpurush to be one's atma. Believe the manifest form of the Satpurush to be your atma. In his hand is ours and in his legs are ours and as such understand him to be your form (in every aspect). According to Vachanamrut Jetalpur 1, develop apopu towards the Satpurush. Believe in Sabij atma; one cannot become brahmarup by doing mañan of nirbij atma. In the entire fellowship, not believing the Gunatit Satpurush to be one's atma is the main deficiency. What does it mean to have attained satsang? To have intense love and attachment with the Satpurush. One, who has truly attained satsang, effortlessly believes the Satpurush to be one's atma." Let us understand more about sadhanas through questions to and answers from Pramukh Swami Maharaj: Q: "What does atmavichar mean?" A: Believing the Satpurush, in whom a God resides in totality, to be one's own atma is atmavichar. Q: "How should one do atmavichar?" A: Atma is the source of happiness, powerful, umpire enable, indivisible and eternal. Constantly contemplate that the Satpurush is one's atma. Q: "Does believing the Satpurush to be one's atma mean to repeatedly say that 'I am atma'? Or does it involve anything else?" A: Speaking means to actually think in our mind that 'I am atma, akshar, brahman. The Satpurush is my atma, my form.' By constantly contemplating on such a thought, one day we will actually develop such firm conviction. He (the Satpurush) is not bound by anything. If we have developed such firm conviction then worldly thoughts will automatically decline. By continually and repeatedly thinking about the Satpurush to be one's form, one will actually develop the conviction." Q: "What does it mean to believe the Satpurush to be one's form?" A: Our form is the atma, not the body. Believe that the Satpurush is our atma; he is our form. It will not actually change our form straight away, however we have to cultivate such an understanding. We have to develop apopu with the Satpurush. If we want to attain that state then do activities with such a belief. That form (Satpurush) is pure. He doesn't have mayik desires or emotions. Our mayikbhav will be eliminated as we develop more conviction towards him." Q: "How can we believe this?" A: We will (eventually) develop firm conviction by constantly thinking about it, no other barriers will remain. We are not the body, but (we are) atmarup, aksharrup, brahmarup. The Satpurush is our true form. The body has desires and it is perishable. The Satpurush who is our form is free from desires. His form is eternal,

immortal, powerful, flawless, above maya and gunatit; believing his form to be such and following his agna is the means to behaving as atma. If we can behave in consonance with his commands then we have truly believed the Satpurush to be our form. Currently, we do according to the wishes of our mind and body, but when we can behave in total accord with the wishes of the Satpurush, then it can be said that we have truly believed him to be our form." In this way, Shriji Maharaj and the Gunatit gurus have shown how to become brahmarup - by believing the pragat Satpurush to be one's form. In essence, we have learnt that we should have apopu towards the Satpurush whilst understanding him to be above maya, flawless and divine; in other words, believe him, and only him, to be our atma. We should harbor constant awareness that he resides in us and it is he who performs all activities, such as, seeing, hearing, talking, eating, drinking, sleeping, waking, sitting and standing, walking, reading, doing seva, and performing austerities, arti, prostrations and so on. We have to surrender our identity by becoming totally engrossed in the Satpurush and becoming one with him (G II 50). We have to firmly understand and believe that whilst residing in us, the Satpurush is performing all actions, suppressing our mayikbhav. Then, having internalized the qualities of the Satpurush, while doing all our actions we should always think, 'What would Pramukh Swami Maharaj do if he was in my place?', 'How would he have performed this action?', 'Do his actions have ill feelings, distress, I-ness, jealousy and envy, egotism or malice?', 'Do his senses want to enjoy worldly desires?', 'Has he ever seen faults in anyone?' On the basis of his form, which transcends maya, and an analysis of his life episodes, the answer to the above questions is certainly 'no'. There would not be an iota of malice in his actions. Thus, through such constant communion with the Satpurush, we will gradually cultivate brahmabhav. We need to mould ourselves as above by adopting the following steps in the given order: (1) Firm conviction in the form and nature of our Ishtadev Bhagawan Swaminarayan and Gunatit gurus. (2) Earn the innermost rajipo of the pragat Satpurush by intensely associating with him through mind, word and deed. (3) Separate from the three bodies, three states and three gunas, think about the virtues of the pure atma. (4) Believe the Gunatit Satpurush to be our form whilst understanding that he is above maya, flawless and divine. Imbibe his virtues. Believe that the Satpurush is performing your actions through mind, word and deed and harbor such constant alertness. (5) Sincerely pray to Shriji Maharaj and the Gunatit gurus to eradicate our body consciousness and cultivate brahmabhav in us. Thus, if an aspirant expels lethargy and truly endeavors then atma-realization can certainly be attained (G I 20). If a person is constantly committed and has a strong desire for spiritual attainment, then that jnan can be realized (G III 39).

2. **Mental Sadhanas: or Thinking about the Glory of Our Attainment: (Pages 255-257)**

Just like the body remains strong by the intake of food in the morning, afternoon and evening, likewise, if the glory of what we have attained is thought of at intermittent intervals throughout the day, then strength, courage and enthusiasm remains in performing our spiritual sadhanas. If we have an electrical supply to our house, then we can make use of appliances such as light bulbs, tube lights, fans, fridges, televisions, etc. Similarly, if satatya in this thought is maintained, only then are all other spiritual sadhanas nurtured and strengthened. Hence, there is no weakness in the spiritual sadhanas. One who has understood the greatness of power, wealth and fame and wishes to acquire them has awakened enthusiasm, faith, trust, passion, attachment and vigor in his life. As a result, he strives with hope throughout his life, against whatever obstacles and oppositions that may arise. In the

same way, if an aspirant understands the true glory of God and the Sant, then: Faith and trust become resolute. - Enthusiasm awakens and becomes firm. - Passion, attachment and vigor increase. If, as a result of understanding the glory of God and the Sant, these three attributed are imbibed firmly into one's life, then satatya in one's spiritual sadhanas would never break. For this, it is necessary to reflect upon their glory daily. This can be done in the following four ways: (a) On the Basis of Extraordinary Tasks: We can understand the greatness of Shriji Maharaj and the Gunatit gurus by thinking about the many extraordinary works they have completed. (b) On the Basis of Liberating Virtues: We can also understand the greatness of Shriji Maharaj and the Gunatit gurus by reflecting on their divine and liberating virtues. (c) On the Basis of Their Form: One should reflect on the form of Shriji Maharaj and the Gunatit gurus in the following ways: Shriji Maharaj is supreme, the avatari of all incarnations. - Gunatitanand Swami is Mul Aksharbrahman incarnate. - Bhagatji Maharaj, Shastriji Maharaj, Yogiji Maharaj and Pramukh Swami Maharaj are Aksharbrahman incarnate. Shriji Maharaj is totally manifest through them and they are the gateway to liberation. - These forms are eternally above maya, Gunatit and divine. Maya is not present in them in the slightest. (d) On the Basis of Being Rare to Attain: How rare is it to attain Bhagawan Swaminarayan the supreme God and Pramukh Swami Maharaj, the manifest Gunatit Satpurush? We can think of the rarity of our attainment from excerpts from various shastras of the Sampradaya and incidents relating to Shriji Maharaj and the Gunatit gurus. On the basis of these points, an aspirant should reflect on the glory of Shriji Maharaj and the Gunatit gurus. He should consider himself to be gratified and absolutely fulfilled by this divine and rare attainment, and remain absorbed in constant elation of this attainment.

March 2014

1. Archanam bhakti (Pages 89-92)

Physically or mentally reciting mantras, offering flowers, and applying sandalwood paste and other adornments with utmost faith to God, his consecrated murti or to the Gunatit Satpurush, through whom God totally manifests in person, is called archanam bhakti. Types of archanam bhakti: There are two primary types of archanam bhakti: i. Mansi (Mental/internal) puja ii. Pratyaksh (in person/external) puja. We will now learn about each of these in detail. i. Mansi puja: Mentally offering worship and items to God or his Sadhu, or their murtis, is called mansi puja. Similarly, offering mental worship with various items to the murtis according to seasons and times is also called mansi puja. In Vachanamrut G III 23, Shriji Maharaj has said: "One who is a devotee of God daily performs the mansi puja of God." Elaborating on this ideal of bhakti, he mentions that one should perform that mansi puja in different ways, depending on the three seasons, namely, summer, winter and monsoon. He further adds, "In this manner, a devotee who offers puja in different ways, according to the three different seasons increases his love for God and his jiva benefits tremendously. Therefore, whoever has heard this discourse should imbibe it and daily perform the mansi puja of God in the manner described." The tradition in our sampradaya is to perform the mansi puja at five different times of the day. Since Shriji Maharaj's time, devotees and sadhus have been doing mansi puja as described below: 1. Pratah Mansi - Morning mansi: In this mansi, done in the morning, you mentally wake God up, bathe him, adorn him with new clothes and jewelry, offer garlands and apply sandalwood paste, offer different food items, perform arti and

prostrations. 2. Rajbhog Mansi - Lunchtime mansi: This mansi is performed at lunchtime. Various food items are offered to God. Then, afterwards God is requested to take his afternoon rest. Whilst putting him to sleep, one massages his feet. 3. Utthan Mansi - Late afternoon mansi: This mansi is done at about 4:00 pm. God is gently and lovingly requested to wake up and bathe. Then, he is offered fresh and dry fruits, fruit juices and other snack items. 4. Sandhya Mansi - Evening mansi: Sandhya mansi is done after the sandhya (evening) arti. Evening dinner is offered to God. 5. Shayan Mansi - Night mansi: This mansi is performed at night. God is requested to retire for the night; he is first offered water and then put to sleep on a comfortable bed and his lotus feet are massaged. In this manner, according to various seasons, different types of mansi are performed at different times. Mansi puja does not require murtis or the personal presence of God or the Satpurush; thus, it is more convenient than pratyaksh puja. As such, mansi puja can be done at any time and place by focusing on the murti that resides within our heart. The distinct characteristic of mansi puja is that it does not require physical items. All arrangements and items are thought of and offered mentally. Hence, limitations of place, time, caste, creed, age, gender, wealth do not hinder anyone in doing mansi puja and so it is really convenient for any aspirant. ii. Pratyaksh puja: Pratyaksh puja means to perform puja of God, the Gunatit Satpurush or their murtis in person by physically offering items. The fixed consecrated murtis in mandir shrines are known as achal murtis, whereas murtis, usually made of panchdhatu or other materials, that can be taken to different locations for celebrations are known as chal murti. The murtis used in personal daily puja are chal murtis; at the beginning God is invoked (avahan) into the murtis and bid farewell (visarjan) at the end. It is important that puja, arti, thal and other rituals are performed with faith and devotion in a timely fashion in our ghar mandir and at the local mandir. We are indebted to God for the countless favors he continues to bestow upon us daily. So, to thank him for his grace, as satsangis it is our duty to perform nitya (daily) personal puja with devotion and faith. We should perform nitya puja of Bhagwan Swaminarayan, who is the all-doer of infinite universes, giver of the fruits of karmas of the infinite jivas, granter of liberation and source of all happiness, together with the satpurushes of his Gunatit Parampara through whom he manifests on earth. Nitya puja is our personal meeting with God and the Satpurush. For answers to our questions and true peace in life, intense attachment towards God and the Satpurush is essential. Nitya puja will help us to increase our attachment to them. Hence, Shriji Maharaj commands in the Shikshapatri, shlokas 49-54, that all male and female householder devotees and sadhus, young and old, should perform nitya puja. Purity of heart and thoughts are paramount in both pratyaksh and mansi puja. The fruits of pratyaksh and mansi puja are the same if the devotee performs it with such feelings;. Shriji Maharaj explains this in Vachanamrut S 3: "If a person lovingly performs puja of God, with hair-raising sentiments and an emotion-filled voice, then regardless of whether he performs puja physically or performs mansi puja, both are superior. Conversely, if he performs puja mechanically - without feeling love or excitement, and without showing emotion in his voice - then regardless of whether he performs puja of God physically or performs mansi puja of God, both are inferior."

2. Deficiencies of Not Perceiving Divinity (Pages 54-55)

The following deficiencies result from not understanding God and his Gunatit Sadhu to be totally divine: (1) Cannot attain innermost rajipo of God and his Sadhu. (2) Unable to follow agna and inner wishes of God and his Sadhu. (3) Cannot find true and permanent answers to spiritual questions. (4) Cannot eradicate innate base

natures and desires; and unable to rise above the three bodies. (4) Feelings of agitation, unease and discontent remain within. (5) Cannot experience true bliss and happiness. (6) Feel incomplete and that one has not gained anything. (7) Cannot attain ekantik dharma. (8) Cannot attain ultimate liberation and therefore this will not be the last birth. (9) Cannot overcome maya and go to Akshardham. (10) Experience obstacles in spiritual sadhanas. (11) Relationship with God and his Sadhu will break. Therefore, we need to develop total divinity towards God and his Sadhu. A reminder - maintaining complete 100% divinity is absolutely essential; in fact, even 99% or 99.99999% is insufficient. On the other hand, it is better to have 1% or 2% divinity than none at all, since as the level of divinity increases, the benefits increase. However, without perceiving complete divinity it is not possible to rise above maya and become brahmarup. In G II 13 Shriji Maharaj asserts: "You also see this form of God, but you do not comprehend fully." What is the message of this statement? Shriji Maharaj is not saying that we do not understand God at all, but that we do not understand God completely as he is. What, then, is the indication that one understands God and his Sadhu to be totally divine? In the same Vachanamrut, Shriji Maharaj has stated the answer: "Whosoever realizes this form will, like me, never be drawn towards the pleasures of the vishays... When you come to comprehend this fact, you will not encounter any difficulty in subduing the desires for the panchvishays and swabhavs such as lust, anger, etc., they will be subdued easily... One who realizes God's form in this manner does not harbor any affection for the panchvishays, just like I do not. He becomes independent." This tallies with Vachanamrut G I 24 and 58, P 7 and V 5 which affirm that by cultivating complete divinity, our innate natures can be eradicated, maya can be eliminated and we can become brahmarup. Yogiji Maharaj had also said: "We understand the Satpurush to be divine, but if we understand him to be completely divine then we too will become free from lust, greed, etc." Whilst we still have innate base natures, desires and body consciousness, we are unable to understand God and his Sadhu to be totally divine. Therefore, we should endeavour to understand them to be totally divine. To strengthen our conviction to their divinity, Yogiji Maharaj explained: "Always perceive divinity in every action of the Satpurush. Associate with the Gunatit Sadhu, and by abiding by his wishes master the knowledge of nirdosh buddhi; we will then remain unaffected by adverse circumstances." "I have been in satsang for more than 50 years and have learnt only one thing from the great sadgurus: to perceive divinity. The one principle of all the Vachanamruts is to perceive divinity." "The true gist is to constantly perceive divinity in the manifest form of God that we have attained. Perceive divinity in God, his Sadhu and satsang. We have to understand that the entire Gunatit garden (i. e. all devotees) as divine. Always understand God and his devotees to be divine."

July 2013

1. The Significance of the Association Of the Satpurush (225-229)

We will understand how to profoundly associate with the Satpurush. There is a difference between living with the Satpurush, associating with him (sang) and profoundly attaching to him (prasang). 1. To live with the Satpurush: This is only meeting with him or staying with him for some duration. One can live with the Satpurush for some time, which is beneficial. Just from a little contact, one can also imbibe some values. 2. To do sang: To converse with the Satpurush, to receive some

guidance through questions and answers. From this, we benefit more. 3. To have his prasang: This is more sublime than the other two. This involves an intense and firm bond with the Satpurush. It enables us to always remain composed in the grave storms of honor and insult, happiness and misery. The relationship with the Satpurush never ceases. Just as when jute-rope is burned, it does not lose its twist; likewise, the relationship with the Satpurush is never, in any way, broken after developing a resolute bond with him. Gunatitanand Swami has mentioned: SNV 3.42: "One who has a rapport with the Sadhu cannot live without engaging in his darshan and service or listening to his talks throughout the day and night. Then one knows that one has a rapport with the Sadhu. Then Swami said, 'The extent to which the jiva is attached to the Sadhu is the extent of its good company and the extent to which the jiva is not attached is the extent of its bad company.' Then someone asked, 'Even when the jiva is attached to the Sadhu in this way, why does it leave Satsang?' Then Swami said, 'The jiva is not attached to the Sadhu in this way, since if it was attached, it would not leave. This neem tree was only two hands tall when we were building this mandir (in Junagadh), and could be uprooted by even one person. But, today, even if all these people of the village get together they cannot uproot it. Similarly, I over the course of many days the jiva has become strongly attached to satsang, it does not fall from Satsang due to the temptations of the five types of sense pleasures or instincts, such as, lust, etc.'" SNV 3.65: "When one becomes separated from such a Sadhu, one should feel pain comparable to that of having fallen into hell! Since such pain is not felt, has the jiva really attached to the Satpurush? No. As long as the jiva is not attached to the Satpurush, one becomes engrossed in this world, its material pleasures and the body." SNV 10.18: "Attach the jiva to this Sadhu in the same way that fishes cannot live without water, since it is their life; then, when the jiva cannot live without this Sadhu for even a second then realize that it has become attached to the Sadhu." Yogiji Maharaj also said, "Just as water and oil stay together yet remain separate, likewise one may live together with God and the Sant, yet one's mind may remain disconnected. We should live like sugar and milk which completely merge with one another." Thus, firm prasang of the Satpurush is to become one with him. Sugar cannot be separated after dissolving in milk, if the milk is heated, then eventually it may become a sweet dish, or even turn to ashes, but the sugar will not be separated. However, if sugar has dissolved in water then when it is warmed up, the water boils and evaporates and ultimately the sugar becomes separated from the water. Sang is described as being like sugar dissolving in water, but prasang is like sugar dissolving in milk. Similarly, we should become completely engrossed in the Satpurush and become one with him; such that we are never separated from him. So, even if the Satpurush insults us and throws us out, or daily beats us with shoes, even then if we never wish to leave the Satpurush, that is known as resolute prasang. In S 10, Shriji Maharaj states: "He should maintain profound association with such a Sant. If that Sant were to daily beat him five times with a pair of shoes, he should still tolerate such insults, but just as an opium addict cannot abandon his addiction, in no way should he abandon his association with the Sant." What is 'prasang'? Yogiji Maharaj explained: "What is prasang? If the Satpurush scolds and throws out and insults us and if we still do not leave him that is known as prasang." "To interact with the great Sadhu without any barriers is known as prasang. To remove all barriers is prasang. When one attains the virtues of the great Sadhu, then understand that no barrier remains with him." "Prasang is to break all barriers and associate with the Satpurush. The mind never wavers no matter how much verbal hardship is faced." "What is prasang? Like the beads threaded together in a rosary. Yet flaws can be seen in

others. On the other hand, what is prasang? Sugar does not separate after dissolving in milk. No faults are seen; just as the three strands of a jute-rope will not separate." Resolute prasang is to associate by mind, deed and speech with the Satpurush after developing such firm conviction in the Satpurush. There is a difference between sang and prasang. Sang can be included in prasang, but not vice versa. However, if that sang is done through mind, deed and speech then prasang can be incorporated into such types of sang. In fact, Shriji Maharaj has explained what true prasang is in G I 78: "When no distance remains at all between one and the person whose company is kept, that is known as true association. Outwardly, even enemies embrace each other, yet their hearts are hundreds of thousands of miles apart. Such outward association cannot be called association; only association that is kept by thought, word and deed can be called association." That is why, in G III 38' Shriji Maharaj shows us how to bond with the Sant, saying: "One should also attach one's jiva to the Bhakta of God - the great Sant - and act according to his command by thought, word and deed." Gunatitanand Swami has also said: "One must associate with the Satpurush through mind, deeds and words. Then someone asked, 'How should one associate through mind, deeds and words.' To this Swami replied, 'With the body, perform deeds as per the commands of the Satpurush. Through speech, praise the countless virtues of the Satpurush. And in the mind, do not lose faith in the powers of the great Sadhu. Thus, one can know that association with the great Sadhu has been made through mind, deeds and words'" (SNV 3.60).

2. Deficiencies Resulting from Abhav, Avgun and Droh (198-205)

In many Vachanamruts, Shriji Maharaj has mentioned the harm caused by indulging in abhav, avgun and droh: A person who perceives flaws gradually regresses and loses his reputation I'm Satsang (G I 6, 53). One, who perceives flaws, constantly remains uneasy, day and night. He cannot sit peacefully anywhere during the day; nor can he sleep at night. His anger never subsides and he constantly shoulders like a half-burnt log. He will never experience peace in his heart; ultimately, he will fall from Satsang (G I 28). Perceiving flaws on seeing some insignificant personal peculiarity is a big fault. If a person does have a habit of doing this, his intellect becomes demonic (G I 31). The intellect is polluted by perceiving flaws in the God and the Sant, and as a result one is unable to walk on the path of liberation (G I 35). One who harbors an aversion towards the Sant is unable to become pure by any form of atonement. If person contracts tuberculosis, no medicine would be able to cure the disease; he would definitely die. Similarly, one who harbors an aversion towards the Sant should be known as having tuberculosis; he will certainly fall from Satsang sometime in the future. He who perceives flaws in a Sant should be known to have his he'd severed (L 1). A person who perceives flaws is consigned to narak, and adharma and its retinue will enter and reside in the perceiver's heart (G II 11). A person who perceives flaws in others and only virtues in oneself may be known as a satsangi, but should be known to be half-fallen. No matter how great he may be, he will certainly encounter hindrances on the path of liberation (G II 26). If a person spites devotees of God, then I develop an aversion towards that person. If I hear someone speaking ill of devotees, then I would not feel like speaking to him. Those who have perceived flaws in devotees of God, even though they were great, have fallen from their eminent status. To spite the devotees of God is to displease God (G II 28). No other sin causes more misery for a person than when he somehow - knowingly or unknowingly -harms a devotee of God by thought, word or deed (G II 40). Those in this world who commit the five grave sins can still be redeemed someday, whereas one who spites devotees of God can never be redeemed. There is

no sin graver than that of spiting devotees of God (G II 63, G III 22). The jiva would be destroyed by harming God, a devotee of God, a Brahmin and one who is meek; hence, that jiva never attains liberation (V 11). Even though he may be called a satsangi, a person who has perceived faults in God or his Bhakta should be known to be like a rabid dog. If one listens to the talks of or keeps affection for one who has perceived faults in God or his Bhakta, then both the person who keeps the affection as well as the listener become like a non-believer. Perceiving faults in God and his devotee is like tuberculosis. Just as tuberculosis is never cured by any medicine, similarly, the demonic attitude of one who has perceived faults in God or his Bhakta is never eradicated from the perceiver's heart. One may have on countless occasions committed the five grave sins; nevertheless the shastras describe the methods to be freed from these sins. But, for perceiving faults in God or his Bhakta, no shastra describes methods to be released from such a sin. One who maligns God or his Bhakta has to continuously die or be reborn for countless millions of years. By maligning God or his Bhakta, the jiva is also destroyed. The jiva of a person who maligns God or his Bhakta also becomes impotent; i.e. it is never able to do sadhanas for its own liberation (G III 12). I do not like even the sight of one who speaks ill of a devotee of God before me. In fact, I do not enjoy food or water offered by such a person. Even if he happens to be my relative, I still develop an intense dislike for him (G III 21). Shriji Maharaj has mentioned in the Shrihari Charitramrut Sagar: "One may be serving me, but if he highlights the flaws in devotees, and does not mention their virtues, then his seva feels like being beaten by an iron rod" (Pur 5, Tarang 52). "If one is inclined towards faults-finding then his devotion will wither away like a tree affected by termites in its roots" (Pur 6, Tarang 102). Gunatitanand Swami says: SNV 1.237: "If a person brings 100,000 rupees daily, but talks ill of satsang, I do not like it. And, even if a person only sleeps and eats, yet talks positively about the devotees of God, then I will arrange for his service. That is my nature." SNV 5.189: "By thinking about the defects of a devotee of God, the jiva is defiled." SNV 9.199: "Maharaj will be pained if you speak ill of a devotee of God." SNV 9.347: "The sins of finding faults in the great devotee are such that the jiva is destroyed. One may be great like the sun, but if one finds faults in the devotees of God, one will become as insignificant as an ant." SNV 13.168: "One may be as bright as a full moon, but if one highlights the flaws of devotees, then one becomes as dim as the new (Dark) moon." Yogiji Maharaj said: "To find flaws in a devotee is fatal. Believe this to be the jiva's death. For a devotee of God, to die physically is not death, but to find faults in the devotees of God is death. He may be living in luxury, but if he finds faults, he is actually dead." "If you begin to find faults in the sadhus and devotees, then you will eventually fall. Your satsang will be thrown into turmoil if you speak ill. Maharaj will expel from Satsang those who find faults in others." Pramukh Swami Maharaj says: "Our jiv becomes abraded if we talk ill instead of praising the greatness of others; we end up not doing what is to be done and do what is not to be done. Speaking ill is poison; a single negative word can finish you. The jiva suffers badly from it." "We lose our foundation if we fall into finding faults of others. Our stability is lost. If we keep looking at the faults and tell others, then we will not be able to attain our spiritual goal. We will not be able to attain that for which we have taken birth." "There is only unrest and agony in seeing the faults of others. Understand that as long as the habit of seeing, speaking about, listening to or thinking about the faults of others remains, you will never experience peace wherever you go and whatever you do." "If you sow crops and thereafter destroy them with a hundred ton roller, then how will they grow? Likewise, we engage in seva, devotion, katha, etc., yet if we also speak ill of others, then our

efforts are washed away. In fact, our swabhavs increase." Thus, the above reveal how an aspirant suffers by taking abhav-avgun when performing spiritual sadhanas. We regret if even a food grain is accidentally eaten during an ekadashi fast, yet we do not feel such remorse when we find faults in others. We feel that whatever we do is acceptable. We show our innocence by arguing that whatever ill we have spoken, heard or thought of is acceptable. The main reason behind such defense is that we haven't yet realized the dire consequences of fault-finding. We would be upset if someone hacked our bank account or stole all our property and wealth from our home. But we cannot seem to understand that we are robbed of our virtues because of fault-finding. We realize that we cannot consume items that are harmful to the body, yet we don't realize that the mind and jiva are infected from fault-finding. We know of the grave consequences of diseases such as AIDS and cancer, yet we have no idea about this cancer affecting the jiva. We witness bodily destruction first-hand, yet cannot comprehend if our studies are affected or that we suffer a loss in our business, but we do not at all look at the fact that our spiritual sadhanas or our liberation is being ruined. We make sure, from our behavior or actions to not displease parents, spouse, siblings, friends or boss, yet we do not believe that from fault-finding, God and his Sadhu are immensely displeased. When will we understand and believe these effects on the jiva? When will we be constantly aware of them? If we read and reflect upon the words of Shriji Maharaj and the Gunatit gurus, build great trust in them and pray regularly, then those words can deeply affect us. As a result, we will understand and believe what effect fault-finding has on spiritual sadhanas and what disaster it can create. Let us look at what can happen from fault-finding: (1) Aspirants may be as bright as a full moon, however perceiving human traits in God and his Sadhu will result in them becoming as dark as an unlit (new) moon. (2) God and the Sant will be helpless. Aspirants will lose their faith in God and the Sant, and vice versa. (3) The divine atmosphere of samp, suhrudbhav and ekta will be ruined; the divine mutual relations will be dissolved. Minds will be separated. (4) The virtues of others will remain hidden. Fraternity or love for them will not remain. One will not be able to serve them with love and understanding. Relations with them will be ruined. Unity will be broken and disunity will increase. (5) One will lose the zeal and passion to observe niyam-dharma, and perform seva, devotion and austerities to please Maharaj and Swami, and to live life according to their commands and wishes. One will not feel like doing anything at all. One will not enjoy in any way whatever one does and regard it all as a burden. (6) One will develop negative, weak and lame thoughts; and will break down from within. (7) One will become disappointed, detached, cowardly and powerless. (8) One will not be able to continue satsang. Even if one remains in Satsang, one will not be able to develop. One will not develop virtues, nor attain the pleasure of the great Sadhu or feel peace. Life will not feel meaningful. (9) One will feel like one is completely surrounded by obstacles. They will hinder at any time. (10) One will never experience stability, impartiality, satisfaction, security, fulfillment, completeness or peace anywhere and in any situation. (11) One will lose the joy of life. One will destroy one's peace by oneself. (12) Until now, no one has been successful and neither shall anyone ever be hereafter. (13) Until now, no one has been spared from the consequences and neither shall anyone ever be. (14) Until now, no one has progressed and neither shall anyone ever do so. (15) Life becomes like a dustbin. Everyone then begins to dump the 'waste' of all kinds of faults of others on them; even their indriyas and antahkaran deposit this waste from outside. Shriji Maharaj and our gurus have strongly prohibited engaging in abhav-avgun, due to the severe harm it causes. They have reiterated this one point many times.

1. Need for complete association with the Satpurush (222-225)

After coming into contact with the Gunatit Satpurush, the true fruits can only be attained if a genuine connection is made with him. Of what use or benefit is a powerhouse adjacent to our Mandir or home if there is no connection with it? Perhaps a connection has been setup, but what if the fuse has blown? What if a patient lives with a world-renowned specialist doctor for his entire life, but does not know how to fully take advantage of him, then of what benefit is this to the patient? Similarly, we have attained Pramukh Swami Maharaj, the Gunatit Satpurush, however if we do not properly bond, love or have a deep spiritual attachment with him or we do not truly associate with him, then we will not gain any benefit. Gunatitanand swami has said the following in this context: SNV 2.41: "Swami described the method of engaging in close association, "First, attach the jiva to the enlightened Sadhu. Then, since he is engrossed in God and the virtues of God are (present) in him, the virtues of the Sadhu enter into one who keeps his company. But if the jiva is not sincerely attached (to him) then the virtues are not gained. So, whether this talk is practiced today or after a thousand births, in the end, without doing this there is no alternative." SNV 3.33: "in satsang there is talk that the jiva becomes brahmarup. Then someone asked, 'There is such talk in satsang, yet why does the jiva not become brahmarup?' Then Swami said, 'Because the jiva has not become attached to the Satpurush with affection. And even if the jiva has become attached to the Satpurush, it does not trust him.' Then someone asked, 'If the jiva has been attached with affection, why does trust not developed?' Then Swami said, 'This Jala Bhakta has firmly attached his jiva to me but does not trust me.' Then he added, 'There may be trust, but one does not honestly confess. And if one is totally honest then the jiva cannot remain without becoming brahmarup. That is a fact.' SNV 3.34: "However much an aspirant stays together with or serves (the Satpurush) and however much he does as told, still the virtues of the great are not easily attained. Then again someone asked with folded hands, 'O Maharaj, by what means are such virtues attained? And it is said at many places in the Vachanamrut that the virtues of the Satpurush are attained by the aspirant.' Then Swami said, 'The virtues of the Satpurush are attained only if one understands him as being free of any faults, as all-knowing and if one is frank with him. Then the virtues of the Satpurush develop in the aspirant, but without this, they never develop.'" SNV 9.346: "If having met a guru, the flaws of the jivas have not been eradicated then realize that you haven't really met a true guru. Even if flaws remain after having met a true guru then realize that you haven't entrusted the jiva to the guru. Therefore, no flaws remain when the jiva is entrusted and no kind of distress remains either. Thereafter, you will always remain engrossed in bliss." As mentioned, the mere significance of all the references is that, even if after attaining a genuine Satpurush, if the aspirant does not associate with him properly, he will not imbibe the virtues of the Satpurush, become brahmarup, attain the realization of atma-Parmatma or experience liberation whilst alive. Furthermore, Gunatitanand Swami says: "After talking on renunciation, detachment, observance of rules and dharma, Swami said, "What is one to do with renunciation and detachment? Whatever the type of jiva, only one who has profound association with the enlightened Sadhu of God is a satsangi. Without this, what is the use even if one offers much devotion? And so what even if he can, through grace, continuously see the murti? Only profound association with the enlightened Sadhu

of God is satsang." (SNV 1.32) in this regard, Yogijin Maharaj said: "It is not the case that niyam, dharma, renunciation or detachment are not to be observed, but Gunatitanand Swami's principle is that profound association is the key. If by God's grace, he continuously sees the murti of God, his glory increases and people prostrate to him. However, lack of profound association with the Satpurush is a drawback as asserted by Maharaj." "No matter what the jiva is like, satsang is all about developing profound love for the devotee of God. So what even if he performs a lot of devotion? He may lift stones in the mandir, make rotlas, spread satsang throughout the whole country, but of what use is it if there is no profound love, no sense of attachment to the devotee of God?" The essence of the points mentioned above by Gunatitanand Swami and Yogiji Maharaj is that if one practises all other spiritual sadhanas yet does not associate profoundly with the Satpurush, then it is a great loss. Hence, in our spiritual sadhanas, primarily, we must profoundly associate with the Satpurush.

2. Benefits of Samp (159-163)

Using the word paksh to mean samp, Shriji Maharaj states the benefits in the Vachanamrut: G I 78: "If a person is loyal to satsang, then his foundation in satsang is unfaltering..If one has such loyalty for satsang, how can one possibly harbor arrogance, matsar or jealousy towards the Sant or satsangis? Therefore, all of the inner enemies - egotism, arrogance, matsar, jealousy, etc., of a person who is loyal to satsang are destroyed." G II 60: "If a devotee of God is being killed or harassed by someone, then he who stands in defense of the devotee of God - and in doing so dies or becomes wounded himself - is totally freed from the five grave sins, i.e. killing a Brahmin, etc. Such is the glory of defending a devotee of God." Gunatitanand Swami also emphasizes the necessity of unity: SNV 3.58: "If you all - sadhu, parshads and brahmacharis - maintain unity, then no matter what type of internal enemies you face, they will not be able to defeat you. And if you do not stay united, then even the smallest of defects will drive you out of satsang." SNV 1.34: "Two people with the same inclination are equal to thousands and hundreds of thousands. Without this, know that even if we are thousands and thousands of thousands, we are alone." SNV 4.104: "If five people or two people of the same inclination get together, they are like hundreds of thousands and tens of millions. And without this shared inclination no matter how many get together, they are alone. Yogiji Maharaj said: "Swami-Shriji and Shastriji Maharaj will be immensely pleased if we unite as one and take on the task to spread and grow satsang." "Maya will never approach us if we worship God with unity." "We will not be affected by circumstances nor suffer any kind of misery." "Suhrudpanu is ekantikpanu; it is the essence of life. If that is present, then other three will automatically come. What are they? Upasana, agna and love for the ekantik sadhu. Therefore, if by grace of the Satpurush, this eternal principle can be accomplished then you have attained perfection." "Satsang can be spread by three means: unity, fraternity and oneness." "If we are determined, then we can paint the whole Mumbai with the colors of satsang, but unity, fraternity and oneness are required." "The whole of London and America will perform bhajan if we take on the task with unity and fraternity." Pramukh Swami Maharaj says: "Unity is the sole reason behind the success of our activities. We are all united. Everyone has one thought, one desire - to please God and his Sadhu. Nobody differs in this thought." "We can perform any task if we have unity, oneness or samp. Even if there are a thousand people against us, they will not be able to cause any harm, but if there are thousands or millions of us with no unity amongst us, then we will become shattered. We will not be able to perform any kind

of task." "Work is successful where there is unity. If there is unity, our sampradaya will carry on, flourish and progress, because our strength and soul-force will be broken. Hence, maintain such resolute faith that we can, day by day, prosper and so can our satsang." "The Swaminarayan mantra can echo throughout the universe if we are united with one desire, one thought and one goal." Based on the benefits of unity, fraternity and oneness described by Shriji Maharaj and the Gunatit gurus; if unity, fraternity and oneness between all the members of a family, Satsang mandal, mandir or organization can be maintained, then: (1) God and his Sadhu will be pleased. There is nothing more to achieve after gaining their grace. (2) There will be no hindrances on our spiritual sadhanas and our relationship with God and the Sadhu remains intact. (3) A divine atmosphere remains within Satsang. (4) Where there is unity, there is peace. There is peace individually and in a group. Akshardham is experienced here. (5) Where there is unity, there is wealth. Because of unity, expenses decrease and more wealth is attained. (6) Unity is a form of energy. The impossible becomes possible, and difficult tasks become easy. Any task can be completed quicker and obstacles can be overcome. We can fight our inner enemies and gain victory over them. (7) Wastage of time, wealth and strength is prevented. In the least time, with the least amount of money and energy, work can be completed at its best. (8) Whatever the goal, be it individual or collective, it can be attained. Success can be attained. A beautiful coordination of everyone's thoughts, strengths, talents and understanding makes any task even better, solid and organized. (9) An individual or a group is nurtured, protected and developed overall. (10) One develops love and affection towards everyone and believes that others' progress is one's own progress. (11) One prays with the desire that everyone progresses and is helpful to all. One will readily suffer for others. (12) One becomes humble and serves everyone. (13) One does not develop love-hate, ego-attachment with anyone. (14) One does not feel jealous or harbor calumny towards anyone. (15) If anyone scolds or shows him his mistake, he is immensely pleased and makes effort to change. (16) One does not see any negative traits or habits in anyone. (17) There are no mutual conflicts or quarrels. Unity, fraternity and oneness are indeed: (1) the oxygen of worldly and spiritual progress. Without them, progress in the true sense is not possible at all. Even if progress is made, it will not last. (2) the foundation of our existence. If there are problems in the foundation, then however good or strong the building may be, it will collapse. We will not survive nor be saved if divisions enter us. Our destruction and ruin will be a certainty. Our extinction is certain. (3) The master key to our material and spiritual success. Success is definite if we have faith in this, otherwise failure is certain. (4) Necessary for the permanent solution of any issues between people. There can be no lasting reconciliation for any problems without them. (5) The only panacea for eternal happiness and peace. (6) Able to eradicate our swabhavs, guarantee moksha and help us progress within Satsang and outside. God and his Sadhu, are the ultimate spiritual supercomputer. A divine and peaceful environment is necessary for a computer such as this to work for us. The supercomputer will not work if there are internal divisions. (7) Essential to attain the state of gunatit, that is, become brahmarup. We cannot become brahmarup at all without walking this path. If we study the history of man and his culture in the worldly and spiritual fields, and if we think about and understand the words of Shriji Maharaj, the guru parampara and other great men, then the firm conviction is that there is no alternative but to have unity, fraternity and oneness.

1. Methods to eradicate desires and swabhavs (193-195)

Shriji maharaj gives guidance about the remedies to eradicate desire and swabhavs: Introspect properly to diagnose one's own swabhavs and attachments (G I 38, S 18, G III 35); Intense enmity towards the attachments or swabhavs one possesses (G I 78, L 10, G II 15); Firmly resolve to eradicate swabhavs (S 18, G II 27). Immense faith and trust in the words of God, his Sadhu and oneself (S 9, S 18). Self-interest in attaining one's own liberation through God and his Sadhu (G III 24). The desire to attain liberation and please the Sadhu (G I 57). Realizing the divinity of God and his Sadhu, and having firm conviction coupled with knowledge of the glory of God and his Sadhu (G I 24, G I 58, G II 13). Bhakti coupled with knowledge of the glory of God (S 5, L 16). Belief in existence of God, faith and listening with affection to spiritual discourses (K 12, G III 24). Service of God and his Sadhu (G II 7 & 25). Absolute conviction that one is atma (GII2 & 62). Firm in one's own niyam-dharma (G II 16, G III 34). Punish the indriyas and antahkaran for behaving immorally (L 1). Personal sadhanas with awareness (G II 12, S 11). Loyal to God and his devotees (G I 78, G III 7). Pray with a pure heart to

God (G I 48 P3). It is certainly true that by making efforts and through Shriji Maharaj's grace, desires and swabhavs can be destroyed. Just like all the medicines in a medical store are not for everyone, likewise it is not necessary that everyone must try all these remedies. Whichever medicine cures the disease is the medicine one takes. In the same way, we only need to try the remedy that eradicates our

Desires and swabhavs. Alongside these remedies mentioned, the following five steps are also helpful. 1. Pratilom (Introspection): With regards to our swabhavs and desires, take a step back to introspect when, where and why any physical or subtle mistake may have been made? 2. Pashchattap (Repentance): one should feel deep restlessness, regret or grief for making a mistake. 3. Prayashchit (Atonement): In proportion to the mistake made, one should atone for it according to one's capacity. 4. Purusharth (Effort): With awareness, one should make efforts to not repeat the same mistake again. One should find the root cause, and make efforts to remove it. 5. Prarthana (Prayer): Pray that Shriji Maharaj and the Gunatit gurus give us the wisdom, strength and inspiration to not make the same mistake again. All the remedies can be tried and for that it is indeed necessary to pray, so that we can be freed fully from worldly desire and swabhavs. Initially, the aspirant should prevent the physical mistakes caused by desires and swabhavs using the five remedies mentioned. There-after, if the aspirant focuses on removing the subtle mistakes, then ultimately, the swabhavs and desires will totally be eradicated.

2. Significance of Jnan: clarification of Jnan in the Form of Atmanishtha (113-115)

Hindu shastras, and especially those of the Swaminarayan Sampradaya use various terms for atmanishtha such as atmarup, atmasattatup, aksharrup, brahmarup, etc. Aksharrup and brahmarup are of course synonyms. However, the root meanings of the words atmarup and brahmarup are different. In the atmarup state the aspirant attains the virtues of the atma: achhedya- unpiercable, abhedya- uncuttable, ajar- ageless, amar- immortal, jnanrup- inherently knowledgeable, sukhrup- innately blissful, sattarup- powerful, and others; shastras refer to this as the atmanishtha rip or kaivalyarthi state. As atmarup, the aspirant realizes himself as only above the three bodies, three gunas and the three states. However, being brahmarup refers to the attainment of virtues above and beyond those of the atmarup state. Btahnabhav, the state of being like Brahman, can only be attained by associating

with the manifest form of Aksharbrahman, or the Satpurush. Thus, the meanings of atmarup and brahmarup differ. Nevertheless, in some Vachanamruts (S 12, G II 62 and 66, G III 36), Shriji Maharaj has used the words atmarup, atmasattarup and atmanishtha in a special case as synonyms for brahmarup or aksharup. It is important to clarify that these words are used synonymously by Shriji Maharaj in a special context, but they are not synonyms when considered in the light of other shastras and sampradayas. When the aspirants have only attained the state of atmanishtha, the words atmarup and brahmarup are not synonyms. The explanations given by Shriji Maharaj using the words atmarup, atmasattarup, atmanishtha, etc., are distinctive and exceptional in the following way: 1. The attainment of Brahmabhav, which is higher state than the atma's innate state. 2. The constant association of the brahmarup atma with paramatma. This is clarified in the following Vachanamruts: S 12: "Such a devotee with perfect jnan is conscious only of his atma. Also, he believes his atma to be brahmarup and that Purushottam Bhagawan - also known as Parabrahman - forever resides in that brahmarup atma. Also, his conviction of God remains forever steady." G II 62: "He has the realization of himself as being brahmarup. In addition, he also has the realization of Parabrahman Narayan - who resides within that Brahman. One who has this realization feels, 'I am the atma, and Paramatma eternally resides within me.' Such a sustained state is the highest level of atma-realization." Thus, it can be concluded that Shriji Maharaj uses atmanishtha, atmarup, atmasattarup, aksharup, brahmarup, chaitanyarup, etc. synonymously.

Exercise

1. Significance of Jnan
2. Sadhana is Not For the Attainment of Parabrahman But to Gain His Rajipo
3. Need for Complete Association with the Satpurush
4. Only sadhanas do not lead to ultimate liberation
5. Importance and necessity of seva
6. Deficiencies resulting from abhav, avgun and droh
7. Prasang of the Satpurush Is Association through Deed, Speech and Mind
8. Deficiencies of not perceiving divinity
9. Mental sadhanas: Thinking about the glory of our attainment
10. Powerful and accessible sadhana
11. Importance and necessity of seva
12. The rarity and purpose of human birth
13. Repaying our debt to Shriji Maharaj and the Gurus
14. Prohibition of abhav, avgun and droh