

INVALUABLE BOOKS OF  
BRAHMVIDYA

VACHANAMRUT AND SWAMI NI  
VAATO

## Table of Contents

<b>PART 1 - BRAHMVIDYA.....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1 The capacity of the human-brain to learn several kinds of knowledge .....	6
1.2 The importance of Brahavidya (Knowledge of atma) .....	7
1.3 The Imporance and the necessity of Brahavidya .....	8
<b>PART 2 - VACHANAMRUT.....</b>	<b>14</b>
2.1 The aspects of Vachanamrut and the subjects explained therein.....	15
2.1.1 The aspects of Vachanamrut .....	15
2.1.2 The topics covered in the Vachanamrut are spiritual, not mundane or worldly.....	16
2.2 Essence, secrets, and principle of all the scriptures in Vachanamrut .....	18
2.3 Opinions About The Vachanamrut .....	21
2.3.1 The opinions of the Gunatit Gurus.....	21
2.3.2 The opinions of prominent learned personalities.....	22
2.4 The Divine Personality of ShreejiMaharaj, the Preacher of the Vachanamrut .....	24
2.4.1 ShreejiMaharaj: Supreme God and the cause of all the avatars .....	24
2.4.2 ShreejiMaharaj: Experienced and the complete knower of Brahmavidya.....	26
• Acute penance and complete disregard for Body .....	29
• Zeal for renunciation.....	30
• Readiness to serve.....	32
• Eagerness to listen to spiritual discourses .....	34
• Thoughtfulness .....	35
• Becoming free of worldly desires: Innocence .....	37
• Equality and stable intelligent mind.....	38
• Realisation of atma-parmatma .....	38
2.5 The purpose of ShreejiMaharj's discourses .....	40
2.5.1: ShreejiMaharaj's blissful life .....	40
2.5.2 Discourses only for the bliss of the jivas .....	41
2.5.3 Insistance for pure action for the liberation of jivas .....	43
2.5.4 Maharaj's insistance for God's firm conviction for the liberation of the jivas.....	45
2.6 Other proofs of the authenticity of Vachanamrut.....	46
2.6.1 Unique Listeners.....	46
2.6.2 Honest editing team .....	49
2.6.3 Historical authenticity .....	53
2.7 Unique Specialities of the Vachanamrut .....	54
2.7.1 Simple Gujarati style of prose.....	54
2.7.2 Light and efficacious style with full of illustrations.....	55
2.7.3 Question and Answer style .....	57

2.7.4 Original meanings, definitions and aphorism teachings .....	59
• Original Meanings.....	59
• Original definitions.....	60
• Aphorism teaching .....	61
2.7.5 Clear, decisive and doubtfree.....	61
2.7.6 Systematic sequence of Philosophy and self-realisation .....	63
• Systematic sequences of Philosophy.....	63
• Systematic sequence-Road to self-realisation .....	64
2.7.7 Clear explanation of the obstacles.....	65
<b>PART 3 - SWAMINI VAATO.....</b>	<b>67</b>
3.0 Introduction .....	67
3.1. The nature of the Book .....	68
3.2 Editors of the Vaato.....	69
3.3. Publication of different editions of the Book .....	70
3.4 Swami's utterances on the importance of 'vaato' .....	72
• Rare talks:.....	73
• Rare are the talks and rare are its spokesman:.....	74
• The cost of hearing these talks: .....	74
3.5 The utterances of persons who have experienced the vaato.....	75
3.6 The divine Character of Gunatitanand Swami, the speaker of the vaato.....	76
3.6.1 Gunatitanand Swami: Incarnation of Aksharbrahm Himself .....	77
3.6.2 Gunatitanand Swami: The Guide to Brhamvidya.....	79
• Austerity, renunciation and complete disregard of body.....	79
• Natural sacrifice from Childhood .....	80
• No desire for eating, drinking and Clothing.....	80
• Disregard for body .....	82
• The conception for service.....	83
• Eagerness to obey.....	84
• Oneness in honour and insult.....	86
• Firmness in observing the panchvartaman (the five religious vows).....	87
• Direct experience of Atma-Parmatma.....	88
• Worthy of holding Maharaj in full .....	89
3.6.3 The moulder of Brahmi Sthiti.....	91
• The noble desire for ultimate liberation of jivas .....	91
• The moulding of Brahmi sthiti .....	93
• Swami's fearless bold talks .....	94
• Incidents indicating Swamishree's bold talks.....	95
• Some of Swami's Vaato indicating his plain speaking.....	97

• Swami's plain speaking of Upasana.....	99
3.7 The special facets of 'Swamini Vaato' .....	101
3.7.1. The difference between "Swamini Vaato' and other Vaatos .....	101
• From subject point of view – Different.....	101
• The peculiar style in Swamini Vaato of explaining things by illustrations/incidents .....	102
3.7.2. Swamini Vaato is the best commentary on Vachanamrut.....	106
• Explanations based on Vachanamrut's context .....	106
• The Summary of several Vachanamruts.....	108
• Clarification of Vachanamruts' absolute truth .....	109
• Truth on different endeavours in Vachanamrut .....	111
• Original definitions of Vachanamrut's wordings .....	111
3.7.3. Clarification on Shreeji Maharaj's heart-touching principle in 'Swamini Vaato.' .....	112
• Shreeji Maharaj-Supreme and source of all incarna-tions.....	115
• Difference between Avtar and Avatari.....	116
3.7.5 Clear descriptive picture of self-realisation in Vaato.....	117
• Clarification of the aim .....	118
• Disproportionate importance of sources .....	119
• Unenimty in Sadhana .....	121
• Importance of the Satpurush in Sadhana.....	122
• Everything is possible due to Sadhu .....	123
• All understanding is gained through Sadhu .....	123
• Habits, Vishayas and deficiencies can be ended through the Sadhu.....	124
• All the virtues are gained through the Sadhu .....	125
• Work quickly accomplished with the direction of Sadhu .....	125
• Protection by Sadhu during adverse times.....	125
• Imperfection remaining in Sadhana.....	126
• Imperfection in recognising God and Sadhu .....	126
• Imperfection in obeying instructions.....	127
• Imperfection in proper amalgamation with God and Sadhu .....	128
• Imperfection regarding human traits and faults.....	129
• Awareness for inner religious rites .....	129
• Clarification of obstacles during Sadhana .....	132
• Answers to questions related to Sadhana.....	133
• Endeavours concisely on Sadhana .....	135
3.7.6 Powerful endeavour in Swami's teachings .....	136
• Jako jagme koi nahi, taku tum ho Maharaj .....	136
3.7.7 Cloud of intoxication on greatness of attainment in 'Swamini Vaato' .....	138
3.7.8 Remedy of permanent peace in 'Swamini Vaato' .....	140



## Humble Offering

With the divine inspiration of our Guruhari Pramukh Swami, we have tried to create an ecopy of Brahmvidya na Amulya Grantho – Pragna 1 Paper 2 syllabus. This effort is thanks to translated copy from London Mandal and N.A. National Karyalay leads and fellow volunteers, who have offered their precious time to do translations.

Translations are done using reference of Swamini Vaato, Vachanamrut and our other Satsang Exam syllabus books.

We sincerely wish that our compiled reading material is of significant help to Satsang Exam students; who work hard to please Swamishree and understand further our Bhagwan Swaminarayan's, our Guru's and Sanstha's mahima.

We would like to hear feedback from Satsang Exam reference users to further improve the content. Please contact your satsang exam lead to convey your feedback.

## **PART 1 - BRAHMVIDYA**

### **1.1 The capacity of the human-brain to learn several kinds of knowledge**

The creation of mankind on this miraculous inanimate universe is in itself a great miracle. Among the other living creatures in the universe, greater wonder, still, is the man's brain. As, none of the creatures, from small insects like ants to birds or animals, have a brain like a human. The brain that the birds, animals, small insects and creatures have is limited either to self –defence or survival. Their brainpower is used either to subsist or defend themselves. They themselves are not able to think independently for themselves, like men, or invent something to improve their life style. That is why there has not been any difference in the lifestyle of birds, animals or insects since millions of years. This is not so in the case of mankind.

Man keeps on changing. Because man has been gifted a thoughtful and ever developing brain, he always keeps on making changes in his lifestyle. Because of his brain, man is always able to think something new, learn something new, know something new, and invent something new. That is why; man has so far invented and mastered many arts. Today, throughout the Universe, many schools, colleges and universities teach a variety of subjects.

Since thousands of years, in the spiritual soil of India, people have been mastering all kinds of arts, and sciences. The sages of India have always insisted on attaining spiritual knowledge, paravidya, (knowledge of Atma and Parmatma) or Brahmidya (knowledge of Atma) rather than attaining worldly knowledge. They have never given prominence to worldly knowledge to attain that topmost goal of human life. They have always accepted the importance of learning BRAHMVIDYA as the final goal of human life. In keeping with that ancient Indian tradition, Gunatitanand Swami has also said “There are many kinds of science (knowledge) to learn but the one which is the ultimate and beneficial to learn is the BRAHMVIDYA, (KNOWLEDGE OF ATMA) and there is no other way without learning it.” (Talks of Gunatitanand Swami 2/38)

## 1.2 The importance of Brahmvidya (Knowledge of atma)

Brahmvidya has been defined in Mundakopanishad thus:

**“Yenaksharam Purusham Ved Satyam Provach Tam tatvat o Brahmvidyam |”**

Meaning: Brahmvidya is that by which one gains the true knowledge of Akshar and Purshottam) (Mundakopanishad: 1/2/13)

Throughout this Upanishad, the word paravidya (Knowledge of Brahma and Parbrahmaha) has been used to describe Brahmvidya because the swarup of Akshar and Brahma has been described in the paravidya only. Also, whilst talking about Adhyatmvidya (spiritual knowledge) in the Kathopanishads, there is a clear indication of knowledge about Akshar and Brahma. Bhagwan Swaminarayan explains these Brahmavidya, (knowledge of self) Paravidya (knowledge of Atma and Paramatma) and Adhyatmvidya (Spiritual knowledge) as Brahmagnan. Explaining the importance of this Brahmagnan, Bhagawan Swaminarayan says in Vachanamrut Gadhada II-3 says, “Purshottam Narayan, who is distinct from Brahma, and is the cause, the supporter and the inspirer of Brahma. With such understanding, and maintaining a master-servant (swami-sewakbhav) relationship with Him, one should develop oneness with one’s Jivatma and with that Brahma, and worship Parabrahma while maintaining a master-servant relationship. With such understanding only, the ‘Brahmagnan’ also becomes an unobstructed path to attaining the highest state of enlightenment.”

From the above quotes, it can be concluded that the essence of Brahmvidya, Paravidya and Adhyatmvidya is to worship Purushottam Narayan with believing one’s self to be Brahma or Akshar.

To understand what this Brahmvidya is, it is important to understand what it is not! Brahmvidya is not a philosophy, a religious scripture, an ethics, or a ceremonial act. But each is related with it in one way or other. All these aspects could be supplementary to Brahmvidya, but nothing from them is Brahmvidya. It is therefore necessary to understand that by following any one of the above aspect, one cannot achieve the goal of Brahmvidya.

Brahmvidya is the spiritual path leading to the real experience of Atma and Paramatma. Its ultimate goal is to gain spiritual experience, the brahmi sthiti or

Brahmi status (oneness with the self) Pragat Brahmaswarup Pramukh Swami Maharaj says

“Brahmvidya means knowing the pragat (visible) Brahma, consider Him to be your own form, and be like him.”

Thus, to experience all the time the God within the manifest form of Aksharbrahma is the fruit of Brahmvidya, Paravidya and Adhyatmvidya.

### **1.3 The Imporance and the necessity of Brahmvidya**

The object behind every activity of the human being is to gain peace and harmony in life. That is why man is always inventing something new, making some new innovations. There may not be a single field where he has not invented something new and made alterations or improvements to it. The man attempts till his last breath to find solutions to the problems coming in his life. To give an everlasting departure to the unhappiness from his life he always endeavours to find and try new ways.

To fulfil his unsatisfied longings, he attempts, on the strength of his wealth, power, and brains, by increasing modern facilities. But the fact is that out of all the people who have reached to the top ranks in the world, no one has achieved the eternal peace. The worldly developments made by them have not permanently solved their problems and afflictions. Certain problems were perhaps partly solved, but then, more unexpected and new problems came on. The problems are never going to end in this life. Throughout the life, struggles, problems, keep on adding, dividing, multiplying, and subtracting. The fact is that the problems rarely get subtracted or divided, but in majority of cases they tend to add and multiply.

The question arising here is: Why have all the man's attempts to gain everlasting peace by destroying all the ultimate afflictions failed so far? Despite striving intensively and constantly, why have the man's efforts not brought the desired results? What is the basic mistake in their strenuous efforts? In reply to this question, the sages and the scriptures explain that the path chosen by the mankind to find peace is wrong. It is a fact that by going to the wrong path and wrong direction, one can never reach the desired goal. In fact, the man has no inkling as to what is the real and basic cause of his infinite afflictions and the correct remedy for

it! Where is the root of life's basic problems? What is at the root of all the problems? If one can catch the life's basic problem and its solution, then and only then could one find the solution to the life's problems. The question now before us is what is the basic problem of the life? What is it like? And what is the solution for it.

If a car cannot be started because of a mechanical fault, can it be started by repainting it? Will it start by changing its mirror, tyre or horn? No. Why? Because the fault lies in the machine. Same way, the cause of man's infinite afflictions is the impurity of his soul. These impurities like greed, taste, honour, anger, jealousy, vain, pride, ardent desire, have been attached to his soul since eternity. The main cause of all these impurities is also ignorance which has become attached to his soul. Until the man rids himself of these desires-and ignorance-the root cause of these desires, he cannot find a permanent solution to his afflictions and problems, in any era, in any country, in any place, and by any means like power, wealth, amenities or fame; as a result, he will never experience the eternal peace and harmony.

Shriji Maharaj explains this fact very well in Vachanamrut:

Gadhada II-51: "as long as the influence of the gunas (qualities) (rajoguna, tamoguna and satvaguna) remain within a person, he will never experience happiness, only when he behaves as the Atma, does he experience happiness. "

Gadhada III-38: "The greed for wealth and the desire to associate with women, attachment of the tongue to various tastes, the belief that one is the body, affection for kusangi and attachment for one's relatives- one who possesses these six characteristics, will never become happy, either in his present life, or even after death. Therefore, one who desires happiness should eradicate such desires (swabhavas), maintain nivrutti, and not keep the company of equals. "

Pragat Brahmaswarup Pramukh Swami Maharaj says: "Problems will remain as long as one associates himself with body. Where there is bodily concern there shall remain instant sorrow and faults. As long as there is bodily concern one is likely to get upset easily. One gets upset even for small things. There are many obstacles due to praise and insult. As long as one associates himself with body, wherever he goes, one will not find anything except grief. Therefore, stay away from body consciousness. Problems will get solved as one gradually disassociates himself from body. When one becomes completely free from body consciousness, there will be a permanent end to all his pains, problems and disturbances."

Therefore, to eliminate permanently all the sufferings and to obtain eternal peace, it is vital to eliminate body consciousness, desires, and their root ignorance. For its destruction, it is necessary to obtain the knowledge of atma and parmatma and its realisation. The scriptures reveal this fact:

**Bhidyate Hradaygranthi-shichhadyate sarvasanshayaha |  
Kshiyante chasya-karmani tasmin dushte paravare | |**

Meaning: On seeing the real Atma and Parmatma, instincts are pierced, the suspicions destroyed and the deeds are diminished. (Mundakopanishad: 2/2/8)

**Vishaya Vinivartante Nirahasya dehinaha: |  
Rasvarj rasoapyasya param dushtva nivartante | |**

Meaning: the desires (Vishayas) of a fasting person can be retired, but not the intense fascination. (asakti) On having Parmatma's darshan (realisation) the intense fascination can also be destroyed. (Geeta 2/59)

Whoever realises this form will, like Me, never be drawn towards the 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 not encounter any difficulty in subduing the desires for the Panchvishayas and Swabhavs, such as lust, anger, etc. They will be subdued easily. One who realises God's form in this manner does not harbour any affection for the Panch-vishayas, just like I do not. He becomes independent. (Vachnamrut: Gadhada II-13)

The above references indicate that only by obtaining the correct knowledge of Atma and Parmatma can one destroy the desires for Panchvishays and the desire for lust. The scriptures have sung heaps of praises of these philosophical teachings of Atma and Parmatma by describing it as Adhytamvidya, Paravidya or Brahavidya. In Mundakopanishad Sage (Rishi) Shaunak asks Angira Rishi:

**Kasminnu bhagavo vignate sarvamidam vignatam bhavati |**

Meaning: What should one know to know everything? (Mundakopanishad: 1/1/3) . In reply, he was told:

**Dwai vidye Veditavye para cha apara cha |**

Meaning: The two sciences of Para and Aparas. (Mundakopanishad: 1/1/4)

and than, referring to the science of Aparavidya:

**Tatrapra, Rugvedo, Yajurvedaha, Samvedoatharvavedah |  
Shiksha kalpo vyakaranam Niruktam Chhando Jyotishmiti | |**

Meaning: Rigved, Yajurved, Samved, Atharvved, (The 4 Vedas) Shiksha, Kalp, Vyakaran (Grammer) nirukta, Chhand, and Jyotish (astrology) – This is Aparavidya.

In the four Vedas, apart from the philosophy, there is also knowledge about other worldly subjects, many an arts, and sciences. To gain mastery in all these subjects is also Aparavidya. (Worldly knowledge) If one obtains only wordy knowledge of the substance of philosophy, or only informative knowledge, but if it does not become a practical knowledge, than that is also Aparavidya. One does not find peace in life with it. The real is gained only by Paravidya.

In Chhandogya Upnishad, after referring to all these scriptures and other sciences, Naradji tells Sanatkumar:

**Soham Bhagavo Mantra-Videvasmi natmvita shrutam hyev me bhavad-  
drashye-bhyastarati |  
Shokmatmavidit soham bhagavah shochami tam ma Bhagwan shpkasya  
param tarayatviti | |**

Meaning: O Lord! I only know mantros (verses) (meaning I only know the words) but I am not an ATMAVETTA. I have heard from likes of you that an Atmavetta overcomes his grief, and O Lord! Because I grieve, kindly help me overcome my grief.

In conclusion of the above 2 references, in today's language, it could be said that what is taught these days throughout the many branches of the universities, colleges, and schools worldwide, is all called Aparavidya. Aparavidya is necessary for day to day life, to earn, for obtaining wealth and prestige, but, it is a fact that one cannot solve all life's problems on a permanent basis with this Aparavidya. Aparavidya cannot bring stability, harmony, and peace to life's many problems and struggles. Therefore, the true knowledge is that which can help one bring eternal peace and freedom from afflictions. (Sa vidya ya Vimuktaye) The true knowledge is Brahavidya, that is the Paravidya and that, also, is Paravidya.

This Brahavidya i.e., the knowledge about Atma and Parmatma or practical

knowledge about Brahma-Parabrahma is the only permanent solution to the man's infinite problems. The completion of man's inventions lies in the ultimate realisation of Brahma-Parabrahma. One's own pure form is Sachchidanand Brahma and Prabrahma Purshottam Narayan resides within. If one realises it then it is impossible for the mankind not to experience immortality, complete knowledge, strength, independence, love, beauty, and divine pleasure as a result of it. This achievement is not illusory or temporary, but is eternal and genuine, and there lies the fulfilment of one's life.

The path to the realisation of Sachchidanand Brahma-Parabrahma is the Adhyatm-path.

To turn to Atma and Parmatma, and to face it, is Adhyatm. In simple words, Adhyatm means to revert to one's original place/position. Until a person going for a pilgrimage returns home, his pilgrimage is incomplete, and the person does not feel gratified. Until a soul (jiva) roaming in the kingdom of nature does not settle in its own form (swarup) it cannot attain real peace.

Some do not wish to revert to Adhyatma. They do not wish to master the Brahmvidya. How is it possible to acquire complete immortality, knowledge, strength, freedom, love, beauty and peace?

A young girl does not desire to marry, but desires a father-in-law, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law etc. When she marries, she automatically receives all these relatives. Similarly, if a person realises Brahma-Parabrahma, than all their virtues would automatically come to him. It is ridiculous to refuse to marry but at the same time wish for relatives like sister-in-law etc., same way; it is ridiculous to wish for peace by ignoring Atma-Parmatma.

On studying the complete history of the human race, and also, our own life, one becomes completely convinced that there can never be eternal peace through materialism. All the modern amenities cannot help in overcoming the internal grief. All the modern amenities of entertainment and worldly remedies are not capable of overcoming man's grief. Despite filled with worldly wealth and other amenities, one still experiences emptiness and restlessness in life.

A conscious man experiencing hollowness and restlessness, and desirous of a solution to that, will have to seek the refuge of Adhyatma, he will have to turn to

Adhyatma.

The development of worldly wealth, bodily and inner security, a happy married life with wealth, wife, children, honest and trouble-free life style, philanthropic life style, community service, promoting religion, art, literature, scholarship, science, naturally beauty – none of these can give man the real solution. Not that these things are bad or worthless, but all, or none, of these things combined, are available for life's complete gratitude. The only way for complete and eternal success is Adhyatma.

The sage clearly states in Upnishad:

**Yada Charmvadakasham Veshtyishyanti manavaha: Tada devam-vignaya dukhasyanto Bhavishyatihi | |**

**Meaning:** When men shall cover the sky with leather, then there shall be an end to the mankind's grief without having the realisation of Parmatma (God) (Shwetashwatar Upnishad: 6/20) It is not possible to cover the sky with leather, similarly, it is not possible to bring an end to the pain without having the realisation of Parmatma, because:

**Tamev viditvati-mrutumeti nanyaha pantha vidyate Anay |**

**Meaning:** Only by knowing it, can one overcome death, there is no other path to Liberation. (Shukal Yajurved: 31/18) That is why Yagnavalkay tells Maitreyi:

**Atma va are Drashtavyaha: Shrotayo mantavyo Nididhyasitavyaha: | |**

**Meaning:** The only thing worth seeing, hearing, remembering and memorising is Atma-Parmata. (Brihadaranyak Upnishad: 4/5/6)

Explaining this fact in Vachanamrut III-27, ShrijiMaharaj says:

“I talk about the nature of the Atma and about the nature of God; yet, by merely talking about them one does not experience their bliss as it really is. Their true bliss can only be experienced in Samadhi, or after one leaves the body; but it cannot be experienced by merely talking about it. . . . However, if one does shravan, manna, and nididhyas on these two topics, then one attains realisation. Then after attaining realisation, one enjoys the same experience and bliss as one

does from these two in samadhi. Therefore, after listening to talks concerning these two, one should do manan and nididhyas on those talks.” Thus, to experience and realise Atma-Parmatma or Brahma-Parabrahma, as it is, is the fruit of Brahmvidya. Within it lies the ultimate solution to infinite problems and the experience of eternal peace. That is why, Shree Krishna, has said in Geeta (10/32)

**“-Vidyanam Adhytamvidya”-** This Adhytamvidya is my divine wealth.

Only this Brahmvidya can fill in the vacuum and imperfection in the life and lead one to experience perfection, gratitude, and satisfaction. That is Pramukh Swami Maharaj says

“If one accomplishes Brahmvidya, then that is the end to all the problems and grievances. Everyone will look in the form of Atma, experience God in everyone, feel sympathetic towards all, no evil thoughts will occur of hurting or wishing ill of others, liberate one’s Atma and experience eternal peace.”

We shall now learn about the most important and useful invaluable books in our life: ‘Vachanamrut’ and ‘Swamini Vato.’

## PART 2 - VACHANAMRUT

(In the following pages we shall enjoy the specialities of VACHANAMRUT which contain all the mysteries of BRAHMVIDYA)

Vachanamrut is an invaluable scripture on Brahmvaidya addressed by Bhagwan Swaminarayan. This scripture describes in a simple and clear language all the subjects useful in Brahmvaidya. Here we shall look at the introduction to Vachanamrut and try to understand its importance from different angles.

### 2.1 The aspects of Vachanamrut and the subjects explained therein

#### 2.1.1 The aspects of Vachanamrut:

Written in Gujarati language in prose. Bhagwan Swaminarayan is not the author of this Book. It is not written in His own handwriting but it is addressed by Him to His disciples, Santos and the devotees in different towns and villages in Gujrat.

The Book contains a collection of certain discourses, He stayed in Gujrat for 30 years (Ashadhi Samvat 1856 to Samvat 1886 that is from BC 1800 to 1830) There are not all the discourses, but only those given by Him during His last 10 years (Ashadhi Samvat 1876 to Ashadhi Samvat 1886 that is during BC 1819 to 1830). And even from these discourses, only 273 discourses have been edited in this Book. The number of discourses in Chapter is as shown below:

Gadhada-I	78
Sarangpur	18
Kariyani	12
Loya	18
Panchala	07
Gadhada-II	67
Vadtal	20
Amdavad	03
Gadhada-III	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>273</b>

Thus, there are in all 273 discourses addressed in difference places.

The heading or title of each Vachanamrut is a guidance to the subject matter of the discourse.

In the beginning of each discourse, the first paragraph begins with the name of the town/village, the place, the year, the month, and the time as a proof of its historical authenticity. With that the reader or the listener's mind remains stable and concentrated; there is also a description of divine ShreejiMaharaj's dress with ornaments.

The main discourse begins after this brief description. In some Vachanamruts, ShreejiMaharaj Himself has started addressing the gathering on a certain subject, or, in some Vachanamruts ShreejiMaharaj has started by asking questions, and then by answering them. Sometimes, Santos (saints) and devotees question/answer between themselves. Sometimes, they ask questions and discuss with ShreejiMaharaj. This way, discourse with depth in different styles has been given lightly and simply.

### **2.1.2 The topics covered in the Vachanamrut are spiritual, not mundane or worldly**

The Brahavidya or Paravidya, which is unavoidable for every person in the Universe desiring eternal peace, has been explained here. One expects the Brahavidya to cover all the subjects, but even there, Bhagwan is prime. Other sciences, philosophy and means are no doubt useful to know, understand and gain knowledge of God, but other knowledge without God at the Centre is like a 'Zero' before 'One'.

Therefore, the main accepted fact or the main subject of Vachanamrut is God or Parabrahma Purshottam Narayan, who is achievable and to achieve Him, He Himself is the instrument as well.

In this book Parabrahma is described as divine incarnate, the all-doer, destroyer, and controller, the almighty, perceptible, sagun and nirgun. Also described are His incomparable divinity, greatness, strength, ability, brightness, happiness, and other innumerable virtues.

Also, in this book are described the important features required to know, understand and achieve the very essential form of Aksharbrahma tatva; Jivas and Ishwars who perceive Parabrahma; the various obstacles of maya, and the deeds of Parabrahma such as creation of the universe, salvation and destruction.

In addition, in this book are also described various methods of worshipping Parabrahma by becoming Aksharrup and how to concentrate the mind. There are explanations about how to ever please Him by way of Dharma, Gnan, Vairagya, and Bhakti with knowledge of His greatness, service, and penance.

Also described are the various kinds of obstacles and various ways of getting through them which come in the way of Upasana and worshipping Parabrahma. The effects of different types of kusang, (bad company) and the ways of getting through them are also shown. Also shown are simple ways to overcome kam,(lust) krodh (anger) lobh, (greed) maan (respect) Irshya (Jealousy) matsar( vain pride) moh ,(attach-ment) and dehabhimaan (self-pride). In this way is described the process of the path from Jeevdasha to Brahmashtra-Brahmishthiti without any obstacles and also explained the form of Jivanmukti and Videhmukti.

To correctly understand and follow all of the above spiritual subjects and the means and to realise them in the life, the necessity of Gunatit Satpurush, His endless Greatness and His unparalleled virtues are unavoidable.

To stay happy in this life and beyond, for complete progress in life, for all challenging circumstances, spiritual guidance is available from Vachanamrut. Easy and simple eternal solutions are given in the Vachanamrut for the innumerable problems faced in the daily life. There is an explanation of how to live without fear and pain, with control and equanimity of mind, in various type of obstacles, and of permanent pleasure and joyful brilliant life. All the necessary daily and spiritual values are prescribed in this Book.

From every page of Vachanamrut one can see Brahmvidya from a new angle, new inspiration, strength and encouragement. Every page of this book is full of knowledge and best thoughts. Thus, the Vachanamrut is a distinct, and unique spiritual book revealing the fundamental secrets of many riddles of life, eliminating the deep darkness of maya, and spreading light and upgrading the whole life.

Vachanamrut is the Aksharbrahmatakal bugle (or call) of Parabrahma Purshottam Narayan, the reading or hearing of which one can progress and attain Parabrahma. This talk of Parabrahma Purshottam Narayan is divine nectar.

ShreejiMaharaj served this nectary to His saints and followers graciously and compassionately. One can experience divine and eternal happiness by hearing and listening to this nectar of Parabrahma Purshottam Narayan.

## 2.2 Essence, secrets, and principle of all the scriptures in VACHANAMRUT

We know that there are plenty of religious and spiritual books in Hindu religion on Brahavidya. There is plenty of ancient and modern literature. Much has been written on Adhyatma in the different languages of India from different parts of India in prose and poetry.

It can be said that there is an ocean of such religious and spiritual literature here. There are hundred thousand Shrutis of the 4 Vedas. There are about four hundred and fifty thousand (stanzas) shlokas of the 18 Puranas. There are one hundredred thousand shlokas (stanzas) in the Mahabharata. In addition, different Ramayanas, Up-purana, Up-Veda, Smruti-grantho (books written based on memory) Dharma-grantho (religious books), Darshanik Grantho, and above all, if we add the Bhashyo, Teekao, Vruttio, and discourses, what would the total be?

Who has the time to read, understand and summarise all these volumes? Even if someone has the time then who has the capability or the qualifications to understand their mysteries?

It is impossible to find someone amongst a hundred million people who can find the essence from the innumerable scriptures after reading and digesting them. It is not the ability of an ordinary human being. It is beyond his reach.

Only by contact with an experienced and knowledgeable person of the scriptures can the Jiva find the true path. In the vast desert of sand only the ants can separate 100 grams of sugar from the sand. It is not our ability to do this. Similarly, it is difficult for people like us to find the essence from the innumerable scriptures.

One cannot uncover the mysteries of the scriptures simply by reading, speaking, hearing or remembering; it is easier to read, master and remember the scriptures, but it is difficult to grasp the principles, the underlying opinions and the mysteries of these scriptures, it is said in Mahabharat Van-parva: the essence of the religion is hidden in the cave. Therefore, to discover the truth or the principle substance of the scripture is as difficult as finding a dark object from a deep, dark cave on a dark night.

In Shreeji Maharaj's time, there was a learned Brahmin named Dinanath Bhatt, who knew by heart all the 18,000 stanzas of Shreemad Bhagvat. Once Shreeji

Maharaj asked him. “Bhattji, You know all the 18,000 stanzas (shlokas) , but do you know which shloka relates to salvation?” Bhattji replied: “Maharaj, if you ask me I will recite before you all the 18,000 stanzas, but I don’t know which one relates to salvation.” ShreejiMaharaj told him, “This shloka is in the third canto”. Bhattji said, “Maharaj, in the third canto there are several chapters and hundreds of shlokas. How do I find the one relating to salvation?” Maharaj said: “It is in the 25<sup>th</sup> chapter,” but still Bhattji was unable to find that shloka. Then, Maharaj Himself recited the relevant shloka 20 from the Third canto in Chapter 25, and said “This is the shloka for salvation which Bhagwan Ka pildev had told His mother Devhuti”:

**Prasangam ajram pasham atmnah kavyo viduhu saev sadhu shu kruto moksh dwaram apavrutam (Bhagvat: 3:25/20)**

meaning: Learned people regard attachment/company as a bond for Atma. The door to salvation opens if same type of attachment company is made with SADHUS

On hearing this Dinanath Bhatt said: “Maharaj! Several times I have recited these 18,000 shloka, several times I have recited the story of Shreemad Bhagvat, but I did not know that until You told me just now as to which shloka related to my salvation.” Upon hearing this ShreejiMaharaj said: “The true meaning, substance, principle, and opinion of the scriptures can only be learned from those who are experienced and learned people of the scriptures. It cannot be fathomed or understood by simple mind.”

On the definition of the ‘secret’ Maharaj says in Vachnamrut Gadhada II/39: “Allow Me to tell you the fundamental principle of those 2 cantos. What can be a fundamental principle? It is that which, once explained to even the most learned scholars or scriptural readers or highly intellectual people, they would have to believe it to be absolutely true and would have to agree with it. In no way could they doubt, that this might not be so.” That is what can be called a fundamental principle. (rahasya)

It is very difficult to digest the essence from all the scriptures, and narrate it. What Maharaj has narrated in the Vachnamrut is the principle, the essence, the substance and the secret of all the scriptures.

At a very tender age He had studied at depth the Vedas of Hindu religion, old scriptures, Ramayana, Mahabharat, Smrutigrantho, and the Philosophy from Shad-darshan. He was able to master and understand the mysteries, the essence, and the principles of all these scriptures. At the tender age of only 10 years, he had won the assembly by defeating learned people in Kashi. These learned men, who had spent

their lifetime in the study of ancient scriptures, and were masters in their field, knelt down and accepted defeat against the scriptural knowledge of this small child. What they wondered was how He achieved such mastery over the deep study of the scriptures!

He continued to read all the scriptures even after establishing the Swaminarayan Fellowship. He used to ask His devotees and saints to read them in His presence and then narrate during the reading, the principles, meaning and the secrets of these scriptures.

Not only the depth of His knowledge of the scriptures was like an ocean, but also its spread was also like an ocean, which is evident from the following contexts:

Vach. Gadhada II/1: This is the very essence of all the scriptures, i.e., the Vedas, the Shastras, the Purans, the Itihas etc.... Furthermore, the discourse which I have delivered before you is the fundamental principle of all the scriptures.)

Vachnamrut Gadhada II/8:“The four Vedas, the Sankhya scriptures, the Yoga scriptures, the Dharma-shastras, the 18 Purans, the Mahabharat, the Ramayan, the Narad Panchratra, in fact, all scriptures share the principle that liberation cannot be attained without performing sacrifices.”

Vachnamrut Gadhada II/21:“ all of the scriptures which Vyasji has written regarding the attainment of liberation. The main principle prevalent in all those scriptures, and the only principle for the liberation of the jiva is simply this: The sole creator, sustainer and destroyer of this entire cosmos is God.”

Vachnamrut Gadhada II/28: “ What is this discourse which I have delivered before you?” Well, I have delivered it having heard and having extracted the essence from the Vedas, the Shastras, the Purans and all other words on this earth pertaining to liberation. This is the essence of all essences.

Vachnamrut Gadhada III/10: “From the Vedas, the Purans, the Itihas and the Smritis, I have formed the principle that jiva, maya, Ishwar, Brahma and Parabrahma are all eternal.”

On reading the above contexts of the Vachnamruts, it is clearly evident that the spiritual path which Maharaj has shown us, and whatever spiritual guidance He has given us, is not a fantasy or a fancy of mind, but is the essence of all the scriptures. Whatever is said in the Vachnamrut is not merely a total or a collection from the scriptures, but is the essence of all essences of the scriptures.

In Vachnamrut Gadhada II/11 Maharaj says: “ If one abandons the desire for the fruits related to dharma, arth and kam, and if one performs pious karmas only to please God, than those pious karmas become a form of bhakti and aid in the attainment of liberation.”

In these three lines comes the essence of Geeta’s five Chapters of Sankhya-yog, Gnan-karma-sanyasyog, karma-sanyas-yog, and Bhakti-yog. There are innumerable such Vachnamruts which contain the essence and principles of so many scriptures.

In this way, Vachnamrut is indeed a spiritual book containing the essence, summary and principles of all the scriptures.

## 2.3 Opinions about The Vachanamrut

### 2.3.1 Opinions of the Gunatit Gurus

The Gunatit Gurus have sung the greatness and the glory of the Vachnamrut in no uncertain words. E.g.

- In this Book of Vachnamrut is the very essence of the four Vedas, Khatshastra, and eighteen Purans. (Swamini Vaat 6/19)
- ShreejiMaharaj has given us The Vachnamrut, which contains the essence of all the scriptures, and it contains paramount knowledge. (Brahmaswarup Shastriji Maharaj)
- ShreejiMaharaj has placed in His 262 Vachnamruts all the philosophical knowledge. Arranged His paravani. ShreejiMaharaj has arranged the very essence of all the scriptures. The essence of all the four Vedas is included in it. (Brahmaswarup Yogiji Maharaj)
- Every word is incorporated in the Vachnamrut. There is nothing left untold. No scripture equals it.
- To look for happiness elsewhere (except the Vachnamrut) is an illusion. Maharaj has incorporated in it the essence of the Vedas and Vedants. (Pragat Brahmaswarup Pramukh Swami Maharaj)
- The greatness of the Vachnamrut is illustrated in these words of the Gunatit

Gurus.

### 2.3.2 The opinions of prominent learned personalities

Whoever reads, even once, the Vachnamrut, immediately sees and understands the several specialities in it. Let us see the opinions of some of the well-known and learned personalities:

- If I have to say something about the Vachanamrut in an ornamental language than I would say that it is the Geeta of the nineteenth century Gujarat. I venture to say that the Vachnamrut covers the entire Bharatiya religion and the essence of spiritual effort. **(Raghuvir Chowdhary: Author)**
- Vachanamrut is an extraordinary scripture. Although I have become a literate, but only Shree Swaminarayan has clearly said how difficult or easy a literate's path is. The simplicity (of the Vachnamrut), its clarifications, its logical presentations fascinates, spellbinds its reader; and straightaway goes deep down the heart. There is an answer, a solution, to settle any doubts arising in a person's heart, and it is so satisfactory that there is no place for any doubt.... there is a clear and satisfactory solution for every deep and difficult looking topics. **(Chandravadan C. Mehta – Literary author)**
- Vachnamrut is known and recognised as the main scripture of the Sampradaya. This scripture has already established itself in the topmost position as the most superior scripture of Gujarati ordinary language literature. Not only that, but it will stand alongside the World's topmost religious scriptures. In Vachnamrut is written the principle essence of the sampradaya, but it is not a scripture for debate on philosophy. Whatever few discussions there are on the substance, are noted completely for the religious and spiritual development, which was the only aim of the speaker (Maharaj). Because of this, one can experience in it a special echo. We also see here a beautiful bridging of words with thought. In this large scripture of hundreds of pages you will not find a single unnecessary word or a thought, out of place or context, which is straying away from the original topic. Indeed, the Vachnamrut is an uncommon scripture and establishes Lord Swaminarayan as an Acharya of the highest level. In this scripture, clear principles have been presented in such a simple, but pleasant style that an illiterate person would not find it difficult to follow and a learned person would not find it easy or simple. Overall, the Vachnamrut is so far the best among Hindu scriptures. This one scripture alone is sufficient to introduce Bhagwan Swaminarayan as a model Acharya and preacher. **(Manilal Parekh (Prof. of Religious studies))**

- The Vachanamrut should be regarded as the topmost satshastra (scripture) for the uplift of moral development. The knowledge of several ancient scriptures of India like Upanishad, Geeta, Mahabharat, Ramayan, Panratra is contained in every word of the Vachnamrut upto the brim. From the very beginning to the end of the Vachnamrut, as the reader progresses on the intelligence journey, he is not only impressed with the simple style of the language, but it also leaves an indelible mark on his heart and mind. We can, without any doubt, say that the Vachnamrut holds the foremost position in the literary field of religion and philosophy. In it are shown the practical and effective solutions and answers to the prevalent problems of the modern society. Through the Vachnamrut thousands of people have awoken to the ideals of their life, and have realised the need for the ideal of humanity. Thus, thousands of devotees and saints of the Sampraday are working noncessantly to improve the distressful condition of the modern day society. (**P.B. Vidyarthi. M.A. Ph.D** Professor of Philosophy, Ranchi University)
- The collection of Sahjanand Swami's Vachnamruts, is a gem of the Gujarati language. I feel that a person wishing to spend his life in spiritual thoughts, cannot progress further without considering this gem of a book in the Gujarati language. Anyone studying, remembering and implementing its principles and advices in life cannot remain without progressing. One may hardly find such a small book filled with principles of spirituality and practical tips to realise them. This is the best sample of Gujarati gadya (prose) of that time. Its language is to the point, short, with a single meaning, simple words and short and simple sentences, which can be understood by a common man. Wherever necessary it is amplified by illustrations.
- One will find the use of an appropriate word at the appropriate place. Nowhere will one find doubtful, misleading or suspicious talk. From time to time, one can feel the presence of the Preacher. (**Kishorlal Mashruwala – Gandhian Thinker**)

The uniqueness of the Vachanamrut can be seen from different angles from the above quotes of the learned personalities. Among other scriptures, filled with a wealth of several spiritual properties, The Vachnamrut is like a Kohinoor, Parasmani or a Chintamani. It is the essence of all the scriptures, the heart of Brahmvidya, and the summary of adhyatm-darshan, or spiritual realisation.

## 2.4 The Divine Personality of ShreejiMaharaj, the Preacher of the Vachanamrut

The correctness and authenticity of a book depends on its writer or preacher's confidence, honesty, and trust. A dishonest, half-educated, immoral, and selfish person's preaching, cannot be considered as authentic, as there is a possibility of there being several faults like deceit, suspicion etc.,

There are no such man-made faults in ShreejiMaharaj, the preacher of the Vachanamrut. He is a Preacher for and of People. His personality is unique and above all the living souls. The importance and speciality of the Vachanamrut is because of its preacher, ShreejiMaharaj's Divine personality. Here we shall think of His Divine personality from different angles.

### 2.4.1 ShreejiMaharaj: Supreme God and the cause of all the avatars

The main thing to be understood about ShreejiMaharaj's Divine Personality is that He is the Supreme God, the cause of all the avatars and the Lord of Akshardham, Parabrahma Purushottam Narayan. He is the all-doer and destroyer, the cause of all causes, the controller of all, the granter of all fruits of our karmas, and the granter of liberation. Although being in a human form, He is all powerful, always apart from maya, innocent and divine personality.

He Himself clearly explains His Divine personality in Vachanamrut Gadhada III/38: "That God residing in Akshardham is served by those mukatas with various types of divine articles, and He is always present there to bestow supreme bliss upon those mukatas. It is that same supreme Purushottam Bhagwan who manifests on this earth out of compassion-for the purpose of granting liberation to the jivas. He is presently visible before everyone. He is your Ishtdev, and he accepts your service. In fact, there is absolutely no difference between the manifest form of Purushottam Bhagwan visible before you and the form of God residing in Akshardham; i.e., both are one. Moreover, this manifest form of Purushottam Bhagwan is the controller of all, including Akshar. He is the lord of all of the Ishwars and the cause of all causes. He reigns supreme, and He is the cause of all the avatars. Moreover, He is worthy of being worshipped single-mindedly by all of you." Even Gunatitanand Swami, who knew ShreejiMaharaj closely in all respects, and who exposed His Glory in the Sampraday, says:

- "To understand ShreejiMaharaj as Supreme, the cause of all the avatars, and the cause of all causes." (Swami-ni Vaato: 2/2)

- To clearly understand the Upasana, that, ShreejiMaharaj is the cause of millions of Bhagwans' avatars such as Shri Krishna, Ramchandra, Vasudev, Narnarayan etc., (Swami-ni Vaato: 2/171)
- There is not an iota of doubt that this manifest Purushottam ShreejiMaharaj Sahajanand Swami is the source of all incarnations and is the cause and controller of all. (Swami-ni Vaato: 6/7)

It is clearly evident from these words of ShreejiMaharaj and Gunatitanand Swami that ShreejiMaharaj is Supreme God. It is natural therefore that His words are more authentic. One whom we have to attain,

When one who is available and achievable, Himself explains His form, His philosophy, and the path to attain Him, then, that should be infallible and correct way. There is no possibility of any doubt in the spiritual guidelines indicated by Him.

He being the God, omniscient-ness is the easiest accomplishment for Him. Talking about God's omniscient-ness, Maharaj says in Vachnamrut Gadhada II/53: "God sees all of the jivas and Ishwars who dwell in the countless millions of Brahmands as clearly as He sees a drop of water in His palm."

Clearly indicating His own omniscient-ness He says Vachnamrut Jetalpur 5: "... I know everything about the past, the present and the future. In fact, while sitting here, I know everything that happens; even when I was in My mother's womb, I knew everything; and even before I came into My mother's womb, I knew everything."

Therefore, whatever ShreejiMaharaj, the omniscient, the almighty, and the Supreme, has said in the Vachnamrut, is undoubtedly authentic.

In this way, we have understood the main Divine, beyond universal personality of ShreejiMaharaj that He is the Supreme God, but it is not easy to be convinced that this person traversing the universe in human form is Himself God. It is not easy to understand this fact by logical reasoning without suitability. That is why Maharaj indicates that one must first be convinced of my Supreme-ness and then says in Vachnamrut Gadhada II/13:

"Realise that the form amidst the divine light is this Maharaj visible before you. If you cannot do that, then at least realise, Maharaj sees the form which is amidst that Aksharurp light. Even if you can understand this much, you will be able to maintain affection for Me. As a result, you will attain ultimate liberation."

In this respect, ShreejiMaharaj says two things, which can lead to the liberation of jivas. For those people, who accept Him as Purushottam Narayan, the first choice is the best. But for those people, who do not accept Him as Supreme God, in order that they also benefit or for their good, ShreejiMaharaj offers another alternative.

It is necessary for those people who cannot or do not accept ShreejiMaharaj as Supreme God, to think about Maharaj's Divine and extra-ordinary personality so that they may have faith in Maharaj's words. ShreejiMaharaj is an extra-ordinary spiritual personality. He has complete experience of spiritual-realisation. As He has proper realisation of atma-parmatma He is fully qualified and capable to talk in simple language on topmost spiritual philosophy and the simplest way to achieve it. Anyone desirous of salvation or liberation firmly believes in ShreejiMaharaj's Divine personality, then he will believe His words to be true, he will have complete faith and trust. Now, we shall consider some facts of ShreejiMaharaj's super-natural personality.

#### **2.4.2 ShreejiMaharaj: Experienced and the complete knower of BRAHMVIDYA**

The authenticity of a person's words on any topic depends on his/her complete knowledge or mastery and experience of the topic. How much can we believe if an engineer lectures on bye-pass surgery? Perhaps, one may hear it, but who will trust him and go to him for a bye-pass surgery? Or who will go to a heart-surgeon to get his house's design? No-one as they not only lack knowledge in those topics but also lack in experience.

Similarly, one cannot trust on someone talking about Brahavidya who has no deep knowledge or experience of the topic. ShreejiMaharaj is not such a Preacher.

The preacher of Brahavidya, ShreejiMaharaj is not merely a knower of its fundamental principles and the scriptures associated with it, but also have experienced Brahavidya. That is why, one may not find Him talking about simply reading from the scriptures, or something thought out, remembered or arranged by Him. His talks are those of His own experience.

An extraordinary intelligent person and one possessing acute memory may, after reading/cramming, editing and arranging the scriptures, be able to talk logically, but it is possible that he does not have the experience of spirituality. He may not have tried to put into practice the talks of the scriptures in his life. He may not have walked even a step towards the realisation of spirituality.

Mere reading of the scriptures does not do any good to any one. Explaining this, Shreeji Maharaj says in Vachanamrut:

- Gadhada I/18: “The matter is such that only one who understands it, and acts exactly according to it will become a mukta. Otherwise, even by listening to, or studying and understanding the meanings of the four Vedas, six Shastras, eighteen Purans, and the Mahabharat and other Itihas scriptures, one cannot become a mukta.”
- Gadhada I/50: “Others may know the precise meanings of the various Shastras, Purans and Itihas scriptures, yet they too do nothing to safeguard their liberation.”

Albeit the knowledge of the scriptures is essential in Brahavidya, if one does not live as per scriptures directives, then that knowledge of the scriptures does not help towards liberation. That is why, explaining the true definition of the knowledge, Shreeji Maharaj says in Vachanamrut Loya 7: “knowing God perfectly means knowing the manifest form of God through the indriyas, the antahkaran, and experience. Only then can one be said to possess perfect gnan. However, if anyone of these three types of gnan is lacking, one cannot be said to have realised ultimate gnan, nor can one overcome the cycle of births and deaths.”

Thus, if unpractical, inexperienced and immature knowledge cannot do any good to the person himself, what good can it do others? The talks of Brahavidya, without self-experience, even if they are backed by logics, intelligent arguments, contexts and incidents, instead of guiding a true aspirant on the correct path, they will only mislead him and destroy him. More harm than good comes from listening to such talks.

The Preacher of the Vachanamrut, Shreeji Maharaj, is not only the expert-knower of the scriptures, but He is also an experienced person of Brahavidya i.e., spiritual upliftment. He has not talked simply by arranging the words of scriptures on the strength of his intelligence, but has implemented them in His life and after gaining experience, has talked about them. He Himself talks about it:

- Vachanamrut Gadhada II/13: “This discourse is based in what I have seen and realised through My own experience. ...this principle, which I have revealed before you is the very essence of all of the scriptures, and it is My own experience. I have talked to you having seen it with My own eyes. In fact, I swear by all of you paramhansas that I have seen these facts with My own

eyes.”

- Vachanamrut Gadhada III/39: “I deliver these discourses 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. Outwardly, I may have a great deal of contact with women, wealth and panchvishayas. In fact, wherever I go-Surat, Amdavad, Vadodara, Vartal, etc., thousands of people gather, they obey Me, honour Me, and welcome Me with great fanfare. There I stay in luxurious places and receive rich clothes, vehicles etc., Despite all of this, whenever I look towards My atma, and towards the greatness of God, it all seems absolutely insignificant. I cannot become attached to any of it. In fact, I become oblivious to it all, just as one is oblivious to one’s past lives. The reason I can behave in such manner is that I have thoroughly realised the afore-mentioned two topics.”

The meaning of the above two contexts is that whatever Maharaj says is after realising and experiencing the spiritual talks in His own life. Despite He Himself being Purushottam Narayan, for the good of general public, common men and future followers He remained as an ideal aspirant, because when an emancipated person begins self-realisation, His ideals of an aspirant becomes live. An aspirant can, by looking at Him, observe and test his own progress. A living person’s ideals can be more effective than thousands of words of advice. Maharaj has done this self-realisation to kindle this faith in the hearts of the aspirants, so that one may reach the topmost position with this human body on the way to self-realisation and Maharaj has also talked about it. That is why, by His Grace, His self-realisation has appeared in the Vachanamrut very nicely. Whatever virtues required in an ideal (adarsh) aspirant can be seen in His personality.

Before talking further about Maharaj’s self-realisation, let us once again understand very clearly that His self-realisation was not to be free from maya or to become a siddha. His being worshipped or regarded as Bhagwan is not because of his becoming a siddha by self-realisation. Since eternity He is Himself independently Purna Purushottam Narayan. That is why whenever Maharaj has talked about His self-realisation efforts, the editing paramhansas of the Vachnamrut have made it specifically clear that His talks about self-realisation are for teaching the devotees, otherwise He Himself is Purna Purushottam Narayan present.(Vachnamrut Gadhada I/44, Loya 14, Gadhada II/55,and Gadhada III/30)

Also, Gunatitand Swami, who understood Maharaj’s opinion and the meaning behind His words, says in Vaato Swaamini Vaato)

“M aharaj has described His own human behaviour but it should be

understood as that of His Mukta, and Purushottam and His divine above Akshar, both are above that kind of human behaviour and do not attribute any human traits to them.” (Swamini Vaato 5/146)

Thus, from the clarifications made by the editors of the Vachanamrut and Gunatitanand Swami, we can confidently say that whatever Maharaj’s sadhana (self-realisation) and his talks about it are only for the ideals of the aspirants, but He Himself is pragat Purushottam Narayan.

Now, we shall consider some of the virtues easily attributed and proved in ShreejiMaharaj’s Divine life, which can be useful to any aspirant for achieving his goal.

### ❖ Acute penance and complete disregard for Body

It is necessary for any aspirant seeking self-realisation to have penance, sacrifice and complete disregard for body. A person who is constantly busy in worldly comforts and caring for his body cannot progress on the path of self-realisation. A person who steps back from his path thinking of hardships and bodily discomforts cannot achieve anything. ShreejiMaharaj, by going through acute discomforts and penance in His life, has given correct inspiration to others. Talking about how He preferred penance in his childhood, He says in Vachanamrut Kariyani 3:

“ I had the same thoughts as Kartik Swami; i.e., I felt, ‘I want to eliminate all of the remnants of my mother- her flesh and blood – from my body.’ So, after many spiritual endeavours I emaciated My body so much that if something pierced My body, water would come out, but never blood. ”

Maharaj, at the tender age of only 11 years left home. Despite acute discomforts and many difficulties, He continued his forest-journey for seven years. During this journey He has suffered unbearable cold, torrential rains and acute heat like fire. He travelled through mountains, valleys, deep forests, crossed stormy rivers, sometimes without food or water for several days. He was not afraid to face wild animals and poisonous snakes. He suffered acute cold and discomfort during His penance for four months in Pulhashram. He says in Vachanamrut Gadhada I/29:23 “ While staying in Purushottampuri, I spent many months surviving merely on air. On one occasion, I allowed My body to be carried away by a river that was three or four gaus wide. During the winter, summer and monsoon, I stayed without any shelter whatsoever, wearing only a loincloth.”

Because of His intense desire for spiritual salvation, longing, and unwavering faith, He accomplished the ashtangyog only within one year, which is difficult for great Yogis to accomplish even after intense and acute penance of several years. Gopal Yogi could not have found a better disciple who literally crushed His body and mind to accomplish the astangyog.

After finishing His van-vicharan (roaming through the forests) and arriving in Loj, after a few months, writing to Ramanand Swami about His acute penance, He says:

“Tapa karun chhun kathan tane, nathi molo hun padato mane; Baar-e maas chomasa-na jeh, karun dharana parana hun the, Varsho-varas Kaartik maas, karun chhun samata upvaas; Vali e maas-ma koik same, karun kruchh-vrat-ne te aame,

Tyar pachhi Maagh maas maay, karun parak-krutchh kahevaay; Chandrayan ekdashi layi, sarve vrat karun chhun hun sai, Krushna prasann karavane kaaj; enu dukh mane nathi Maharaj; Panch-vishay-thi man uteri, karun chhun tapa kathan bhaari, Tene kari-ne sharer-mai, lohi maans gayun chhe sukai;

Pran rahya tani ek reet, nathi raakhi men chintavyu chitt. (Bhaktachintamani: Chapter 42/11-15)

After reading these words of Maharaj, one may get a glimpse of His liking and insistence for penance. Even after several years, He says in Vachanamrut Loya14:

“In fact, I feel that it would be very good to go to **Shwetdwip** and **Badrikashram** and perform austerities without any food.”

### ❖ Zeal for renunciation

Talking about his zeal for renunciation Maharaj says:

- Vachanamrut Kariyani 10: “A person who has great zeal in an endeavour would never be hindered, even if he were to face thousands of obstacles. That should be known to be true zeal. Just see, it has been 21 years since I first met Ramanand Swami. During this period I have come across countless devotees who have been offering, a countless variety of clothes, jewellery, food and drinks etc. Despite this, My mind has never been tempted by any of those objects. Why? Because I have zeal only for renunciation.”
- Vachanamrut Gadhada II/33: “Even though I am insistently offered the panchvishayas without actually wishing for them Myself. I still do not have any desire for them. In fact, I push them away.”

Because of intense and firm zeal for renunciation in His life, He left the worldly life without any temptations. His renunciation was natural, self-motivated, since birth, and detached. One can enunciate at an old age after enjoying the worldly pleasures but to enunciate at such a young age despite being in touch with worldly pleasures is not a child's play. But still by leaving home and treading on the path of intense self-realisation, Ghanshyam (ShreejiMaharaj) has provided a glaring example to the future generation. Sometimes, one may leave home in a hurry, rage, or intoxication, but when difficult circumstances arise, when faced with mental and bodily hardships, when best of worldly pleasures tempt, such enunciations evaporate. Ghanshyam's resolve was firm. Ghanshyam left home taking Nilkanth as His name. Ignoring the intense heat and cold, without caring for hunger and thirst, unafraid of wild animals, He arrived at the monastery of Shripur. The annual income of the Mahant of this monastery was said to be Rupees one hundred thousand. When the Mahant tempts Him by offering to appoint Him as his successor, He replies: "Why would I leave home if I had expectations of wealth or the ashram? I wish to give salvation to innumerable souls by going to the pilgrimages."

One can see in this reply, His intoxication of detachment-renunciation and the humble desire to salvage innumerable souls.

Nilkanth's mission was clear. That is why He was not tempted by offers of wealth, women and authority. Thus travelling, he arrived in Vanshipur city. The king, the queen and their two daughters, were all serving Nilkanth. Giving them the benefit of serving Him, he decides to proceed further. The King and the Queen beg Him to stay there and offer Him their Kingdom and both their daughters. Declining their offer Nilkanth tells them "I have not come here to be tied down in your kingdom or your daughters. I am born to relieve countless souls from the bonds of nature and illusions."

After giving these devotees the benefit of His service, one night Nilkanth leaves them sleeping; but is not tempted in the authority of the Kingdom, its wealth or their daughters. Nilkanth knows very well the difficulties He has already faced so far in the van-vicharan, and what He will be facing further. If He did not have the deep desire for renunciation, he would have been tempted in the worldly pleasures of the kingdom.

During His seven years of van-vicharan, He had declined the offers of becoming the mahant or a head of so many monasteries, He firmly stuck to his mission and declined the humble offers of King Siddhvallabh, the King of Sirpur

and also the Nepalese King of Butolnagar, King Mahadutt, and so many such kings to offer their everything at his feet.

Even after coming to Gujarat and taking over the reign of the Fellowship (Sampradaya), He declined the offer of the Kingdom of Dharampur of 500 towns by its queen Kushalkunvarba. His mission was not to rule people but to rule the hearts of the people by transforming their lives and give them a clear vision of atma-parmatma. He did not need kingdoms for this.

The above utterances of ShreejiMaharaj and by looking at some of the incidents of his life, one can get a glimpse of His zeal for renunciation.

### ❖ Readiness to serve

Maharaj has advised everyone through His life that in an aspirant's life, the desire to serve humanity should also be developed together with penance, detachment and disregard for body. It is said in Nitishatak that

### **seva dharmah paramgahano yoginampyagamyaha (58)**

The service of humanity, which is incomprehensible and unobtainable even by the paramhansas and Yogis, was second nature to Maharaj. Even when Maharaj was home, He had served His parents whole-heartedly. Also during His van-vicharan (travel through the forests) wherever necessary He had served deserving people in so many instances.

He Himself has narrated the incident of His service to Sevakram in Vachnamrut Gadhada I/10:

“Once, when I was travelling from Venkatadri to Set ubandh Rameshwar, I encountered a sadhu by the name of Sevakram. He had studied the Shrimad Bhagwat and the other Purans. But it so happened that during his journey, he fell ill. He had a thousand rupees worth of gold coins with him, but since he had no one to nurse him, he began to cry. I consoled him, saying, ‘Do not worry about anything: I shall serve you.’

On the outskirts of the village was a banana grove which had a banyan tree within which a thousand ghosts lived. Because that sadhu had become extremely ill and was unable to walk any further, I felt extreme pity for him. I prepared a bed of banana leaves one-and-a-half feet high under that banyan tree. As the sadhu was

suffering from dysentery and was passing blood, I would wash him and attend to him.

The sadhu would give Me enough of his money to buy sugar, ghee and grains for himself. I would bring the ingredients, cook them, and then feed him. As for Myself, I would go to the village for My meals. On some days, when I did not receive any food from the village, I had to fast. Despite this, that sadhu never once said to Me, “I have enough money. Cook for both of us so that You may dine with me.”

After serving the sadhu for two months in this way, he began to recover. Thereafter, as we walked towards Setubandh Rameshwar, he made Me carry his belongings weighing about 20 kgs, whereas he would walk with only a rosary in his hand. By then, he was healthy and capable of digesting half a kilogram of ghee, yet he would make Me carry his load while he walked empty-handed. In actual fact, My nature was such that I would not keep even a handkerchief with Me. But respecting him as a sadhu, I walked carrying his belonging weighing 20 kilograms. Thus I served that sadhu and helped him recover.”

In this incident of the service to Sewakram, one can clearly see ShreejiMaharj’s zeal for service, endurance, non-arrogance, honesty, the ability to recognise the person opposite, and to serve others by cooperation, etc., virtues of an ideal worker developing in Him.

After arriving in Loj, in the beginning, for nine months, He carried out even the smallest task with enthusiasm. He joined whole-heartedly in such humble tasks like running sadavrats, to bag alms, collect dung and make dung-cakes, to fetch water from the vav (deep well with steps), wash saints’ clothes, serve the sick saints, and clean the monastery. One can see from His words in Vachnamrut Gadhada II/63 that even after several years His zeal to serve humanity had remained unabated: “Then I thought, much better than behaving as the atma is to stay within the fellowship of God and his devotees. I then became afraid, ‘What if by behaving as the atma, I cannot return to this body again? Thus, to stay within the fellowship of God and His devotees and thus be able to serve them in whichever way possible is indeed the very best spiritual endeavour.”

Here Maharaj says that he considers serving is being better than atma’s happiness. That is why Maharaj prefers to stay in the service of the devotees rather than behaving as atma. That is why he says in Vachanamrut Gadhada III/21:

“ I do not stay amidst thousands of people out of any self-interest: It is for the sake of God and His devotees that I stay in the midst of people. In fact, no matter how much pravritti I may have to engage Myself in for the same of the devotees of God, I still consider it to be nivritti.”

His zeal to serve the devotees is apparent from these words He has uttered in in Vachanamrut Gadhda II/28: “In order to please God, I desire only to serve devotees of God in this life and all subsequent lives. Furthermore, just as this is my resolution, all of you should also make the same resolution. ”

### ❖ Eagerness to listen to spiritual discourses

In a spiritual aspirant’s life, together with good virtues like penance, detachment, austerity, and renunciation, sometimes hidden defects like ego, jealousy, vain pride also manage to enter. Therefore, it is essential to have, together with penance, self-restraint, and seva, also virtues like knowledge and understanding. It is essential to listen to spiritual discourses to strengthen the understanding. The words of discourses, keep an aspirant constantly awake to the dangers lying in his path. They supplement his faith, patience, and courage, so that, in difficult times his sadhana does not fall back. Also, by listening to the spiritual discourses, one’s goal in life becomes clear and stable, gains the true knowledge of atma-parmatma, understands the shuddha upasana, knows the true ideals of self-realisation, so that his efforts become easy and free of all obstacles. That is why Maharaj has taught us this lesson of sadhana through His Life.

He says in Vachnamrut Gadhada II/55 that from His early child-hood He liked to listen to spiritual discourses. In addition to daily studying and reading the scriptures, He also used to visit different temples in Ayodhya to listen to the spiritual discourses being held there. In spite of Himself being the portrait of gnan, (knowledge) He has always remained glued to studies and discourses. Despite knowing the secrets of the scriptures in His palm , He often used to hear from the paramhansas or Pragji Purani Him Shreemad Bhagwat, and chapters from Moksha-dharm. Once when in Kariyani He made Pragji Purani read before Him the complete Bhagwat seven times. His liking for listening one such scripture intently and with so much interest several times, shows His affection towards these scriptures.

In Vachnamrut Gadhada II/49, He speaks about His ever unsatisfied quench for listening to the scriptures:

“My mind never becomes satiated with spiritual discourses, devotional songs, talks related to God or meditation of God. All of you should also do the same.”

### ❖ Thoughtfulness

Many aspirants do several types of difficult sadhanas continue during their whole life. Some spend their whole lives in the caves of Girnar, or on the cliffs of Himalaya by leaving their homes. Some crush their bodies by penance, detachment and disregard of their bodies and some do pilgrimages on foot, some do pilgrimages by prostrations, and some continue roaming the pilgrimages. Some continue scripture reading during their whole lifetime, whilst some do rosary. Some insist on observing religious vows and rules whilst some have a great liking for human service. Some do a variety of yogic sadhan, whilst some believe in the motto ‘human service is God’s service’ continue to serve the society up to their neck. So many such sadhanas continue to be performed. But despite this, there does not appear to be any internal transformation in the lives of these aspirants. Addictions cannot be got rid of, the liking for worldly pleasures and infatuations are not decreased, nor has the defects such as sexual pleasures experience been eradicated. There does not appear any reduction in the activities of ego or jealousy, as a result, they do not experience divine peace.

Some have progressed by a variety of sadhana, reached a certain level of spiritual height, but a push of maya throws them to the very bottom of sadhana’s Himalayan cliff. The reason for such happening is because in the sadhana (enlistment) related to the body, thinking process has not been involved. Such sadhana merely becomes materialistic or bodily. Therefore, one does not get the real and utmost benefit of sadhana. Bharatji (King Bharat) could enunciate his kingdom but got involved himself in a deer. As a result, instead of achieving the fruit of his penance and detachment-the ultimate salvation-in his next reincarnation, he had to take the next birth as a deer because of his attachment in the deer.

In the end, if penance-renunciation is diverted to detachment, body restraints to atma-nishtha, and service, spiritual discourses and singing of hymns to parabhakti, then only all these mediums can be fruitful. For that, one has to think constantly of God’s upasana, atma’s form, and the destructive properties of the universe. By introspection, and regarding our habits as our enemies, by thinking God’s glory, and by destroying our likings for vishayas, one has to try and establish God and our love for Him within our hearts.

Thus, it can be clearly understood that together with bodily efforts, it is also very important to make mental efforts as well. We can see and learn from Maharaj's life how the highest ideal of a sadhak combined with a thoughtful sadhana should be. By studying the complete Vachanamrut we can clearly see that Maharaj's nature was thoughtful and introspective.

In sadhana, how one should think of atma and God's glory, and the perishable nature of the universe, Maharaj, citing His own experience, says:

Vachanamrut Gadhada II/55 "The following thought is constantly in my mind. When a person is laid down on his death-bed with death impending, everyone loses their self-interest in that person. The mind of the person who is dying also becomes dejected from worldly life. In the same way, I also constantly regard each and every worldly object to be perishable and insignificant."

Vachanamrut Gadhada II/35: "Amidst the activities of all my indriyas, I do not lose awareness as the atma for even a moment."

Vachanamrut Panchala 1: "When I think of this bliss of the abode of that God, I become indifferent to all other forms of happiness, and I feel, 'When will I leave this body to experience that bliss?' Moreover, when I naturally indulge in the panchvishayas, I entertain no particular thought; but, if I were to sense some pleasure in an object, My thoughts would immediately be diverted to the bliss of God, and My mind would become extremely indifferent."

One can enunciate the world, its objects and the panchvishayas, but without these three thoughts, the attachment from these objects does not go whereas, in Shreeji Maharaj's life, these three thoughts are easily entwined.

In this world, as People do sadhana without thinking, so do people write and say about spirituality without thinking or studying. Many preachers, after reading from, or remembering something from the scriptures, keep talking about it, but, without proper and deep thinking they cannot fathom the mysteries of the scriptures. In this respect, Shreeji Maharaj is an extraordinary preceptor. Whatever He talks about Brahmvidya, He deeply thinks about it and only then does He advise us. This unique attribute of His is evident from His own words in:

- Vachanamrut Panchala 2: "while you were singing, I thought over the principles of both sankhya and Yoga. Please listen as I explain . . ."
- Vachanamrut Gadhada II/62. "Since the day I began considering over it, I have noticed that . . ."

- Vachanamrut Gadhada II/64: “ after listening to and analytically pondering over all of the scriptures written by Vyasji, . . .”

ShreejiMaharaj’s thoughtful nature can be seen in the above contexts. He has said very thoughtfully whatever he has seen. Not only that, but only after implementing and experimenting those thoughts in His life, has he expressed these thoughts to and for the benefit of His listeners.

### ❖ **Becoming free of worldly desires: Innocence**

The fruit of true and complete sadhana is becoming free of worldly desires and innocence. There are many who do spiritual sadhana, but in the end, how many achieve the highest level? Even after commencing hard austerities and vows some have fallen back due to desires and some because of anger. Some have been defeated by greed, and some have been conquered by indriyas. Some have been entrapped by attachment and some by enmity. Glued towards panch-vishayas and desire etc., the inner enemy have entangled great men and made them fall from the path of self-realisation. These defects have brought them to their heels in their sadhana. Amongst those who have fallen from their sadhana because of these defects, to name a few, are Vishwamitra, Parashar, Ekalshrungi, Chyavan, Naradji, Saubhari, Bharatji, and Vashishtha, etc., whose examples can be seen in the purans.

- From the above examples, it is clear that one can give up his wife, but it is difficult to give up the desire for sexual happiness. It is easy to give up wealth but difficult to give up greed. One can leave his relatives, but difficult to leave get out from the tangles of affection. One can cover his body by ash, but difficult to burn the ego. One may dissolve his body in the Himalayas, but not the body-consciousness. Giving up internal passion requires perfection of real sadhana. Without completely destroying the seeds of passion of vishayas, there is every possibility of these seeds growing again. So, without true sadhana neither does the vasana (desires) vanish nor does the passion destroyed. ShreejiMaharaj has established the principle of non-desire (nirvasanik) and innocent (nirdosh) state from His life for the benefit of those sadhaks treading on the path of true sadhana. Talking of His highest level of spiritual state He Himself says in:
- Vachanamrut Kariyani 6: “ As for Me, not even the slightest bit of lust, anger, avarice, egotism, matsar, or jealousy enters My heart. Also, in My heart I experience a strong aversion for the panchvishayas, namely, sights, sounds, smells, tastes and touch. In fact, I do not have slightest interest in any one of the panchvishayas.”

- Vachnamrut Gadhada II/13: “I remain naturally in a state in which even if I wished to engross My mind in the most charming sounds, the most charming touch, the most charming smells, the most charming tastes and the most charming sights of this world, I could do not do so. I remain absolutely dejected towards them.”
- Vachnamrut Gadhada II/33: “I swear by the lives of these Paramhansas that 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. Thus I am eternally flawless.

One can glimpse from the above words of ShreejiMaharaj His very clean, innocent and personality. It is extremely difficult to find in this world a person who can talk with such a pure mind by staying aloof from the worldly stigma. Such rare, wonderful and unique was the personality of ShreejiMaharaj.

#### ❖ Equality and stable intelligent mind

It is easy to lecture and write articles and pen volumes on equality and stability of mind; but only a rare person can remain stable in those conditions. One is convinced from ShreejiMaharaj’s these words that for Him such a state was natural and normal.

Talking about His such a state, He says in Vachanamrut Gadhada II/13:

“... all of the attractive vishays and the repulsive vishays are the same to Me. Also, a king and a beggar are the same to Me. Further, to rule all the realms and to beg for food carrying a broken begging bowl are the same to me. Even sitting with honour on an elephant and walking on feet are the same to Me. Whether someone honours Me with sandalwood paste, flowers, fine clothes and ornaments or throws dirt on Me—all are the same to Me. Whether someone praises Me or insults Me—both are same to Me. Gold, silver, diamonds and refuse are all the same to Me.”

From the numerous incidents of His entire life one is convinced of the truthfulness of His words of being able to remain stable with intelligent mind and equality even during difficult times.

#### ❖ Realisation of *atma-parmatma*

ShreejiMaharaj’s non-desire of worldly objects, innocence, equality, and a stable minded state, is not up to the mental state; but is related to the realisation of atma-

parmatma.

Sometimes, one may have given up the vishays mentally or bodily, but when coming in contact again with the vishays it will again bind. If the roots of vishays are attached to the jiva, as long as it has no contact of the vishays, or very repulsive vishays, it may appear innocent and non-desirous of worldly happiness; but whenever it comes in contact of the vishays then it is bound to cause attachment. As explained earlier, Narad and other greats, before coming in contact with the vishays, looked normal, but when came in contact with vishays, they too fell to the temptations, because the seeds of the vishays lay deeply invisible within them.

All these great Samadhi-nishths had renounced bodily, they had penance and bodily disregard, but without the realisation of atma-parmatma they were dislodged when faced with very bad circumstances (deshkaal) or because of coming in contact with the vishays.

Citing the examples of these greats, Maharaj says that without self-realisation there are possibilities of obstacles:

Vachnamrut Gadhada I/23: “As long as one has not attained this elevated spiritual state, one is subject to obstacles, even if one is a devotee of God. Shivji, for example, did not behave in such an elevated spiritual state and therefore enticed by the beauty of Mohini. Brahma also did not behave in such a state and thus became infatuated on seeing Saraswati. Naradji also did not behave in such an elevated spiritual state and consequently harboured a desire to marry. Moreover, because Indra, Chandra and others were not behaving in such a state, their reputations were also blemished due to their mistakes.”

Inspite of coming in contact with vishays, ShreejiMaharaj remained untouched and aloof like the sky. Explaining this, He says:

Vachnamrut Gadhada II/56: “... it seems to Me that My position is better, in the sense that regardless of the extent of adverse circumstances that I may encounter, in no way will My antahkaran ever be affected.”

Vachnamrut Gadhada II/33: “The day when I feel that I have developed affection for something other than the devotee of God, I will consider Myself as having been dislodged from My spiritual status. However, I am confident that that would never happen.”

From the above contexts, it is clear that Maharaj’s state of non- desire

(nirvasanik) will not rust due to bad circumstances (deshkaal).

It will not ebb. When can this be possible? If He Himself is Purushottam Narayan who is above maya. (Vach. Gadhada I/13 and II/4) or He has realisation of atma-parmatma. (Vach. Gadhada I/23, and II/30) only then it is possible to achieve such a state of aloofness. Here, some may not accept Maharaj as God, but one has to clearly believe the fact that He had achieved the realisation of atma-parmatma.

Stating that the secret of His such a state of non-desire and equality is the realisation of atma-parmatma, He says in Vachanamrut Gadhada II/13: “So what is the cause of My behaving like this? Well, it is because My indriyas, vruttis, constantly remain inverted towards My hrudayaksh. In that hrudayaksh I see extremely luminous divine light. Just as during the monsoon season, clouds cover the entire sky, similarly, only that light pervades My heart. Amidst, that divine light I see the extremely luminous form of God. The form is dark, but due to the intensity of the light, it appears to be rather fair, not dark...I see that form in the incarnate form before Me at this very moment.”

Because Maharaj has such a realisation, He says in Vachanamrut Gadhada I/64 and II/13: “I have talked to you having seen it with My own eyes.”

Up to now, to understand the importance and the reliability of Vachanamrut, we have looked at its narrator, ShreejiMaharaj’s spiritual and above this world personality’s different facets. As explained before, in the spiritual personality, He is supreme of all the avatars and the Lord of Akshardham Purna Purushottam Narayan. Even then, until one is not convinced in His form, if we consider His unparalleled and unique personality impartially, there can be no doubt about the authenticity of His words.

## 2.5 The purpose of ShreejiMaharaj’s discourses

### 2.5.1 ShreejiMaharaj’s blissful life

Behind every spiritual discourse, there is always a hidden selfishness to gain wealth, women, or fame. But in the advice given by ShreejiMaharaj there is no such self-interest. His manifestation on the earth was for the liberation of infinite jivas. In Vachanamrut Jetalpur 5, He says: “It is for the liberation of jivas that I have manifested along with this sadhus.” and, clarifying the purpose of His manifestation, He states further “mera yeh avatar hai so jivoku brahmarup karake atyantik mukti

dene ke vaste aksharatit Purushottam jo hum wah manushya jaisa banya hun. ( My birth on this earth is to give ultimate liberation to jivas by making them brahmarup, that I, Purshotum Narayan, have come in the human form. ”

For the bliss of jivas, He gave up worldly life and roamed in the forests. Although He preferred to stay in the forests, He stayed in the midst of thousands of people only for the sake of God and His devotees. (Vachanamrut Gadhada III/21)

Maharaj has not only changed His natural liking for the sake of devotees and persons desirous of spiritual salvation, but He has sacrificed His whole life. In Vachanamrut Kariyani 6, He says: “I have sacrificed My body for the sake of those who are devotees of God, by thought, word and deed. I keep this physical body for the sake of satsangis, there is no other reason besides that.”

Maharaj not only kept His physical body, and sacrificed it for the satsangis, but has begged their pains for Himself. In Vachanamrut I/70 and Jetalpur 5 He says: “ I have asked of Ramanand Swami ‘If your satsangis is destined to suffer the distress inflicted by the sting of one scorpion, may the distress of the stings of millions of scorpions befall each and pour of my body but no pain should afflict your satsangi. Moreover, if the begging bowl is written in the prarabdh of your satsangi, may the begging bowl come to me; but on no account should your satsangi suffer from the lack of food and clothing. Please grant these two boons!’ ”

Maharaj, who is ready to suffer the pain from millions of scorpions for the sake of satsangis, what self-interest could He have from the satsangis? If His coming on the earth, to be born in human form, to roam in the forests, to remain in close contact with millions of satsangis, to sacrifice His whole life, bag the pains and distresses of the satsangis, to accept their food and clothes, all these were simply for the good of jivas, for their liberation, then naturally. Whatever he has said could only be for their liberation.

### **2.5.2 Discourses only for the bliss of the jivas**

One can see that each and every discourse of ShreejiMaharaj is for the bliss of jiva. Expressing His good sentiments He says:

Vachanamrut Gadhada II/13. “ What I am about to say to you, I say, not out of any pretence, or out of any self-conceit, or to spread My own Greatness. Rather, it is because I feel that amongst all of you sadhus and devotees, if someone can understand My message, it will tremendously benefit that person, that is the only

purpose in narrating it....I have absolutely no selfish expectations from My paramhansas and satsangis The only reason I may call someone, rebuke someone, or send someone away is that if by any means one realises this fact it will be very beneficial to them. So all of you should firmly imbibe this discourse.”

Gadhada II/35: “All of you have faith in Me. If I were to mislead with unfounded talks, it would amount to throwing all of you into a well and sealing it with a stone slab so that there would be no hope of escape. However, because of your faith in My words, you are misled along the wrong path, then of what good would that be to Me? Thus, these discourses are for the sake of your liberation. I have told you this out of affection for all of you, as now all of you should understand it and strictly live by it.”

Gadhada II/45: “All of you munis, brahmcharis, satsangi householders, parshads, and Ayodhyavasis are said to be Mine. So if I was not vigilant in having all of you behave accordingly, and if you were to then behave waywardly, I would not be able to bear this. In actual fact, I do not want even the slightest imperfection to remaining in those who are said to be Mine. However, you should also remain very vigilant, because if you allow even a little carelessness, your footing in Satsang will not last.

Furthermore, as you are devotees of God, I do not wish to leave any form of improper swabhav within your hearts. Nor do I wish to allow any trace of any of maya’s three gunas, ten indriyas, ten prans, four antahkarans, five bhuts, panchvishayas, and the deities of the 14 realms to remain. Instead, I wish to make all of you such that you offer bhakti to God realising your true form to be the atma, which is characterised by eternal existence and is free from all of these mayik flaws.”

His vigilance for the satsangis not to retain any vasana or Swabhav can be realised from His introductory words in Vachanamrut Gadhada I/18: Three hours before sunrise on Maghsar vadi 6, Samvat 1876, He woke up and summoned the paramhansas and satsangis from their sleep. He sat engrossed in thought for sometime. Then said: “I wish to tell all of you something, so please listen. 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, otherwise, even by listening to, or studying and understanding the meaning of the four Vedas, six Shastras, eighteen Purans, and the Mahabharat, one cannot become a mukta. I shall now talk about that matter, so please listen.”

From the above words of ShreejiMaharaj, can be seen His compassion and His noble desire to liberate jivas. That is why, whenever, wherever, whoever, and whatever, He has talked to, He had no self-interest in them. He has talked only for the liberation of the jivas, His intention was not to deceive any one or make someone unhappy.

### 2.5.3 Insistance for pure action for the liberation of *jivas*

ShreejiMaharaj constantly worried for the liberation of his followers. That is why he has always insisted for pure action and behaviour by them. He has continuously advised in Vachnamrut for them to control their indriyas and antahkaran, and to observe the panchvartaman. Let us see some contexts:

Gadhada I/8: “If the vruttis of the indriyas are directed towards women and other vishyayas, then one’s antahkaran becomes polluted and one falls from his path of liberation. Therefore, one should indulge in the vishayas only as prescribed in the scriptures, but one should never indulge in them by transgressing the regulations that are described in the scriptures.”

Gadhada 18: “On the other hand, if one indulges in the panchvishayas thoughtlessly, without distinguishing good from bad, then even if one is as great as Narad and the Sanakadik, one’s mind will surely become polluted. What is surprising, then, about the mind of one who believes oneself to be body becoming polluted? Therefore, if one who gives liberty to the five indriyas without applying the discrimination of what is suitable or unsuitable, one’s antahkaran will become polluted. On the other hand, if one indulges only in pure vishays through the five indriyas, then one’s antahkaran becomes pure. If the antahkaran becomes 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 bless 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... imitating Me, believing, that one can remain pure even amidst alluring pleasures is just not possible, even for the likes of Narad and the Sanakadik. So what can be said of others? Countless have become muktas and countless more will become so. Amongst them, none have been

able to indulge in pleasures of the senses and yet remain uninfluenced by them, no one will be able to do so in the future; nor is there anyone like that presently. Even one who has endeavoured for countless millions of years is incapable of remaining uninfluenced amidst temptations. Therefore, if you behave as I have described, you will benefit.”

Gadhada II/35: “Now if you have decided to act according to the discourse which I have just delivered, then come forward one by one, and touch My feet. While doing so, take an oath and pledge ‘I definitely want to behave accordingly.’”

Jetapur 3: “O Sadhus! Never allow any lapse in the observance of non-egotism and other vows. Be extremely vigilant.”

Jetapur 5: “It is for the liberation of the jivas that I have manifested along with these sadhus. Therefore, if you abide my words, I will take all of you to the above from which I have come. So you should also realise, ‘We have already attained liberation.’ Furthermore, if you keep firm faith in Me, and do as I say, then even if you were to suffer extreme hardship, or even if you were to face the calamities of seven consecutive famines, I will protect you from them. Even if you were made to suffer miseries from which there seems to be no way out, I will still protect you – but only if you meticulously observe the dharma of My satsang, and only if you continue practicing satsang. However, if you do not, you will suffer terrible miseries and I will have nothing to do with you.”

From the above words, one can see the worries, and well wishes of Maharaj, to ensure that His followers don’t spoil their liberation by disobeying Niyams.

Sometimes Maharaj awakens His sadhus and followers by harsh words if they disobey the Niyam dharma and commit sins under the pretext of God’s glory, gnan, and shelter. For example:

Gadhada I/77: “A person who forsakes dharma under the pretext of the gnan of God, should be considered to be demonic. Whoever forsakes dharma in the form of five religious vows-solely advocating strength of bhakti or gnan is a blasphemer of the guru and guru’s word. Anyone, who even talks of such a lapse in dharma should be called a non-believer.”

Gadhada II/35: “Though a person has the refuge of the form of God, though he narrates and listens to God’s divine incidents and though he chants the name of God, if he does not observe dharma, he would be known as foolish as one who tried to cross the ocean carrying a stone slab upon his head,; he should also be known to be like an outcast.”

Gadhada III/32: “He does not hesitate in committing sins under the pretext of knowing God’s greatness. Such a person should be considered wicked and sinful.”

Thus, for the good of the jivas, Maharaj has continuously insisted, for them to behave with pure mind.

#### **2.5.4 Maharaj’s insistence for God’s firm conviction for the liberation of the *jivas***

In the obstacles free and smooth path to self-realisation, and many types of self-realizations, the real knowledge of Incarnate God’s form is the first requirement. Without firm conviction and refuge of God, there is no other solution. Explaining this in detail, He states at the end in Vachanamrut Gadhada II/13: “Realise that the form amidst the divine light is this Maharaj visible before you. If you cannot do that, then at least realise, Maharaj sees the form, which is amidst that Aksharrup light. ‘Even if you can understand this much you will be able to maintain affection for Me. As a result, you will obtain ultimate liberation. Keep this principle constantly new and fresh in your minds. Never forget it out of complacency. Remember it to tomorrow just as it is today. Keep it vivid in your minds and remember it daily until the end of your lives. Whenever you talk about God, be sure to implant the seeds of this principle. This is My command.”

If there is confusion in the determination of God, and these human traits in His form, then the aspirant falls from his path of liberation. Explaining about the divinity and Human Traits at great length, Maharaj states in Vachnamrut Loya 18: “Regardless of whether you realise this fact today, or after a hundred years, but it must be realised. In fact, there is no alternative but to realise it and imbibe it firmly. Therefore, all devotees should remember this principle of Mine and discuss it amongst each other. Furthermore, whenever someone suffers a set-back due to some misunderstanding, he should be alerted by mentioning this. In fact, one should discuss this principle of Mine routinely, at least once a day, this is My command. So please do not forget it, please, please, do not forget it.”

From both the above contexts, one can understand Maharaj’s insistence for the firm determination of His Divinity.

From the above points, one can say that in whatever Maharaj’s has advised, He had no self-interest in it. He has only talked about the liberation of jivas. As such there is no doubt about the authenticity and reality.

## 2.6 Other proofs of the authenticity of Vachanamrut

### 2.6.1 Unique Listeners

The greatness and the authenticity of the discourses of a preacher depend also on the listeners and the grasping power of the listeners.

Anyone can talk before an ignorant crowd of listeners who has no knowledge of science or other subjects about  $E=mc^2$ , computer or rocket in any way he likes. A person ignorant of medical knowledge can be talked to about the symptoms and cures of any diseases. A person totally ignorant about the ABCD of music, or who has no knowledge of rhythms, can be talked to about any rhythm, melody or ragas and played before him any type of musical instrument in any way. Thus, one may fool people who have no knowledge of that particular subject. But, people who have studied those subjects and have thorough knowledge about them cannot be fooled.

Will a person who is a professional on any particular subject accept any false talk or facts about it? Will a professional and experienced cook of several years accept your advice that he should add some salt and pepper in laddu? Perhaps, he may listen to it due to the circumstances, but he will definitely not accept that advice believing it to be true. The point is that there will always be doubts about the authenticity of a talk or discourse if it was said before a crowd which is ignorant of that subject.

To whom is Maharaj preaching Vachanamrut? Who were His listeners and what were they? Were they simple, ignorant and passionate jivas? No, His listeners were different from this world's ordinary worldly jivas. That is why these discourses made before them are of a different nature.

These talks are the discourses given to the pure aspirants desirous of walking on the difficult path of spirituality. These discourses are those imparted to those paramhansas who have renounced power, wealth, women and fame, for the liberation of their souls and to gain Parmatma, meaning, disregarding the worldly pleasures, cutting the chain of the dearest and nearest relatives with the sword of detachment and renunciation. Many of whom were trying for spiritual salvation even before coming in contact of ShreejiMaharaj. Muktanand Swami, Bhayatmanand Swami, Bhai Ramdas, Sukhanand Swami etc., 50 such santos were already in the ashram of Ramanand Swami, when ShreejiMaharaj came there. Some of them had come from all over India, sacrificing their possessions, power, headships of monasteries, their disciples and attachment to vishayas, and surrendered at the feet

of ShreejiMaharj. At a single call of ShreejiMaharj, deserting the centuries old belief and custom of vernashram, He had given diksha to 500 such persons and made them paramhansas only in night. Not only that, they had also gone through the 108 most difficult chapters of self control and detachment prescribed by ShreejiMaharaj, with zeal and pleasure.

These paramhansas, who had gone through these difficult chapters, were no ordinary persons. They were not poor, unemployed, uneducated, simple, or incapable, who would spend their lives being crushed under the feet of Maharaj as slaves, and rather, they all were prosperous, strong spiritually and in worldly affairs, capable, clever. They possessed virtues an aspirant, saintliness, intelligence and expert and unique in other performing arts.

Muktanand Swami was learned, virtues, full of saintliness and detachment. Brahmanand Swami was extraordinarily intelligent, respectable, expert in 24 kinds of performing arts. Whilst Nityannand Swami had knowledge of the four Vedas and had also deep knowledge of other scriptures, he was a unique learned person of that time. Gopalanand Swami was a learned person. He had mastered ashtangyoga and was a very very capable person. Santdas was meditational, whilst Swarupa-nand Swami used to see the atma uninterruptedly. There was Bhayatmanand Swami who had complete disregard for his body, whereas there were the likes of Vyapakanand Swami who could easily bring to life a dead mare. Then there was Nishkulanand Swami, who was like a real portrait of detachment and renunciation. There were Satchidanand Swami and Kripanand Swami, the real portraits of love itself. Who could not bear being away from Maharaj for a moment, and in the event they could not see Maharaj, for a minute even, blood would start oozing from every pore of their bodies. Swayam-prakashanand Swami was the mahant or Head of hundreds of disciples, whereas Adwaitanand Swami (previously Magniram) had accomplished the art of black-magic by pleasing the Goddess Devi. Gunatitanand Swami was Himself Aksharbrahma, who was capable of upholding infinite Brahmands (universes) and converting infinite jivas to Brahmi sthiti by removing their ignorance.

There were devotee householder men and women like the paramhansa-saints-and ascetics, who were living strictly according to the commands of Maharaj, completely detached like a 'lotus in water'.

Only on receiving one letter of ShreejiMaharaj, 18 gentlemen, some of whom were kings, some were landlords, owners of districts, renounced everything, like a snake discarding its skin, and left their homes, accepted austerities became sadhus and came to Maharaj. One of them, Adbhutanand, although his name was not in the

letter, considered himself included in the word etc., left his marriage ceremony performed half way and joined the other seventeen to become a sadhu.

Similarly, one Dosabhai, who, although looked involved knee-deep in business, renounced everything and left at a moments notice on receiving Maharaj's letter. How detached state of these people like Parvatbhai, Gordhanbhai must have been? Although knee-deep involved in business they used to see Maharaj uninterrupted in all the three states.

There were thousands of devotees like Dada Khachar of Gadhada, Somla Khachar of Botad, Sura Khachar of Loya, Vasta Khachar of Kariyani, Zinabhai Darbar of Panchala, previously a dacoit of Vartal and later transformed, Jobanpagi, Kakabhai of Rojka, and the likes of Kashidas of Bochasan who were totally committed to Maharaj by sacrificing their body and soul and wealth, and having reached the highest spiritual level. Then there were also thousands of lady devotees like Laduba, Jivuba, Rajba, Zamkuba, Ladhima, who were completely detached from this world and who were totally committed to Shreejispiritually.

Maharaj has given spiritual guidance to those pure spiritual aspirants who had zeal, hunger and who were willing to aspire.

Aspirant devotees have asked for guidance to get rid of desires of vasana and swabhavs, to get rid of body-consciousness and get confidence in atmabhav, get the correct knowledge of one's own form and also Parmatma's form, and to make this the final birth. They have asked for a simple way to get over obstacles in the spiritual path. When the pace has slowed down, they have asked for a way and the trick to increase it. On the way, when faced with several roads, diversions, they have stopped, asked Shri Hari, and then moved forward on a short-cut and easy road so that they may not miss their destination or not go in a round-about ways. To walk on the path indicated by Maharaj, Santo-devotees have battled with their inner enemies, the indriyas-antahkaran, have constantly remained alert and struggled. Even then, wherever and whenever confused, or lost, they have instantly prayed for help, guidance and inspiration of Maharaj, and in turn, Maharaj has always given them appropriate guidance.

Also, whenever and wherever the devotees were not satisfied or happy with the answer given by Maharaj to any of their questions, they have not rested until their doubts and uncertainties were fully resolved, either by counter-argument or by raising counter-questions. They have not accepted whatever Maharaj told them blindfolded. Such dialogues can be seen in Vachanamrut in so many places.

When we read these dialogues, we realise that the paramhansas have not heard

or accepted quietly whatever Maharaj told them blind-folded or in blind faith. Until they were fully satisfied that Maharaj's answers to their questions were convincing and that they were not in contradiction with the scriptures.

Thus, Maharaj's disciples were not foolish or dumb; rather, they were people constantly desirous of spiritual progress, honestly working and continuously striving. If hundreds and thousands of people have reached Kedarnath or Badrinath easily on a path indicated by an experienced person, then that path must be the right one; If thousands have been completely cured of their serious illness by the medication prescribed by an experienced doctor, then that medication must be the correct one; thus, acting on the spiritual guidelines indicated by Maharaj, if thousands of householders have been able to erase their body-consciousness, have by achieving brahmisthiti attained jivan-mukti, and experienced the divine bliss of atma-parmatma, then there can be no doubt at all that the advice given by Maharaj must be completely correct and authentic. There is a collection of such advices in Vachanamrut that is why it is authentic.

### 2.6.2 Honest editing team

We all know that Maharaj has not written the Vachanamrut Himself with His own hands. But, the discourses given by Him was written down by some santo and devotees. Later, at the request of the devotees, in order that these discourses may become useful for ever, Maharaj commanded stalwart santos like Muktanand Swami, Gopalanand Swami, Nityanand Swami and Shukanand Swami to compile them in the form of a book. Maharaj had appointed these Santos as Sadgurus in the fellowship. Their merciful and affectionate virtues combined with their saintly intellect were famous in the fellowship. The fellowship is well acquainted with their leading qualities.

We are all familiar with Muktanand Swami's pure desire for salvation, his pure qualities of a saint, and topmost state of knowledge. Maharaj often quoted him as an ideal sadhu in His discourses.

Gopalanand Swami being an ashtangyog-siddha Yogiraj, was able to revive back the forgotten memories. Maharaj had appointed him as the Head of both the districts, and commanded His followers to observe their dharma and obey his instructions.

Nityanand Swami being a highly intellectual and learned person knew the meanings of all the scriptures, and was clever in defeating the opponents of the

fellowship in debates. He was always automatically selected to speak on Veda, Vedants and Puranas in the presence of Maharaj.

Shukanand Swami used to compile and do letter writing for Maharaj, He used to follow Maharaj like His shadow and always followed His commands in His presence.

Thus, these Santos were quite capable to understand and interpret Bhagwan Swaminarayan's discourses and present their mysteries and meanings in His own words. These Santos were not only capable intellectuals, but were always the loyal, obedient and humble das-sevaks of manifest Parabrahma Purushottam Narayan.

These editing Santos were not any paid persons doing the editing work, but were totally dedicated Santos to Shreeji Maharaj, who had, only to please Him, honestly attempted to live their whole life according to His commands. They had forfeited this world's honours, greatness, power, wealth and fame. Therefore, they had no personal sentiment to gain fame, or other interest in this editing work, for which people are tempted to do adverse things.

They had done this editing task just to please their Ishtadev, without any expectations of worldly gains or without any personal gains, unselfishly, with pure intentions, and for the benefit of others. They have regarded and worshipped Maharaj as their Ishtadev during their whole life time. Therefore, it is natural that they would never do anything, anywhere that displeases Maharaj or something which He dislikes. These Paramhansas life was completely honest with the firm conviction that Maharaj is supreme, all knowing, and omniscient and always with us, sees everything, knows everything. These Paramhansas were completely honest, devotional, and fully alert and aware of their responsibilities, and would never ever dream of cheating or deceiving Maharaj to do as they pleased. This is evident from their life and from studying the questions they have asked.

Let us read two of the questions as samples that Muktanand Swami and Nityanand Swami, each have asked from many of the questions asked by these four saints:

### **Muktanand Swami**

- “The jiva is distinct from the indriyas, antahkaran, and pran; it is also distinct from three states, waking, dream and deep sleep and the three bodies, sthul, sukshma and karan. After hearing this in satsang, a firm conviction regarding this fact has been cultivated. Why then, does the blissful jivatma still associate

with the indriyas, antahkaran etc., while engaged in the worship and remembrance of Parmatma and thereby become miserable due to the influence of disturbing thoughts? (Vach.Gadhada I/56)

- “How can one remain composed even under the influence of lust, anger, avarice and fear? (Vach.Gadhada I/61)

### **Nityanand Swami**

- “What is the method of becoming free of worldly desires? Is it listening to the talks or is it Vairagya?” (Vach. Gadhada I/73)
- “What is the method for overcoming the enemies like lust, anger etc? (Vach. Loya)

It is clearly evident from deep and thoughtful study of the above and other questions, which the editing saints have asked, that, they were honest. In some of the questions they have asked, they have opened their hearts in the public without being afraid in the least of their own position, importance, fame, as to what people will think of them or believe of them. They have asked questions about their weaknesses or defects before people in the open assembly and asked for Maharaj’s guidance about it. Such questions do not arise in one’s heart, without the firm conviction, desire and honest efforts to progress in the path of spiritual realisation, and even if they arise, they would not dare raise them in the public. How can a person who is deceitful and full of hypocrisy, who is always trying to show off his importance and goodness, ask questions in public about the problems to eradicate his faults and defects? These Paramhansas were Sadgurus, elderly, and well-known. If they were not honest, they would not have asked questions to Maharaj in the public showing them lowly. Even if someone did ask such questions in the public, when editing them, he would delete them and not print them in a book. People would soon forget what they have heard in the public, but what is written in a book, would be read for thousands of years, thought of, and it is very likely that they would form a low opinion about their lives. But these editing Santos have had no such fear in their hearts, because they were honest.

Had they not been honest they would not have included such questions in the Vachanamrut, or, wherever there was a possibility of a persons image being tarnished, they have, in that place, stated ‘one saint’ or ‘one saint asked’ and tried to protect that person’s image; in that way, to protect their own images, they would not have indicated their names.

Also, in many Vachanamruts, we note that these editor saints have not been to

answer the questions raised by Maharaj, other Paramhansas or devotees, or they have not been able to give a completely satisfactory answer. If they were not honest, they would not have indicated their own names in the questions asked by them. But, were they conscious of their prestige? No. Their only good intention was to see that the aspirants hear proper answers to their questions from their Ishtadev ShreejiMaharaj and the spread of His Greatness. That is why when answering questions they have not tried to show off their intelligence. Sometimes, at the instance of Maharaj, and only to please Him they have tried their level best to answer correctly as far as they could, but in the end, they have said, with folded hands: ‘O Maharaj! Only You can answer to this question properly.’ Here also we see their honesty.

Sometimes, ShreejiMaharaj has said some tough and harsh words to His devotees in the public by scolding them about their defects or shortcomings, but this was only because of His pledged concern for them to ensure that they not an iota of imperfection remain in them. Not only that, but on the other hand, His true aspirants, these Santos and devotees have accepted their mistakes openly in public.

Included amongst such honest listeners were several Paramhansas, devotees and these editor paramhansas also. Without being afraid or shy about any of their shortcomings or defects, they have, with the honesty of their hearts and truthfulness, included in the Vachanamrut. We shall consider here four such examples:

- Once when Maharaj asked the Paramhansas to speak about their own specialities, Muktanand Swami had said that if a bad-tempered person was rushing with anger, and if he sees me, then his anger will get diluted. Maharaj asks Muktanand Swami- by only seeing whom one’s anger is diluted-one question in Vachanamrut Gadhada II/27: “What causes anger to arise within You? Also, how much of that cause makes you angry? Also how much of that cause does it take you to become angry?” Muktanand Swami replies: “Anger arises due to association with some objects or on seeing perversity in a person; but it subsides instantly.”

Shreeji Maharaj says in Vachanamrut Gadhada III/33: “In the satsang fellowship, there are only a few devotees whose mind would not be affected by wealth, property, women, children etc., and who would not develop faith in those who fulfil the desires related to those things. In fact, there cannot be many devotees who are like this.” Saying this ShreejiMaharaj continued: “ This Muktanand Swami and Gopalanand Swami are like that, because in no way would they become impressed by anyone, no matter how great he may be-even if he were to show miracles.” Thus, praising the state of these two top sadgurus, He then said: “even

though these two sadhus are so great, if they were to receive an abundance of honour, or if heaps of rupees and gold coin were to be placed before them, or if they were to encounter attractive women, then even though they are renunciates, they would not be able to maintain their integrity. In fact, if they do encounter these objects, then it is doubtful whether they would remain on par with the lowest of our renunciates. Why? Because the very association of those objects is like this.”

- In Vachanamrut Gadhada III/28 Maharaj asks Brahmanand Swami, Shukmuni Swami and Sura Khachar, all three of them: “What flaws do you possess which would make you suffer a setback?” “The three of them answered: Maharaj, we have flaw of egotism. As a result, if a sadhu of equal status insults us, we become somewhat disturbed.”
- In Vachanamrut Gadhada III/24 Maharaj says “The three senior ladies of this place and Gopalanand Swami, Muktanand Swami, Nityanand Swami, Shukmuni Swami, Somla Khachar and Dada Khachar-all of you presently behave very well. However, if from factors of place, time, company and action were to become unfavourable then there is no doubt that your enthusiasm would not remain as it is now.”

Several such facts can be found in Vachanamrut in which, there are indications to the defects, or shortcomings in the spiritual state of the editing Santos like any other Santos and devotees. Had they wished, they could have kept these incidents out of the Vachanamrut. But because they were honest, they have not done so, That is why they have honestly attempted to put it in their own words whatever had happened at that time and whatever Maharaj had said. They have preferred to show Maharaj’s greatness instead of their own.

Because of the honesty and the devotion of the editing paramhansas in the editing work, the authenticity of the Vachanamrut containing Maharaj’s discourses has increased manifold.

### 2.6.3 Historical authenticity

The position of Vachanamrut as to its historical authenticity amongst the world’s religious or spiritual scriptures is unique. There is no specific information available as to when important scriptures of Hindu dynasty like Vedas, Upanishads, Purans, Smritis, Ramayana, Mahabharata originated. Different learned personalities offer different inferences as to their compositions.

Similarly, there is no certain determining date or year available as to the compositions of the world’s leading religions like, Jain, Buddha, Christian and Islam.

In contrast, there is clear historical note of the time in Vachanamrut. The first paragraph of each Vachanamrut is proof of its historical authenticity. This first paragraph clearly shows in which year (Samvat 1876, Samvat 1877, Samvat 1878 . .) which month (Kartik, Magshar..) The first or second fortnight of the month (sud, or vad, full moon or dark) which day (first, second ...) and which town (Gadhada, Sarangpur, Kariyani, Loya, Panchala, Vartal, Amdavad, Aslali, Jetalpur) in which place (Dada Khachar/Jiva Khachar/Vasta Khachar,Zeenabhai's darbar,His own place, in Paramhansas place, Shree Gopinathji, Shree Lakshminarayan or Shree Narnarayan's mandir, or in Lakshmiwadi or Gomati Talav (pond ) facing which direction, (East, west, south or north) sitting on ... type of seat ( dholiyo, paat, gaadi-takiyo, palang, vedi, Oto, chotro, simhasan...etc) wearing which type or clothes, ornaments, flower bouquets, and flower garlands, and talking to whom, all these details have been beautifully narrated minutely, and in great detail. It is a solid fact that no such historical proofs are available in such minute detail and information in any of the world's philosophical and religions' literature so far.

Also, looking at the history of the worlds religions it appears that until now never have any religions' founders' discourses been noted during his/her lifetime. It can therefore be understood that such discourses which have been published in book form after hundreds of years did not have the acceptance and approval of their narrators. The discourses contained in the Vachanamrut have been noted in its narrator's presence, not only that, but its editors Paramhansas have after editing it, shown it to ShreejiMaharj, and then obtained His approval as to its correctness and authenticity. (Vachanamrut Loya 7)

Thus, if there is any scripture in the world, which has been compiled in the presence of its narrator, who has not only seen it, but also accepted and approved it, it is only the 'Vachanamrut.'

## 2.7 Unique Specialities of the Vachanamrut

### 2.7.1 Simple Gujarati style of prose

The traditional Hindu scriptures like the Vedas, Upnishads, Purans, Smrutis, Mahabharat. Ramayan etc., all the religious literature is available in Sanskrit. Its philosophical scriptures are mainly in Sanskrit and that too, are written in aphorism. It is therefore but natural that many of its readers would find them difficult to read and understand. That is why everyone is not able to take full advantage of such books. Even the Acharyas have composed their commentaries on Prasthantrayee in Sanskrit and explained their difficult meanings in a judicious style. It is therefore

difficult for a layman to understand their judicious Sanskrit language.

But because the Vachanamrut has been written in simple Gujarati prose style, it is easy to understand. That is why, even less educated people can read it themselves, or uneducated people can only by hearing it benefit from it.

ShreejiMaharaj has, by simplifying the difficult mysteries of the cream of all the scriptures, in simple Gujarati language, kept them flowing to the lives of common man.

### **2.7.2 Light and efficacious style with full of illustrations**

The prescribed subject of the Vachanamrut is spiritual. It contains explanations related to substances like jiva, Ishwar, maya, brahma, para-brahma, and other subjects like austerities, renunciation, seva, satsang, restraint, dharma, gnan, vairagya, bhakti, trust, refuge, upasana, birth-death, reincarnation, and the principles of karma, restrictions, freedom, and the creation of the universe, its state, and destruction. When all these substances and subjects, which are difficult and full of mysteries, are very difficult to be understood even by the most intellectuals, then, how can an ordinary person or uneducated people understand them?

It is a fact that among the listeners sitting before Maharaj, there were extremely capable intellectuals like Muktanand Swami, Gopalanand Swami, Nityanand Swami, Brahmanand Swami, Munibawa, Dinanath Bhatt and also half educated and uneducated people who could hardly understand colloquial Gujarati from the villages. Maharaj has explained by balancing such difficult discourses of spiritual nature and presented them before both these type of listeners so that everyone can understand them easily.

To explain such difficult subjects of spiritual nature and its deepest mysteries in the Vachanamrut, Maharaj has liberally illustrated them with traditional examples, original examples, stories and the subjects from the purans, incidents of the haribhaktos, metaphors, idioms and proverbs. Maharaj's expertise of using them is tremendous. Whenever and wherever, and whoever, He wants to explain something to, He has liberally used proverbs, idioms, similes, examples etc., depending on the person.

Sometimes, He uses different examples, subjects and things to explain a particular principle; or sometimes by using only one example, one incident and one person, He explains or teaches several principles and lessons. Sometimes, He simply

mentions these things, and sometimes He illustrates a verbal picture. Let us see some such examples from the Vachanamrut:

- Vachanamrut Gadhada I/23: “A pot that is filled with water and emptied somewhere, if another pot of water is subsequently emptied at the same place on the following day or the day after that, a pool of water will not collect there. Why? Because the water poured on the first day dries up on that very day and the water poured on the second day also dries up on that same day. On the other hand, if a trickle of water were to flow continuously, a large pool of water could so be formed. Therefore, while eating, drinking, walking, engaging in any activity whatsoever-whether it be pure or impure-in fact, at all times, one should constantly keep one’s vrutti on God. While maintaining one’s vrutti constantly on God in this manner, one attains that abiding elevated spiritual state.”
- Vachanamrut Kariyani 12: “If a man with teeth strong enough to chew raw cha na were to eat a great many sour mangoes, then he would not be able to chew even boiled rice. In the same way, 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 panchvishayas.”
- Vachanamrut Loya 17: “Whoever has drunk sweetened milk that has been poisoned by the venom of a snake, even though he may be living at present, is sure to die-within half an hour or an hour, in the morning or in the evening, today or tomorrow, eventually, he will die. In the same manner, he who identifies his self with body will definitely bear contempt for the sadhu and will eventually fall from satsang-either after one month or after two months; after one year or after two years; or maybe at the time of death or even after death-he will certainly fall.”
- Vachanamrut Gadhada II/6: “A wealthy businessman, if he writes a draft to pay some other merchant, then although, it seems that the piece of paper is not worth even a single rupee, it is indeed money, only when one cashes the draft the businessman had signed does one subsequently receive a large sum of money from that very same draft. Similarly, although at the time there may not seem to be any benefit in observing the moral do’s and don’ts, one who does observe dharma by command of a great Purush ultimately attains liberation-just as one received cash from drafts.”
- Vachanamrut Vartal 12: “A king who is impotent, and who is about to lose his kingdom, and whose family line is about to cease, will still not be able to beget a son with his wife. In fact, even if he summons impotents like himself from his entire kingdom and allows them to associate with his wife, she will not beget a son. Similarly, no one attains liberation by hearing even holy scriptures like Gita and Shrimad Bhagwat from one who does not have faith

in God coupled with the knowledge of His greatness, just as death is assured to whoever drinks sweetened milk into which snake's venom has fallen, similarly, no one can ever attain liberation by listening to the Gita or Shrimad Bhagwat from a person who does not have faith in God coupled with the knowledge of His greatness. On the contrary, only harm can come from it.”

- Vachanamrut Gadhada III/12:“Just as one who is touched by the saliva of a rabid dog also becomes rabid, similarly, of one listens to the talks of or keeps affection for one who has perceived faults in God or His Bhaka, then both the persons who keeps the affection as well as the listener become like a non-believer.”

From the above examples, it is apparent that ShreejiMaharaj had mastery over that wonderful art of explaining the principles through examples. There are plenty of such examples and incidents in the Vachanamrut. Maharaj has, by explaining the difficult truths of spiritualism in a very simple, pleasant, and light style established faith in the lives of ordinary people.

### 2.7.3 Question and Answer style

The Vachanamrut is a unique and uncommon even looking at the question and answer style of book. Here, the relationship between those taking part in questions and answers, the saints and the devotees, is divine and friendly, and that of a devotee and God, Upasak and Upasya. Whilst ShreejiMaharaj heartily desires for the ultimate liberation of all, the Santos and the devotees are desirous of getting free from the eternal shackles of birth and death, and enjoy the permanent bliss of atma-parmatma. The questions asked here are not asked simply for the sake of asking or just to satisfy the blank curiosity, but have been asked with a noble aim as stated above.

In order that the habit introspection may develop in His devotees, originality of thoughts may blossom, and their spiritual knowledge become more firm and clear, ShreejiMaharaj, like a model educationalist, used to ask questions and answer them or sometimes ask the Santos and the devotees to ask questions which He would answer or ask the Santos to answer. In the whole of the Vachanamrut, sometimes ShreejiMaharaj asks questions, or sometimes the Santos/devotees ask questions, and sometimes Maharaj Himself asks them to question/answer between themselves or inspire them to ask Him questions, and tried to explain the spiritual knowledge as simply as possible.

Throughout the whole of the Vachanamrut containing 262 Vachanamruts, out

of the total of 456 questions, 138 questions have been asked by Maharaj to Santos/devotees, whilst the rest of the 318 questions have been asked, either by the Santos/devotees to Maharaj, or by his command, they have asked amongst themselves.

In the Vachanamrut, after testing the internal desires, faith, understanding, and their state, in order that no defect remains in the Santos/devotees, Maharaj has asked them questions with the view of giving them proper guidance. On the other hand, the Santos/devotees have, whenever they found some obstacles in their process of salvation, asked questions to get rid of them, and to improve the quality and the speed of the process. It is clearly evident from the questions asked by them, that they have not asked these questions merely to show their intelligence or knowledge, or to fathom the oppositions' knowledge. Their curiosity is not vain or barren. They do not wish to know something for the sake of knowing or understanding; But they wish to learn something more, understand, and then proceed on that path, they wish to increase the tempo and its quality, or to get rid of the obstacles coming in that path.

Let us read as examples some of the questions asked by the Santos/devotees:

- Vachanamrut Gadhada I/24: "Brahmanand Swami asked a question: Suppose there is a person whose indriyas are not drawn towards any of the vishayas nor do vicious thoughts arise in his antahkaran. He also has absolute faith in God. Despite this, though, a feeling of unfulfilment remains, and he feels despondent within, what can be the reason for this? "
- Vachanamrut Gadhada I/62: " Thereafter Nirvikaranand Swami asked: Despite having the conviction of God, noble virtue are still not acquired, on the contrary, egotism and jealousy are increasing day by day. What can be the reason for this?"
- Vachanamrut Gadhada I/78: "Shunyatitanand Swami then asked: 'When a person practices satsang initially, he has deep affections for the sant and the satsangis, but why does this affection later decline?'"
- Vachanamrut Sarangpur 5: "Muktanand Swami asked a question: 'Which method of eradicating worldly desires is so powerful that that method alone incorporates all other means?'"
- Vachanamrut Kariyani 7: "Thereupon, Kashidas of village Bochasan asked ShreejiMaharaj a question: 'Maharaj, renunciants follow the path of nivrutti, thus, they are able to keep their vruttis constantly on God. But householders follow the path of pravrutti, hence they are plagued with with countless worldly problems. What understanding, then, must a householder maintain in order to fix his vruttis constantly on God?'"

- Vachanamrut Gadhada II/33: “Thereupon Harji Thakkar asked “By what means can one’s observance of the vow of non-lust become extremely firm?”

If we consider this and all the other questions asked throughout the Vachanamrut, we realise to what extent the santos/devotees were eager and desirous to precede on the path of spiritual knowledge.

All these questions have emanated from their curiosity and especially from their constant frictional struggle to know the spiritual philosophy and to get to the root of them. That is why; any aspirant can find answers to any of the problems faced by him in his search for spiritual knowledge from this Vachanamrut.

#### 2.7.4 Original meanings, definitions and aphorism teachings

##### ❖ Original Meanings

ShreejiMaharaj has, on the basis of His omniscience and experience, perfectly evaluated the deep mysteries of the spiritual words in His own original style. Similarly, He has, clearly and explicitly explained the hitherto deeply remained and unfathomed mysteries of the scriptures, so that they may become more practical and more beneficial in everyday life. Considering from every angle, the way He has explained so many facts of the scriptures in His own original style, they look more authentic and original. Let us look at one context.

Many philosophers, acharyas, and religious leaders, have defined dharma differently. The definition of dharma as ‘Good behaviour is religion’ is accepted to Mah araj also. But, he has also given another special definition of dharma in Vachanamrut Gadhada II/9, He explains “Thus, one who is intelligent should intensely maintain spiritual strength bases on the conviction of God. Even the slightest strength based on this conviction will protect one from great dangers. Shri Krishna Bhagwan has also said:

#### **Swalpm-apyasya dharmasya trayate mahato bhayat |**

The meaning of this verse is: ‘If one has the slightest strength based on the conviction of God, it will protect one from great calamities.’ Almost all the acharyas have interpreted the meaning of the above verse as ‘one’s dharma affiliated with karmayoga.’

Now, if swadharma in the form of sadachar or karmayog cannot survive on its

own in difficult circumstances, how can it protect us? But, the strength of God who is the pillar and possessor of dharma, can only protect one in any circumstances. That is why, the meaning given by Shreeji Maharaj of 'swadharma' seems more appropriate and fitting.

### ❖ Original definitions

In His discourses Maharaj has defined in very short but infallible words the original definitions of words like maya, moha, preeti, tyag, motap, dharma, gnan, vairagya, bhakti, ekantik bhakta, kharo bhakta, pooro bhakta, pakko bhakta, yathartha bhakta, dradh bhakta, sadhu, sant, sampurna satsang, nischay, adag nischay, paripakva nischay, dradh nischay, mahamtya-gnane sahit nischay, ashraya, upasana, manushya-bhaav, divya-bhaav, irshya, dosh, droh, etc.,

Let us read the definitions of some of the words as examples:

- **Preeti (Affection):** "He who has affection for his beloved God, will never disobey the wishes as his beloved. That is the characteristic of affection." (Vachanamrut Kariyani 11)
- **Maya:** "Maya is nothing but the sense of I-ness towards the body and my-ness towards anything related to the body." (Vach. Gadh. II I/39)
- **Moh (Delusion):** The characteristic of delusion is "not being able to perceive one's own flaws." (Vachanamrut Gadhada II/53)
- **Tyagi (Renunciant):** "A renunciant is one who has renounced worldly life, and accepted the garb of a renunciant, who does not harbour affection for asat objects i.e., objects other than the form of God." (Vachanamrut Gadhada I/36)
- **Motap: (Greatness):** "A person who forsakes vanity and worships God, should be known to be an extremely great devotee." (Vachanamrut Gadhada II/41)

Even if one goes through the giant ocean of all the scriptures, one may not find such original definitions like Maharaj's. They are like spiritual pearls and emeralds. Through them aspirants can make their lives prosperous with inner wealth.

Any aspirant, by keeping such useful definitions and understandings before his eyes, and by acting on them and by making necessary adjustments in his life, can achieve the highest level of goals.

## ❖ Aphorism teaching

Shreeji Maharaj's style of aphorism teaching is also distinct and unique. He has neither used difficult words to explain simple subjects or objects, nor has He used too many words. As it is difficult to find pearls from the ocean, similiary it is also difficult to find virtues and essences, which are useful in day to day life from talks which are unneccerarily lengthy. That is why Maharaj has not resorted to lengthy descriptions to explain any point. He has not misguided or confused His listeners by expanding His teachings. Whatever He had to say, He has said it in as few words as possible. By using essential and appropriate words He has been able to bring into His teachings aphoprism and simplicity. Even then, He has not let His teachings become unacceptable due to short and aphorismic style. He has taught in short and aphorismic style so that everyone can undertand it easily. Let us some examples of such aphorismic teachings:

- Vachanamrut Gadhada I/1: "There is no spiritual endeavour more difficult than to continuously engage one's mind on the form of God and there is no greater attainment."
- Vachanamrut Gadhada I/20: "For person who has attained satsang, realisation of his jivatma does, indeed, lie in his own hands."
- Vachanamrut Gadhada I/56: "Without the strength of his Ishtadev, no spiritual endeavours can be fulfilled."
- Vachanamrut Gadhada I/60: "To behave above the influence of worldly desires is the dharma of one who is ekantik."
- Vachanamrut Loya 7: "Only one who is brahmrup has the right to offer bhakti to Purushottam."
- Vachanamrut Gadhada I/51: "Only one who follows the commands of satpurush is behaving as the atma."
- Vachanamrut Vartal 1: "One who aspires for liberation should most certainly develop enmity towards the mind."

Such aphorismic jewels, which can become constantly useful to every aspirant, are seen on every page of the Vachanamrut.

### 2.7.5 Clear, decisive and doubtfree

In the Vachanamrut, spiritual elements like jiva, Ishwar, maya, Brahma, and Parabrahma, and spiritual subjects like dharma, gnan, vairagya, Bhakti, tapa, (austerities) tyag,(renunciation) saiyam,(restraint) sewa, satsang, shraddha,(faith), Vishwas, (trust) bandhan,(restriction) mukti,(liberation) karma-siddhant,(principle of karma) punar-janma(re-incarnation) are explained in short, but clear, beyond-doubt,

and appropriate manner. Maharaj has especially taken great care to see that there does not remain any misunderstanding or defects in the understanding of the philosophical elements. Maharaj has, sometimes by asking someone questions about these subjects-elements, removed their misunderstandings and doubts, or expecting that there may remain some defects in the description of their forms, have given a clear cut picture of these defects. Sometimes, the paramhansas have obtained clear guidance from Maharaj about the prevailing misunderstandings in the society by raising doubts and questions.

ShreejiMaharaj has, instead of explaining the spiritual subjects by discussing them, by His Greatness and experience given His final decision of what is right and what is wrong. Thus, it can be said that he has never entrapped or put into imbalance anyone, anywhere. Explaining the decisive correctness of his teachings, ShreejiMaharaj Himself states:

- Vachanamrut Gadhada I/7: “No one is able to understand the philosophical principles found in the scriptures; in fact, all are confused by them. Therefore, please listen as I explain these principles precisely as there.”
- Vachanamrut Panchala 2: “In this manner, I have described the eternal principles of the sankhya-shastra and yoga-shastra having thoroughly pondered over them.”

Also, in many Vachanamruts, He has Himself proved their reliability by saying that ‘this fact is true and there is no doubt about it.’ Let us understand from His own words with how much confidence and complete trust He speaks:

- Vachanamrut Gadhada I/18: “Countless have become mukatas and countless more will become so. Amongst them, none have been able to indulge in pleasures of the senses and yet remain uninfluenced by them. None will be able to do so in the future; nor is there anyone like that presently. Even one who has endearment for countless millions of years is incapable of remaining uninfluenced amidst temptations.”
- Vachanamrut Sarangpur 11: “Hence, whether it takes one life, or innumerable lives, only when develops the previously described characteristics and becomes extremely free of worldly desires, does one become worthy of attaining the Grace of God, and only then will one attain ultimate liberation. Without it, one will definitely not attain it.”
- Vachanamrut Gadhada II/21: “Whether this principle is understood after being told once, or after being told a thousand times, whether is understood today, or after a thousand years, there is no option but to understand it.”
- Vachanamrut Gadhada II/35: “Regardless of how much a person may have

mastered Samadhi or how thoughtful he may be, if he begins to stay in the close company of women, there is no way in which he could maintain his dharma. Similarly, regardless of how staunch a woman may be in observing dharma, if she stays in the close company of men, then she would also, in no way be able to maintain her dharma. Thus, no one should believe that men and women can stay in each other's company and still be able to maintain their dharma. This fact is true and no one should doubt it.”

We saw above some truthful examples of Shreeji Maharaj's talks. Such compact illustrations are on every page of the Vachanamrut. There cannot be such solidity in His sayings without the abundance of experience, and omniscience. It will be difficult to find someone in the annals of the world's spiritual history except Shreeji Maharaj who can write or speak with such conviction and firmness without leaving His listeners in the least doubt, suspicion, or hesitation.

### **2.7.6 Systematic sequence of Philosophy and self-realisation**

Shreeji Maharaj's teachings in the Vachanamrut are not related to one aspect, but are in systematic sequence of all aspects, means and talks. That talk either is on the forms of jiva, Ishwar, maya, Brahma and Parabrahma or relating to self-realisation, but He has fully explained them from all the angles. He has not left the slightest imperfection in it. Whatever He says is based on self-experience and after thinking from all the necessary angles and balanced with all the scriptures. He does not talk from any one angle or only of one aspect.

#### **❖ Systematic sequences of Philosophy**

God's real form can only be understood through the four scriptures; Like sankhya, yoga, Vedant, and Panchratra, after explaining minutely as to what type of obstacles befall when one tries to understand it on the bases of any one or other three scriptures, Maharaj says in Vachnamrut Gadhada I/52: “However, if one attempts to realise God using all four sets of scriptures together, then the flaw raised by one understanding of one set of scriptures is corrected by one's understanding of another. Therefore, he who understands God using all four sets of scriptures together is known as being completely enlightened. If he ignores one set of scriptures, he is known as being three quarters enlightened. If he ignores two sets of scriptures, he is known as being half enlightened. If he ignores three sets of scriptures” He is known as being quarter enlightened. If ignoring all four sets of scriptures he acts according to his own mentally concocted interpretations of the

scriptures, then even if he is a Vedanti or one with upasana, he is lost' he cannot be said to have found the path of liberations. Thus, such a vedantic gnan hypocritical, and a person with such upasana is a hypocritical devotee.”

In explaining the complete enlightenment: as to understand God only through all four sets of scriptures, Maharaj in Vachanamrut Gadhada III/2 states, “Only one who realises God through these four scriptures can be said to possess total gnan. For example, only when one sees with one’s eyes, does one come to know that milk is white; only when one smells with one’s nose does one come to know its smell; only when one touches it with one’s finger, does one come to know whether it is hot or cold; and only when one tastes it one’s tongue, does one come to know its tastes. In this manner, only when milk is tested through all of the indriyas can one totally know its nature; it cannot be totally known through one indriya alone. Similarly, one realises God’s nature totally when one realises it through its four scriptures, i.e., the Vedas, etc., to have such knowledge is called total gnan. ”

From the above two contexts of the Vachanamrut one can see that whatever Maharaj has talked about philosophy, He has said it after deeply thinking from all the angles and as systematic sequence of all the scriptures, and therefore is completely and totally real.

#### ❖ **Systematic sequence-Road to self-realisation**

Shreeji Maharaj has introduced the way to self-realisation also with all the aspects and co-ordination of all the scriptures. Some books are only based on the religion, whilst some on tyag and tap, some on bhakti and some solely based on the gnan. Thus, it would seem that some books or some preachers, by giving credence to one particular track, try to lead the aspirants on that track only, in that respect, the Vachanamrut is a different kind of book, because, in it, there is a systematic sequence of all the necessary ingredients in ample quality for the aspirants on the road to self-realisation. To promote the jiva from jiva-dasha to Brahmi-sthiti, and to enable them to realise His Akshardham, Supreme Lord Swaminarayan has, given firm guidance to the student of Brahavidya, whenever, wherever and in whatever quantity required, from KG level to P.Hd level as per their requirements.

As an example, in a recipe of cooking potato vegetable, if the ingredients like potato, oil, water, salt, papper, tomatoes, and other necessary spices are added at the appropriate time and appropriate quantity, then only the item would become tasty and eatable. But with only potatoes, or water, or oil, or only one ingredient, it cannot be called an item. Also, in the recipe, if the salt is in excessive quality, or other

ingredients are in excessive quality, the item is not suitable to eat.

Similarly, in the path to self-realisation, faith in God, upasana, submission, Greatness, Divinity combined with dharma, gnan, vairagya, bhakti, austerities, (tap), renunciation, (tyag), non-violence (ahimsa), japp, tirth, meditation, scripture reading etc., mediums and the need of satpurush to accomplish them in what proportion, where, when, and how has been clearly explained by Shreeji Maharaj in the Vachanamrut. He has not stopped by indicating only of the many endeavours He had done, but, instead, whenever and wherever necessary, He has taken care to see that the aspirant does not stop there and end his sadhana prematurely.

### 2.7.7 Clear explanation of the obstacles

Anyone who has studied all the religious scriptures and balanced them with the Vachanamrut is bound to notice this special uniqueness of the Vachanamrut. In addition to philosophical knowledge and clear definitions of 'do's and don't's', but there is also clear explanation of the obstacles in the path of self-realisation. A clear verbal picture has been presented of where, what and which type of obstacles can come in the path of the person beginning from jiva-dasha and reaching upto brahma-dasha. And after explaining the different type of obstacles, remedies have also been explained of how to overcome them.

Maharaj has insisted on knowing and to escape from it, staying away from outer kusang, and internal kusang. The greatest obstacles in the path to self-realisation are mainly human trait in Bhagwan and satpurush, and disliking, defect and betrayal of the devotees. Why, how, and in whom this human trait or disliking occurs, that, and also in order that they do not occur, Maharaj has indicated different remedies according to the state of different aspirants.

Similarly, He has also clearly described the loss to the devotees on spiritual process from habits such as kam, anger, greed, pride, vain pride, jealousy, envy, ego, expectations, desire, body consciousness, desire for worldly happiness, intense fascination, equality, offending, enmity towards devotees, attachment etc., He has also explained where, when, whom and how these habits can pollute the process of self-realisation, and has prescribed the remedies according to the different categories of the aspirants to get rid of these habits, the sanots-devotees have also, whilst treading on this path, asked questions about where, and what obstacles come in their ways, and asked for remedies to overcome them, and Maharaj has also prescribed to them, at the required time, the required remedies.

Thus, Maharaj has, given perfect, useful, and obstacles free guidelines for any aspirant treading on the path of self-realisation.

Until now, we have been looking from different angles about the Vachanamrut being an invaluable scripture of Brahavidya. Now, we shall be looking at **Swamini-vaato**, as the invaluable scripture of Brahavidya.

## PART 3 - SWAMINI VAATO

**Swamini Vaato: Means Commentary on Vachanamrut in which have been explained the Brahmvidya's Secrets in very simple language.**

**Let us enjoy in the following pages the specialities of Swamini Vaato.**

### 3.0 Introduction

'Swamini Vaato,' is also an invaluable book of Brahmvidya like the Vachanamrut. It can be said that in the Swaminarayan fellowship, if the first place among the scriptures of discourses belongs to Vachanamrut, then the second place belongs to 'Swamini Vaato.' Whilst the Vachanamrut is a Shrutigranth, Swamini Vaato is a Smruti-granth. One can say without any hesitation that the Swamini Vaato is a simple and original commentary on Vachanamrut. The Vachanamrut is the sermon of all the scriptures fundamental principles and essence. Similarly in these 'Vaatos' (or talks) there is also, besides the fundamental principles of the scriptures as well as the Vachanamrut. Therefore, to fully comprehend the deep mysteries of the Vachanamrut it is essential to read and think about the Swamini Vaato. That is why, Maharaj writes in one letter:

- "The reading and discussing Shreej Maharaj's pronounced Vachanamrut by people of similar tastes, can result in understanding His true principle by His mercy. It is important to continuously read and study Mul Aksharmurti Gunatitand Swami's 'Swamini Vaato' to find out the real principle of Vachanamrut. Because in these talks Swami has often talked about Shreeji Maharaj's upasana and His greatness, atmabuddhi in satsang, and vairagya, dharma and the knowledge of atma. Therefore, if you will keep reading Vachanamrut and Swamini Vaato there shall be no defect in your understanding, and after accomplishing the four principles-agna, upasna, sadbhav, and paksha-you shall proceed to Akshardham by gaining the final birth and join in the service of Shreeji Maharaj." (Chapter 1/328,329 – By Shastri Yagnapurushdas.)
- Pramukh Swami Maharaj also states. "Vachanamrut and Swamini Vaato is our life. Read them daily. It will give strength. It is the only source of nourishment."

Thus, it is essential for any aspirant of Brahmvidya to study Swamini Vaato as well as the Vachanamrut. By reading Swamini Vaato one can understand the opinion and the principle of the Vachanamrut more clearly. The correct passage of their

sadhana will become clearer.

These Vatos is not a collection of oratory skills, but is a unique guidance to a treasure of priceless and unique principles, because this Vatos is the echo of the experience and behaviour of Gunatitnand Swami, its narrator. These Vatos have just slipped from His mouth as a proof of His devotion towards His Ishtadev Bhagwan Swaminarayan.

The Vatos are a result of His immense love, mercy and affection towards His own santos-Bhaktos. This nectar has been served by Him with the noble intention and love so that there may not remain any immaturity or defects in His followers, they all, by accomplishing the ekantic dharma attain ultimate liberation, and for ever remain in Akshardham in the service of Parabrahma Purushottam Narayan.

These Vatos are a supernatural medicine capable of curing the disease of birth and death of any aspirant. This is a knowledge, which can rescue the aspirants from the circle of birth and deaths and make them immortal. This is the brahm-gnan, which can remove every doubts and defects. Whoever, listens to it, and tries to act accordingly with faith, is bound to reach the topmost spiritual level. That is why this is a priceless scripture of Brahm-vidya.

### **3.1. The nature of the Book**

This Swamini Vaato is, also like the Vachanamrut, a collection of discourses.

This book contains some of the Vaatos by Gunatitanand Swami, which He had said during his travels to Junagadh, and many other cities, collected and written by His followers, santo-bhaktos.

Gunatitanand Swami, during His saintly-life, (BC 1866 to BC 1923 or AD 1810 TO ad 1867) i.e. 57 years had talked incessantly like an unstoppable rain. He had himself said that if there was somebody to write what he had spoken, it would fill the complete sky and the whole universe. This means that He has spoken so much that there could be no end to it.

He has confirmed it Himself that after Shreeji Maharaj's agna to him, He has never stopped talking. "One day, I asked Maharaj four questions about which duty I should concentrate on: first to serve the sick, second, to behave as atma, third, to serve the sick and fourth, to talk about God. Of the four, which is best for me?"

Please tell me. Then Maharaj said. ‘Talk of God is the best.’ So, from that day, I began to talk, day or night, without break; so that the jivas become brahmrup.” (Swamini Vaato 3/56). Swami had fully complied with Shreeji Maharaj’s this command.

He has never looked back in giving discourses. In giving discourses, he has neither looked at the time, the circumstances, nor cared about his health. Whilst giving discourses He has not shied away from anybody’s friendship. He has even not bowed to pressure from the authorities. His discourses have flowed incessantly without caring to see if the listener is fit or unfit. To open the doors of ultimate liberation innumerable souls and to cut their strings of attachment, He had continued talking about the glory of the God. The flow of discourses about God’s glory continued to flow from his mouth uncessantly like the rains during the month of Ashadh.

It is but natural that nobody could have written all of his discourses which could have filled several universes, but, from whatever have been written, they have been compiled in 7 Chapters comprising of 1494 discourses. In addition to this, there are another 8 Chapters containing in all 2142 discourses. These discourses have been separated and compiled accordingly with their subjects. Of these discourses some are only of a single line, whilst the others in two, three, or four lines. Some are in a small paragraph; some are in a large paragraph, whilst some are as large as a whole page. Serial Numbers were not given to each discourse during the publication of the first edition nor were they separated in paragraphs. However, later on, each discourse was allocated a distinct serial number.

### **3.2 Editors of the Vaato**

It is a fact that it has been not been possible to collect and write all of Swami’s discourses. Particularly, several years after the demise of Shreeji Maharaj, some of Swami’s santos and householder disciples started noting down his discourses. Amongst those who had noted and compiled Swami’s discourses were mainly santos like Sadguru Balmukunddas Swami, and Jaga Bhakta and amongst the householders, were Shree Harishankarbhai Asharam Raval, Sadashankarbhai Amarji and mandir’s scribe, Thakkar Narayan pradhan. Out of the seven chapters, the first three Chapters were compiled by Jaga Bhakta, the fourth and the fifth Chapters were compiled by Shree Harishankarbhai, the sixth Chapter was compiled by Sadashankarbhai, and the remaining seventh and the last chapter was compiled by Sadguru Balmunddas Swami. Out of the other eighth to fifteen chapters, the eighth

chapter was compiled by Jaga Bhakta and the remaining chapters were compiled by Shree Thakkar Narayan Pradhan.

All those who had noted, and later compiled/edited Swami's discourses, were Swami's favoured and honest disciples. They had not compiled these discourses in expectation of any material objects, greatness, or honour. They had compiled Gunatitanand Swami's discourses mainly for themselves. What you hear you forget, but if the discourse is written, then it can be read again and again and meditated upon; so that one can live his life accordingly and gather strength and inspiration from them. They had written these discourses with this noble aim. Later on, in order that this Brahmvidya may become useful to all santos-haribhaktos, it was compiled and edited in the form of a Book. There is no place for any doubt in their honesty. Also, in the first published collection containing five chapters, Sadguru Balmukund Swami notes that Gunatitanand Swami had himself authenticated this collection in the presence of Balmukund Swami, Achintyanand Brahmchari and others after hearing it. Whenever this was read, Gunatitanand Swami often used to say 'It is word to word without any change.'

It is a fact that those santos-devotees compiling the Vatos, were not professors in Sanskrit. It is possible therefore that certain impurities may have remained in writing the shlokas spoken by Swami. It is also a fact that these impurities were later removed, but that is no reason to doubt the honesty of the editors.

### **3.3. Publication of different editions of the Book**

The different santos-bhaktos who had noted down Swami's talks had prepared their own notes. In the beginning, these collections used to be read by the sanots-bhaktos. Some used to get all these notes copied down. Thus, more and more started reading the Vaatos. Krushnaji Ada (Rajkot) had also received the copies of the notes which Jaga Bhakta had. A few years after that, Krishnaji Ada's son, Vaijnath-bhai, had the first edition containing six chapters, printed in Samvat 1959 (AD 1903). This contained the three Chapters written by Jaga Bhakta, one by Sadashankarbhai and two chapters written by Harishankarbhai, total six chapters. Probably, Balmukund Swami was not able to find the one chapter written by him, hence it was not published.

After that, in 1966 (AD 1910) under the leadership of Sadguru Balmukund Swami, five Chapters were published from Rajkot, which contained three Chapters

edited by Jaga Bhakta, one Chapter edited by Sadashankarbhai and one Chapter edited by Balmukund Swami. It is possible that they did not have those two chapters edited by Harishankarbhai.

The same five Chapters were published in AD 1911 by Bookseller Guruprasad Naranji on being inspired Sadguru Nandkishoredas after having obtained the permission of Amdavad Acharya Vasudevprasadji to do so.

Considering the first edition as the original, it was again published in Samvat 1975 (AD 1919) by Rajkot Satsang-Hitvardhak Mandal after obtaining permission from Acharya Shripati-prasadji Maharaj.

On the basis of the Swamini Vaato published by Balmukumd Swami, Rajaram Bhatt had it published in 1989 (AD 1933) after having obtained the permission of Acharya Anand-prasadji Maharaj.

Later on, in 2022 (AD 1966) Swaminarayan Gurukul Rajkot, in 2050 (AD 1994) ShreejiDikshdham Shree Swaminarayan Mandir, Piplana-and thus, these five chapters continued to be published.

After the publication of the five Chapters by Balmukund Swami, in 1984 (AD 1928) Vaijnathbhai, by incorporating in it the Chapter relating to Purushottam's infinite Supremacy, himself published in 1959 (AD 1903) the six chapters already published by him earlier and the new seventh Chapter as above, which have gained the most publicity.

The Bochansanwasi Aksharpurshottam Sanstha has been publishing the edition containing these seven chapters, of which, so far, more than 100,000 copies have been published. Thus, the five chapters, and the seven chapters, are the editions most published.

Apart from whatever Chapters have been published, are some more Vaatos noted by Jaga Bhakta, and the scribe of Junagadh mandir, Shree Thakkar Narayan Pradhan.

Thus, as and when the Chapters continued to come in hand, they were published by Rajkot's Vaijnathbhai and other publishers. Commencing from 1959 (AD 1903) to 2017 (AD 1961) different chapters were published under the editorship of Vaijnathbhai. Bocha-sanwasi Aksha Purshottam Sanstha had twice published Chapters one to fifteen.

So far, the most published are the seven Chapters of Swamini Vaato by Bochasanwasi Akshar Purshottam Sanstha. Therefore, all the devotees and the santos regularly read these Vaatos. We shall now look at the contexts, mainly from these seven chapters.

### 3.4 Swami's utterances on the importance of 'vaato'

What does a squirrel living on dry leaves know about the taste of mango pulp? Similarly, what do the jivas who are under the influence of three gunas understand the glory of Gunatit Vaato? The talks of mayik jivas smell of self-pride, attachment and enmity, jealousy and anger. The talks of brahma-parabrahma are above maya and hence have no such smell. As such, these talks penetrate through the jiva, clean all the rubbish inside it, remove infinite suspicions, cure it of its disease of births-deaths, and make it nirvasanik and brahmarup. The glory of such miraculous Vaatos can only be understood if told by Gunatitanand Swami himself. That is why sometimes he used to say frankly about the glory and the speciality of his Vaatos. Let us look at some of his Vaatos:

#### ❖ The Glory of the Vaato

Explaining the glory of the Vaato, Swami States:

“These are the words of Purshottam (Supreme God) and the talks of Gunatit.”  
(Swamini Vaat 1/131)

“Is this a mere talk? No. This is nectar.” (Swamini Vaat 6/221)

“These talks are from Akshardham, and are of God, o f Narayan.”(Swamini Vaat 4/35)

#### ❖ Strength of the Vato

Explaining the strength of the nectar-like Vato's of Akshar-dham, Swami states the benefits and fruits from it:

“ 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 them. 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 will give mangoes. This is what happens.” (Swamini Vaat 1/33)

“These talks of Purshottam Bhagwan (Supreme God) Vaatos can clear infinite doubts.” (Swamini Vaat 1/231)

“These Vatos will not let you reborn.”(Swamini Vaat: 4/53)

“These talks are such that they suppress even those with evil intentions and make their good effects felt.”(Swamini Vaat 1/302)

“These talks are magic, one who listens becomes mad! Mad in what sense? The world ceases to exist and is understood as perishable, then who will call one wise?” (Swamini Vaat 1/136)

#### ❖ **These talks greater than billions of means**

Gunatitand Swami, by explaining that his talks are greater than billions of means, says:

“Tens of millions of spiritual endeavours may be performed, but they are not equal to delivering and listening to these spiritual talks.” (Swamini Vaat 1/226)

“If one performs austerities for ten million births, still one would not get the benefits that arise from these spiritual talks if one thinks like this.” (Swamini Vaat 6/198)

“This talk is superior to ten million meditations.” (Swamini Vaat 3/67)

“To listen to this sadhu’s spiritual talks is better than totally emaciating one’s body, shunning food, living in the jungle and renouncing home.” (Swamini Vaat 1/131)

#### ❖ **Rare talks**

Swami himself says that his talks are rarer than ten millions endeavours and are like magic:

“These talks are rare.” (Swamini Vaat 6/247)

“Even by giving tens of millions of rupees such spiritual talks are

unattainable.” (Swamini Vaat 1/19)

“Such talks are not found anywhere else” (Swamini Vaat 4/35) “Such talks do not take place anywhere” (Swamini Vaat 5/155)

“These talks have not been attained by anyone” (Swamini Vaat 6/193) “Later, you will cry to listen to these talks.” (Swamini Vaat 6/230)

### ❖ Rare are the talks and rare are its spokesman

Swami himself states that speaker of such Gunatitt talks are also rare:

“A speaker of these talks is rare.” (Swamini Vaat 1/246)

“Search the whole universe, but where will you find such a sadhu?” (Swamini Vaat 6/218)

“Who will talk like this? If someone does, they will talk about birth and death. Here, the faults of mind and the senses are revealed. Who would know about them?” (Swamini Vaat 6/189)

“The talks taking place in satsang at this time are not possible even in another birth, it is not known even how to deliver them and even if one studies for one’s entire life, one cannot learn them.” (Swamini Vaat 1/219)

“Others are not able to deliver such talks amid such activity.” (Swamini Vaat 1/226)

### ❖ The cost of hearing these talks:

Explaining at what cost one should hear such super-natural and impossible talks, Swami States:

“If there is a house of gold, it is worth burning it to ashes to listen to these spiritual talks.” (Swamini Vaat 6/247)

“By burning houses of gold, listen to these talks.” (Swamini Vaat 6/248)

“We get food to eat, but if that is not available, we shall beg for cooked food to eat and still keep the company of the sadhu. If necessary, we should eat only raw

grains, observes fasts, or eat only neem tree leaves and keep his company.” (Swamini Vaat2/44 )

In all the above talks Gunatitanand Swami himself has sung the glory of his own sermons. On reading them one can be convinced that these talks are really the step ladder to reach Akshardham. It is the divine nectar of Akshardham. It is also the experience of those who have read or heard these talks.

### **3.5 The utterances of persons who have experienced the vaato**

Although Gunatitanand Swami was not an expert Pandit of the scriptures from worldly point of view, but hearing his talks on the essence of the scriptures, even great learned persons’ hearts used to get pierced. Everyone used to realise that the strength of experienced talks was greater than the mere memorised words of the scriptures. These Gunatit talks are like the English steel or cannons of the Portugese. These talks can convert jiva to Brahmrup by destroying its eternal ignorance. This was the experience of all those who used to hear swami.

On Shreeji Maharaj’s command, all the elderly paramhansas and house holder disciples used to come to Junagad for Swami’s confluence. Even Acharya Raghuvirji Maharaj and Acharya Ayodhya-prasadji Maharaj also used to come. Also, Swami often used to go to Gadhada, Vartal, and Amdavd and give discourses there too.

Both the Acharyas, all the Paramhansas, and the devotees were gratified on hearing Swami’s talks.

Some of the talks of Gunatitanand Swami were like a sharp, double-edged sword, and harsh, but still everyone liked them like a crystal of sugar and enjoyed them like nectar. That is elderly and learned santos like Gopalanand Swami, Nityanand Swami and Shukanand Swami used to praise Gunatitanand Swami freely and open heart, e.g., when Gunatitanand Swami used to talk about the supremacy of Maharaj, Goapalanand Swami would say: “ Oho, as Swami Himself is the incarnation of Aksharbrahm, he is not bound by the restraints of the Veda.”

Once Gopalanand Swami went to Junagadh and stayed there for four months. Hearing Gunatitanand Swami talking about the supreme greatness of Maharaj, he exclaimed: “They talk 25% about it in Vartal, 50% in Gadhada but here, in Junagadh, they speak about it upto their heart’s content.”

Whenever Gunatitanand Swami used to talk about renunciation, non-attachment, and dharma-niyam, some sadhus used to get intoxicated by it. Nityanand Swami, at that time used to say “Whilst Nishkulanand Swami has uprooted the five vishayas by writing books; Gunatitanand Swami cuts the roots of panchvishayas by his talks.”

Once Nityanand Swami was in Junagadh and was doing his morning pooja. Gunatitanand Swami, at that time was giving powerful talk before the assembly, hearing which, Nityanand Swami exclaimed: “Today we saw Swami in his true form as described by Maharaj. Good that he is at it. How convincingly He talks! No one else can speak like that. How anyone can speak like that if One’s behaviour is not good? And even if he speaks there will be no conviction in it and no one will believe him” so saying Nityanand Swami went into a trance. Again he awoke and said, “Swami’s talks and behaviour are same. He may perhaps control his speech, but in behaviour He never departs in the slightest from the commands of Shreeji. He has completely covered Sorath with his talks. ”

Once Sadguru Shukanand Swami had also said in Surat, “The way infinite jivas were attracted by Shreeji Maharaj’s talks, same way also thousands of aspirants are also attracted by Swami’s talks. People feel equally satisfied by Gunatitanand Swami’s vatos as they are as good as those of Maharaj.”

Raghuvirji Maharaj came to Junagadh for swami’s samagam by becoming a tirthwasi, i.e. without any attendants. One day, Gunatitanand Swami talked about Maharaj’s extreme glory and upasana, hearing which Raghuvirji Maharaj said: “Swami, Today you said so many things worth understanding. These talks can lead to Akshardham by removing deficiency of hundred millions of births.”

Thus, whoever has heard Gunatitanand Swami’s talks, every one of them has realised the incomparable greatness of Swami’s vato.

### **3.6 The divine Character of Gunatitanand Swami, the speaker of the vaato**

There is a difference in throwing a revolver bullet by hand, and the other one being fired by a revolver. Despite being the same bullet, there is a great difference in from which instrument it is released. Similarly, the importance of the spiritual words

depends from whose mouth they are delivered. Gunatitanand Swami explains this fact in his Vaat: “A sword is a sword, but it depends in whose hands it is, a kshatriya warrior or a bania merchant. Similarly, the words of the enlightened have great effect, but those of others do not.” (Swamini Vaato 6/206)

There is no dearth in this world of preachers and writers on spiritual matters. Today, a great deal has been said and written on spiritual matters. But in all these, the reason for Gunatitanand Swami’s Vaatos being distinct and different from all these, is his divine and beyond this world’s character.

Now, we shall try to understand the glory of Swami’s Vaato based on different angles of Gunatitanand Swami’s divine character.

### **3.6.1 Gunatitanand Swami: Incarnation of Aksharbrahm Himself**

The main point in the divine and transcendental character of Gunatitanand Swami is that he is the incarnation of Aksharbrahm. He is not someone who has accomplished this by winning over his passion, habits, mistakes or passion, but he is, since eternity, like Parabrahma, above maya. He does not have the touch of maya. Maya cannot transgress him. He, despite, always being eternally beyond maya, but, because of parabrahma’s desire, even if he comes into this universe for the ultimate liberation of infinite souls, he always remains aloof and unaffected from maya.

His coming on this earth is not due to his deeds, but because of parabrahm’s desire, for the good of jiva’s liberation.

Shreeji Maharaj Himself says in Vachanamrut Gadhada I/71: “When God incarnates for the purpose of granting liberation to the jivas, He is always accompanied by His Akshardham, His attendants-who are formed of chaitanya-and all of His divine powers.”

Gunatitanand Swami also says the same thing in his talks:

“Maharaj has come here (on the earth) with His Akshardham, Parshads, and all of His powers.”(Swamin Vaat 1/1)

“Today Purshottam incarnated on this earth together with God realised sadhu and muktas.” (Swamini Vaat 3/41)

In addition, there are clear indications in so many Vaatos that Shreeji Maharaj incarnated on this earth together with His Akshardham.

It is a well-known fact in the sampradya that Gunatitanand Swami is Himself the Aksharbrahm whom Shreeji Maharaj had brought with Him. Shreeji Maharaj has also clearly said on many occasions that Gunatitanand Swami is Aksharbrahm. Let us look at one such incident:

During BC 1868 Maharaj celebrated Holi festival at Rathod Dhadhal's place in Sarangpur. At that time, Maharaj took part in **raas** (circular dance), At that time, He was singing Kabir's Pad ' Sadguru khele vasant... ' then Maharaj asked everyone:

'Who is such a sadguru? '

On a similar occasion, first in Loj and then in Mangrolm, as Maharaj had said "I am such a sadguru" therefore, the santos also replied that "You are such a sadguru."

At that time, Shreeji Maharaj, by pointing with the stick in His hand in the chest of Gunatitanand Swami, and said: "I am supreme Purshottam Narayan, and the greatness of the sadguru mentioned in the **pad** is this, Sadguru Gunatitanand Swami." This Sadguru Gunatitanand Swami, in the form of dham, is the residence of infinite muktos and Myself. In visualised form He is in Akshardham and here, on the earth, he has incarnated with us as Sadguru to spread our supreme upasana."

Gunatitanand Swami has himself introduced Himself on several occasions to many of his close disciples as Akshar. Let us look at one such incident:

After taking his leave for the last time from Junagadh He arrived in Vanthli. At that time, Devjibhai, the son of Kalyanjibhai, after performing Swami's puja, asked him a question. "Swami, The Akshardham about whom we talk often, what does he look like?" Swami told him: "The one who is in your house now, is Akshar himself."

Also, there are clear indications of his being Akshar in many of his vato, e.g:

"This sadhu's for should be understood like Akshar." (Swamini Vaat 3/38)

"This sadhu is Akshar, understand his divine and manly sentiment to be one, and He is unborn, has not come through a maya and understand his style as maya of a magician. He is seen here on the desire of Maharaj." (Swamini Vaat 5/184)

"I am Brahm and the one that passed away was Parabr ahm." (Swamini Vaat 6/211)

From all the above contexts, it is only to be understood that Gunatitanand Swami is the incarnation of Aksharbrahma. (Footnote: Detailed explanation on Gunatitanand Swami himself being the avatar of Aksharbrahma, based on

Sampradayik literature, sampradayik incidents, and historical contexts is given in Vachanamrut Rahasya Part III on pages 107 to 173)

One who is the model of self-realisation and upasana, through whom one is going to gain Parabrahm Purshottam Bhagwan Swaminarayan's best and nirvikalp faith, that person is none other than Anadi Mul Akshar Gunatitanand Swami only. Therefore, the sermons of Gunatitanand Swami are also completely authentic as much as that of Shreeji Maharaj.

There is not the least scope for any doubt in his Vatos. Any aspirant can reach the topmost levels of Brahavidya with full confidence in his vato)

### **3.6.2 Gunatitanand Swami: The Guide to Brhamvidya**

Brahma and Parabrahma both are above maya. Therefore it is not possible to determine immediately their true form as they have been born as human beings like us, without the aspirants' capacity or his eligibility for it. Only one who has strong refinements from the past, who is blessed by the mercy of God and the sant, and who has firm faith and belief in their words, those can only know their true forms. But for those who are not so qualified, even if they have no conviction that Gunatitanand Swami is Aksharbrahma, or there is no immediate likelihood of being so, if they only know that Gunatitanand Swami is the right expert and guide to Brahavidya, then they may have some faith in whatever guidance Swami has given on the subject of Brahavidya.

Gunatitanand Swami himself is an uncreated siddha; but to show the aspirants on the path of spiritual self-realisation a model of sadhana he has always remained on the top-most height by crossing every step of spiritual self-realisation.

Gunatitanand Swami has explained by his own life as to how, what, and by which highest conception an aspirant should work on the path of self-realisation. Whatever virtues are needed by an aspirant to progress on the path of self-realisation, can be seen inter-twined in Gunatitanand Swami's life. We shall now look at some of these virtues.

#### **❖ Austerity, renunciation and complete disregard of body**

The adhyatmic sadhana moves from bulk to minuteness. Anyone wishing to progress in sadhana has to gain austerity, renunciation and complete disregard for

the body in his life. Those who remain engrossed in the panchvishayas and fondling the body do not gain much in the path of self-realisation. Gunatitanand Swami has by his own life story, taught all the aspirants. Throughout his whole life, one can see austerity, detachment, renunciation, and disregard for his body. These virtues were natural to him. He did not have to strive for them. From his early life, he never had any attachment for the world. Let us try to understand this point from the incidents of his life.

### ❖ **Natural sacrifice from Childhood**

Before becoming sadhu, once he was talking to his younger brother Sunderjee whilst swinging him in the cradle. When his mother, Sakarba, asked him about it, he said “Mother, I am going to become a sadhu, but also wil I take Sunderjee with me and make him a sadhu.

How easily he had renounced home! Once he (Mulji Bhakt) was watering the plants in his field. At that time Maharaj gave him Darshan and said: “What is the purpose of our coming on this earth and whatis being done? The Glory of Brahm has completely dried out from the world. Therefore, leave home now. Your time is finished.”

On hearing this, Mulji Bhakt immediately threw away the spade and without going home, he straightaway took the road to Gadhada. What natural sacrifice!

This sacrifice of his was not superficial. It was based on firm conviction of detachment. Maharaj sent him back home because of his domestic trouble. But after convincing and quietening everyone at home, he returned and implored Maharaj to initiate him. Maharaj told him: “We will initiate you if you go back, burn the family and then come back.” He again started walking home, but at Muktanand Swami’s instance, Maharaj called him back. At that time Muktanand Swami told Mulji Bhakt: “What Maharaj meant by telling you to burn the family, was that you cut the family times from your heart, not phiscially burn the family.” On hearing this, Mulji Bhakt, replied, smilingly: “There is nothing in my heart except Maharaj, so I don’t need to burn anything.”

Indeed, his sacrifice was extensive and without attachment, was fully coloured by extensive detachment.

### ❖ **No desire for eating, drinking and Clothing**

In Gunatitanand Swami’s life, right from the beginning to his last breath, no false pomp or passion for food, clothing or any other material objects could be seen.

Once in Bhadra, the Bholanath family was invited for dinner at Vasta Patel's house. Mulji Bhakta took away from his plate the Ladoos leaving only Rotlo and kadhi, saying "I will eat only Rotlo and Kadhi. I have not come here to eat ladoos."

Mulji Bhakt preferred to eat kotha, bora, ambli, etc., rather than good rich food. Even after becoming a sadhu, he had never any liking for good rich food or rich clothes. Describing his natural temperament, he states:

"We do not need any clothes. Not even a single blanket, and this eating is also for the good of others; otherwise we prefer only simple food and, by Maharaj's grace, in other objects also, we have naturally no interest." (Swamini Vaat, 6/152)

"We are staying here amidst all these activities, but even if we stay in the jungle, we will be happy. We need food once a day and if we have a cotton blanket then we do not need other clothing since when we stayed in the forest, we stayed only with this blanket. It protects from cold, sun and even rain heavy enough to soak a thick blanket. When such an attitude is cultivated, what more is needed?" (Swamini Vaat, 6/59)

Whenever he used to go in vicharan, he never used to accept rich food or sweets, despite being pressurised by the devotees.

Once, when taunted by Maharaj about his drinking milk, He had never tasted milk. Despite being the Mahant of Junagadh Mandir, he always used to eat only dried crushed rotlo adding buttermilk and salt into it. He had never accepted rich food despite affection for any devotee.

Once, in Anand, Raghuvirji Maharaj gave one pendo to Gunatitanand Swami. After holding it in his for few minutes, and thinking, he said: "These 500 Paramhansos are holding from the scruff of my neck and telling me not to eat it, saying it is poison, poison, poison."

Once in Jamnagar, because of insistence from a devotee, the Sanots cooked a dish of milk and rice, and served one measure of it in the plate of Swami. Swami took a piece of rotli, dipped it in the milk, and went into deep thought. When Santos asked him to eat, he said: "These 500 paramhansos and Shreeji Maharaj are holding my neck, and telling me, don't eat, it is poison, don't eat." So saying, he ate only rotli and shaak, but did not drink the milk.

From both these incidents, one can have some idea of Swami's liking. Swami

always ate very little and he stayed half-hungry.

Once during the vicharan, after all the santos had finished eating, One pound of math (gram) was left over. Nobody was going to eat it. Ramdas Swami wished that somebody finish it. Gunatitanand Swami ate it. Ramdas Swami seeing this exclaimed: “Sadhuram, do you always remain so hungry?”

Similarly once after dinner, when Gunatitanand Swami ate the remaining two rotlas, Krupanand Swami also experienced the same feeling that Gunatitanand Swami must be remaining half-hungry.

Also, Swami always used to tie a string around his waist and measure his body. If he ever found his body getting nourished, he would immediately fast.

### ❖ Disregard for body

Combined with austerity, renunciation and detachment, he had also complete disregard for his body. He has never worried about his body. He had made his body like a shoe. He used to be happy if his body had to suffer, and in case of adversity he used to be happier. He has never fallen back due to bodily pain, inconvenience or difficulties. Talking about disregard for his body, he says:

We stayed 22 years in forests, get food after three days; we used to stay in cold, heat, rain and ice. Also stayed in heaps of grass and stayed covered by a cotton blanket. We have suffered such difficulties. (Swamini Vaat, 6/67)

‘In the reverence and condemnation’ Vachanamrut, it is said that “those who have understood God’s glory become worried when they get good material objects.” Then a sadhu asked: “Why does he become depressed on getting good material pleasures of?” Swami said: “Like the others who become depressed with inferior objects of pleasure, similarly, this sadhu becomes worried with good material pleasures!” I did not want to keep even a seat but I kept it because the sadhus insisted. However, I do not like it and I spread it as much as others do for their seats and that too, because of old age. But I can do without it also. There is no enjoyment like sitting on bare ground. And it is good if transport is not used too much. I sit on whatever I get, but what is the necessity of better facilities? Also I do not like luxury or this guest-house, but I have been commanded, so what can I do? Otherwise, what worth is there in all this? Whatever service can be done is of value, otherwise I really like the forest. (Swamini Vaat, 6/128)

“What does one want to do with the physical body? People pamper it and protect it like a bubble. Do not keep it like that. Make it like a shoe. See this, my feet are like metal so that even thorns do not hurt; and they do not burn either. Once I was going to Maharaj, and on the way, the sharp thorns cracked under my feet and I continued walking. Nothing happened. Therefore, if the body is kept very delicately then even if a slight breeze does not blow, the jiva feels discomfort from within. Therefore, do not keep the body like this. (Swamini Vaat, 6/179)

From his above words, one can see his disregard for body. Only one who has complete disregard for bodily comforts, no desire to preserve it, could one travel from village to village, and devotees house to house, at immense pain to his body, could serve like that. To the last breath in his body, Gunatitanand swami has suffered inconveniences and difficulties. Also, once he stood for hours in a dark night under a roof in rain for Maharaj’s darshan in the flash of lightening. Once he ran back-footed with Maharaj on His Manaki Ghodi (Manaki the mare) for Maharaj’s darshan. From several such instances one can see his complete disregard for his body.

In short, it is to be said that such virtues like austerity, renunciation, detachment and disregard for body, had blossomed in full in Gunatitanand swami’s life. His behaviour complemented his talk, that is why they penetrated the hearts of the aspirants, and they too used to become intoxicated with austerity and detachment. During the camp of discourses in Vartal, Swami’s talk were so effective that the sweets remained untouched during the camp.

### ❖ The conception for service

An aspirant desiring spiritual salvation, there should be in his life, austerity, renunciation, and detachment combined with disregard for body and eagerness to serve. Gunatitanad Swami has taught this to all with his behaviour. He has never let any opportunity let go by to serve Maharaj, santos, the mandirs, and the devotees. After initiation as Sadhu, he was travelling in company with elderly sadgurus like Muktanand Swami, Atmanand Swami, Krupnand Swami and others. Because of his eagerness to serve, he was in great demand by all the santos. During that time he used to go for bagging food, feed all the santo, and serve everyone.

Gunatitanand Swami was particularly remembered by Maharaj and everyone when some of the santos used to fall sick. He was allotted the service of the sick

santos. Swami also used to serve them with equal zeal and glory. He served the 19 santos who had become sick in Kariyani and 18 santos in Vartal in every way. Sometimes, along with the sick santos' clothes, even the healthy santos used to give him their clothing as well as their quilts for washing. Swami used to serve them without any complaint. Sometimes, when some temperamental sant was sick, nobody except Gunatitanand Swami could serve him. Swami used to tolerate them with great patience and serve them.

Once Swami was passing through Bhal-pradesh along with the company of santos and devotees during monsoon. The road was covered in mud due to the rains. As the mud stuck to the shoes of the company, their shoes had become very heavy. Swami asked all of them to take off their shoes and give it to him. He made a bundle of them and carried it on his head, thus making the company relaxed and he being happier for having been able to serve them, and walked in the mud.

Even during the construction of Junagadh Mandir also Swami had worked very hard. Even after becoming the mahant of the mandir, he used to do all small-big jobs. To go in the fields and clear pebbles, collect grass and tie them up in bundles. In Mandir also, he used to help in making bowls from leaves and sweep the compound. That's why he told the bawas of Tarnetar that with us, one who serves is called the mahant.

He used to look after the devotees visiting the mandir, and ensuring that were well looked after. By visiting several villages under the control of Junagadh he had fulfilled the wishes of thousands of devotees.

Thus, by serving in various ways, Swami had easily accomplished the seva-yog.

### ❖ **Eagerness to obey**

The mysterious and difficult process of adhyatma becomes easy by obeying the instructions of perceptible Supreme or perceptible Guru. Obedience is an essential virtue for any aspirant of Brahmvidya. This virtue can be seen entwined naturally in the life of Gunatitanand Swami. He has not disobeyed any of Shreeji Maharaj's wishes. He was always eager to obey any kind of instructions of Shreeji Maharaj. Let us understand this by some incidents:

After his initiation, travelling with Muktanand Swami, Gunatitanand Swami arrived in Jetalpur. Here, in the building, Muktanand Swami was sleeping on the roof without any bedding. Gunatitanand came to sleep there, and he also prepared to

sleep on the floor without any bedding. Muktanand Swami implored him to cover the floor with something as it rough and covered with small stones. When Gunatitanand Swami asked him why he was sleeping without any bedding, Muktanand replied that “I have no order from Maharaj, but you are new here , so please use a bedding.” Swami said: “Maharaj’s order applied to everyone. I have also come here with the desire of bliss. Please let me follow the instructions.”

Once, Maharaj had decided to go from Kariyani to Vartal to celebrate the Harijayanti utsav there. Suddenly, 19 of the santos fell sick. Maharaj offered the person who stayed behind to look after the santos the fruit of 100 such festivals, but nobody came forward. But, realising Maharaj’s wish, Gunatitanand Swami said: “Maharaj! I will stay in their service.” Maharaj was pleased, and said: “Splendid! You did not let my words go astray.”

Once the devotees of the city of Mahemdavad requested Maharaj “The Vedantis in our town are in full power, and they do not allow anyone here to become satsangi. Please send some learned pundit or shastri to defeat them, so that they can be stopped from coming in our way.” Maharaj asked some learned sadhus to go to Mahemadavad. But no one came forward to go. At last Maharaj sent Gunatitanand Swami. Although, from the worldly point of view, Gunatitanand Swami had not studied the scriptures, but nevertheless he went there on Maharaj’s command, and defeated the Vedantis by his supernatural power.

Junagadh Mandir was to be constructed. But roads there were dangerous and difficult, it was a muslim state, the influential population there of the Nagars creating problems in the way, for all these reasons nobody was prepared to go there.

At last Maharaj thought of Gunatitanand Swami and asked him. Swami immediately said: “Maharaj, I will go if you command me.”

In this context, Gunatitanand Swami says in his Vaatos: “I have never transgressed Maharaj’s commands and never made others violate them either. I came when Maharaj told me; what has happened to me? I have had no trouble.” (Swamini Vaat, 6/224)

In the same way, because of his eagerness for obedience, he has gone to the far districts of Buranpur and Khandesh, reasling Maharaj’s command and his wishes.

Several such incidents like above have happened in the life of Gunatitanand Swami, from which one can imagine his eagerness for obedience.

### ❖ Oneness in honour and insult

A sadhu is one who does not feel insulted and who does not become unsteady when honoured. This virtue was natural in the life of Gunatitanand Swami. He had been greatly honoured, and also he had been insulted in the worst possible manner, but he had learned to remain equal, still and steady under any situation. In fact, he has never become proud because of the honour, or withered because of insult, disregard and contempt. On both the occasions one can his steadfastness.

From Maharaj's time, Gunatitanand swami was given honours and respect in the sampraday. Maharaj has Himself talked about his unique glory by introducing him as Aksharbrahma. Appointing him the mahant of Junagadh mandir was in itself a great honour. In addition to Shreeji Maharaj, elderly santos, who were considered to be the pillars of the sampraday, like Gopalanand Swami, Muktanand Swami, Shukanand Swami, Nityanand Swami, Krupanand Swami, Bhayatmanand Swami, etc., also openly praised Swami. Such steadfast santos and elderly householder devotees used to go to Junagadh, by the command of Maharaj, to hear his discourses.

Even the Nawab of Junagadh, and the Nawabs of Manavadar and Khambhat, used to respect Swami. On the way from Junagadh to Vartal, hundreds of villages coming in between used to welcome Swami profusely with open arms. People used to come from Vartal upto Mahelav to receive and welcome him to Vartal.

Seeing Swami being welcomed in every village of Sorath and their dedication towards Swami, even Acharya Maharaj and Nityanand Swami, and Shukanand Swami were surprised. Swami was felicitated in Bochasan, Vartal and Amdavad by sitting him in howdah on an elephant's back. Even Acharya Raghuvirji Maharaj, Acharya Bhagwatiprasad Maharaj, and Acharya Ayodhyaprasadji Maharaj had great respect, honour and venerable view of Gunatitanand Swami, and listened to his talks. Thus, within the whole sampradaya, Gunatitanand swami commanded great respect and dignity. During all these felicitations, Gunatitanand Swami had always remained humble and egoless.

Against all these felicitations, there were also many incidents of insults as well. Those within and outside the sampradaya, the renunciates and the householders, biased with egoism, enmity, jealousy and cupidity, had not left any stone unturned to insult him.

When Gunatitanand Swami arrived with Krupanand Swami at the town of Juna Sawar, its darbar, Uga Khuman had them beaten by his men, and drive them out of the town. On this occasion, Swami remained quiet, steadfast and tolerating this insult, prayed for Uga Khuman to be gifted with a son.

Swami was twice insulted in the presence of full-congregated assembly. In the conext of these insults, Swami had said that words were said like the hailstorm in heavy rains in the year 1976. But even against insults Swami remained quiet. There was no thought in his mind nor did any line on his face change. Immediately after this incident, he even garlanded one of the miscreants of this insult, Swami Hariswarupdasji. On his way, he was met by Adbhutanand Swami, Shukanand Swami, Pavitranand Swami and others, who honoured him, presented him with dhotiyas, and sugar crystals. They all then begged him to forgive them and said

“Swami, ignore what we have said.” Swami smiled, as if nothing had happened and moved on. Really, here one can see the topmost state of steadfastness in Swami’s life.

#### ❖ Firmness in observing the panchvartaman (the five religious vows)

The distinct feature of the swaminarayan sadhus is because of their observance of the five religious vows, Nishkam (celibacy), Nirlobh (non-greed) Nisneh (Detachment), Niswad (detachment from pleasure of taste) and Nirman (humility)-these five vows must be observed by all the Swaminarayan sadhus. Shreeji Maharaj presented the society with such sadhus observing these five panchvartman. (Vows) And amongst all these Gunatitanand Swami was unique. He was perfect and brave in observing these five vows. In the above explanations there is an indication of his panchvartman also. There are also several other incidents of his firmness in observing the five vows. It is not possible to include all of them here. We shall only look at one such incident to understand his firmness to observe these five vows.

In Samvat 1983 after the festival of Prabodhini Ekadashi, Maharaj held an assembly of all the paramhansos in Akshar-ordi. He told all the sanos: “All of you must observe the five vows strictly, and I want an assurance from each of you that none of you will transgress from them. For that I want each one of you to vouch for the other. ” Then each of the sant vouched for his partner. Exatctly at that time Gunatitanand Swami arrived there from Junagadh and straightaway came to Akshar-Ordi for Maharaj’s darshan. Seeing him Brahmanand Swami said: “Now, who will vouch for Gunatitanand Swami? All of those sitting here have vouched for each other for the strict observance of panchvartman. There is none remaining.” Hearing

this, Maharaj said: “Swami, We are His Guarantor since eternity.” The assembly was spellbound on hearing this.

For one whose guarantor is Maharaj since eternity, what further need be said about his firmness in observing the five vows?

Shreeji Maharaj says in Vachanamrut Gadhada III/27: “The attributes of the sant:- being free of lust, avarice, egotism, taste, attachment, etc., has the direct relationship with God.” Because Gunatitanand had all these five virtues in him, it proves that He had direct relationship with Bhagwan Swaminarayan. Direct contact means direct experience, or realisation of atma-parmatma.

### ❖ Direct experience of Atma-Parmatma

The state of every aspirant on the path of spiritual self-realisation is the highest, the direct experience of atma-parmatma means sakshatkar or realisation. After constant and genuine labour, there could be a few aspirants out of hundreds and thousands who have reached to this stage in this birth. Majority of the aspirants stop being satisfied with having reached the stage of good virtues. The number of heroes reaching the state of realisation of atma-parmatma is very few.

Gunatitanand Swami had reached this satge naturally since childhood. He used to talk from childhood about seeing Maharaj and His divine deeds – lilas- and talk to his mother Sakarba about them.

In 1845 when Mulji Bhakt was 4 years old, once he said to his mother, “Ma, I would like to drink milk.” His mother told him: “I will first offer it to Thakorji and then give it to you.” On hearing this Mulji replied “Ma, Thakorji always resides in my heart. Thakorji was there when I was in your womb and even before that too. Thakorji is for ever in me. When I eat, Thakorji eats with me, and when I sleep, Thakorji sleeps with me too. So, when I drink milk Thakorji will also drink milk with me. The Thakorji who is outside, and the one who is in me, are one and the same.” Sakarba, on hearing Mulji’s such knowledge-full talks, was pleasantly surprised. Then Sakarba gave the milk to Mulji, who drank it smilingly. At that time, Sakarba happened to look at Thakorji’s murti, when she saw a white line on the lips of Thakorji. She then believed Mulji’s words to be true.

Also, on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of Fagan Sud in SY 1845, Mulji Bhakt said to his moter, “Ma, Ma, today my Lord Purshottam Narayan is being given the sacred thred (Yagnopavit) in Aodhya, so sing the songs of janoi or Yagnopavit today.”

Purna Purshottsm Narayan was travelling in the forests. Mulji Bhakta used to see Him everyday. Once, by being happy with this glimpse or darshan, he began singing:

**Vanma vahalo Vichare, te aavshe aapane gaam;  
Maata mujane jaan-jo tej prabhunu Dham.**

(Meaning: My dear Lord is travelling in the forests, One day he shall visit our Village; Ma, know me as that Lord's abode)

It is evident from the above incidents that for Gunatitanand Swami, Maharaj's realisation was since birth. Speaking about this natural state of his, he says in his Vaato:

"I have to complete thousands of tasks, but if I forget God, even for a fraction of a second it takes to blink, and then I feel pain like as if my head has been split open." Then someone asked: "You accomplish thousands of tasks, yet continually remember God like an uninterrupted flow of oil. How is this possible?" Then Swami answered: "Do you ever forget your body?" No Maharaj. Then Swami said: "If you forget your body, then I will forget Maharaj's murti. Just as a fish moves, swims and acts in water, I walk, talk and do all the tasks immersed in the form of Maharaj, but forgetting Maharaj I never do anything." (Vaat: 3/65)

"I can introspect and state that God is like this." (Vaat: 6/120)

### ❖ Worthy of holding Maharaj in full

It is not only that Gunatitanand Swami had Maharaj's realisation, he was also holding Maharaj in him constantly. He was the abode of Maharaj to stay permanently and entirely in visible sate on the earth.

On several occasions he has said that Bhagwan Swaminarayan resides in him continuously. e.g., once, explaining about his form to Balmukund Swami and Kothri Trikamdas in Junagadh, He said: "You have visible God himself so you do not have to do anything. As Jiva is in your body, similiary Maharaj is in full flange in me. He glances at you; He puts his arms on your head. He meets you, and gives you happiness in full flange. So Trikamdas, please understand that the only difference is that this shape is of Sadhu but is Maharaj Himself, but you do not realise Maharajs' visible form."

One day Jaga Bhakta sadly said to Swami: "Swami, I was unfortunate that I

was not born at the time Maharaj was, thereby I did not have His darshan and contact.” On hearing this Swami said: “You cannot see Maharaj’s shape, but be assured that there is not an iota of difference in what you see now in front of you.” Hearing this from Swami, Jaga Bhakta was very pleased that Maharaj is manifest in Swami.

When Swami bade his farewell to Junagadh on his way to Vanthli, he said: “Whenever we go on this way, we rememeber Maharaj. Maharaj and elederly santos have often walked on this way” Hearing this Kashiram said: “Swami! Those who have seen Maharaj can remember Him, but what about those who have not? ” Swami replied: “He is not invisible to you! He is present before you in the form of sant. He speaks to you, looks at you, and gives you great happiness, but you do not know this because of ignorance.”

Also, Swami says in his Vaatos:

“God resides in this sadhu.” (Vat: 5/166)

“In Akshardham, Maharaj is seated lie this facing north.” Saying this, he demonstrated by pointing his finger from the toe on his foot to the crown of his head. (Vat: 4/91)

“The form of God that is in Akshardham and the one which you see are identical. The only difference is that the former shows more light.” (Vat: 5/256)

“Here, together with this sadhu, Sahjanand Swami himself is manifest.” (Vat: 6/224)

The above incidents and Vats clearly indicate that Bhagwan Swaminarayan himself is manifest in Gunatitanand Swami.

Thus, the narrator of these Vaatos, Gunatitanand Swami is no ordinary aspirant, is not a highly spiritual person who has accomplished himself, but He is the receptacle or the worthy abode of Parabrahm Purshottam Narayan. As stated earlier, he is the incarnation of Anadi Aksharbrahm. He has not achieved self-ralisation by sadhana.

Like Parabrahma, he is also above maya since eternity. Therefore, they both are closed related. In Akshardham and here, Parabrahma is not sighted apart from him even for a second. That is why, according to Vachanamrut Gadhada I/27: “Shreeji Maharaj Himself sees through his eys, hears through his ears, and speaks through his tongue.”

In Junagadh, when once Swami became over-sentimental, and talked

supernaturally, Raghuvirji Maharaj said: “Swami, today you said so many things worth understanding. These talks can lead to Akshardham by removing the deficiencies of millions of births.” Swami replied: “Maharaj, they just flow naturally from within. Maharaj Himself speaks from within me.” Raghuvirji Maharaj said: “Yes, Swami. It is obvious that it is Maharaj who always speaks from within you.”

Can there ever be any doubt or bad inference as to its authenticity when Shreeji Maharaj Himself speaks through him?

### 3.6.3 The moulder of Brahmi Sthiti

#### ❖ The noble desire for ultimate liberation of jivas

Shreeji Maharaj came to this earth for the liberation of infinite souls, and brought with him Aksharbrahma Gunatitanand Swami. Guna-titanand Swami also realising Maharaj’s desire, continuously laboured very hard throughout his life for the ultimate liberation of souls by removing their eternal ignorance and bad habits, by making them brahma-roop, and by making them aware of the supremeness of Shreeji Maharaj. He has expressed his noble desire for the liberation of souls in his Vaatos, thus:

“Born as human for liberation of jivas” (Vat: 5/65)

“Fill a well with mustard seeds and make a pile as high as an arrow can be shot in the sky that is the number of jivas we want to liberate.” (Vat: 5/355)

“Some drawbacks will be cured through spiritual renunciation and detachment, some through devotion and any defects left will finally be cured through illness. But I want to make you pure and not leave any faults.” (Vat: 1/63)

“Just as Maharaj during his last eight months kept us near him and gave us spiritual wisdom, I also wish to keep you for twelve months and arrange for spiritual discourses on the scripture written by Achintyanand Brahmchari to give spiritual wisdom.” (Vat: 6/97)

“Now for the last time, I want to keep the sadhus here in Juna-gadh upto Diwali and talk to them. I may live or not, but I want to give spiritual knowledge related to the form of God and make them happy.”(Vat: 6/101)

Thus, the main object of Swami’s incarnation and all his noble activities was the liberation of souls. For their liberation only he had travelled in villages and cities and given discourses during his life time.

Only by his touch or his darshan infinite souls were cured of bad habits and

good virtues developed. On his mere glance, the jivas hunger for spiritual knowledge awakened. Knowingly or unknowingly, the jivos turned towards satsang by his even very little service to them. He has mainly diverted the jivos on the path of ultimate salvation by his talks only. By correcting their faults he has moulded them for brahmi sthiti.

How intense his desire for the liberation of the jivos, without any expectations from them, was, can be seen from his following Vats:

“One person donated Rs.500/- to a mandir and left. Instead, if he had associated with sadhus, remained at the mandir to gain spiritual knowledge and eating out of that Rs.500/-, he would have benefited more.” (Vat: 2/25)

“Eat food from the mandir, but associate with sadhu. There is plenty of food in the mandir, come and I will serve you.” (Vat: 6/126)

“If someone remembers God, I will arrange to look after his daily needs, and give him food also.” (Vat: 1/276)

“If someone sits idle but worships God, then I will undertake to feed him and also to look after his family members’ needs.” He said this out of compassion. (Vat: 5/244)

“I have written that, every year, everyone should spend one month in the company of sadhu. Without this, the deficiencies will not be overcome. Someone may say that we will spend money, and spend it often, but where will one get such spiritual talks! So, listen to these talks. Some may spend repeatedly for religious causes, but so what? If someone spends one rupee for satsang, I am ready to give him Rs 4,000 in return, but without listening to this spiritual wisdom, the deficiencies will not be cured. But nobody stays here. If someone wishes to stay here and is short of money, then do not give donations for one month in the mandir. In fact, if you stay here, I will give you ten rupees a month. Now, How many are prepared to stay here? Even if 400 people stay, the money here will not run out. But you will get much knowledge. Instead of someone spending a hundred thousand rupees, I would prefer that he stays here at the mandir’s expense and listens to these talks. Where will one find such talks?” (Vat: 6/247)

“I was perplexed when we started the construction of this haveli, when will it finish and when will we start talking again? This body may perish any day, and the talks will remain untold. I would rather sit in a hut, collect some grains and talk to all the people on the earth!” (Vat: 5/91)

Thus, the reason of Swami insisting for everyone to listen to his talks is that if people come and listen, their deficiencies may be cured; they gain spiritual

knowledge and ultimately get liberated.

### ❖ **The moulding of Brahmi sthiti**

As an expert sculptor makes a beautiful idol from an unpolished stone, so has Gunatitanand Swami transformed people who were like stones, mountains of sin, wretched and animal like, by nurturing them into true human beings. He has removed from their hearts their bad habits, devilish conduct, and spread the fragrance of good virtues in them. He has removed the darkness of ignorance from their hearts and spread there the light of knowledge, eg., Munjo Suru of village Lilakha was very fond of hunting, and full of addictions. Eating meat and drinking liquor were his daily routine. He used to take away the goats and lambs of the shepherds and slash them like cocoanuts for his meals. Swami transformed him by talking, initiated him as a sastsangi, and taught him the lessons of humanity.

Valero Varu of village Babariyawad Manasahad had become an outlaw. He used to harass the people of the nearby villages, by beating, robbing, and terrorising them. He would kill innocent peasants while they were farming, rob the wedding party and kill the bridegroom. This Valero Varu, who attempted to rob the santos came in the sights of Swami. By listening to Swamishree's factfull and kind talks, he realised his mistakes, and from a demon he was transformed into a human being.

Ramo Hati of Maliya was another such deceitful person. He also was full of all the addictions and brave. But by listening to Swami's meaningful and heart-piercing preachings, he also repented and promised to leave all his addictions and become a true human being.

Dajibhai of village Kamrol was full of all the addictions like, liquor, meat, adultery etc., it was his daily routine to kill several sparrows and eat their tongues. Swami converted such a mountain of sin by preaching to him, and diverted him to the path of humanity.

Swami has transformed several such wicked jivas by removing their wickedness, their bad habits, faults and addictions and enlightened in them the light of humanity. By talking to such jivas He gradually transformed them from simple human beings into Godlike beings. Going further, he uplifted their worldly desires to spirituality.

He made them walk and run on the path of Brahmi Sthiti.

That is why, Gunatitanand Swami had once said to Raghuvirji Maharaj “Maharaj! I have explained the satsang to such an extent to the devotees of Sorath, that if I wish I could fill the steep-well of Khengar-vav right upto the brim with the heads of the satsangis.

Thus, Swamishree had, by continuously giving discourses, cultivated a large group of santos-haribhaktos who were firm believers of Agna-Upasana, who lived with each other harmoniously and were prepared to serve in every way.

Even those jivas who were good, cultured, and aspirants, he made them by constantly awakening them, making them aware of their faults, and transformed them into Brahmarup.

There were hundreds like Upendranand Swami, Ghanshyamdas Swami, Vasudev Swami, the Mahant of Dholera, whom he had transformed them by correcting their faults and made them happier. He had spiritually developed hundreds of devotees like Shivilal Sheth of Botad, Vaghjeebhai of Vaso, Lalabhai of Upleta, Rayo Desai of Kamigadh, Karsan Bambhaniyo of Hamapar, Ram Bhanderi of Chadiya, Velo Sathvaro of Bagasara, Abhaysinh Darbar of Lodhika and Ganod.

Acharya Raghuvirji Maharaj was one of such aspirants whose complexes were melted in the gymnasium of Swami’s discourses and who became Swamirup. The rajogun of Keshavprasadji Maharaj of Amdavad disappered, and Jaga Swami was relived of all his internal-outward problems. He had made Bhagatji Maharaj’s armour so strong that nothing could pierce it.

Also, He had further strengthened the Supremeness of Maharaj in the minds of those stable santos who were in close contact with Mahara, such as Bhayatmanand Swami, Shukanand Swami, Muktanand Swami, and Premanand Swami. He had continuous talked to hundreds of santos and devotees of Sorath by talking to them of his being Aksharbrahma and the Supremeness of Shreeji Maharaj, thereby strengthening their belief and thus opening the doors of salvation through pure upasana.

Thus, Gunatitanand Swami had, by talking to whoever came in His contact, according to their faith and aspirations, by melting their worldly desires, converted them from their jivdasha and made them realise Brahmi sthiti.

#### ❖ Swami’s fearless bold talks

When a sculptor starts working on a stone with his chisel, he creates from the

raw stone a pretty and beautiful image. Nothing can be created out of a stone merely by blowing over it or pampering it. It has to be sculpted with a chisel. Sometimes sparks may fly whilst working with a chisel on it, but as a result, a beautiful image or idol is created. Same way, Swami has said some harsh words to remove the karan deh attached to the jiva, to remove the desires, defects and the wastage of desires from the jivas and to make them Brahmarup. Naturally, the jivas feel bitter about the truth. But even then, without caring for the friendship, or being afraid of anyone and fearlessly, Swami has said whatever he wanted to, to whomever and wherever.

Be it a millionaire like Shivilal Sheth or a busy person involved in his state's administration like Darbar Abhesinh of Lodhika; the Acharya of Vartal desh Raghuvirji Maharaj or the Acharya of Amdavad desh Ayodhyaprasadji Maharaj; in short, be it a millionaire householder or a young or great Tyagi alike, Swami voice has never faltered in telling them the truth. Swami has never hesitated in giving a bitter medicine to cure them of the decease of birth and death.

#### ❖ Incidents indicating Swamishree's bold talks

Let us look at some of the incidents of Swami's bold talks:

Once, Shivilal Sheth came to Junagadh for Swami's samagam. One afternoon he went to the market and sold some gold. He gave rasoī in the mandir from the brokerage he received for selling the gold. Instead of being pleased with the rasoī, Swami told him frankly: "Have you ever thought of trading in 1000 million kgs of agricultural waste? What have you earned by deserting the darshan and the discourse of such a sadhu?" By saying so, Swami removed his intellectual ego.

Once Swami took Shivilal Sheth with him in his cart and said: "You think that you have done a great service by sponsoring the installation of the murti of Gopinathji Maharaj in Gadhada and also sponsoring Raghuvirji Maharaj's visit to Bhavnagar.

But when I look at your jiva, I see there remains only half of your satsang." Shivilal Sheth said with both his hands folded: "Yes, Mahara j". Then Swami said: "Leaving this Sadhu and wishing for other pleasures is like the calf, who, one day entered the cowshed thinking that it will enjoy some milk. There, some bulls had arrived. So, wherever the calf attempted to place its mouth, it received a kick. As a result of these kicks, its mouth became swollen, and it could not get the pleasure of drinking milk. Then, when its own mother came, it was not able to suck. Similarly, leaving this sadhu and seeking happiness elsewhere is like receiving the kicks. Since, when one lapses in observing God's commands and understanding His true form,

one will not be able to sit with such a sadhu – just as the calf could not go to the mother.” Then Swami said: “When I talk like this for two months then once again your jiva will join with God as before. That is how much deficiency has set in. And these talks are for uniting with God.”

Once, Swami arrived in Lodhika. The Darbar of Lodhika, Abhesinh, set in meditation and sent the raso of motaiya ladu with his servant. Swami told him plainly “We do not need the motaiya ladu. Tell your Darbar that our knowledge is 100 million times greater than your meditation.”

In 1905 all the sadhus got together in Vartal and planned to insult Gopalanand Swami. On coming to know about this, Gunatita-nand Swami, immediately came to Vartal from Junagadh. After meeting Acharya Raghuvirji Maharaj and Nityanand Swami, He went to see Bhagwadanand Swami, the instigator of this plan. He welcomed Swami, and offered a sit, but Swami kicked away the offered sit, and told him “What is all this? You have invited the Acharya of the other country, and misguided the sadhus. Do not think that Gopalanand Swami is alone, so stop all this. You may be a leader here, but don’t forget that in Akshardham I am the Chief there. There I will keep you standing in the sun if you misbehave. God is anyathakartum, I will create another sun there for you. So saying he persuaded Bhagwad-anand Swami and stopped the programme of insulting Gopalanand Swami.

The next day, after the above incident, Ayodhyaprasadji and Acharya Raguvirprasadji were present in the assembly with all the other santos. At that time, Swami began with the roar of a lion, “The creator and speaker of Dharmamrut is still alive and exists, but still people steal things and hoard them and transgress dharmamrut. Why is it that despite your existence (referring to the Acharyas) and we being the sadhus initiated by Maharaj, some santos have begun to disobey the commands. Is this right? Since you are the Acharyas of Dharma, it is upto you to ensure that the santos follow and obey the commands. If you do not enforce the discipline it is your loss, and as santos, it is our loss if we do not observe the discipline.

One day, in Nadiad, Swamishri went along with other santos for a padhramani where chairs were arranged for the sadguru santos to sit. Atmanand Swami did not like this, so, the next day, he refused to go along. Raghuvirji Maharaj asked Swami “Why is Bhai Swami refusing to come to the padhramani?” On this Swami replied: “Your father used to make the sadhus cover their faces with veils. While you are trumpeting and inviting ladyfolk to stand between the santos. Then you ask to

observe religion. How can it be possible? Therefore, ensure that during the Santos visits, no chairs are kept and no ladies come there. Only then will we come for padhramani. On hearing this, Acharya Maharaj made arrangements accordingly. In this way, on every occasion Swami insisted that discipline and religion was observed by all.

Naja Jogiya, who was the personal sevak of Maharaj, was initiated as a sadhu after the passing away of Maharaj to His abode, and named Ghanshayamdas. He was attracted by Swami's talks and often used to go to Junagadh for Swami's confluence. Once when he was meditating in the assembly hall, Swami asked him "Are you meditating or day-dreaming?" Awakening from his meditation, he asked "Swami, why are you blaming me?" Swami asked him "Were you really meditating or patting the head of the buffalo with white spots in Gadhada?" Ghanshayamdas was stunned by this revelation. He realised his mistake.

Once, Jaga swami was carving stones in the compound. Swami went to him and asked "You are carving, but does your instincts remain joined in God's image continuously?" Jaga Swami said no. So Swami told him "It does not matter if you carve one or two stones less, but always remember that your instincts remain joined in God."

He had even taunted his heir Bhagatji Maharaj. Once in Kariyani, Bhagatji Maharaj was cleaning the utensils, when in trying to clean the stuck food from the bottom of the utensil, he had to use some force. For that few moments only his instincts got disconnected from God. Swami, who was sitting in the assembly, immediately got up, came to him and asked him "Hey, why are you cleaning utensils whilst being dirty? You are cleaning utensils and forgetting God." Bhagatji Maharaj realised his mistake and immediately joined his instincts in God.

In this manner Gunatitanand Swami has, by personally criticising or even saying harsh words to everyone, be it small or big, corrected their faults and developed their spiritual structure.

### ❖ Some of Swami's Vaato indicating his plain speaking

Some incidents have been noted where Swami has spoken without fear or favour to householders or tyagis, for example:

Some persons are sitting in the balcony and criticising the world. We will throw them out. They are transgressing the very Dharmamrut which has been written for us, and stealing things. They are keeping more clothes, which is not good. If a lapwing will not be able to support the sky by raising its legs, we will throw all of them out. Therefore, whoever wishes to keep things by transgressing the dharmamrut should start leaving now. We are determined to enforce the religion. (Swamini Vaat: 6/151)

Some are not attending the discourses, and keep double seats. What do they think? They won't find such adviser. (Swamini Vaat 6/89)

True worship is when one repeatedly wakes up at night to pray. 'And yes sir, the mind has been appeased.' But, by appeading the mind nothing is gained. Still some, when they go to urinate (at night) do not even fully open their eyes, as if they will lose sleep and valuables will be lost. Thus they pass the whole night sleeping and during the day they do not stop gossiping. Does God become happy with him? No. And one feels one has grown up spiritually, but have you become like Ambrish? Still one eats, sleeps and feels fulfilled. (Swamini Vaat 6/116)

See, people come from other regions to listen to these discourses. While those who are from here, sit on the first floor balcony or elsewhere. So what do they understand? Nothing. If one becomes sincere and attached oneself to the Sadhu then the enemies in the form of lust, etc., are destroyed and one becomes united with God. Further there is nobody as sinful, unrighteous, foolish and ignorant like those who get food to eat and yet do not worship God. Oh! We have attained this Maharaj and yet such deficiencies remain. What other misfortune is there like this? (Swamini Vaat 6/159)

Oh! There is no end to the jivas ignorance. It is engrossed in worldly activities, visiting Kings and householders. So what can we say? Just like those engrossed in worldly matters, one struggles to read two Vachanamruts in the discourse in the evenings and then return to the same routine. God is not pleased by this. So act thoughtfully. (Swamini Vaat 6/44)

Look, some do not do any work, not even fetching water, so what is it? They do not wish to give any labour to their bodies. What do they think? I laugh at such people. Look at the curse of the creator! Do they lie down at home? But it is ignorance. Are they really meditating? No. They are sleeping. While wherever I look, I see God. But still we leave all this and join them in the service of such sadhus. But what these idiots understand? (Swamini Vaat 6/108)

“One is only outwardly dressed in saffron. But the jiva inside has no changed”. One has to look at this also. (Swamini Vaat 5/385)

What is gained if one renounces but still seeks power and fame? The principles of God and the Sadhu are still not understood. The essence is to become Brahmrupe and then offer devotion with deep affection. This is because one is carried away on the spur of the moment and renounces, enjoys desires and indulges in idle talks. What is attained if the essence is not understood? (Swamini Vaat 5/235)

Thus, to remove faults in behaviour and obedience, Swami used to tell people personally or in the assembly.

### ❖ Swami's plain speaking of Upasana

If someone was lacking in his understanding of Upasana, Swami used to point out this without fear or favour. e.g.:

Once in Vartal, Ayodhyaprasadji Maharaj said to Swami “Because of your tough talks on Upasana, other avatars are being downgraded.” On hearing this, the sadhus of Amdavad also joined him and said “Narnarayan, Laxminarayan, Radhakrushna, and Shreeji Maharaj- are all one, but you are distinguishing them. Who told you this?” Swami replied “Swaminarayan Himself has told me this, who else? From the very beginning, I knew this, and have been saying that. Can a king and his servant be at par?” So saying he asked Acharya Ayodhyaprasadji Maharaj “Take your example, all these sadhus collect and bring you the dharmado (alms), you also have good relations with us, but despite all this, you have given the key of your safe to Keshavprasadji Maharaj (his son). Similarly, Sahajanand Swami has given me the key to Akshardham (Purusho-ttamness.) Therefore, the supreme and eternally divine omnipresent, and the cause of all those incarnations of the past, like Radha-Krishna etc., other Gods, Pradhanpurush, and Mul Prakrutipurush,

He is the controller of all, and above all, the master of Akshardham, who is none other than the son of Bhakti-Dharma, that is Sahajanand Swami, He is Purushottam Bhagwan. To explain this fact and convince about the supremeness of omnipresent Purushottam Narayan, that is key to Purushottampanu. You are being worshipped because you have been delegated the key to be worshipped.

Once explaining the details about Upasana, he said in the Assembly “The cause of all the incarnations is Purushottam Sahajanand Swami. By Worshipping Him, on

goes to Akshardham., and if you worship other incarnations, then you go to His dham. If one understands Maharaj as Ramchandraji, then he goes to Vaikunth, and if one understands Maharaj as Shree Krishna, than he will go to Golok, But nowever is such bliss as Akshardham, therefore, believe Maharaj to be Purushottam. When Swami said this, some of those sitting in the assembly, said irritatingly “We have to stay where God keeps, and all the abodes of God alike, why do you keep on harping this point?” At that time, to clear their misunderstanding about the correct Upasana, he said plainly “You cannot compare the stars with the moon. Maharaj has also clearly said to distinguish between Avatar and Avataari, i.e. a king and his officer, or an arrow an archer. The king’s officer may be a great one, but when he goes to the King, he has to pay many salutes before he is allowed to sit. And he is governed by the King. On that he read the related Vachanamrut, and said “Do not keep the company of such person wh o regards Akshardham and other abodes alike, and who regards Maharaj and other incarnations alike.” Making him read this Vachanamrut, he made him retreat.

Once in Junagadh, in the presence of Raghuvirji Maharaj, Swami narrated some wonderful incidents of Maharaj’s supremeness. Bolanath Bhatt who was in the assembly, did not like this, so he said to Raghuvirji Maharaj “There should be a limit to such talks. These talks are the songs of haveli.” On hearing th is Swami replied “When there is no limit to Akshardham, how can there be an end to His talks? I wish to explain clear upasana to all these 5000 people who are sitting here. How can I do this if I go on telling it door to door? Therefore, I wish to publicise these talks here, in the assembly. Bhattji said “But should there not be somebody worthy of th at?” Swami said “Whoever listens and digests them is worthy, and those who do not digest them are unworthy.” So saying he spoke at length on pure upasana.

Thus Gunatitanand Swami has spoken fearlessly and non-stop about pure upasana and supremeness of Maharaj.

Hence, Swami has been very explicit on both the subjects of agna and upasana. Wherever he has found laxity in observance, his tone has changed. However, that tone, whilst being harsh, is as much innocent. His plain-speaking is not loaded with material expectations.

It is not tainted with gaining fame or honour.

Swami had nothing to gain personally in criticising or saying harsh words to someone. He has not said anything out of personal enmity, cotempt or jealousy. He has said so only out of pure love and mercy on the jivas, in order to build their

brahmisthiti. It is also a true and an undisputable history that because of his discourses and plain speaking many a jivas have attained brahmisthiti.

## 3.7 The special facets of ‘Swamini Vaato’

### 3.7.1. The difference between ‘Swamini Vaato’ and other Vaatos

In Swaminarayan Sampraday, apart from Aksharbrahm Gunatitanand Swami’s Vaato, there are Gopalanand Swami’s Vaato, Sadguru Shukanand Swami’s Vaato, Sadguru Adbhutanand Swami’s Vaato, Sadguru Bhayatmanand Swami’s Vaato, Sadguru Prabhavanand Swami’s Vaato, Sadguru Tadrupanand Swami’s Vaato, Sadguru Prasadand Swami’s Vaato, Sadguru Nirgundas Swami’s Vaato, Sadguru Aksharanand Swami’s Vaato, etc., books have been published. If one comparatively studies any of the above Vaatos with Swami’s Vaato, it will be abundantly clear that in comparison to them, Swami’s Vaato are distinct, unique and miraculous.

#### ❖ From subject point of view – Different

The subjects chosen in Swamini Vaato, are distinct when compared to other Vaatos. In other Paramhansos Vaatos, one will find Shreeji Maharaj’s incidents, and occasional advises rendered by Him. No doubt, for the personal nourishment of any santo-haribhaktos of the sampradaya, these books are very useful, and for any aspirant it is essential to read, remember and think about their Ishtdev’s leelacharitra. Although these books have their importance in the sampradaya, but it is very clear that Shreeji Maharaj’s personal opinion and principle, shuddha upasana and swarupnishtha, and self-realisation are not seen as clear in other Vaatos. Although Gopalanand Swami’s Vaato do contain the principle and upasana, but still, they are at par with Gunatitanand Swami’s Vaato.

Also, the sting and the piercing strength seen in Swami’s Vaato to erode the roots of materialistic desires, drawbacks, and to become brahmru, are not seen in other Vaatos. Further, the insistence to accomplish dharma, gnan, vairagya, and the determination to attain ekantik dharma, the ways to achieve them, and to recognise the good and bad companies, and stay away from them, as also ways to abstain from them, is also not seen other Vaatos. Nobody has consistently talked as much as Gunatitanand Swami on the necessity of ekantik satpurush and discourses in sadhana. This insistance is not seen any one’s vaatos.

Also, no other vaatos can be as useful as Swami's Vaatos to understand the principles of Vachanamrut and its mysteries.

If one were to study impartially and from different angles Swami's Vaato and other paramhansos Vaato, it will be observed that the subjects covered and explained in Swami's Vaato are much more varied and quite distinct from each other.

### ❖ The peculiar style in Swamini Vaato of explaining things by illustrations/incidents

There is a distinct and peculiar style of explaining things by way of illustrations in Swamini Vaato. In order to make a layman easily understand the deepest mysteries of spirituality, Gunatitanand Swami has vividly used illustrations/examples. His style of narrating the incidents is also unique. He has narrated different types of discourses, incidents and examples in so many different ways.

Sometimes he has shown a simple and straight way for spiritual sadhana by narrating famous stories from the scriptures. e.g:

“To do as per the commands of the seniors, is like Ganeshji having circumambulated (pradakshina) the cow (which represents the earth) whilst to do as one pleases is like Kartik Swami having circumambulated the earth. Therefore, one who does even very little, but with agna or command is having achieved too much, whilst one who does according to his own will, is equal to having achieved very little.” (Swamini Vaat 2/26)

“Prahladji fought for many days with Narayan, but God was not won over. The God told Parhlad, “I cannot be won over by such wars. Thw way to win me over is by singing my bhajans. Thinking of me in your mind and cherishing my murti in your eyes. In this way, always remember me.” Then, Pra hlad tried this method and God was won over within six months. Thus, to please God, learn this method, which is the best.” (Swamini Vaat 1/3)

Sometimes, Swami has advised quoting the incidents from the lives of the santo/-Haribkots of that time, e.g:

“How great was Chaitanyanand Swami? But despite his greatness, he discovered his faults only when he came in contact with Balmukundanand Swami

and ultimately got rid of them. If this happens to such great santos then what about others? It is a principle that unless one keeps constant association with the elderly santos, their faults/short-comings will not go. (Swamini Vaat 2/142)

“Mayaram Bhatt wanted to start business. And on the very first day, spent the whole night in planning about it. He thought that I have still not started the business, and on the very first night of thinking about it, if I had to loose my sleep, what would happen in the future. Next day he vowed never to think about starting business.” (Swamini Vaat 6/101)

“When Maharaj was pleased with Premanand Swami, he offered him to ask something of Him. Premanand Swami requested for Maharajs’ murti to appear before him continuously. At that Maharaj said “That pleasure is different. For that you have to strive. It is not possible without efforts.” (Swamini Vaat 2/70)

Sometimes Swami has given spiritually talks indicating certain distinctiveness of birds and animals. E.g:

“As long the snake in the house finds rats to eat, he does not trouble anyone, but if the rats are driven away from the house, then he will try to bite the residents. Similarly, if one allows himself to be dictated by the mind and the senses, then there will be no problems. But if they are denied their wishes then there is agitation.”(Swamini Vaat 5/86)

“Big animals like goats to as large as elephants, can be locked up in enclosures, but lions do not stay in enclosures. Similarly, the spiritual aspirants do not remain in the bondage of maya.” (Swamini Vaat 5/197)

“Once we were sitting on the outskirts of Dhoraji . There were piles of manure lying around. A bull would come running every now and then, dig his head in these piles and throw a basket or two full of dirt on his head. Similarly, no soul can remain without foraging in dirt in the form of material pleasure.” (Swamini Vaat 6/252)

Sometimes Swami has given his spiritual message by pointing to the specific working styles of the English and Portugese people, e.g:

The Portugese hold daily military training so their people become very alert. Similarly, an individual who studiously engages in spiritual discourses and posing and answering questions progresses fast and gains spiritual strength. But without this no strength is gained. And what satisfactions can one gain who sits around lazily?”  
(Swamini Vaat 2/48)

When the English officer is confused, he retreats into the Bungalow, and thinks. Similarly, one should often retreat from his activities, become free, and introspect within and think. (Swamini Vaat 2/182)

Sometimes, Swami has explained the truth by indicating certain realities of nature, nature's elements and realities. E.g:

“Of one has served the great sadhu, and acquired his virtues, then the adverse circumstances will have no effect on him. This is like darkness which disappears in the presence of the sun, but cannot exist there. (Swamini Vaat 1/9)

“This jiva has become enamoured of this world. When one hears these spiritual talks, it is like disturbing moss on the water surface by hitting it with a stick; the moss is separated initially and then again gathers around. Similarly, it is the tendency of the jiva to merge back with this world. (Swamini Vaat 2/98)

“This bush has been scraped smooth by the sand, and even if it is (watered) with a hundred thousand kilometre ocean, it will not turn luscious green, since it has been abraded by the sand. Similarly, this jiva has been eroded by the material pleasures; but even by being immersed in this Satsang, which is like a great ocean of fresh water, it does not blossom, since other people, worldly pleasures and the body have eroded the jiva. This is plainly visible. (Swamini Vaat 3/59)

“A shadow cannot be caught. Similarly, material desires and endeavours also cannot be fulfilled. Therefore, happiness is experienced when spiritual wisdom is attained. (Swamini Vaat 5/191)

Sometimes, Swami makes spiritual examples known by quoting worldly examples, e.g.,

“As one's spiritual knowledge develops, the greater the glory of God one comes to know. To illustrate this, Swami gave an example. ‘A shepherd was walking and he found a diamond, which he tied around the goat's neck. Then a merchant bought the goat along with the diamond and sold it for Rs.1000 rupees, and then it was sold for 100,000 rupees. This person then went to a trader and asked, ‘do you want to buy this diamond?’ After assessing the value of the diamond, the trader said ‘Bring a hundred labourers and take all the money you can carry away from my Treasury between sunrise and sunset.’ The townspeople were stunned that the trader had allowed his treasury to be looted. Then the trader's father came and asked, ‘What have you bought that you have paid as much?’ The trader replied, ‘I have bought this diamond.’ The father looked at it and commented, ‘you have got it for free! You've not paid even one day's worth of income.’ So, you see, of all these

people, the trader can be said to have the most accurate knowledge of the true worth of that diamond. It is the same with the glory of God. As one's knowledge of God's glory increases, one's understanding of His glory increases.' To illustrate this, he had Vachanamrut Sarangpur-17 read" (Swamini Vaat 3/61)

"We should become humble to preserve what we have. In a village, there lived two Vania brothers. Both of them had a chintamani each. When the King found this out, he sent his army, which defeated one of the brothers and took away his chintamani. The other brother was clever. He wore torn clothes like a pauper, begged for his food and hid the chintamani. Thus he pretended to be poor and left the kingdom, keeping the chintaman. Similarly, we should become meek and preserve the chintamani. (Swamini Vaat 5/85)

Sometimes Swami has explained the truth on the basis of business or some special aspects of business. e.g:

The example of a potter making pots: "While making a pot the potter a tool called golito on the inside for support and strikes (taplo) from the outside. Similarly, for us inner support means the glory of God and the external taplo means spiritual endeavours." (Swamini Vaat 5/186)

"If a landowner is powerful, he will only acquire land, and if a businessman is powerful he will accumulate wealth, and if a Brahmin is powerful, he will collect books, and if shepherd is powerful, he will accumulate cattle, but none will become an ekantik or an enlightened sadhu. Thus, there is no worth in all this." (Swamini Vaat 6/46)

"When an expert disguises himself, the fools believe he is a woman, but one who is wise, sees him as who he is, a man. Similarly, this world is an illusion. (Swamini Vaat 4/133)

Sometimes Swami has given his message by referring to the latest happenings. e.g.,

"A muslim woman of Amdavad took a contract for the whole town. She had no time even to eat due to her contract of beating her breast on somebody's death. Ultimately she died of hunger. Similarly, we should not take the monopoly contract for everybody." (Swamini Vaat 5/337)

"A Bania in Goldal built a house and put tiles on it. It cost him Forty thousand koris, which he had with him. Then he mortgaged his his new house, which he is still unable to get released and he has nothing to eat. Similarly, we should not

become like this Bania of Gondal, by mortgaging our body and do not worship God. (Swamini Vaat 6/289)

Thus, looking from different angles, we see so many different peculiarities in Swami's Vaato.

### **3.7.2. Swamini Vaato is the best commentary on Vachanamrut**

Shreeji Maharaj is Parabrahm and Gunatitanand Swami is Aksharbrahm. Both of them are above maya since eternity. Hence nobody could better understand each others opinion than themselves.

That is why whatever Shreeji Maharaj has said in Vachanamrut, Swami has explained its meaning appropriately and correctly.

Therefore, it can be said that Swamini Vaato is a simple translation of Vachanamrut. Generally, a commentary book consists of difficult words which are simplified, clarification of deep and indirectly said words in a simple and easy way, detailed description of minute talks, conclusion of detailed talk, meanings of deep and interesting talks. All these qualities are seen in Swami's vaatos. That is why there is no hesitation in saying that Swamini Vaato are the VACHANAMRUT's commentary. That is why Shastriji Maharaj write in one of his letters: "The main topics in the Vachanamrut are five, Dharma, gnan, vairagya, Bhakti and Mahima, similarly, the same five topics also are the main stay in Swamini Vaato. The only difference is that the question of glory which, Maharaj has seriously propounded in the Vachanamrut, Swami has propounded it in great detail and in simple language so that any layman can understand it. (Shastri Yagnapurushdas: 2/444)

#### **❖ Explanations based on Vachanamrut's context**

Whenever Swami used to narrate He used to read Vachanamrut and explain its meaning. Out of the seven chapters of Swamini Vaato, in 80 vaatos he has began by reading Vachanamrut. In these talks, Swami has explained the principle and the meaning of that particular Vachanamrut in simple and easy to understand language. It is clearly said as to what is to be understood from that Vachanamrut. Let us look at some of these Vaatos:

Vachanamrut Gadhada III-13 was read and then Swami talked on the question. "How can one remain God-centered even when circumstances become very bad?"

Swami said “If complete faith remains, that is itself a characteristic of one who is God-centered, Just as, if the chintamani remains and all other wealth is lost, then nothing is lost; but if the chintamani is lost, and all wealth remains, then nothing remains; similarly, if firm faith remains then everything remains and in the end only that will remain,” (Swamini Vaat 1/203)

Swami asked for Vachanamrut II-9 to be read, and said: “As described in this Vachanamrut, one who knows Maharaj as Puru-shottam and leaves satsang, will still go to Akshardham. And one who stays in satsang, observes dharma and is a celebate, but does not know Maharaj as Purushottam, will go to another abode.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/306)

After reading Vachanamrut Kariyani 7, Swami said: “Firm faith in God is in itself ultimate liberation and the state of spiritual perfection. To see God is to know the real form of God. Even with-out this knowledge, he can be seen, but it is inferior and eradicating vishayas understands sankhya and to see only God is Nirvikalp Nischaya.” (Swamini Vaat:1/309)

Further, after reading, ‘The Iron Nail’ Vachanamrut, (Gadhada III-7) Swami said: “Understand the nail (foundation) to be of two types. One is tribhuvana-vaibhava-heavepya-kuntha, that is, in the form of unflinching remembrance of God. And the second type is resolute faith in God. Whether one is able to remember God or not, but resolute faith in God should not waver. Since, through resolute faith in God the state of tribhuvana-vaibhava-heavepya-kuntha has been attained. Therefore, that is good. And, mostly, people have the nail (firm foundation) of resolute faith in God” (Swamini Vaat: 4/1)

“If one understands the form of God as described in Vachanamrut Gadhada II-13, then only does one attain liberation. The other means of liberation are like hands and legs and this knowledge of the form of God is the head. Therefore, to understand all, which has been, said a capable Guru has to be accepted and only such scriptures should be read. By doing as stated, this form should be attained. (Swamini Vaat: 6/236)

“Then, after having Vachanamrut Gadhada II-11 read, Swami said: “If all householders understand this Vachanamrut, they will remain at piece within. But this talk is difficult to understand.” Then, he gave an example, “On seeing a householder who has a wife, eight children, sixteen buffaloes, and other things, one feels that he will not attain liberation, but he has met God so he and everyone with him will attain moksha. This talk is just like one who has become ill by eating ghee

and is cured by again eating ghee. Others cannot understand it, only Maharaj can understand it. And the answer to this question can only be given by Maharaj, but not by anybody else. The very same qualities of rajogun, tamogun, and satvagun by which one goes to hell are also the same qualities by which moksha is also attained. To illustrate, he quoted the shlok, 'Amayo yena bhutanam'. (Swamini Vaat: 4/61)

When Vachanamrut Sarangpur 11 was being read, a devotee asked, "When death is mere moments away, how should one remember God?" Then Swami replied: "If someone has a strong desire to unite with God, and his life is about to end, then God and His Sadhu will help and protect him so that he can join with God. Therefore, harbour good intentions." (Swamini Vaat:4/45)

After having Vachanamrut Panchala-7 read, Swami said, "By understanding this manifest God (Bhagwan Swaminarayan) to be free from all blemishes, there is nothing else left to do. By understanding God as fault-free, one also becomes fault-free. The flaws that are experienced are of the material elements and only God is truly fault-free. Also, place and time do not affect God, but they do affect the jiva. Since the body is formed from the prarabdha karmas, when impure prarabdha karmas bear fruit, then place and time have an impact. But by knowing the manifest form of God as fault-free, then one is also in the process of becoming fault-free." (Swamini Vaat: 5/125)

After having Vachanamrut Gadhada I-54 read, Swami said "Oh! I feel like listening to this Vachanamrut all day long and still do not feel it is enough. Since, it describes the gateway to moksha." Saying this, he had it read three times and said, "Those whose karmas are barren will not understand this talk. For them, fundamentally, they see the great Sadhu as an enemy. That is described as destructive spiritual knowledge. So now, attach only with this Sadhu." (Swamini Vaat: 6/212)

### ❖ The Summary of several Vachanamruts

Some of the Vaatos do not have reference to Vachanamrut; even then in it one can see the essence secret and teaching principle, such as:

"The means to understanding this glory is profound association with such a sadhu." (Swamini Vaat: 1/1) (Vach.I-1, 21, and 51)

"Without God's wish nobody can move even a leaf." (Swamini Vaat: 1/4)  
(Vach.I-37, 74, 78)

“Only God and His holy sadhu, can grant moksha.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/20) (Vach.II-21, 59; Vartal 10)

“Much greater than the enjoyment of material pleasures is the bliss of the atma and even better than that is the bliss of God, which is like the chintamani.”

(Swamini Vaat: 1/26) (Vach. Sar.1; Loya 18, Panch 1; Gad II-1; Var.9, 16; Gad III-27)

“We shall aspire for all four spiritual endeavours, dharma, spiritual wisdom, detachment and devotion.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/31) (Vach. GadI-19, 21; Gad II-32, 65)

“Cannot eradicate vishayas, even in nirvikalp Samadhi (Swamini Vaat: 1/37) (Vach. Var.17. 20; III-1)

“To understand this upasana clearly, is the main endeavour.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/2) (Vach.I-56, 61; II-35; III-36)

“At present we do not realise it, but we have attained God, so we are fulfilled.” (Swamini Vaat: 4/9) (Vach. Loya 7; II-13)

Whatever is said here in every Vaat is the essence, secret principle referred in the Vachnamamruts mentioned thereto. These are some samples but this truth is almost there for each vaat. When we read the Vaato, we realise that we understand Maharaj’s teachings in simple language.

### ❖ Clarification of Vachanamruts’ absolute truth

Explanation of some absolute teachings of Vachanamrut is given in some Vaats. For example, Maharaj has many times talked about realisation of visible God or talks on His faith. Gunatitanand Swami, by explaining the relations on visible God said:

“It is mentioned in Panchala Vachanamrut “The way one keeps relation with God, he gains happiness. So if the God is not present how can one keep contact?” Then He replied: “Sermons, songs, bhajans and meditation are the sources of contact. Apart from that the communication with great sadhu is the real contact of God and one can enjoy the pleasure of God because in him God is manifested in all modes. When He was present even then if one did not know Him in true form

then it is not called proper relationship, and thus, without knowing what is the point even if he is present! Similarly, if one knew God is manifested in the Sant then He is called visible. And without knowing this he is absent then. A sadhue asked, “Is God not manifest in the murtis?” Then Swami said “If one attributes human traits to the actions of God and His Sadhue then one’s spiritual progress vanishes like the new moon; and if one attributes divine traits, then one progresses spiritually like the waxing moon of the second day of the bright half of the lunar month. And what actions do the murtis perform that one perceives faults in them and regresses? Therefore, only the talking-walking form of God (i.e. human form) is called manifest, and only the great Sadhu can instil divinity in the murti, scriptures and pilgrim places-together do not equal a Sadhu. And such a great sadhu is able to make all three-murtis, scriptures and pilgrim places. Therefore, such a Sadhu, in whom God fully resides, is the manifest form of God. (Swamini Vaat: 5/395)

Shreeji Maharaj has talked about His own behaviour in several Vachanamruts (Vact.I-29, 73; Kariyani 6; Loya 14; II-55, III13 etc.,)

If someone reads these endeavours then there is a possibility of misunderstanding that Shreeji Maharaj is one like us and he has reached to this stage of jivanmukta by doing sadhana of so many types. To avoid this misunderstanding, Swami explains Maharaj’s endeavours:

In the Vachanamrut, Maharaj has described His own human behaviour, but it should be understood as that of His liberated souls. And understand both Purushottam and His abode, Akshar, to be above that human behaviour and do not attribute any human traits to them.” (Swamini Vaat:5/146)

In Vachanamrut Vartal 18, and in the preface and in some literature of the sampradaya it is mentioned that Akshardham is within Golok. Swami explains the meaning of this as under: “One understands Akshardh am according to his knowledge. To some, Badrikashram is Akshardham, to some Vaikunth is Akshardham and to some Golk is Akshardham, but one who knows The greatness of Maharaj can understand properly.” Referring to thi s, he read Vachanamrut I-63, and said “Look, Maharaj has written that amongs the mos quitos, an ant looks bigger, and among the ants a scorpion looks bigger, and amongst the scorpions, a serpent looks bigger, and amongst the serpents a hawk looks bigger, and among the hawks, a buffalo looks bigger, and amongs the buffaloes, an elephant looks bigger, and amongs the elephants the Girnar looks bigger, and amongst that mountain Meru mountain looks bigger, and amongs the Meru mountain, the Lokalok

mountain is respected amongst other infinite mountains. Similarly, Akshardham is respected amongst other dhams, but it is not that Akshardham is within Golok. And there is a limit of other Dhams, but Akshardham has no limit. It is the fact. (Swamini Vaat: 3/23)

Thus Swami has explained the absolute truth of some of the Maharaj's teachings.

#### ❖ Truth on different endeavours in Vachanamrut

Maharaj gave different sermons based on the type of audience. He emphasises on different spiritual endeavours and virtues according to circumstances. So sometimes a person does realise the true opinion of Maharaj and what one has to do for liberation, but Swami has clearly given his opinion on this, such as:

One person asked Swami "Thoughtout the Vachanamrut, in some places the strength of refuge in God is described, in some places that of dharma, in some places that of detachment, in some places that of atma-realisation, and also in some places spiritual means have been described. Of these, please name one in which all are included and by which ultimate moksha is attained." So Swami said, "If one has upasana and the highest level of conviction in the supreme form of God, then with these two all spiritual means will come automatically." (Swamini Vaat: 6/294)

Maharaj has delivered countless discourses for the moksha of the jiva. Of them, four are the life force of the jiva. What are they? Firstly, Maharaj's upasana, secondly Maharaj's commands, thirdly attachment with the great God-realised Sadhu, and fourthly friendship with the devotees. These four principles are the life-force of the jiva" Swamini Vaat: 3/17)

In many such Vaatos Swami has clarified essence of Maharaj's various discourses.

#### ❖ Original definitions of Vachanamrut's wordings

Gunatitanand Swami has given original definitions of several words of Vachanamrut. Such as:

**Satsang:** 'Satsang means to fold one's hands before the great God-realised Sadhu, and do as He says.' (Swamini Vaat: 1/17)

**Sankhya:** 'To demolish all the works of Prakruti (i.e. to believe that no worldly, physical object is permanent, including one's own body) is called sankhya.'

(Swamini Vaat:1/108)

**Gnan-pralay:** ‘It is to remove all the work of prakruti from the heart, to become brahmrup and gunatit.’ (Swamini Vaat: 5/195)

**Seva:** “To follow the spoken or unspoken comments of the great God-realised Sadhu by mind, action and speech. There is no service comparable to this” (Swamini Vaat: 2/100):

**Maya:** “Not being able to recognise the mainifest human form of God is in itself maya.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/94)

**Divyabhav: (Divinity)** “Seeing no fault in any of His action is to see Divinity.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/102)

**Aloukik Drashti: (Heavenly vision)** to look at the Akshardham of God is a heavenly vision. In this resolute faith in God lies the divine vision.”(Swamini Vaat:1/102)

Thus Swami has given wonderful definitions in Vaato on Vachanamrut’s many words.

Also what should one keep in mind when following the words of Vachanamrut? Explaining this, Swami says “In Vachanamrut, Maharaj has revealed His esoteric teachings, opinions, preferences, principles and many other topics. Focus on them and move forward. That is what needs to be done.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/76)

Thus, one realises that by studying the Vachanamrut together with Swamini Vaato it is the simple but best translation of Vachanamrut. Any aspirant desirous of studying the true meaning of Vachanamrut must study Swamini Vaato. Only by studying Swamini Vaato can one understand Maharaj’s understanding and principle, and has the opportunity to fulfil his life.

### 3.7.3. Clarification on Shreeji Maharaj’s heart-touching principle in ‘Swamini Vaato.’

Shreeji Maharaj has given the understanding of his heart-touching principle in his teachings, but has kept in mind the different stages of jivas in His sermons and mostly gave His teachings as suitable to everyone. To find out logical principle is as difficult as to separate 100 grams of sugar from 1000 kgs of sand, but Gunatitanand Swami has separated Maharaj’s principles and explained them in his Vaatos. Such as:

‘Believe one’s true self as atma and worship’ that is the principle. It is similar to believe that many persons convert to other religion, but one does not, that person

should believe that 'I am not converted' This is one way to understand one's self 'Brahmrup' (Swamini Vaat:1/59)

“Maharaj has initiated an all encompassing path. That is 'He has spread the glory of Mandirs and encouraged people to fulfil their worldly duties by erecting buildings, and acquiring horses, carts etc., But He never let out of sight His principle that He wanted to free all aspirants of worldly desires and join everyone in God. So, follow any path, remain a householder or become a sadhu, but in the end, this is what is to be done. (Swamini Vaat: 2/84)

“This jiva thinks of this world till the end, but give them up, and think of heavenly abode (Akshardham). Always think of atma-parmatma. That is the opinion of Maharaj. But to support that principle, you will find fewer words, whereas to support the principle of renunciation, bhakti and Dharma you will find thousands of words, but still no one treads on that path. Ultimately, one has to do what Maharaj says” (Swamini Vaat: 2/105)

A devotee read find Vachanamruts, namely, Gadhada I-23, Gadhada II-30 and 45, Amdavadas 2 and 3. Then, Swami sat up and said, “It is as if I had never heard these Vachanamruts.” With this, he said, “Read them again” Then he (the devotee) read them again. Then Swami said, “Listening to these Vachanamruts, I have concluded that even after millions of years, without behaving in this way there is no final release. So, for us, there is no alternative but to do that way. Also even if one is an acharya, a son of God, an Ishwar or some small or big deity, still there is no release without behaving in that way. Since, that is Maharaj's belief.” ...Where shall we install Purushottam without becoming Brahmrup? So, if you want to install Purushottam, you have to become Brahmrup.”(Swamini Vaat: 2/76)

“Believe ones self to be Brahmrup. If one does not do this, today then when the body perishes one will have to do so. But as long as the body is believed as the self, how will ego and other faults be over-come? Therefore, do not believe ones self to be this body. That is Shreeji Maharaj's principle. And there are many types of people; Explain to them as per their understanding. Consider this at least once a day, and mostly out of many persons, if one remains in the community then others altogether try to probe him converted. It is like this, but do not compromise on this subject.

Such talks are not often found in the scriptures, but this is what is to be understood.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/363)

“And again talked about Leela, and during that said: It can also be said that Maharaj is pleased with him, but that pleasure is of a different kind. Blessings are gained from obedience of the principles of the Vachanamrut I-19, which says: ‘engross yourself in obeying the commands, following upasana and join the murti. Do it today, or after hundred births, but only then you shall be able to stay constantly with Maharaj. And this is the essence of whatever other discourses Maharaj has delivered. This is the essence of His teachings.’” (Swamini Vaat:6/254)

Any aspirant reading this Swamini Vaato cannot fail to understand Maharaj’s principle.

### **3.7.4: Shreeji Maharaj’s paramount faith in Swamini Vaato**

Gunatitanand Swami’s great service in this sampradaya is to propagate the Supremacy of Shreeji Maharaj. Some of Maharaj’s paramhansos found it difficult to understand Maharaj’s supremacy. Mostly were guided by the scriptures. Some accepted His supremacy, but were held back by fear of public opinion. Some of them could not talk because of others’ objections. None of these obstacles came in the way of Gunatitanand Swami. Previously, we have seen the outspokenness of Gunatitanand Swami in propagating the Supremacy of Shreeji Maharaj. He has spoken boldly and clearly before the great Paramhansos or both the Acharyas about Maharaj being Super Avtari and the source of all the avatars. Apart from Junagadh, wherever he went to Gadhada, Vartal or Amdavad, or in the presence of one sadhu or devotee, or in the assembly of thousands of sadhus and devotees, he unfailingly always spoke about Maharaj’s supremacy. He has never left anyone in any doubt or in fault about prevailing true upasana. He had firmly established the upasana in everybody’s heart.

Amongst his Vaato, there are many which explain the unavoidability or the importance to understand Maharaj as Supreme, the clarification of Shreeji Maharaj’s supreme form and the difference between avatar and avatari. Let us look at some of such Vaato:

#### **❖ The necessity to understand Maharaj as supreme**

It is essential to understand Shreeji Maharaj as supreme and the source of all incarnations. Explaining this, Swami says in his Vaato:

“Without knowing Maharaj as Purushottam, it is not possible to go to

Akshardham.” (Swamini Vaat: 3/12)

“Above all, the most important means of salvation lies in understanding upasana. And among all means upasana is the most powerful. One should understand Maharaj to be supreme, the source of all incarnations, the cause of all causes. This is one thing to understand. The quintessence of upasana is that one becomes as one understands Maharaj to be. One attains that much power and strength. By understanding Maharaj as the source of all avatars and the Lord of Akshardham, one attains Akshardham. Also Maharaj has said in the Vachanamrut, “One becomes as one understands God to be, but God remains limitless”. Therefore, to understand this upasana, clearly is the main endeavour” ((Swamini Vaat: 2/2).

“Have a pure and resolute faith in God’s manifest form, otherwise obstacles will not be overcome-even Maharaj has said this.

Therefore, this manifest Purushottam, Shreeji Maharaj, Sahajanand Swami, is the source of Shree Krishna and other incarnations, and is the cause and controller of all. In this, there is no doubt. Knowing this, stay absolutely faithfully and one will go straight to Akshardham.” (Swamini Vaat: 6/7)

“Purushottam Sahajanand Swami is the cause of all the incarnations. On this upasana, one will go straight to Akshardham, and having upasana of other incarnations one will go to their Dham.” (Swamini Vaat: 6/21)

“After reading Vachanamrut Gadhada II-9, Swami said “If one knows Maharaj as Purushottam, but due to circumstances, leaves satsang, even then one attains Akshardham, and if one does not have this spiritual wisdom to recognise Maharaj as Purushottam but remains in satsang, then he will attain another abode, but not Akshardham. (Swamini Vaat: 1/261)

### ❖ Shreeji Maharaj-Supreme and source of all incarnations

Gunatitanand Swami has made it amply clear in his Vaato that Shreeji Maharaj is Purushottam Narayan, is Supreme and the source of all the incarnations and the cause of all causes. E.g:

“In every universe there are ten murtis, out of which 6 are in sagun form and 4 are in nirgn form. There are such infinite universes and in all those universes there

are infinite murtis of Bhagwan, and Bhagwan Swaminarayan is the cause of all of them. This should be clearly understood.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/124)

“The understanding of upasana is that Shreeji Maharaj is the cause of countless numbers of incarnations of Krishna, Ramchandra, Vasudev, Narnarayan etc.,” (Swamini Vaat: 2/171)

“Actually, first Ganesh is described as a God, then Brahma, Vishnu and Shiv are described; Anirudhh, Pradyumna and Sankarshan are also described as Gods, then, who out of them should be believed as God? The explanation for this is that there are tens of millions of classes of jivas, ishwaras, Brahmas, and the cause of them all is Maharaj Himself. When one understands like this, then an answer can be said to have been given. There are countless Rams, countless Krishnas and countless akshar muktas, and the creator of them all; the supporter of them all, the controller of them all and the cause of them all is Maharaj. If He is understood in this way then spiritual wisdom is attained.” (Swamini Vaat: 6/257)

#### ❖ Difference between Avtar and Avatari

Gunatitanand Swami has very often clarified that there is no fundamental similarities between all the avatars, Ram-Krishna etc., and source of all the avatars Shreeji Maharaj. Both are fundamentally different. Swami explains this by giving worldly example on the difference between avatar and avatari.

Swami said once “How should one understand the difference between an Avatar and the source of avatars” Someone replied: “like an actor and his role.” Then Swami said: “The difference between the Avatar and their source is not like that, the difference should be known to be like that between the King and his nobleman, an archer and the arrow, and the stars and the moon.” (Swamini Vaat: 6/34)

“Other great avatars are like Parasmani, and Purushottam is Chintamani.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/171)

“All avatars are like magnets. Some of them weigh several kilos, some ten kilos, some hundreds of kilos and some hundreds of thousands of kilos. Of them, a magnet weighing several kilos attracts the metal of this mandirs, a magnet weighing tons of kilos attracts the metal of the entire city; a magnet weighing hundreds of kilos attracts the metal of the whole country; and a magnet weighing hundreds of

thousands of kilos attracts metal of an entire region. And today, a whole of mountain of magnet has come. Otherwise, how would the whole universe be attracted? With this, Swami said. “Jivas are drawn to previous avatars according to their powers. And today the source of all avatars, the cause of all causes, Purushottam, has come. And seeing Him, the lords of countless abodes and the liberated souls in them are drawn to Maharaj’s murti; just as on encountering a mountain of magnet, the nails of a ship are attracted.” (Swamini Vaat: 3/4)

“There are three grades of snake charmers: vadi, fulvadi, and gardi. Of these, a vadi captures meek snakes, a fulvadi captures those, which are easy to catch, else uses a cloth tie to kill them; and before a gardi all types of snakes, even cobras dance. This is an illustration and its principle is that Dattatraya, Kapil are in place of a vadi, they can liberate aspirants. Ramchandra and Shree Krishna are in place of a Fulvadi. They only liberate those who fulfil their promise and those who do not obey will be liberated by a stroke of sword. Whereas Maharaj is like a gardi, and before Him jivas, ishwaras, Purush and Akshar, etc., all stand with folded hands.” (Swamini Vaat: 3/5)

Thus Swami has not left any stone unturned in making known the Supreme form of Maharaj. Irrespective of whether someone is able to digest his talks, he has continued talking non-stop about it.

### **3.7.5 Clear descriptive picture of self-realisation in Vaato**

Each aspirant must have a clear picture in his mind about spiritual self-realisation. If a traveller has a map of his journey, then his path becomes easy. If you have a model/plan of your intended house, then how easy it would become to build it! Similarly, to attain proper self-realisation and to make it easy, if one has a clear-cut plan or a model in his mind, then how easy it would become! Some aspirants strive for many without achieving the desired result. In some cases, many aspirants divert from their intended path, and do what was unnecessary and forget what was to be done. Even whatever is done, is not done according to the plan and in time. Because of these reasons the desired result is not achieved. The main reason amongst all these is that the aspirant did not have a clear-cut picture in his mind of self-realisation.

A dry leaf on the ground flies here and there according to the direction of the wind, because the leaf itself has no goal of where and in which direction to go. Similarly, a sadhak who reads different books and listens to different orators, and

keeps on changing his sadhana accordingly, because he is uncertain in his mind as to how and where he intends to go, is like that leaf. What is the ultimate goad of his self-realisation? What is going to happen by self-realisation and what is to be attained? And how is it to be attained? The aspirant has no clear picture of all these things. That is why he is not able to attain that goal. It is therefore absolutely necessary that an aspirant has a true and a very clear cut picture of his self-realisation.

Bhagwan Swaminarayan has, after a deep study of all the scriptures and His experience, given wonderful direction on the subject of sadhana. On studying the Vachanamrut, one gets a clear cut picture of sadhana. But still, nobody can better understand the secret and the purport of Shreeji Maharaj as well as Gunatitanand Swami. Swami, by knowing the liking of Shreeji Maharaj and by his own experience, has made clear the sadhana as described by Shreeji Maharaj. Therefore, any aspirant desiring for spiritual salvation gets a clear picture of sadhana from Swami's Vaato. Now we shall try to understand the clarifications of sadhana on the basis of Swamini Vaato.

#### ❖ Clarification of the aim

A sadhak cannot gain anything in its true meaning without clarification and firm determination of his goal. Gunatitanand Swami has therefore made known the principle on the final goal of life, such as, "We are born to accomplish two things: First, to become Aksharrup and second, to join with God." (Swamini Vaat: 4/101)

"Out sole wish should be that we have to go to Aksh ardhham." (Swamini Vaat: 1/301) "Even by spoiling ten million tasks, improve your moksha. In case ten million tasks are improved, but moksha is spoilt, then what is achieved?" (SwaminiVaat: 1/14)

"Worship God with this body, since this body will pass away at any time. This task is like instantly threading a peal in a flash of lightening. Similarly achieve our work in the little time you have." (Swamini Vaat: 6/79)

The principle underlying the above talks is: "achieve salvation of the jiva with this human body and at the end reach Akshardham."

Let us now think over the guidance given by Swami for moksha.

### ❖ Disproportionate importance of sources

A sadhak, during his sadhana, does various activities, but even in them, there is a difference. By knowing the importance of the resources, the sadhak should give preference to more important resources in sadhana. By giving priority to the more important resources he should proceed in his sadhana. One may find this clearly mentioned in some of Swami's Vaatos, such as:

“Some are strong in dharma, but have little understanding, and some are normal in dharma but have proper understanding. Therefore, one who has understanding can progress”. (Swamini Vaat: 1/194)

“Understanding is greater than continuously saying the rosary, so keep this as the main thought.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/296)

“Even if one becomes united in God's murti, how much clarity of understanding will it achieve? Therefore, understanding is superior to all, whether or not one can control one's pulse by yogic powers. And even greater than sankhya and yoga is to understand God as Supreme.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/39)

“Above everything, to offer worship is better, and compared to that to keep on remembering is better; and compared to behold God within one's atma is better.” (Swami Vaat: 1/200)

“Developing an elevated spiritual state through knowledge is greater than seeing God during meditation. Parvatbhai, Krupanand Swami and Muktanand Swami did not experience samadhi, but they could continuously see the murti of God, and Parvtabhai understood as we understand now. Therefore, to believe oneself as brahmurup and that God resides within, is the state of spiritual wisdom; that is superior to Samadhi and it is free of obstacles.” (Swamini Vaat 1/228)

“Even one who has surrendered is **jiva** to God and the great Sadhu has to acquire spiritual knowledge since without acquiring it, it is not possible to know. And that is Maharaj's belief-to become spiritually wise. Otherwise, other activities take place and will continue to do so. But this knowledge must be acquired. No object will satisfy this jiva, but if spiritual wisdom is attained, nothing remains to be acquired.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/228)

“Even if one learns to turn a rosary, what is attained? There is no Wealth comparable to spiritual wisdom. And without spiritual wisdom, everything is

incomplete. (Swamini Vaat: 2/145)

“When listening to spiritual discourses and songs in praise of God, meditation should be stopped. Since, when spiritual knowledge is attained from them, meditation is sustained.”(Swamini Vaat: 6/169)

“Meditation is superior to dharma, etc., Spiritual knowledge is greater than that and greater than that is to intuitively serve the great and please them. In this one, all other three are incorporated. When the glory of God is known, then affection for Him arises spontaneously from within. And when such affection develops, then His wishes are followed. Therefore, this chintamani, which has come to hand should not relinquished. Thus the body must be made God-centered. (Swamini Vaat: 5/181)

“For one who performs (an ashwamedh) yagna and rides a horse throughout the world it is very difficult, since, if someone captures the horse the yagna will remain incomplete. While another, who rides the horse in the compound, completes the yagna. The meaning of this is, ‘controlling the sense and inner faculties is like riding the horse throughout the world. While, believing oneself as brahmurp is like riding the horse in the compound. Also, imbibing the 64 qualities of a sadhu is like riding the horse throughout the world. But associating with a sadhu who has the 64 qualities is convenient, like riding the horse in the compound.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/171)

“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. This satsang is attained by continuously practicing it until the very end of the entire universe. Then circumstances will not affect. So, do such satsang.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/32)

“To become spiritually pure there are two means: Austerities and intuitively following the wishes of God. Of them, intuitively following the wishes is better. And better than that is to keep (focus on) only the two – atma and parmatma. (Swamini Vaat: 5/309)

“The **jiva** is certainly purified through the nine forms of devotion and other endeavours, but not to the extent it is purified by the talks. There is nothing as powerful as the words.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/15)

Thus Swami has given disproportionate importance to resources in some of His Vaatos.

### ❖ Unenim�ity in Sadhana

There are plenty of ways shown in the shastras for liberation. And occasionally, Maharaj has also given different solutions on the usefulness and availability of tools. Swami has given more clear understanding in his Vaatos, on the best instruments and solutions indicated by Maharaj in Vachanamrut. Clarifications on most important talks are expressed in different Vaato on occasional teachings by Maharaj, such as:

“God represents the number one and endeavours represent zero. There is no value (in zeroes) without the One.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/192)

“Resolute faith in the manifest form of God and knowledge of God’s greatness is like bridegroom, and other spiritual enclosures for salvation are like the bridegroom’s entourage.” (Swamini Vaat: 1//298)

“So one who has known God, has nothing left to know. Therefore, one who understands God as Purushottam has nothing left to understand. All virtues will develop in him.” (Swamini Vaat: 4/10)

“Whether Mandirs are made of Gold, or the body is emaciated, in fact, whatever endeavours you do, only when you know me as I am, I become pleased. That is what Maharaj has said.” (Swamini Vaat4/99)

“One who has resolute faith in God has completed all endeavours. He has nothing more left to do.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/123)

“Moksha is attained through upasan, dharma, detachment and atma-realisation can not earn moksha.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/136)

“Firm faith in the manifest form of God, firm faith in spiritual knowledge, firm faith in spiritual knowledge, firm faith in the knowledge of the atma and firm faith in dharma. Out of these four types of faith, if only resolute faith in God’s form is present, then remaining three are included.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/173)

“Without knowing God, **atma**-realisation, detachment and **dharma** are of no use since none of them can give liberation.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/146)

“Compared to the murti of the manifest form of God, spiritual knowledge, detachment, atma-realisation and all other means for liberation are like sour buttermilk.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/278)

“One may observe ten million commands, but without manifest God will not attain salvation. And by observing even just one command by the order of the manifest God and manifest Sadhu, salvation is attained.” (Swamini Vaat: 4/37)

“One may be burnt out by performing austerities, but if one does not have firm refuge in God then He will not come to take when one passes away. And even if one sleeps comfortably on a swing, and eats sweetened milk and rice while others serve him, still, if his refuge is firm, God will seat him in a divine charioteer and take him. Therefore, the cause of moksha is refuge in God.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/172)

“One should continuously engage in delivering and listening to talks on the glory of God and his Sadhu. Maharaj has come here (to earth) with His Akshardham, parshads, and all His powers, He is exactly the same (today). He whom we wish to attain after death, we have attained during this life; there is nothing more left to attain. If this truth is not understood properly, the **jiva** will no longer consider itself weak. Once this is understood, the **jiva** will no longer consider itself weak and will acquire a different mettle. Also, there is no greater endeavour than to understand the glory of God. Without understanding the glory, even countless other endeavours will not enable the **jiva** to attain spiritual strength. (Swamini Vaat: 1/1)

If a sadhak continues to follow all these different types of endeavours, he will not attain the desired results. So for the final liberation, out of the many endeavours, the sadhak should follow the best and the extra one.

### ❖ Importance of the Satpurush in Sadhana

Gunatitanand Swami has often made it very clear the importance of Satpurush throughout the Sadhana. We shall now try to understand this fact by different illustrations.

### ❖ Everything is possible due to Sadhu

Gunatitand Swami makes it clear in his teachings that whatever a sadhak has to achieve during or by his sadhana, it shall only be achieved through Sadhu. Let us under-stand this by some Vaato:

“Everything is gained through the Sadh. Therefore, keep Him in the centre of all activities; But do not let the knowledge become the main aim.” (Swamini Vaat:1/168)

“After purifying the inner faculties, one should think that whatever important talks take place are due to this Sadhu, and that the satsang, God and this Sadhu have been recognised is described as the gateway to moksha. After reciting the stanza “Prasang majaram pasham . . .” Swami said “without a door one cannot get through by banging one’s head on the wall.” So, attach the jiva with such a sadhu.”(Swamini Vaat: 6/87)

“Only profound association with the enlightened Sadhu of God is satsang. And jiva not associated with Sadhu is kusang.” (Swamini Vaat: 3/42)

“Where there is the great Sadhu, moral codes are observed, dharma is practised and spiritual wisdom is attained. Also where there is the Sadhu, there are infinite virtues and also God. So, as a result, the jiva becomes divine. It is noted in the Vachanamrut that ‘God has said that I am not as pleased by austerities, renunciation, yoga, observance of vows, donations or other endeavours as I am by the association of a Sadhu of complete (Swamini Vaat:/181)

Now, we shall try to understand by different points that everything can be achieved due to the Sadhu.

### ❖ All understanding is gained through Sadhu

“The means to understand the glory is profound association with such a holy sadhu, and without it, the true glory of God cannot be understood. (Swamini Vaat: 1/1)

“Even if one stays a hundred years with God; without close association with the Sadhu, understanding of God’s glory does not develop. (Swamini Vaat: 6/198)

“There are four barriers which have to be overcome. Of these, the first is to understand the upasana of God. Second is to know the Sadhu, the third, to understand that the body and atma are separate, and the fourth, to overcome the desire for the best worldly pleasures. The Sadhu is the cause prevailing in all these. (Swamini Vaat: 2/96)

“This fact cannot be understood even if we take ten million births- but it can be easily understood when the Great Sadhu explains.” (Swamini Vaat: 4/85)

“Become Gunatit or Brahmrup by departing from three deha, three states, three gunas, and become separate from their deeds. That these are the qualities of body and state. So do not believe in them and understand them to be false. No one except the great Man can understand such discrimination. (Swamini Vaat: 5/262)

### ❖ Habits, Vishayas and deficiencies can be ended through the Sadhu

“No one can survive from the sphere of action of the **indriyas etc.**, Therefore as told in the Vachanamrut, those who stay within the cage of rules, can only survive. And Brahma etc., were not ignorant and no one else except the great Sadhu can help you conquer, and the great Sadhu can teach the device, a deception and the skill to conquer and control the **indriyas** and lead to **moksha**. So disregard your own power and take refuge in the great Sadhu. (Swamini Vaat: 5/58)

“If the great Sadhu casts even a slight glance, lust etc., cannot harass. And despite any amount of effort on one’s own, lust etc., will still overpower one. Therefore, take firm refuge at the feet of the great Sadhu. (Swamini Vaat: 5/251)

“All the faults are overcome, when the jiva attaches itself to the great Sadhu. (Swamini Vaat: 4/110)

“The **jivas** cannot separate from material pleasures on their own, and if they attempt to overcome them, they become doubly bound. But the **jivas** can separate themselves from the vishayas when helped by the great Sadhu. An example was cited there of milk and water, which cannot be separated, but they are separated by the mythican swan.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/254)

“One may engage in many endeavours and yet die without overcoming desires. They are overcome only by the grace of the great Sadhu. (Swamini Vaat: 1/70)

### ❖ All the virtues are gained through the Sadhu

“One should attach one’s jiva to a Sadhu who is attached to God, who obeys God’s commands and knows God’s wishes. From such a sadhu one can acquire all the virtues of dharma, spiritual knowledge, detachment, devotion and upasana along with the knowledge of God’s glory. Apart from him, where else can they be acquired? A person acquires the virtue of the sadhu he serves; even if he is a genuine spiritual aspirant if he is not attached to a God-realised Sadhu, he may regress; and even an evil person may progress. Thus, the cause of everything is the company of a great Sadhu.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/7)

“To associate with a Sadhu having sixty-four virtues means sixty-four become available in one.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/165)

“Jiva is given all the virtues of dharma, spiritual knowledge, detachment, devotion, glory of God and Upasana by God’s holy Sadhus. (Swamini Vaat: 1/10)

### ❖ Work quickly accomplished with the direction of Sadhu

“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 God-realised Sadhu.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/12)

“If a true God-realised Sadhu is attained and one does as He says, then the failing that would have taken tens of millions of births to overcome, are overcome today and one becomes brahmarup.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/119)

“The subtle but certain progress of the Sadhu’s talks is like that of time, in that they cannot be seen but they remove ignorance. Just as from a child one becomes a youth and then old, but this cannot be seen. The work accomplished in millions of years elsewhere is accomplished here in one day.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/45)

“And what does not happen even after ten million births of introspection, will happen in one month. Such is the power of this association.” (Swamini Vaat: 6/55)

### ❖ Protection by Sadhu during adverse times

“If one has served the great Sadhu and acquired His virtues, then adverse circumstances will have no effect on him. This is like the darkness which disappears in the presence of the Sun. but is unable to exist there.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/6)

“Association with the the great Sadhu is better than staying with God. Since, God will display human traits and if there is deficiency in understanding, doubts will arise and the opposite will be the result. Thus close association with a Sadhu is better. One who eats mandir foods and begins to gain spiritual knowledge is better than one who donates ten thousand rupees. Since, circumstances will affect the latter. But not the former. (Swamini Vaat: 2/39)

“Among us, renunciation shines out but there are obstacles in this, devotion all shines out a lot, but there are obstacles in that too, and there are obstacles even in atma-realisation. But one who has surrendered his mind to the great Sadhu has no difficulties.” (Swamini Vaat: 4/6)

#### ❖ Imperfection remaining in Sadhana

It is possible that even when a Sadhak is doing Sadhana, he does not get the expected results. There could be many reasons for that. Main reason is that somewhere in his sadhana there remains some imperfection. Gunatitanand Swami has indicated about these remaining imperfections in sadhana. Such as:

#### ❖ Imperfection in recognising God and Sadhu

“If Sadhak is in the process of Sadhana, but is imperfect to understand the forms of Bhagwan and Sadhu, than he does get the due result. Explaining this fact, Swami says: “One who has recently joined the satsang may be enjoying the bliss of Akshardham. And without resolute faith in the manifest form of God, one may have met Maharaj, or met Muktanand Swamum but will not have the bliss of **Akshar**. This is the very nature of understanding.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/209)

“The form of God that is in Akshardham and the one which you see are identical. The only deficiency is in not understanding this murti, which is seen to be the same as the murti in Akshardham.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/256)

“We are unable to recognise the true nature and value of the satsang, Sadhu and God we have attained as they are, and so human characteristics are perceived.

The benefit gained is also not grasped fully. And that there is divinity even in the human traits of God and His Sadhu is not believed. And one observes fast, but does not understand this divinity. (Swamini Vaat: 5/319)

“The Sadhu has come here from Akshardham. If such glory is understood continuously one experiences great joy! But this Sadhu is not understood as He is. (Swamini Vaat: 1/222)

“How much loss do we suffer? Well, we do not understand the glory as it is, of the God whom we have attained, and the gain we have made is also not known. Just as the son of Gaekwad of Vadodara, cries for an insignificant thing like a raddish—that is the extent of loss.” (Swamini Vaat: 4/70)

### ❖ Imperfection in obeying instructions

Very often sadhak is staying with Bgawan or Satpurush and engaged in service and having their company, but there is no benefit to him if he does not follow the instructions. Swami clarifies this point of the benefits gained and lost due to obeyance and dis-obeyance of the instructions. He says:

“Someone may single-handedly do the work of two people, but it is better to sit idle obey the instructions and do as the great Sadhu says.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/109)

“To do as the Sadhu says is best. To do as per one’s own wish is worst. And one who does as per his own wish, even though he observes austerities, does the work of the whole mandir and introduces many people to **satsang**, is still inferior and some day will face an obstacle. While one who eats thrice daily, is lazy, is mostly sleeping and has other such faults but acts as per the commands of the Sadhu, is superior. To do as per one’s own desire is full of blemishes. (Swamini Vaat: 2/57)

“As long as one performs spiritual endeavours according to the wishes of the mind, the rule of the mind does not cease. Therefore, act according to what God and this Sadhu say.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/170)

“One who follows the commands and lives far away is still near my seat. While one who does not follow the commands may be near but is still far away. So, no matter how much knowledge one may have affection one may have or great one may be, but If commands are transgressed it is possible to stay in the satsang for long. Then he gave an example, “The kite may appear to go far away, but as long as the string is in the hand of the flier, it is nearby. Similarly, if the

string in the form of the commands (of God and His holy Sadhu) is in the hand (i.e. they are observed), then one is near Maharaj.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/152)

“One who disobeys the commands does not experience happiness in his heart.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/42)

So instead of obeying the instructions, one acts according to his wish, then the sadhak suffers great loss, i.e. he does not gain enough fruit of his Sadhana.

### ❖ Imperfection in proper amalgamation with God and Sadhu

Now suppose the Sadhak is staying with Bhagwan and Sadhu and observes the instructions even though he has not amalgamated with Bhagwan and Sadhu. Therefore, He does not gain the virtue of the Satpurush and he does not become Brahmurup. Pointing to this imperfection and explaining the correct method to become Brahmurup, Swami said:

“When such a Sadguru is served, the jiva becomes pure. He has been attained, but nobody hands over the jiva to Him. Without surrendering over the jiva how can the enlightened state be attained? The extent, to which the jiva is surrendered, is the extent of fulfillment attained, and the extent to which it is not surrendered over, that much is not attained. So, when it is completely surrendered then he shall attain the state of enlightenment.” (Swamini Vaat: 6/228)

“At that someone asked ‘How does one attain the virtues that cause peace within others?’ Then Swami said, ‘Such virtues are not easily attained; 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 keeps no distance from him. Then the virtues of the Satpurush develop in the aspirant, but without this, they never develop.’ (Swamini Vaat: 3/34)

“In Satsang there is talk that the jiva becomes Brahmurup. Then someone asked, ‘There is such talk in Satsang, yet why does the jiva not become Brahmurup?’ 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 develop?” The 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.” (Swamini Vaat: 3/33)

### ❖ Imperfection regarding human traits and faults

Sometimes the Sadhak does all types of Sadhana, but he attributes human traits to Bhagwan and Sadhu or one attributes fault finding in God and great Sadhu. Then he does not gain the right fruit of sadhana. Sometime this fault wipes out all the sadhana done by him, and instead of gaining anything he loses. Swami clarifies on this point as well, such as,

“What is the worst of all? That one attributes human traits in the Sadhu. There is nothing worse than this.” (Swamini Vaat: 3/36)

“One who attributes faults even in the great Sadhu will not be liberated from the cycle of birth and deaths even in tens of millions of years. That is a fundamental truth. (Swamini Vaat: 3/65)

“If one continues to perceive human traits in God, then final salvation is not attained.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/116)

“If a person brings daily 100,000 rupees but talks ill of Satsang, I do not like it.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/237)

“By thinking about the defects of a devotee of God, the Jiva becomes defiled.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/190)

“If one sees faults in the Sadhu, he declines and becomes lifeless.” (Swamini Vaat: 6/123)

### ❖ Awareness for inner religious rites

Sometimes a Sadhak is performing religious rites by material body, but might not be awake to carry on sadhana concurrently with inner subtle Sadhana even then he suffers much more loss in his achievement and state. Inner subtle sadhana has greater value than material sadhana. As such Swami has repeatedly talked to become

awake in inner Sadhana in many of his vaatos, E.g:

“Maharaj is pleased with devotion, and that is His command, but it is a material way. So keep on offering devotion by this and this body only and doing that continuously of being an atma. There is not talk like that of atma-realisation. One should continually think “I am Akshar and Purushottam is seated within me.” Maharaj has said this in many places. This is subtle devotion, through which ultimate liberation will be attained. But the previously described devotion is the physical path and by it-‘Atyantiki yatra na Mrutyuhasaha’ –such liberation in which the fear of death is eliminated is not attained. And due to ego, one offers such physical devotion, singlehandedly that would be offered by four people. One performs service, lifts stones and cooks food, but all this devotion is offered since praise is received. One does this but perfection is not attained by this. ‘kiya balpanani ramat, kiya pamvo siddhono mat.’ Therefore, only when, someday, this talk is practical will there be final salvation.” (Swamini Vaat: 6/42)

“One who does things with his body and offers devotion to God with the understanding that his true form is different from the body (i.e. atma) progresses a lot. But if he becomes one with his action, that is not proper. (Swamini Vaat: 1/13)

“One should constantly analyse oneself, introspect and think that there is still more to be done, and what have I come to do and what is happening? (Swamini Vaat: 4/106)

“Always introspect during every task and ask yourself ‘I want to worship God and what am I doing?’ Keep thinking like this.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/35)

“There is a keen desire within to offer devotion in the form of work in the mandir. Thoughts of offering this type of devotion arise, but thoughts of God and His glory do not arise. Similarly, thoughts of spiritual knowledge, upasana, and love for God are not entertained, but should be.” (Swamini Vaat: 6/85)

“Work has become predominant, so who talks and who listens about spiritual knowledge, detachment, dharma, glory and upasana? But do what can be done while engaging in spiritual discourses. What is done during this time is done; otherwise if it remains undone, do not worry. But that is the main thing to do, otherwise desires’ increase.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/174)

“The worldly path is not difficult. Anybody can master it, but to understand and treat the path of spiritual wisdom is indeed difficult. And that, in fact, is the only thing to be done.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/102)

“Some cook, some fill water, some write, some study, some cut the grass, some graze the cattle and other such activities are being done. These should be understood as bodily activities and are to be performed. But, in reality our task is to do something else. What is that? It is to remember the **murti** of Maharaj; learn **upasana** and spiritual knowledge; distinguish between **satsang** and bad company and lay a strong foundation so that we can remain in **satsang**. This and whatever else is necessary has to be done. And people are ready to do whatever work we assign them. But are hesitant to do what actually has to be done.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/22)

“To merely speak and listen to spiritual knowledge is not difficult. So, for some time, withdraw one’s focus (from the external world) and remember God. If meditation is not possible, then offer worship. But of what use is it to cook a meal and not eat? Desire for material pleasures will not be reduced merely by spiritual knowledge; that will happen only when we remember God. And one who begins to remember God gains the blessings of God and the great Sadhu but one does not walk that path, so what blessings will fall on him? Therefore keep faith and continue one’s efforts.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/12)

“To write and study on spiritual subjects is all right, but there is no limit to devotion. So, if one observes moral codes and differentiates between atma and non-atma for some time, and in the same way chants for some time, withdraws the mind from worldly objects and offers devotion then it can be said that the jiva certainly progresses. And without codes of conduct, it is like pouring a pot of water (which, in a short time, evaporates)” (Swamini Vaat: 2/40)

“Those who keep their minds concentrated on God are few, but there are those who can run the administration of the whole mandir with competence. Even if one’s mind does not stay focussed on God, still engage in spiritual discourses continuously and keep the mind (focussed) on the discourses. For that, too, one constantly needs such company; otherwise, that is not possible. For that reason, activities have been promoted and to engage in them while remembering God is also a good path. But the main principle is to keep the mind on God. That has to be done. This is possible only when one is ready to fully dedicate one’s life to attain in.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/138)

In the above examples, Swami clearly states what the sadhak has to do. In order that the sadhak does not get diverted on a different track, Swami has alerted the sadhak in many of His Vaatos.

### ❖ Clarification of obstacles during Sadhana

The aspirant who wishes to progress in spiritual rites has to stay awake constantly. If he slightly deviates or neglects then his sadhana will wash out. Efforts of sadhana will ruin. Perhaps the loss may not come to that extent, but due to obstructions the speed of sadhana will slow down. He may lose faith and enthusiasm. May lose courage and break down. Therefore, sadhak has to know the obstacles in the way of sadhana. Gunatitnand Swami has made known the obstacles to be faced in sadhana in many of His Vaatos and thus alerted the sadhak. Such as:

“There are many who cause obstacles on the path of salvation. They should be recognised.” (Swamini Vaat: 6/281)

“Do things in such a way that no obstacles come in the path of moksha.” (Swamini Vaat: 6/102)

“To householders, wife, children, wealth and food are binding and to renunciates, Body, indriya, disciple, and food are binding.” (Swamini Vaat: 6/89)

“For this jiva, panchvishaya, (five types of senses-pleasures) sixth body-consciousness, and seventh, bias for worldly pleasures are all obstacles on the path which harms the jiva. So do not keep them. (Swamini Vaat: 6/273)

“There are three obstacles in worshipping God: First, lok-no kusang (bad worldly company), second, satsang-ma kusang (bad influence due to the senses) and third, indriyu-antaskaran-no kusang. (Inner faculties) Therefore do not be taken in by their deceit. And if one associate with bad company in satsang then even one who is Brahmarup, one becomes body-conscious.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/313)

“This jiva faces many obstacles in going towards God. The details: Caste, family, parents, wife, wealth, senses and inner faculties. These are all obstacles.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/79)

“Only a person with much enthusiasm can stay right. Otherwise, by hearing different types of teachings may make him diminish.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/28)

## ❖ Answers to questions related to Sadhana

“The path to Sadhan is unknown, subtle and deep to follow. It is natural that to an unknown sadhak treading on the unknown path of sadhana several questions may rise. The sadhak can reach his destination without any obstructions only if he comes in contact with an experienced manifest Satpurush or he can find answers to his questions from his teachings. Gunatitanand Swami has, based on his experience and omni-knowledge, given answers of such questions related to Sadhana. Any aspirant can get satisfactory answers faced by him on his path to sadhana from Swami’s Vaatos. Let us look at some of such questions/answers.

**Q:** One tends to forget God when adverse conditions of place and time arise. How should one understand that?

**A:** “God is the all-doer. In adverse place and time nobody ever remembers God. But in order that one does not get attached to this material world, and one may get detached, God keeps him in misery. Therefore, understand God to be the all-doer.” (Swamini Vaat: 4/48)

**Q:** When one associates with the great Sadhu, there is less time for meditation and worship, and if one meditates and prays then there is less time for association. So what is to be done?

**A:** “Associate with the Sadhu, since through association only the worldly desires can be overcome. Without association worldly desires cannot be overcome.” (Swamini Vaat: 4/108)

**Q:** How can one know that he has gained complete satsang?

**A:** “When one becomes **Aksharrup** than one should know that he has gained satsang.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/88)

**Q:** After surrendering jiva, does one have to give up his desires?

**A:** “One has to give up his desires. If this is not the answer, then one object the God that He removes the desires of one, and not of the other, so that is the answer. Desires can be rid out by atmanishtha and glory.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/96)

**Q:** How can one uproot vishayas?

**A:** “Having company of those who have uprooted vishayas, one can gain knowledge, vairagya, understanding and believe atma and body are different. Then vishayas can be uprooted.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/239)

**Q:** How can one reach all the way to Maharaj and You?

**A:** “By knowing Maharaj as Purushottam and by following the commands of God.” (Swamini Vaat: 6/28)

**Q:** How can one please Maharaj?

**A:** “In the Vachanamrut titled “**Natni maya**” (The maya of a magician) God’s form is described as without any faults. Maharaj’s form should also be understood in that way and this Sadhu’s form should also be understood like that. Also Maharaj’s commands should be followed and the company of a good sadhu should be kept. With such a person Maharaj is always truly, truly, and truly pleased. (Swamini Vaat: 3/38)

**Q:** How can one who has attached and rapport with God be recognised? And how can one who has established rapport with the Sadhu be known?

**A:** “One who has rapport with God cannot live without talking or listening about the physical descriptions, divine actions and natural mannerisms of God throughout the day and night and one who has a rapport with the Sadhu cannot live without engaging in his darshan and service and listening to His talks throughout the day and night. Then one knows that one has a rapport with the Sadhu. (Swamini Vaat: 3/42)

**Q:** If the desires of the worldly pleasures have not been contemplated, how can the desire for worldly pleasures be overcome?

**A:** “The water in the ocean is not likely to dry up, but it dries up at the time of final dissolution. Similarly, when one attains ultimate spiritual wisdom, the desires for worldly pleasures are overcome. Ultimate spiritual wisdom is merely to recognise this Sadhu, and by this, desires for worldly pleasures are overcome; and without this wisdom, merely by contemplating on the faults they are overcome only after a long long time.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/7)

**Q:** Should we feel fulfilled because we have attained manifest God and this true Sadhu, or only when our material desires are overcome?

**A:** “Because conviction has developed, worldly desires will surely be overcome. Therefore, believe oneself to be fulfilled now and harbour the desire to follow the commands of God and if the commands are transgressed due to adverse place, time etc., still one faces no obstacle. (Swamini Vaat: 5/10)

**Q:** When can one be said to be truly fulfilled?

**A:** “When the knowledge of both atma and parmatma is attained, and the sixth level (highest) of conviction in which there are no doubts in any action of God, then one can be said to be fulfilled.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/212)

**Q:** Why is such glory not fully realised?

**A:** “If one gets realisation one gets carried away. Therefore spiritual knowledge is given slowly and the glory of God is gradually understood—just as flowers and fruits grow slowly. Thus God knows what is necessary and does what is appropriate. If he gives at once, one will go mad. Thus whatever God does is proper.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/74)

**Q:** If one is about to be executed, what understanding stops one from entertaining a wish that it would be good if God comes to the rescue.

**A:** “He believes God as the all-doer and that except God nobody is able to do anything. Then, no wish will arise and patience will remain. And if one does not have this understanding even small things will cause one to become upset and impatient. On this earth, even Maharaj suffered misery without any reason. This world is like that. Its nature (that it brings misery) should be known. (Swamini Vaat:1/235)

**Q:** What should one do when in difficulty?

**A:** “Chant ‘Swaminarayan, Swaminarayan’ so that the worry is resolved.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/272)

As such, useful questions/answers are seen in many of ‘Swamini Vaato’ for the benefit to Sadhak during Sadhana.

### ❖ Endeavours concisely on Sadhana

Gunatitanand Swami’s Vaato are like a formula. It is difficult to remember big endeavour, as such one cannot continuously keep link of it, but more clarifications are found in small Vaato of Swami relating to Sadhana. There are such small Vaato of such concise endeavours which can be kept in front of oneself. Let us see some examples of these:

- “Without Sankhya, satsang is said to be only half complete.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/ 2)
- “Learn to worship God from within. By doing this, the desire for material pleasures will be reduced.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/30)
- “Before contact is made with material pleasures, be fearful like a goat, but if contact is made, become like a lion. (Swamini Vaat: 2/114)
- “If there is contact with bad company, than satsang is eroded, so do not keep bad company.” (Swamini Vaat: 6/12)
- “Believe that we belong to God, and not to maya.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/230)

- “Control the mind, but do not act as per its wishes.” (Swamini Vaat:2/64)
- “With this body, do what God likes.” (Swamini Vaat :2/83)
- “Live in the home like a guest.” (Swamini Vaat:4/6 3)
- “Some are controlled by mind, while some control the mind. This statement is worth contemplating on daily.” (Swamini Vaat:4/123 )
- “Engage in worldly affairs but remain mentally detached. (Swamini Vaat:5/257)

### 3.7.6 Powerful endeavour in Swami’s teachings

The path to spiritual endeavour is the path to fight against indriyas, inner faculties and inner enemies. This endeavour is like to swim against fierce water force. The sadhak loses his heart when even on doing different types of experiments, he cannot control his indriyas and inner faculties, inner enemies do not come into control or material pleasures is not uprooted. In order that such circumstances do not arise, Swami has given powerful endeavours. To keep alive the flame of power and faith, Swami has given inspiration in His teachings. Let us look at some such examples:

“There is nothing better for an aspirant than to take firm refuge in God for such a person, everything has been achieved and he has nothing more left to do. God is the uplifter of the downtrodden, redeemer of the sinful and compassionately cares for all who surrender to Him.

**Jako jagme koi nahi, taku tum ho Maharaj**

Meaning, for those who have no one, God is there to protect them. God is known as the shelter for the poor. And,

**Pragatne bhaji bhaji par pamyā ghana,  
Gidh ganika kapirvund koti;  
Vraj tani nar vyabhicharbhave tari,  
Pragat upasana sahuthi moti**

Thus, there is nothing comparable to the talks of the manifest form of the God. When the sun manifests, light spreads everywhere. And we have taken refuge of the manifest at present, so remain strong by the strength of that refuge. (Swamini Vaat: 1/139)

“Lust, greed, taste, attachment, and ego are all like the ocean, but by God’s

grace, they will become small like the foot-prints of a cow. This this is the glory of God, so never allow jivas to become weak.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/305)

“One day, a sadhu offered sincere devotion. Seeing this, Maharaj was pleased and then, said, ‘The inner enemies of lust, anger, etc., cannot be conquered by the **jiva** itself. But the great Sadhu and I are on your side and we will help you, so that you can conquer. Therefore, continue your efforts with courage.’ To illustrate, Swami narrated the story told by Maharaj of the lapwing who filled the entire ocean with the help of the eagle.” (Swamini Vaat: 4/18)

“This man (Swami) is powerful. He is capable of removing worldly desires at the end of life by operations and makes forget your body like that of Hirji. (Swamini Vaat: 1/51)

“One has faith in God but has desires even then do not be afraid. What is the strength of it? (Swamini Vaat: 1/138)

“As we have a body, faults will exist. But what is the burden of these deficiencies for one who lives intuitively as per God’s wish? None. Let them be, since what we have to do is being done and we are removing these obstacles. Faults are like a thicket which cannot be instantly removed. They will disappear by listening to the spiritual talks as the glory of God is realised.” (Swamini Vaat: 4/29)

“Our faults are already eradicated by Maharaj. But we see faults in us, for our good. Otherwise, **jiva** can go out of control. And now we have to charm God, and want to be equal in power that of God. That is why we are persevering.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/58)

“Rajogun, Tamogun, and Satvagun are attributes of the body and they are expected. One feels hungry and thirsty, and experiences misery and happiness – these are traits of the body. Also the mind is like a mischievous monkey; it keeps on flitting. And our true form is the soul, which is above the mind. Therefore, do not believe the characteristics of the body, senses and inner faculties to be our own; we are (the **atma**) separate from them. Therefore, do not let them defeat you; continue to fight against them. (Swamini Vaat: 5/131)

“Swami said, ‘We have met God and so should believe ourself as Akshar.’ Hearing this someone asked a question, ‘Worldly pleasures defeat us so how can we believe ourselves as Akshar?’ Swami answered, ‘The body needs worldly objects to survive, but that is only one aspect. So believe oneself as Akshar, but do not believe

the atma to be a worm from hell. Then, just as the stick grew with Wamanji., we will grow.” (Swamini Vaat:/283)

“Pray to God, but do not believe oneself to be sin ful and inferior. Since, by thinking like that, the **jiva** does not remain strong and its strength and its strength declines. And we have attained God, so why should we feel fallen? We should feel fulfilled.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/103)

“Sometimes the deceive, sometimes the ears, and the tongue, and sometimes, the skin (touch) etc., also deceive, but become alert again and do not lose heart.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/69)

“Vicious natures such as lust, anger etc., are like pimples and ringworms. They are consequences of having a body. But they will be conquered. And if the great Sadhu showers His blessings, they will be overcome this instant.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/164)

“Do you ever think of uprooting this Girnar mountain? Someone said, “No, Maharaj.” Then Swami said, “You have not contemplated it in your mind, otherwise you would uproot it. Since, if all the people of the world are assembled together and all the blacksmiths begin to prepare the metal (chisels) and all of us begin to strike and break it up, then in 4-5 years, we can break it into pieces. Similarly, no matter how powerful lust, anger, etc., are, but if we resolve in the mind, we can crush them. Of this, there is no doubt.” (Swamini Vaat: 3/40)

“We have attained God, and the Sadhu, now do not let misery enter the heart, and whatever fate has in store for us, accept it.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/176)

Thus, in a life of an aspirant during his sadhana, get strength, power and faith. Plenty of such Vaato are available from Swami’s Vaato. Sadhak cannot become disappointed if he reads and thinks during Sadhana, and he can maintain zeal for sadhana in his life for ever.

### **3.7.7 Cloud of intoxication on greatness of attainment in ‘Swamini Vaato’**

A Sadhak during his Sadhana does not lose his heart while fighting with inner enemies, or does not become disappointed. He has to gain continuously intoxication of attainment. In real terms, one has to do sadhana by immunisation of intoxication of attainment. Gunatitanand Swami has mentioned in His many Vaatos about intoxication of attainment. Such as:

“We have gained the great advantage, its greatness will not end even if we talk till Brahma’s kalp, and if we do not understand then there will be a great loss. This also will not end even if we talk till Brahma’s kalp.” (Swamini Vaat: 4/88)

“One should continuously engage in delivering and listening to talks on the glory of God and His Sadhu. Maharaj has come here with His Akshardham, Parshads, and all His Powers. He is exactly the same today. He whom we wish to attain after death, we have attained during this life. There is nothing more left to attain.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/1)

“Only this has to be understood, that the one whom we wanted to meet after leaving this body, the one whom we wanted to attain and the one whom other devotees, after leaving their bodies, have attained, that same God we have attained while alive. It is that same God and that same Sadhu. But these attainments, glory, bliss and advantage we have gained is not recognised by us, as we have been bound by the **maya** of God. And that ignorance causes misery. This talk was repeated five times. After shedding the body, there is nothing left to see. After leaving the body, we want to go to the one whom we have attained here. It is the same God and this same Sadhu.” (Swamini Vaat: 4/30)

“On this earth the jivas are kings, citizens etc., but if Indra does not send the rains, they will all die. And that Indra is insignificant before Brahma, Vishnu and Shiv. And they are insignificant before Vairat. That Vairat is insignificant before Pradhan Purush. And all these pale into insignificance before Akshar. And above that Akshar is Purushottam, whom we have attained in person today. Therefore, be strong due to one’s close association with Him. (Swamini Vaat: 1/217)

“That God and Sadhu we wanted to attain through end less austerities, chanting, the name of God tens of millions of times, observances, donations, and sacrifices, we have attained today.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/294)

“This is an incredible opportunity and we have attained the ultimate liberation. Today satsang is in the peak of its youth. We have received the central (soft and juicy) part of the sugarcane. There is a lot of juice in it and is convenient to eat. (Swamini Vaat: 1/163)

“One who has gained the gnan of God and Sadhu, there remains nothing more to be gained for him. Even if he is here, he is settled in Akshardham. So there is no fear even if one does 5 rosary more or less, act according to your energy, but keep

Bhagwan and this Sadhu in your heart. And we are not great due to the strength of endeavour, but great due to the strength of upasna.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/220)

“This satsang we have attained is the best Chintamani. With it, the jiva will make great progress.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/166)

“If this Vanthali village is given as a gift to someone, he would go mad. So what would be his condition if he is given Vadodara? We have attained tens of millions of such Vadodaras-even that would be an under-statement. So now as long as we live, eat simple food and worship God.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/215)

“One believes it to be a great fortune if an offer of marriage is received from the King of Vadodara. Similarly, we have received an offer from Purshottam Narayan, to join Him. Therefore, we should feel elated about this.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/77)

If a Sadhak absorbs this Vaatos’ nectar, then he would never feel sorrow, misery, agitation, and restlessness in any kind of inner or outer problems. He would always be Intoxicated of this achievement.

### 3.7.8 Remedy of permanent peace in ‘Swamini Vaato’

Every person longs peace and happiness and struggles to get it. Even after having experimented different ways in this mundane world, he has never gained peace in its true sense. In fact, his direction for search of happiness is wrong. If the address for happiness is not correct, how can one achieve it? Gunatitand Swami has, in his many Vaatos, shown the remedy of peace and happiness. Such as:

“The abode of God is full of bliss. From there a drop of bliss was released, reaching humans via Prakruti Purush, Pradhan-Purush, Vairat and the deities. That bliss makes all **jivas** happy. Therefore, the source of all bliss is God. Be happy through His bliss.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/182)

“Everyone remains happy due to some reason. But become eternally happy due to two things-God and atma-and leave the many other forms of support.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/88)

“Happiness results when one attaches to God and His holy Sadhu by any means; one attains knowledge of the atma; the senses observe the moral and

spiritual disciplines; one has firm conviction in the form of God together with detachment; and the jiva introspects-by these five ways one can remain happy. Therefore, everyone should examine one's own position and think, 'To which of these (five) am I inclined' and remain happy. (Swamini Vaat: 5/351)

“Three kinds of people are happy; one who does as the great Sadhu says, the spiritually wise who does not accept the thoughts of his mind and one who does not need anything. **‘Asha hi paramam dukham nairashyam paramam sukham.’**

These three are happy.” (Swamini Vaat: 5/203)

“There are two means by which inner peace remains and no agitation arises; one is to worship God and the other is to understand God as the all-doer. Then, if we get happiness we should enjoy it and if we encounter misery we should tolerate it. It is said,

**“Dasna dushman Hari ke di hoy nahi, jem karshe tem such ja thashe.”**

God is not an enemy of the devotee, whatever He does will bring happiness.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/148)

“When one is at peace within and someone speaks harshly, causing one intense anger from within, the solution lies in spiritual wisdom.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/314)

“Methods for overcoming worries: know the nature of time; think about the miseries of birth and death, and the glory of God. Remember, nobody is ours and we are nobody's. Also, the **atma** is separate from the three bodies. Such a spiritually wise person has infinite eyes.” “There are many ways of overcoming worries, since there are many reasons for worries.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/167)

“One who walks on the path of becoming brahmrup gradually experiences increasing happiness-just as one who comes in burning from the hot sun experiences comfort by sitting under the shade of a tree, and just as one who is hungry becomes satisfied when he eats to relieve his hunger and thirst. Similarly, there is bliss in becoming brahmrup.” (Swamini Vaat: 2/78)

“One who renounces worldly life and becomes a renunciant overcomes all miseries and becomes happy. But even after becoming a renunciant, the misery associated with base instincts-greed, lust, taste, attachments and ego-remains. As these base instincts are (gradually) overcome, one becomes happier.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/9)

“Seeing the clear sky in one autumn season, Swami said, “When the inner faculties become pure like this sky, the jiva experiences bliss. This happens while doing the satsang.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/66)

“To remain happy, learn the principle of sankhya.” (Swamini Vaat: 1/2)

“Those who wish to remain happy should think of those worse off than them. But they should not look at those happier than themselves. Since, happiness is attained according to one’s fate.” (Swamini Vaat: 4/84)

From the strategy shown by Swami for happiness, apply one, which fits. By doing so any person gains permanent happiness.

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