

SECTION 1: 'VACHANAMRUT'

Q.1 Answer all of the following using one sentence (not just one word) for each answer. (Total Marks: 4)

March 2015

- 1. According to Gadhada II-12, how does one achieve the highest state of enlightenment? (Gadhada II-12)**
One who wishes to attain the highest state of enlightenment should make an effort, but he should not relax or lose courage.
- 2. What means should a person who does not possess vairāgya adopt to eradicate his vicious natures? (Gadhada II-7)**
If a person lacks vairāgya, but intensely serves a great Sant, and obediently perseveres in his observance of the injunctions of God, then God will look upon him with an eye of compassion and will eradicate his vicious natures.
- 3. What should an intelligent person be firm in? (Gadhada II-16)**
The one who is intelligent should certainly maintain resolute faith in God, since thereby faith in dharma will also remain firm.
- 4. What are the characteristics of a person who has affection for God? (Kariyani 11)**
He who has affection for his beloved, God, will never disobey the wishes of his beloved. He will live according to God's wishes.

March 2016

- 1. Who is able to immediately conquer all of one's indriyas? (Gadhada II-16)**
Even if he were a senior person, he would become as impatient as a child to have the darshan of God. One who has such characteristics should be known as one who possesses intense shraddha. One who has such shraddha is able to immediately conquer all of one's indriyas.
- 2. What did Naradji do to please God? (Kariyani 10)**
In order to please God, Naradji performed stringent austerities by enduring cold and heat, hunger and thirst for many yugs; and due to this, he was able to please God. In the same way, a person who is wise deliberately performs austerities.
- 3. How does adharma come to reside in one's heart? (Gadhada II-11)**
If in any way a person perceives a flaw in a devotee of God who, by God's command, performs karmas for the purpose of pleasing God, then adharma and its retinue will enter and reside in the perceiver's heart.
- 4. What Maharaj tell his chitt when he heard the words of the deities? (Gadhada II-22)**
Maharaj told his chitt, 'If you contemplate on anything other than God, then I will also crush you to pieces.'

March 2017

- 1. In whom does one not ever find flaws? (Gadhada II-59)**
Even if one's wife, son or other family members are unworthy, and even if they are immoral and vile, in no way would one perceive flaws in them.

2. Whose maya is the kaaran body? (Kariyani 12)

The kaaran body is the maya of the jiva.

3. What is the uniform divine light? (Gadhada II-13)

That uniform divine light is referred to as the atma, or Brahma or Akshardhām.

4. According to Gadhada II-16, what does the form of God possess? (Gadhada II-16)

God possesses the 39 redemptive attributes. All forms of dharma are supported by the form of God.

March 2018

1. How can one understand scriptures? (Gadhada II-13)

Discourses regarding the nature of God cannot be understood by oneself even from the scriptures. Even though these facts may be in the scriptures, it is only when the Satpurush manifests on this earth, and one hears them being narrated by him, that one understands them. They cannot, however, be understood by one's intellect alone, even from the scriptures.

2. With whom will sadhus stay with? (Gadhada II-47)

If a person has a group of sadhus staying with him, and if he can sincerely look after them in a gracious manner, those sadhus will happily stay with him.

3. Who is the greatest among all the renunciants? (Gadhada II-61)

A renunciants, who despite encountering wealth and women in his travels to other regions, remains unaffected and continues to firmly adhere to all of his niyams, is considered to be great amongst all renunciants.

4. What is a true zeal? (Kariyani 10)

A person who has great zeal in any endeavor would never be hindered, even if he were to face thousands of obstacles. That should be known to be true zeal.

March 2019

1. Who cut off Daksha's head and offered it in the fire? (Gadhada II-61)

Virbhadrā cut off Daksha's head and offered it in the fire.

2. Without what Maharaj's mind is indifferent? (Gadhada II-55)

Besides the bhakti of God, Maharaj's mind is indifferent to everything else.

3. Which firm wish should a renunciant sadhu maintain in his mind? (Kariyani 10)

A renunciant sadhu should firmly maintain the following wish in his mind: 'I do not desire the pleasures of the panchvishays found in Devlok, Brahmālok, Vaikunth and other realms.

4. What is the characteristic of affection? (Kariyani 11)

He who has affection for his beloved, God, will never disobey the wishes of his beloved. That is the characteristic of affection.

Q.2 Write concisely on any TWO of the following questions. (In 4-5 lines each.) (Total Marks: 4)

March 2015

1. What is in the hearts of God's staunch devotees? (Gadhada II-22)

Regardless of whether they encounter honors or insults in this world; regardless of whether they encounter bodily comforts or miseries; regardless of whether their bodies remain healthy or unhealthy; and regardless of whether their bodies survive or die, staunch devotees of God never harbor timid thoughts such as, 'We will suffer this much pain,' or 'we will enjoy this much happiness.' Neither of these two types of thoughts arises within their minds. Such devotees firmly believe, 'We want to attain the abode of God within this very lifetime; we do not want to become enticed by anything along the way.'

2. What should a renunciant sadhu wish in his mind? (Kariyani 10)

He should wish 'I do not desire the pleasures of the panchvishays found in Devlok, Brahmaloak, Vaikunth and other realms. In this very body, or by going to Badrikashram and Shwetedwip after I die, I wish to please God by performing austerities.'

3. What are three attributes of a staunch devotee? (Gadhada II-61)

The first is to strictly adhere to the niyams prescribed by one's Ishtadev – to such an extent that one would never forsake those disciplines even at the cost of one's life. The second is to have extremely firm faith in God, so much so that one would never sway from it even if others or one's own mind were to raise doubts. The third is to be loyal to those Vaishnav devotees who worship one's Ishtadev – just as parents are loyal to their children, a son is loyal to his father, and a wife is loyal to her husband. One who possesses these three attributes completely can be called a staunch satsangi.

4. What does Shriji Maharaj see in his heart? (Gadhada II-13)

"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. The form has two arms and two legs, not four, eight or a thousand arms; and its appearance is very captivating. The form is very serene; it has a human form; and it appears young like a teenager. Sometimes the form in the divine light is seen standing, sometimes sitting, and at other times, it is seen walking around. It is surrounded on all four sides by groups of muktas, who are seated facing Him, and who are engrossed in looking at that form of God with a fixed gaze."

March 2016

1. What has Shriji Maharaj told the senior paramhansas and senior women? (Gadhada II-33)

He has instructed the senior paramhansas and senior women that "if any male or female devotee in the Satsang fellowship commits a breach in his or her observance of the vow of non-lust, then please do not inform Me of it. Because when I hear such things, I am deeply saddened – just as a childless couple would feel saddened if their newly born son were to suddenly die. In fact, at such times, I feel like abandoning this Satsang and leaving. Therefore, only those who observe this vow are dear to Me; they and I will always be very close, both in this realm and beyond."

2. What is the form of indriyas? (Gadhada II-16)

The indriyas are like the wind – even though the wind cannot be seen, it can be inferred that the wind is blowing by the way in which it shakes the trees. Similarly, the vruttis of the indriyas cannot be seen, but

everyone realizes that they surge towards the vishays. If a person deceitfully attempts to hide this, then realizing him to be deceitful, others will condemn him all the more. Therefore, in no way can one conceal the acute cravings of one's indriyas to indulge in the vishays.

3. What did Maharaj do in the forest of Ganesh Dholka? (Gadhada II-22)

He reached the forest of Ganesh Dholka near the village of Koth and spent the night there. He began to think so much that he forgot all about his body. While thinking, he forgot all of the activities, and dispelled all those thoughts in such a manner that it was as if he had not even stayed at Lake Kankaria, and as if there had been no festival – no thoughts remained at all.

4. When does one not encounter any obstacles on the path of liberation? (Gadhada II-13)

When God, after assuming a human form, leaves this earth to return to His abode, sometimes, like a human being, His physical body remains on earth – like when Rukmini took Shri Krishna's body into her lap and was engulfed along with it in the fire. Likewise, Rushabhdev's body was burnt in a raging forest fire. In other instances, His bones and flesh become divine and, leaving no remains behind, He returns to His abode. When He manifests, He may sometimes be born of a woman, or He may sometimes appear from wherever He wishes. In this manner, God's method of birth and death are not necessarily in accordance with the ways of this world. When you thoroughly realize God as such, you will encounter no obstacles on the path to liberation.

March 2017

1. Who does Shriji Maharaj swear by in Gadhada II-33? (Gadhada II-33)

He swears by the lives of the paramhansas that from the day he was born to this very day, he has never harbored an improper thought regarding women or wealth, either in the waking state or in the dream state.

2. What are the characteristics of a person too attached to his body (dehabhiman)? (Gadhada II-22)

While worshipping God, he harbors thousands of timid thoughts such as, 'If the religious vows become strict, I will not be able to survive; only if they are easy to observe will I be able to survive.' He also thinks, 'If I employ this method, I shall be happy even in worldly life. Also, if it is possible, I shall survive passively in the Satsang fellowship.' Such a devotee represents the coward.

3. What is considered the same to Shriji Maharaj? (Gadhada II-13)

Shriji Maharaj says, "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 honor on an elephant and walking on foot are the same to Me. Whether someone honors 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 the same to Me. Gold, silver, diamonds and refuse are all the same to Me. Moreover, I look upon all devotees of God as being equal; i.e., I do not differentiate one as being superior and another as being inferior."

4. Who did Raghunathji instantly renounce and why? (Gadhada II-28)

Even though Raghunathji protected anyone who sought refuge at his feet, he would, however, immediately abandon them if they committed even the slightest mistake. For example, even though Sitaji became subject to only minor public criticism, he instantly renounced her, even though she was very dear to him.

March 2018

1. If those who have less shraddha attain liberation after many lives, where do they stay until then?" (Gadhada II-16)

They go and reside in the beautiful realms of the deities. This is because when that devotee meditated on God, he used to look towards God and God used to look towards him as well. But God was aware of the vishays, the devotee thought about and had affection for while meditating on Him. Thus, when the devotee leaves his body, God sends him to a realm full of the vishays for which he had a passion. God also issues the following command to kal: 'You should not interfere in this devotee's indulgence in the vishays.' As a result, that devotee remains in Devlok and enjoys those pleasures. Thereafter, when he returns to Mrutyulok, he attains liberation eventually after many lives.

2. What is inappropriate about pleasing God through offerings, without resorting to austerities? (Kariyani 10)

If one is tempted by those objects, viewing them to be God's prasad, and, leaving God aside, if he develops affection for those objects, then by indulging in the vishays, he will become engrossed in them and corrupted by them – that is what is inappropriate. Therefore, a renunciant should realize God to be the all-doer and strive to please God only by performing austerities.

3. When does Maharaj feel pleased and displeased? (Gadhada II-28)

Shriji Maharaj says, "My nature is such that I do not become easily pleased or displeased over small matters. Only after I have observed for many days whether a person is worthy of My pleasure or displeasure do I become pleased or displeased. Never do I become pleased or displeased with a person merely upon hearing someone else's opinions of that person; I appreciate only those virtues that I perceive with My own mind. Also, my inclination is as follows: 'If one is a genuine devotee of God, then I am a devotee of that devotee, and I do the bhakti of such devotees of God.' This is My greatest virtue. A person who does not have that virtue is not worthy of any type of greatness."

4. What is the relationship between command and affection? Give example. (Kariyani 11)

After God went to Mathura, even though Shri Krishna was only three gaus away, the gopis never disobeyed his wishes by going for his darshan. They realized, 'If we do go to Mathura contrary to God's wish, then the affection that God has for us will diminish.' Therefore, the characteristic of affection is exactly this: One who has true affection for a person acts according to the person's wishes. If he realizes his beloved to be pleased by his staying nearby, then he stays nearby. On the other hand, if he realizes his beloved to be pleased by his staying away, then he stays away; but in no way does he behave contrary to his beloved's wish. That is the characteristic of affection. So, since the gopis had true affection for God, they did not go for God's darshan without his command. Only when God sent for them in Kurukshetra did they have the darshan of God, but in no way did they disobey God's command. Therefore, a person who has affection for God would never disobey God's command. He would only act according to God's wishes. That is the characteristic of affection.

Q.2 Write on any ONE of the following examples and clarify its principle. (In 4–5 lines.) (Total Marks: 4)

March 2019

1. For all of them, this discourse is like a lifeline. (Gadhada II-28)

Example: Those who have perceived flaws in devotees of God, even though they were very great, have fallen from their status of eminence. Those who progress do so only by serving devotees of God, and those who regress do so only by spiting devotees of God. In fact, the only method for a person to please God is to serve devotees of God by thought, word and deed. The only method to displease God is to spite devotees of

God. I have delivered it having heard and having extracted the essence from the Vedas, the Shastras, the Puranas and all other words on this earth pertaining to liberation. This is the most profound and fundamental principle; it is the essence of all essences. For all those who have previously attained liberation, for all those who will attain it in the future and for all those who are presently treading the path of liberation, this discourse is like a lifeline.”

Principle: The only method for a person to please Bhagwan is to serve His bhaktas. Jina bhakta of Panchala served Kamalshibhai of an inferior caste and so Maharaj was very pleased with him. One who serves God shall be free from any sins and who spites God’s devotees shall face destruction and hence this discourse is like a lifeline.

2. The mind is just like a ghost. (Gadhada II-33)

Example: When the mind is not engaged the mind thinks of evil thoughts. This is compared to ghost devouring the man. In the same manner, if mind is not involved in God’s devotion and bhakti then it ends into doing adharma and just like the ghost it ends into devouring jiva.

Principle: Mind does not like to stay in one condition. Hence, it is good to involve it in navdha bhakti. If one does not do that then it will befall on the path of adharma and will lead jiva to hell.

Q.3 Write on any ONE of the following examples and clarify its principle. (In 4-5 lines) (Total Marks: 4)

March 2015

1. Glory of niyams based on the example of an ailing person and his medication. (Gadhada II.16)

Example: Therefore, the only means to overcome the desires for the panchvishays is to follow the niyams prescribed by God. Furthermore, for those who have little vairagya, remaining within niyams is the only way of being saved, just as an ailing person can be cured only if he controls his diet and completes his course of medication.

OR

Thereupon Akhandanand Swami asked, “An ailing person has a fixed number of days over which he must follow his course of medication. Similarly, is there a definite time period for which one must endeavor to attain liberation?” Shriji Maharaj explained, “It takes a person who has feeble shraddha many lives to reach the culmination of his spiritual endeavors. In fact, the Bhagwad Gita states: “Anek janma sansidhststasto yati parah gatiim”, this verse explains that only a yogi who has become realized after many lives attains the highest state of enlightenment.

Principle: Just as we can only attain any objects of this world only by abiding to the niyams of this world. Similarly, we can only attain God by abiding and staying within the boundary of niyams set forth by God.

2. State of the mind based on the example of a ghost. (Gadhada II.33)

Example: For example, if a man conquers a ghost but does not assign it some work to do, the ghost would turn onto the man himself. In this sense, the mind is just like a ghost; when it is not engaged in the bhakti of God, it begins to conceive evil thoughts. This can be likened to the ghost getting ready to devour the man. For this reason, then, the mind should continuously be kept occupied in spiritual discourses, devotional songs, and activities related to God. This can be known as having conquered the mind.

Principle: It is a saying that an idle mind is like a ghost. When it is not engaged in bhakti of God it conceives evil thoughts and makes jiva to breach the satsang vows and tread on the path of adharma. For this reason, the mind should be engaged in navadha bhakti or nine types of bhakti.

3. Example of sucking sour lemons. (Gadhada II.13)

Example: Imagine a very strong man who is able to crack a betel nut between his teeth. But, after sucking ten or twenty very sour lemons, he would have great difficulty chewing even roasted chana. In this manner, it is only when I forcefully engage My vruttis in the vishays that they remain engaged in them.

Principle: Shriji Maharaj, himself is the supreme God, Purna Purushottam Narayan and therefore his vruttis can never engage in any kind of vishays. Here Maharaj is giving his own example to help mumukshus to realize how they can stay away from vishays.

March 2016

1. Medication to cure the disease in the form of the panchvishays. (Gadhada II.2)

Example: In this manner, through the five indriyas, one firmly abstains from the vishays. Then the flow of the vishays cannot enter within from outside. For example, a well can be cleaned only when the small streamlets of water that flow into the well are clogged from their entrance with cloth rags. In the same way, by keeping control over the external indriyas, the external vishays cannot enter the antahkaran. Again, a stomach illness can only be cured when medicine enters the stomach. In the same manner, the vishays that have already accumulated in the antahkaran by way of the indriyas should be eradicated by thinking of oneself as the atma.

Principle: In order to win over vishays one must abstain them from outside and feel complete happiness from within their atma.

2. Example of falling headfirst into the gutter. (Gadhada II.47)

Example: After leaving this body, I want to become brahmarup like Narad, the Sanakadik, Shukji, etc., and offer bhakti to God.' Even if during this process one has to go to dwell in Brahmlok or Indralok, there is nothing to worry about. Because if one goes for ablutions and then falls headfirst into the gutter, one should take a bath and become pure again; one should not remain in the filth. Similarly, if a person harbors pure desires and as a result attains Brahmlok or Indralok, he should think, 'I have fallen headfirst into the gutter.' Thinking in this manner, he should discard the pleasures of Brahmlok and Indralok using the strength of his pure desires and make his way to the abode of God. He should resolve not to stop anywhere in between.

Principle: In regard to moksha-dharma, the abodes of devta when compared with the abode Bhagwan's Akshardham are considered to be hell. So, while harboring subhvasna if one attains devta's abode then he should discard them and make his way to the abode of Bhagwan only. By keeping such staunch nischay one can attain Akshardham.

March 2017

1. A person who has temptation of collecting objects that he likes, should be known to be an extremely wretched person and like a dog. (Gadhada II.47)

Example: Also, if a person is staying with a senior sadhu due to the temptation of obtaining tasty food or drink, or due to the temptation of obtaining nice clothes, or due to the temptation of collecting objects that he likes, then he should not be considered a sadhu at all. Instead, he should be known to be an extremely wretched person and like a dog. One who has such corrupt intentions will ultimately fall from Satsang.

Principle: One should stay with a senior sadhu only to attain jiva's kalyaan and moksha but not with temptation to enjoy delicious food, drinks, fancy clothes and other material objects. Maharaj considers such a person wretched and like a dog. One can attain such worldly objects anywhere but jiva's kalyaan and moksha can only be attained by surrendering to a senior sadhu.

2. Worldly objects compared with the hairs of the armpit. (Gadhada II.55)

Example: Shriji Maharaj says, I constantly regard each and every worldly object to be perishable and insignificant. Never do I make any distinctions such as, 'This is a nice object, and this is a bad object.' Instead, all worldly objects appear the same to me. For example, when considering the hairs of the armpit, which can be considered good and which bad? Indeed, good or bad, they are all the same. Similarly, all worldly objects appear the same to me.

Principle: Armpit hair are all the same, none can be said to be better than the other. Similarly, Maharaj explains the all material object are like armpit hair. They are all perishable, worthless and they all create attachment.

March 2018

1. Example of a small streamlet of water. (Gadhada II.2)

Example: If a well that is completely full of water. The water in the well will prevent the flow of new water from entering the well. However, if the well is emptied by drawing water from it, then new water from outside will enter it. Similarly, through the bliss of one's atma, one should remain fulfilled within. Externally one should obstruct the inflow of the vishays through the indriyas this is the only definite method for overcoming lust, anger, etc. Except for this, though, they cannot be overcome by fasting alone.

Principle: In order to win over the vishays one has to abstain them from entering in from outside and remain absolutely fulfilled within.

2. Example of earthen and gold utensils. (Gadhada II.16)

Example: Just as one would never be attracted to earthen utensils that are used for drinking water. However, if those utensils were made of gold then one would naturally be attracted to them. Similarly, if one realizes the greatness of the discourses, devotional songs, etc., related to God, then one's shraddha in God and in those activities will naturally increase. Therefore, one should employ whichever method is necessary to understand the greatness of God. If one does employ such a method, then even if one has no shraddha at all, still one will develop Shraddha and if one has feeble shraddha, it will become stronger.

Principle: The importance of an object is determined from the cost of that object and one obviously tends to like the expensive objects. Similarly, if one understands the importance of katha and kirtan, one will naturally understand the importance of Bhagwan.

Q.3 *Write concisely on any TWO of the following questions. (In 4–5 lines each.) (Total Marks: 4)*

March 2019

1. What is the form of the indriyas? (Gadhada II.16)

The indriyas are like the wind – even though the wind cannot be seen, it can be inferred that the wind is blowing by the way in which it shakes the trees. Similarly, the vruttis of the indriyas cannot be seen, but everyone realizes that they surge towards the vishays. If a person deceitfully attempts to hide this, then realizing him to be deceitful, others will condemn him all the more. Therefore, in no way can one conceal the acute cravings of one's indriyas to indulge in the vishays.

2. The devotee does not want to retain a single swabhav which may hinder him in worshipping God and yet, such inappropriate swabhavs do remain. What is the reason for this? (Gadhada II.7)

If a person has a deficiency of vairagya, then even if he has the shraddha to eradicate his swabhavs, still they will not be eradicated. For example, a poor man may wish for lots of sumptuous food and lavish

clothes, but how can he acquire them? Similarly, one who lacks vairāgya may wish in his heart to acquire the virtues of a sadhu, but it is very difficult for him to do so.

3. What is the difference between the activities of a devotee and the activities of a non-believer? (Gadhada II.11)

There is a vast difference between the activities of a devotee of God and the activities of a nonbeliever. How? Well, all activities of a non-believer are for pampering his indriyas, whereas all activities of a devotee of God are solely for serving God and His devotee. As a result, the devotee's activities are a form of bhakti. Moreover, bhakti is like gnan in the sense that both are a form of non-karma. Hence, all of a devotee's activities are in a form of karmas that do not cause attachment.

4. Explain: How should one learn the art of ruling? (Gadhada II.12)

First of all, one should thoroughly realize the greatness of God. Then, one should conquer one's mind by meditating on God's form. One should conquer one's ears by listening to discourses related to God, but one should not allow worldly talks to be heard by the ears. In the same manner, the skin should only be allowed to touch God and the devotees of God. The eyes should only be allowed to do darshan of God and His followers. The tongue should forever sing the praises of God and taste only the Prasad of God. The nose should only be allowed to smell the fragrance of flowers and other objects that have been consecrated by God. None of the indriyas should be allowed to follow the unrighteous path. When a person behaves in this manner, no one can overthrow his authority in the kingdom in the form of his body.

Q.4 *Explain any TWO of the following incidents and give a suitable Vachanamrut reference from the syllabus. (In 3-4 lines each.) (Total Marks: 4)*

March 2015

1. Uttamcharandas did not follow Yogiji Maharaj's command to join him for vicharan. As a result, he soon left the sadhu ashram. (Gadhada II.51)

Vachnamrut reference: So, only one who follows the commands of the Satpurush can be said to be under the influence of favorable circumstances. To deviate from those commands is the very definition of adverse circumstances. Therefore, only one who follows the commands of the Satpurush is behaving as the atmarup.

Explanation: If we do not obey the commands of a Satpurush then our favorable circumstances become unfavorable. For that reason, one who obeys the Satpurush's agnaa is said to be behaving as atma-sattarup.

2. Shriji Maharaj went to Sagram Vaghri's hut with the same love and enthusiasm with which he visited Kushalkunvarba's palace. (Gadhada II.13)

Vachnamrut reference: 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 not do so; I remain absolutely dejected towards them. In fact, all of the attractive vishays and the repulsive vishay are the same to Me. Also, a king and a beggar are the same to Me.

Explanation: Bhagwan and a true Satpurush never lets their minds to be attached in any worldly panchvishays even if they forcefully try to engage them. To them they attain same contentment from both the king's palace and a poor man's hut.

3. Gunatitanand Swami has shown just as many divine powers as Shriji Maharaj. (Gadhada II.22)

Vachnamrut reference: There is no greater status than that of a sadhu. For example, in a kingdom, the queen's authority is equal to that of the king. In the same way, that sadhu possesses as much majesty as God.

Explanation: Bhagwan and Bhagwan's divine powers are not always equal. Sometimes Bhagwan may even show more divinity in his bhakta than in Himself. For that reason, Narsinh Mehta has sung, "Mara bandhya vaishnav chhode, vaishnav bandhya hu na chhodu.... praan thaki ma...ne vaishnav vahala.

4. There was a group of sadhus in Junagadh who ate nothing, but plain flour mixed in water. But because they took abhaav of Gunatitanand Swami, they left satsang and adharma entered in them. (Gadhada II.11)

Vachnamrut reference: Therefore, if in any way a person perceives a flaw in a devotee of God who, by God's command, performs karmas or the purpose of pleasing God, then adharma and its retinue will enter and reside in the perceiver's heart.

Explanation: One should never take avgun of Bhagwan or Bhagwan's bhakta because by doing so all the flaws sets in his heart.

March 2016

1. "Jaisi Preet haram se vaisi Hari se hoy, chala jaye Vaikunth me palla na pakade koi." (Gadhada II.59).

Vachnamrut reference: So, one should develop affection for God's Sant just as one has affection for one's wife, son, parents or brother. Due to this affection, then, the jiva becomes absolutely fulfilled.

Explanation: One needs to change the direction of one's affection. If one has the same affection for Bhagwan's Sant as they have towards their family, relatives and worldly things, then the jiva will attain param kalyaan or ultimate happiness/liberation.

2. King Gopichand and King Bhartruhari renounced their kingdoms but fought over a single peg to hang their cloth bags. (Gadhada II.7)

Vachnamrut reference: If a person has a deficiency of vairagya, then even if he has the Shraddha to eradicate his swabhavs, still they will not be eradicated. For example, a poor man may wish for lots of sumptuous food and lavish clothes, but how can he acquire them? Similarly, one who lacks vairagya may wish in his heart to acquire the virtues of a sadhu, but it is very difficult for him to do so.

Explanation: In this world the root cause of misery is one's own swabhav. It is very difficult to eradicate swabhavs but when one comes in commune with a Bhagwan and Sant all his swabhavs vanish. Here a vairagya lacking person is compared with a devotee and sumptuous food and pretty clothes are compared with virtues of a sadhu.

3. "Even though the leaves of a mango tree are shed, there is no doubt that it is a mango tree. In the same way, our faith in God and his Sadhu should be firm." - Yogiji Maharaj. (Gadhada II.61)

(a) Vachnamrut reference: (a) Have extreme firm faith in God's swaroop, so much so that one would never sway from it even if others' or one's own mind were to raise doubts.

(a) Explanation: We have firm nischay or complete awareness of our name, our relatives and the name of our village that even in our sleep we don't make any mistake. Similarly, we should have such firm faith in Bhagwan and Sant.

(b) Vachnamrut reference: When one, in their past birth has attained Bhagwan or Bhagwan's bhakta and has done their seva, then in this birth also their affection and their firm faith or nischay for them remains just as staunch.

(b) Explanation: When one has attained the company of a devotee or that devotee's Sant in any birth and they have done their seva then that seva never goes vain. Even in their new birth it stays intact. For that reason, the nischay for Bhagwan and the bhakta never vanishes.

4. Every activity of Pramukh Swami Maharaj is bhakti. (Gadhada II.11)

Vachnamrut reference: Whereas all activities of a devotee of God are solely for serving God and His devotee. As a result, the devotee's activities are a form of bhakti.

Explanation: Any seva done for Bhagwan and Bhagwan's a Sant becomes nirgun, bhaktirup and non-binding.

March 2017

1. Jogidas Khuman courageously threw chilies in his own eyes to punish them. (Gadhada II.12)

Vachnamrut reference: Thus, he who aspires to attain liberation should never harbor such timidity and should employ whatever measures are necessary to force the indriyas and antahkaran to accept his authority.

Explanation: In respect to one's indriyas and antahkaran one should never become timid and give in, but instead one's jiva should take control and rule heroically over them.

2. Yogiji Maharaj did not watch the marriage procession of the king of Bhavnagar. (Gadhada II.2)

Vachnamrut reference: Similarly, through the bliss of one's atma, one should remain fulfilled within. Externally, one should obstruct the inflow of the vishays through the indriyas. This is the only definite method for overcoming lust, anger, etc.

Explanation: When one acts according to the niyams set forth by Bhagwan then worldly vishayas are not able to enter in one's heart and with atma-sukh or cleansed heart the vishayas that had previously entered into one's heart gets vanished.

3. Pramukh Swami Maharaj, who is attached to God in five ways, told Acharya Swami, 'Acharya, gently!' (K.11)

Vachnamrut reference: Therefore, such a devotee does, in fact, constantly maintains contact with God in the five ways. How? Because the same panchvishays that no being can stay without, that devotee has considered them to be vain; instead, he has attached himself to God in the five ways. Therefore, that devotee maintains a constant relationship with God

Explanation: Acharyaswami was drying out the water on Gunatitanand Swami's big toe. At that time, he doubted the presence of God in Gunatitanand's murti. So, he pressed hard on his His big toe. At that time Pramukh Swami Maharaj, who was engrossed in attending to Shreeji Maharaj immediately responded, "Gentle Acharya!" Because Swamishri maintains constant oneness with God and is attached to Him in five ways, he felt the pain and responded instantly.

4. One should take Medicine according to Doctor's advice - not more or less. (Gadhada II.51)

Vachnamrut reference: For this reason, then, all renunciants should abide by the dharma of renunciants, all householders should abide by the dharma of householders, and all women should abide by the dharma of women. Even in this, one will not become happy if one behaves less than what is prescribed; nor will one become happy by behaving beyond what is prescribed.

Explanation: When staying within the boundary set by Bhagwan and the Sant one always experiences peace and happiness, otherwise they will face miseries.

March 2018

1. **Nilkanth Varni threw and broke the beautiful tumbler, which he had received as a gift, regarding it as perishable and insignificant. (Gadhada II.55)**
Vachnamrut reference: In the same way, I also constantly feel as if death is imminent at this moment for Myself as well as for others. In fact, I constantly regard each and every worldly object to be perishable and insignificant.
Explanation: Bhagwan and His Sant has no desire for or any attachment in any materialistic things.

2. **Vagha Khachar from Sarangpur went to Junagadh on Gunatitanand Swami's command and his attachments of the kaaran body were eradicated. (K.12)**
Vachnamrut reference: However, if a person attains the company of the Sant, realizes the form of God through the words of that Sant, meditates on that form of God and imbibes the words of God in his heart, then the kaaran body attached to his jiva is burnt completely
Explanation: Vagha Khachar went to Junagadh upon Gunatitanand Swami's agnaa and there he associated with Bhagatji Maharaj and thus, his kaaran sharir, or body was eradicated.

3. **'Em ek puje puja sahu, seveye sahu seviya; mate ghanu ghanu shu kahu, bhed bhakta na kahya.'** (Gadhada II.59)
Vachnamrut reference: a. In the four Vedas, the Puranas and the scriptures, there is but one central principle, and that is that only God and His Sant can grant liberation.
b. So, when one attains God or His Sant, then, apart from this there is no other liberation for the jiva; this itself is ultimate liberation.
Explanation: In order to attain kalyaan, or liberation no matter how arduous means of bhakti one may attempt, one does not attain ultimate liberation until one has attained Bhagwan and His Sant.

4. **Doing mansi while farming, all of Parvatbhai's activities were a form of bhakti. (Gadhada II.11)**
Vachnamrut reference: Whereas all activities of a devotee of God are solely for serving God and His devotee. As a result, the devotee's activities are a form of bhakti
Explanation: Any deed done for Bhagwan or His Sant becomes nirgun or bhaktirup and free from any attachment.

Q.4 Complete the following quotations. (Total Marks: 6)

March 2019

1. **Such discourses regarding the nature of God cannot be understood by oneself even from the shastras. Even though these facts may be in the shastras, it is only when the Satpurush manifests on this earth, and one hears them being narrated by him, that one understands them. They cannot, however, be understood by one's intellect alone, even from the shastras. (Gadhada II 13)**

2. **If a person attains the company of the Sant, realizes the form of God through the words of that Sant, meditates on that form of God and imbibes the words of God in his heart, then the karan body attached to his jiva is burnt completely. (Kariyani 12: Destroying the Karan Body; A Tamarind Seed)**

3. **Only those who have accumulated a great number of merits from performing good deeds receive the opportunity to serve God's Sant, but those who have a few merits do not. So, one should develop affection for God's Sant just as one has affection for one's wife, son, parents or brother. Due to this affection, then, the jiva becomes absolutely fulfilled. (Gadhada II 59)**

Q.5 Complete the following quotations. (Total Marks: 9)

March 2015

1. Your minds must not be becoming as stable while meditating or by turning the rosary as perfectly as they do while you are listening to these discourses. Thus, one should listen to the discourses of Purushottam Nārāyan with faith and love. There is no better method to stabilize the mind and free it of the desires for vishays. (Kariyani 12)
2. A person had attained God and his Sant and had served them in his past lives, then in this life, his affection for the Bhakta of God would never diminish. Nor would he waver in his faith. (Gadh. II 59)
3. If he is a householder, he would surrender everything he has for God and his devotees; and if required to do so, would even give his life for Satsang; and the moment his Ishtadev commands him to become a paramhansa, he would immediately become a paramhansa. If a devotee of God possesses these characteristics, then whether he sits at the front of an assembly of devotees, or at the back – he should be considered to be great amongst all devotees. (Gadhada II 61: Niyams, Faith in God, and Loyalty)

March 2016

1. I also constantly feel as if death is imminent at this moment for myself as well as for others. In fact, I constantly regard each and every worldly object to be perishable and insignificant. (Gadhada II 55: A Goldsmith's Workshop)
2. 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 panchvishays and swabhāvs such as lust, anger, etc.; they will be subdued easily. (Gadhada II 13: Divine Light)
3. In fact, my nature is such that I do not become easily pleased or displeased over small matters. Only after I have observed for many days whether a person is worthy of my pleasure or displeasure do I become pleased or displeased. Never do I become pleased or displeased with a person merely upon hearing someone else's opinions of that person. (Gadhada II 28: Mahārāj's Compassionate Nature; A 'Lifeline')

March 2017

1. Therefore, just as one shuns a vile person, one should immediately shun the company of those persons and those shastras that refute the upāsanā of God and break one's master-servant relationship with God. (Kariyani 10: Checking the Pulse; Austerities)
2. If a person lacks vairāgya, but intensely serves a great Sant, and obediently perseveres in his observance of the injunctions of God, then God will look upon him with an eye of compassion, and feel, 'This poor fellow lacks vairāgya, and lust, anger, etc., are harassing him very much. So now, may all those vicious natures be eradicated. As a result, they will be eradicated immediately. In comparison, if he were to endeavor in other ways, those swabhavs may be eradicated, but after a great deal of time and effort – either in this life or in later lives. If such vicious natures are eradicated instantly, then it should be known that they have been eradicated by the grace of God. (Gadhada II 7: A Poor Man)

3. Therefore, faith in dharma naturally develops in one who possesses faith in God. However, if one maintains faith in dharma alone, then faith in God will decline. It is for this reason that one who is intelligent should certainly maintain resolute faith in God, since thereby faith in dharma will also remain firm. (Gadhada II 16: Faith in God and Faith in Dharma)

March 2018

1. An ekāntikbhakta does not believe his body to be his own true form; he believes himself to be chaitanya. He does bhakti of God while observing dharma, jñān and vairāgya. Also, he maintains no desire for any object other than God.' When he becomes such a sadhu by worshipping God in this way, then there is no greater status than that of a sadhu. (Gadhada II 22: Two Armies; The Consecration of Nar-Nārāyan)
2. Your minds must not be becoming as stable while meditating or by turning the rosary as perfectly as they do while you are listening to these discourses. Thus, one should listen to the discourses of Purushottam Narayan with faith and love. There is no better method to stabilize the mind and free it from the desires for vishays. (Kariyani 12)
3. So, even though God assumes a human body, he is still divine, and the place where he resides is also nirgun. His clothes, jewelry, vehicles, attendants, food, drinks, etc. – in fact, any other objects which become associated with him – are all nirgun. One who realizes God's form in this manner does not harbor any affection for the panchvishays, just like I do not. He becomes independent. (Gadhada II 13)

Q.5 *Explain any TWO of the following incidents and give a suitable Vachanamrut reference from the syllabus. (In 3–4 lines each.) (Total Marks: 4)*

1. **Bhagvatprasadji Maharaj spited Gunatitanand Swami by striking on the square sanctified by him with trikam so his hand got decayed.**
Reference: (1) Those who have perceived flaws in devotees of God, even though they were very great, have fallen from their status of eminence. Those who progress do so only by serving devotees of God, and those who regress do so only by spiting devotees of God. (Gadhada II 28)
(2) One who spites devotees of God can never be redeemed. (Gadhada II 63)
Principle: One should not spite God's devotees in any manner because God does not tolerate the spitting of a devotee and he develops aversion towards that person.
2. **In Gadhada, the Koli boy controlled his mind and offered a melon to Shriji Maharaj. (Gadhada II 22)**
Reference: My mind was not tempted anywhere from Devlok all the way to Brahmlok. "Seeing this, all of the deities began to praise Me, 'You truly are an Ekāntik Bhakta of God; after all, your mind did not forsake God and become tempted elsewhere.' On hearing their words, My heart gained a lot of courage. I then told My 'man', 'I know your true form. So, look! If you harbor a thought about any object other than God, I will crush you to pieces.' In the same way, I told My buddhi, 'If you harbor any form of resolve other than that, of God, then you will be in trouble.' Similarly, I told My chitt, 'If you contemplate on anything other than God, then I will also crush you to pieces.' In the same way, I told My ahamkar, 'If you harbor any form of conceit except that of servitude towards God, I will destroy you.'
Principle: God's staunch devotee only wish to make God happy. Hence, whatever 'man'(mind) tries to deceive them, they do not deviate from their goal. One who gets victory over 'man' gets victory over the world.
3. **Yogiji Maharaj understood the greatness of devotees and served them by discoursing to them. (Gadhada**

II 47)

Reference: Mulji Brahmachari realizes My greatness and serves Me. In the same way, I realize his greatness. Thus, as the householders serve us by providing food and clothes, we should also realize their greatness and serve them by preaching to them.

Principle: If one is a householder or a tyagi, one should understand the importance of each other. A householder serves the tyagi with food and clothing. In the same way, a tyagi should relieve the householder from three types of sufferings with his discourses.

4. **Premni agal sadhan sarve, Ravi agal jem tara re; Muktanand kahe premno marag, prichhe te Prabhujine pyara re.**

Reference: If a devotee has deep affection for God and treats the worldly panchvishays that are not related to God as vain, and if he is firmly attached to God via the panchvishays, then wherever such a devotee goes by God's command, the form of God also goes with him.

Principle: Whatever efforts jiva does, God does not surrender to him. However, if a devotee has strong affection for God, he readily follows God's agnaa. Hence, he becomes dear to God. So, God does not leave the heart of that devotee even for a blink of an eyelid.

March 2019

SECTION 2: 'BHAGWAN SWAMINARAYAN JIVANCHARITRA PARTS 1 AND 2

Q.6 *Write concisely on any ONE of the following. (In 30 lines.) (Total Marks: 12)*

March 2015

1. **Exemplary women devotees of Shri Hari. (Only incidents from 'Mahayagna in Dabhan' to 'Famine in 1869')**

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| 1. Karniba's heart was shaken on seeing thorns in Maharaj's feet-Maharaj promised her to give her Dabhan's lila darshan from her home. | 3/2/32-33 |
| 2. Maharaj ate Gangama's thaal. | 3/2/37 |
| 3. Karniba did darshan of Dabhan in Adhoi. | 3/2/69-70 |
| 4. Bhada Patel's wife gave away the grain kept in the house for Brahmin's chorasi. She told Dosa barot "Please tell Maharaj to come down in my last moments." | 3/4/101-102 |
| 5. Darshan of purnahuti to Bhikaridas's daughter in Surat-darshan of purnahuti to Dada Dave's daughter Jamuna and son Ishwar. | 3/2/70 |
| 6. Minbai send Rs. 500 with charaniya for Kariyani's dashera festival. | 3/4/111 |
| 7. Abhal khachar's wife Surprabhadevi got upset with him and went to Gokhlana from Rampara on Maharaj's agnaa. | 3/4/113 |
| 8. Maharaj went to Vajiba of Vijapur. | 3/4/116-121 |
| 9. Maharaj's rival Laldas Suba's sister Udaykuvarba was Maharaj's devotee-she was devoted to Maharaj so when she found out that Maharaj had come alone, she was confused. | 3/4/122 |
| 10. Maharaj looks into the eyes of Raandeba. | 3/6/182-183 |
| 11. Looking at Somba, Paachaliba, Devuba, Raandeba, etc. carrying baskets of food to lovingly feed Maharaj, Maharaj said: 'What is this, rishis' wives coming down with thaal?' | 3/6/184 |
| 12. 'You don't realize what you are singing in love'-Somba, Raandeba to Panchaliba. | 3/6/185 |
| 13. Maharaj gives fagwa to ladies devotees in Sarangpur. | 3/8/225-227 |
| 14. Your cursing seems so sweet to me. Vajiba's conviction. | 3/8/230 |
| 15. Vashram could not recognize Maharaj during drought since he was dressed as an | |

- ascetic. Whereas his wife recognized him and prepared food and fed him. 3/9/263
16. Laduba and Jivuba's love does not allow me to sustain anywhere. 3/9/264-265
17. Mamaiya Patgar's mother lovingly instructed Maharaj to get rid of his ascetic form. 3/9/268
Maharaj honored Raiba's wish.
- 2. Opposition from the Vedantacharya and Muktanand Swami's victory.**
1. Vedantacharya made stories and passed it on to Vadodara's diwan-Diwan ultimately presented it to Gaekwad. 4/4/58-59
2. Scriptural contest again with Vedantacharya: Gaekwad sent request letter to Maharaj to reveal Vedantacharya's vanity-Maharaj instructed Mukatanand swami to go for the scriptural debate. 4/4/60
3. Sayajirao goes for Muktanand Swami's darshan-declaration of scriptural debate 4/4/61
4. Vedantacharya's vanity is revealed-Muktanand Swami's victory. 4/4/62-64
- 3. Shriji Maharaj's affection towards devotees. (Only incidents of 'Affectionate Towards Devotees')**
1. Words of conviction from the brahmins to Keshavji, a brahmin from Kandorda-Maharaj performed chorasi and scorned the brahmin's pride. 3/4/99-101
2. Broke the khatras in Panchala-had rotlo from rancid barley-made millet rotlo for Alayakhachar. 3/4/107-109
3. Maharaj stayed at Kala Makvana in Kariyani-festival of Dussehra- Laxmi came down to give money. 3/4/110
4. Abhal khachar's wife Surprabhadevi got upset with him and went to Gokhlana from Rampara on Maharaj's agnaa. 3/4/112-113
5. Maharaj becomes unhappy from the pain of people of Visnagar. 3/4/104,113
6. Maharaj goes to Visnagar alone. 3/4/114-115
7. Maharaj instigates the danger. 3/4/122-123
8. Laldas sees Jampuri in samadhi-bows to Maharaj. 3/4/124-126
9. You will get the strength to lift the murti. 3/4/115-116
10. Naja! We have come. 3/4/131
11. We only come for the devotees. 3/4/131
12. Vasur Khachar becomes a devotee. 3/4/133-134
13. Naja Jogiya is commanded to come to Gadhpur. 3/4/134
14. Mayaram Bhatt has our image in his mind. He is not the one who would be tempted in such valuable ornaments and clothes. 3/4/137
15. Maharaj hits Brahmanand Swami with a bead. 3/4/138
16. Everyone should obey the niyams-bead thrown at Muktanand Swami. 3/4/139
17. Brahmchari serves us even in his dreams-proves it by hitting a bead to Mulji brahmachari 3/4/139-140

March 2016

- 1. Shri Hari performed transformation of the society (only incidents from 'Yagna in Jetalpur' to 'Affection for devotees')**
1. The prostitute in Jetalpur becomes pure. 2/25/418-421
2. The prostitute invites Maharaj. 2/25/429
3. One should not touch anyone's things. 3/1/12
4. Call Joban Pagi in the front. 3/2/61
5. Today devotee Joban is born-Dharma does not look at caste, creed, rich or poor. Transformation of Joban. 3/2/62-63

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| 6. | You will have the strength to lift the idol. | 3/4/155 |
| 7. | Laldas bows to Maharaj. | 3/4/124-126 |
| 8. | Vasur Khachar becomes a devotee. Maharaj leads both the king and the people towards dharma and teaches them to leave unruliness. | 3/4/133 |
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| 2. | Spiritual state and understanding of women devotees of Bhagwan Swaminarayan (only incidents from 'Wrote two letters from Bhadra - Travels in Kutch' to 'Affection for devotees'). | |
| 1. | Kalyandas's mother Devubai-turns in her son to become sadhu. 'One who leads are the only true relatives.' | 2/20/294 |
| 2. | Sadaba of Kera had 'Niravaran drashti'-however she always longed for Maharaj's darshan and seva. | 2/20/315-316 |
| 3. | The prostitute of Jetalpur had inclination to be pure and so she herself ground wheat for the Yagna-she served Maharaj and became pure. | 2/25/418 |
| 4. | Made Gangama happy by serving as her son-Gangama used to carry the stove on her head wherever Maharaj went and served him with hot meals. | 2/25/429 |
| 5. | Maharaj goes to the prostitute's house-from now she has become divine and pure. | 2/25/429-430 |
| 6. | To Vakhatba's house in Vahelal-there are no chances to be saved-Maharaj's human act-however, she still had the same divyabhav and bhaktibhav. | 2/28/475 |
| 7. | Inspite of knowing her husband's devilish intentions, Jagjivan Mehta's wife Prabhavati gave her maaf to Maharaj in seva. | 3/1/26 |
| 8. | Karniba's heart was shaken on seeing thorns in Maharaj's feet- 'Today Aksharnath is tolerating a lot for mumukshus! | 3/2/32 |
| 9. | In Adhoi, Karniba did darshan of Maharaj in Dabhan. | 3/2/70 |
| 10. | Darshan of purnahuti to Bhikaridas's daughter in Surat-darshan of purnahuti to Dada Dave's daughter Jamuna and son Ishwar. | 3/2/70 |
| 11. | Darshan of Dabhan yagna to Dada Dave's daughter in Vaso-she could not go because of the crowd. | 3/2/70 |
| 12. | Bhada Patel's wife gave away the grain kept in the house for Brahmin's chorasi. She told Dosa Barot "Please tell Maharaj to come down in my last moments." | 3/4/101-102 |
| 13. | Surprabhadevi: We are happy in your agnaa. | 3/4/113 |
| 14. | Vajiba's conviction: If you move the peepul tree, then you are God, if not then you are not God? How come you are lost being such a literate person? | 3/4/119 |
| 15. | The peepul tree was moved, but Vajiba's conviction was 'I would never be impressed by anyone else but only Swaminarayan.' | 3/4/121 |
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| 3. | Shri Hari fulfilled the heartily wishes of his loving devotees (only incidents from 'Again in Kutch' to 'Raso vai saha') | |
| 1. | If he allows me to wash the dhotiyu, then he is indeed God. | 3/1/1-2 |
| 2. | Celebrated the annakut festival in Bhuj thus fulfilling Hirjibhai's wish. | 3/1/22 |
| 3. | Ate 44 lbs of sweets lovingly offered by devotees of Hadvad. Also ate Shivshankar Jani's thaal. | 3/2/34 |
| 4. | 'We also needed to come!'-Maharaj gave darshan to fulfil Mamaiya's wishes. | 3/6/188 |
| 5. | Fulfilled his wish to personally serve Maharaj-Kala Makwana | 3/6/174-175 |
| 6. | Your cursing seems as sweet as honey to me. Vajiba's conviction. | 3/8/230 |
| 7. | Dada! I cannot go anywhere leaving you. Your love does not allow me to stay anywhere. | 3/9/264 |
| 8. | Mamaiya Patgar's mother lovingly instructed Maharaj to get rid of his ascetic form. Maharaj honored Raiba's wish. Instructed Santos to quite their khatras niyams. | 3/9/268 |
| 9. | Look, we gave away all our clothes to this swami under his loving influence, so we got new clothes- 'Lagaadi te priti laal re'...-during the kirtan to Brahmanand Swami | 3/14/357-359 |

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| 10. Looking at Adiba's feelings, Maharaj fed the Santos second time. (made biranj meal) | 3/14/360 |
| 11. In Shiyad village, Maharaj fed the devotees, pieces of ghee to fulfil Madhavji and Jesangbhai's wishes. | 3/14/374 |
| 12. Purifies servant Miyaji's house on his request in Ningala. | 3/14/392-393 |

March 2017

1. Shri Hari: A guide for the lost (Only incidents from 'Grand Glory of Maharaj in Gadhpur' to 'Departure Towards Gujarat').

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| 1. Maharaj! You did not preach me directly. You told me through bashri. Now everything surrendered to you. Now give me diksha.' Poet Ladudan. | 2/11/144 |
| 2. 'Now this satsang and its rules are only to be followed'. Hamir Khachar and Daha khachar | 2/11/147-148 |
| 3. Breaks the hook. | 2/14/197 |
| 4. Shri Hari explaining the definition of bravery to Takho Pagi. | 2/14/202 |
| 5. Non-violence is like impotency in front of the strong. | 2/14/203 |
| 6. Preaching to Jalimji 'Do not steal even for the sake of Dharma.' | 2/14/204 |
| 7. Under the influence of satsang, Mulu Khachar gives up hoko and drugs. | 2/14/206-208 |
| 8. Addiction of tobacco and bhang to brahmins of Umreth-understands Shriji Maharaj's advice of quitting the addictions-accepts vartmans and becomes satsangis | 2/14/210 |
| 9. 'A sin that is done unknowingly is not a sin. Today we have got rid of maya, so go ahead and so seva.' To Khodabhai of Budhej while remembering the prior incident. | 2/14/211 |

2. Gunatitanand Swami's glory in the words of Shriji Maharaj (Only incidents from 'Maharaj Reveals the Glory of Mulji Sharma' to 'Sadguru Khele Vasant').

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| 1. There is sweetness in this Mulji. If one stays with him, they he would be free of the bitterness of this world. | 2/19/281-282 |
| 2. Along with are idol, this Mulji Maharaj's idol will also be consecrated and worshipped. | 2/19/282-283 |
| 3. Today is Sharad Purnima and also our Aksharsham's birthday. | 2/19/283 |
| 4. Maharaj reveals the glory of Mulji Sharma. | 2/19/285-286 |
| 5. When one understands Akshar's mahima, then one also understands Purushottam's mahima. | 2/19/286-290 |
| 6. Bhagwati diksha is given to anadi Aksharbrahma. | 3/2/65-67 |
| 7. Sadguru khele vasant: Maharaj's question and introduction. Who is such a Sadguru? | 3/8/223-224 |
| 8. Sachidanand Aksharbrahma is our Akshardham-will be rightful. To become brahmarup one must understand Akshar-Maharaj to Santos | 3/8/225 |

3. Religious transformation effected by Shriji Maharaj (Only incidents from 'Departure Towards Gujarat' to 'Yagna in Jatelpur').

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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Do not steal even for the sake of Dharma. | 2/14/204 |
| 2. We cannot take anything without asking the owner. We cannot pick anything on the way. - sugarcane stick, farmer's complaint | 2/17/257 |
| 3. Diksha to 500 Santos. | 2/17/261 |
| 4. Maharaj came to Jagjivan's yagna and opposed the animal killing. | 2/20-310-313 |
| 5. Jetalpur's prostitute becomes pure. | 2/25/418-420 |
| 6. Prior all the avataars are respected, but the upasana lies in the bhakti of present form- explaining the mystery of the present bhakti. | 2/25/423 |
| 7. Scriptural debate with Bansidhar-one who worships with alcohol and meat is adulterated-Proponent of non-violent yagna. | 2/25/424-426 |

8. The prostitute invites Maharaj-Shri Hari addresses her as sister. 2/25/429-430
9. One shuns dehbhav when one comes in contact with Akshar-birth and death are not the goals of life. Maharaj's wish to give Akshardham to his devotees-to fulfil this wish is the ultimate goal-identification of the ultimate goal. 2/25/432
10. Maharaj comes to the prostitute's house-she will be liberated like Muktanand Swami. 2/25/435-437

March 2018

- 1. Defeat of the Matpanthi scholars through different scriptural debates (Only incidents from 'Two Letters Written from Bhadara – Touring in Kutch' to 'Grand Victory Achieved by Muktanand Swami').**
 1. Violent yagna in Kutch by Jagjivan Mehta-Maharaj reached there and explained the characteristics of a being a brahmin according to the scriptures 2/20/310-312
 2. Maharaj's clear explanation to Jagjivan-you don't know the essence of the Vedas and if you kill animals, then it in the end it leads to your destruction 2/20/312
 3. We will reveal the real identity of Swaminarayan Bhagwan, Khaiya invited Maharaj for scriptural debate. 2/20/317-318
 4. Khaiya showed desperation to ask questions to Brahmanand Swami in the assembly. Brahmanand Swami was seated in Bhagwan's place. The young sadhu will answer your Questions. Khaiya's questions-108 questions at one time. 2/20/321
 5. Please speak softly now. Speech flow as smooth as air-prompt answers-Khaiya becomes a satsangi. 2/20/322-323
 6. Scriptural debate with Bansidhar-Shaktipanthi of Mehemdabad came down to ask questions-Shri Hari explained without knowing the views of the scriptures and creating imaginary dharma, the religious sect cannot survive. Thus, Bansidhar's views were defeated. 2/25/424-426
 7. Maharaj came to the assembly in Umreth-Maharaj asked the brahmins to ask questions-Maharaj responded to brahmins' questions in accordance with the scriptures-the brahmins bowed to Maharaj's feet-some of them became satsangis. 4/3/39-41
 8. Muktanand Swami's debate in Vadodara with Vedantacharya-Muktanand Swami's victory. 4/4/59-65
- 2. Divine incidents of Shri Hari's rest (Only incidents from 'Shri Hari's Divine during Illness in Jaliya').**
 1. Asked for illness in Jaliya at Hirabhai Thakkar's place. 3/10/275
 2. Maharaj's illness at Hirabhai's house. 3/10/275
 3. Effects of the illness-started telling the thoughts of people who came down to see him. 3/10/276
 4. This are all not masculine people. 3/10/277
 5. You are refusing even a pound of jalebis-asked for jav pok to eat. 3/10/277-278
 6. Bring in the Ganga water-we want to bathe. 3/10/279
 7. Stretch this cart to make it longer. 3/10/279
 8. How can we be heavy, we haven't eaten for 13 days! 3/10/280
 9. Verabhai leaves from Upleta to Gadhada to bring in the sigram. 3/10/280-281
 10. Naga Babariya had doubts in Maharaj's swarup and resolution. 3/10/281
 11. Service of Daha Khachar and Minbai in Kariyani. 3/10/281
 12. This Bhaguji is extremely weakling. 3/10/282
 13. Talks of defeating the Arabs and the canon ball shooters in Gadhada in Jivakhachar's house. 3/10/282
 14. Had Ladha Thakkar decorate the sword and asked for Rs. 5. 3/10/283
 15. Called devotees of Varjang Jaliya during Diwali days and gave agnaa-result of nirdosh buddhi service. 3/10/283
- 3. Shri Hari, the saviour of the society (Incidents from 'Departure for Gujarat' to 'Two Letters Written from Bhadara – Touring in Kutch').**

1. Mulukhachar accepting conditional vows.	2/14/195
2. Mulukhachar goes to Gujarat to do satsang with Maharaj.	2/14/196
3. That hoko drinker is not a satsangi-Mulukhachar leaves drinking hoko.	2/14/196
4. Shri Hari holds Takha Pagi's hand.	2/14/202
5. Non-violence is like impotency in front of the strong.	2/14/203-204
6. Do not steal even for the sake of Dharma.	2/14/204
7. Mulukhachar leaves drugs.	2/14/206
8. We should not take anything without asking the owner, that is considered stealing. We should not even take anything dropped anywhere.	2/17/259
9. The real form of sacrifice.	2/20/305
10. Shri Hari stopping the killing of animals in Jagjivan's yagna.	2/20/311

March 2019

1. 'Today God Himself searches for the aspirant.' - The excerpt well effectual in the life of Shriji Maharaj. (Only incidents from 'Wrote Two Letters from Bhadra-Touring in Kutch' to 'Mahayagna in Dabhan'.)	
1. We are here to make mumukshu like you to devotee-Shriji Maharaj to Gangadas in Badadiya	2/20/316
2. Following Brahmanand Swami's instructions, Maharaj decided to make ladoos for 60 days. Brahmanand Swami understood Maharaj's intention- 'Hi Ningro to Kanaiyo aay'-Khaiyya Khatri took vows	2/20/323
3. Khaiyyo like a mountain moved and this stone also moved-Vanzha bhagat also at Maharaj's Refuge	2/20/324-325
4. Nanabhai of Karjisan brought pails of ghee for Jetalpur yagna- 'Whichever buffalo this ghee came from, will also be liberated'-there is no master of master.	2/25/413
5. The prostitute of Jetalpur becomes pure	2/25/418-420
6. Koli, Bhil, Thakarda, etc. of Sadki town were liberated of their addictions-Maharaj gave them promise and made them like brahmins-We performed 'chorasi' of brahmins	2/26/447-448
7. If he allows me to wash the dhotiyu, then he is indeed God.	3/1/1-2
8. The jiva does not care for liberation-it is God and his sants that care and go out of their way to do it."-old woman did not say 'Swaminarayan'	3/2/35-36
9. Ramchandra's darshan in dreams of Jalimsinh's mother-introduced Purna Purushottam only with Maharaj's relation one gets liberation-she immediately had Shri Hari's darshan-vowed to have Shri Hari's darshan	3/2/42
10. 'My intentions were not successful but since you had said that you will not leave Joban, so your intentions were fulfilled, I am at your refuge	3/2/62
11. Prabhatgar gets Maharaj's conviction.	3/2/63-65
2. The bearer and promotor of the forgiveness - Shriji Maharaj. (Only incidents from 'Again in Kutch' to 'Problems in Anand'.)	
1. A brahmin came to kill Maharaj- Maharaj gave him sidhu	3/1/4-6
2. Ravji's surprise-broke his agnaa- he was forgiven and given diksha and became Ramdas	3/1/10-12
3. "He will feel the poison from the demons and reap the fruits of his sins. We don't have to do anything."-sends Arab guards to Gangaram's house	3/1/27-30
4. Forgive Joban Pagi and made him a true satsangi	3/2/62-63
5. Your Swaminarayan will have darshan of the Arabs-Maharaj in Visnagar-Laldas bows to Maharaj	3/4/122-126
6. Shobharam Shastri responsible for excommunicating all the devotees-blind in 4 days-Maharaj ready to meet.	3/4/126

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| 7. Maharaj at Vasur Khachar's courtyard who was ready to break Naja Jogiya's knees- Vasur Khachar becomes a devotee | 3/4/132-134 |
| 8. Vasur Khachar thought that one who directs the king and his citizens towards righteousness and gives us dishonesty is God | 3/4/134 |
| 9. Verabhai: "Maharaj, forgive me for my disobedience, I disobeyed You. I am in great pain and misery. "Maharaj: "Verabhai, it is in man's nature to disregard words of advice. I had instructed you according to My nature, but you did not understand My words. But now your miseries will be over. Do not worry." | 3/9/262 |
| 10. Because of the sword of forgiveness mother earth has less stress-give forgiveness-don't be excited | 4/3/47-48 |
| 11. Opposition in Anand-Maharaj gave agnaa to maintain peace-exhibited forgiving characteristics of brave devotees | 4/3/48-53 |
| 3. Established true relationship with the devotees. (Harijan sangathe kidhi sachi sagai) (Only incidents from 'Affection for Devotees'.) | |
| 1. Words of conviction from the brahmins to Keshavji, a brahmin from Kandorda-Maharaj performed chorasi and scorned the brahmin's pride. | 3/4/99-101 |
| 2. Maharaj becomes unhappy from the sufferings of Visnagar's devotees. | 3/4/104,113 |
| 3. Broke the khatras in Panchala-had rotlo from rancid barley-made millet rotlo for Alayakhachar. | 3/4/107-109 |
| 4. Maharaj stayed at Kala Makvana in Kariyani-festival of Dussehra- Laxmi came down to give money. | 3/4/110 |
| 5. Abhal khachar's wife Surprabhadevi got upset with him and went to Gokhlana from Rampara on Maharaj's agnaa. | 3/4/112-113 |
| 6. Maharaj goes to Visnagar alone. | 3/4/114-115 |
| 7. You will get the strength to lift the murti. | 3/4/115-116 |
| 8. "If Swaminarayan is really God, then let Him move this pipal tree to the house opposite yours," | 3/4/118-119 |
| 9. Maharaj moves the pipal tree. | 3/4/121 |
| 10. Maharaj instigates the danger. | 3/4/122-123 |
| 11. Laldas sees Jampuri in samadhi-bows to Maharaj. | 3/4/124-126 |
| 12. Naja! We have come. | 3/4/131 |
| 13. We only come for the devotees. | 3/4/131 |
| 14. Vasur Khachar becomes a devotee. | 3/4/133-134 |
| 15. Naja Jogiya is commanded to come to Gadhpur. | 3/4/134 |
| 16. Dada Khachar's family in Gadhpur was like life to Maharaj. Hence, whenever Maharaj came to Gadhpur from else where he would feel satisfied as if he had come home | 3/4/134 |
| 17. Mayaram Bhatt has our image in his mind. He is not the one who would be tempted in such valuable ornaments and clothes. | 3/4/137 |
| 18. Maharaj hits Brahmanand Swami with a bead. | 3/4/138 |
| 19. Everyone should obey the niyams-bead thrown at Muktanand Swami. | 3/4/139 |
| 20. Brahmchari serves us even in his dreams-proves it by hitting a bead to Mulji brahmachari | 3/4/139-140 |

Q.7 Write short notes on any TWO of the following topics. (Each short note should contain two incidents of five lines each.) (Total Marks: 8)

March 2015

1. Transformation of society effected by Shri Hari. (Only incidents from 'Journey towards Gujarat')

1. Mulukhachar accepting conditional vows. 2/14/195
2. Mulukhachar goes to Gujarat to do satsang with Maharaj. 2/14/196
3. That hoko drinker is not a satsangi-Mulukhachar leaves drinking hoko. 2/14/196
4. Nonviolence in presence of the strong is cowardness. 2/14/203-204
5. Do not steal even for the sake of Dharma. 2/14/204
6. Mulukhachar leaves drugs. 2/14/206

2. Scriptural debates conducted by Shriji Maharaj.

1. Maharaj came to Jagjivan's yagna and opposed the animal killing-Maharaj reached there and explained the characteristics of a being a brahmin according to the scriptures 2/20/310-312
2. Maharaj's clear explanation to Jagjivan-you don't know the essence of the Vedas and if you kill animals, then in the end it leads to your destruction 2/20/312
3. We will reveal the real identity of Swaminarayan Bhagwan, Khaiya invited Maharaj for scriptural debate. 2/20/317-318
4. Khaiya showed desperation to ask questions to Brahmanand Swami in the assembly. Brahmanand Swami was seated in Bhagwan's place. The young sadhu will answer your Questions. Khaiya's questions-108 questions at one time. 2/20/321
5. Please speak softly now. Speech flow as smooth as air-prompt answers-Khaiya becomes a satsangi. 2/20/322-323
6. Scriptural debate with Bansidhar-Shaktipanthi of Mehemdabad came down to ask questions-Shri Hari explained without knowing the views of the scriptures and creating imaginary dharma, the religious sect cannot survive. Thus, Bansidhar's views were defeated. 2/25/424-426
7. Maharaj came to the assembly in Umreth-Maharaj asked the brahmins to ask questions-Maharaj responded to brahmins' questions in accordance with the scriptures-the brahmins bowed to Maharaj's feet-some of them became satsangis. 4/3/39-41
8. Vedantacharya's vanity is revealed-Maharaj asked the meanings of Brahmvakya from vedas. 4/3/63

3. Broke the command: Vishwaschaitanyanand Swami and Ravji Suthar.

1. Vishwaschaitanyanand Swami: Vishwaschaitanyanand Swami in Bhuj at Dhanji Suthar's house-Maharaj reminded him of his command to stay in Surat lifelong-Did Swarupanand Swami give you agnaa to or did you make him give you agnaa? Maharaj's firmness in following his commands-Maharaj 'without such restrictions, one just gets involved in materialistic pleasures.' 3/1/7-8
2. Ravji Suthar: Ravji Suthar used to go to Brahmamahol and took others with him also-Maharaj had instructed him to stay away from four misconducts while doing satsang in Kutch-he did not listen to him-Sundarjibhai had sent a letter explaining in detail with Valji Suthar-Gopalanand Swami: "All his achievements are gone from today. From now, he will only operate the randho and vanslo." Ravji heartily regrets-I, the unfortunate, tried to compare myself to Maharaj! Even though I tried to go against Shriji Maharaj, merciful Maharaj requested Harbham to take care of my business-used to eat stale rotlo and if not available, then only drank water and did farming-his wife used to do reverse of everything Ravji said-Maharaj had told her that if she did not act against to what Ravji said then she would go to jampuri and that he would not talk about this in presence of Ravji-Do you want to become a sadhu? Gave diksha and named him Ramdas. 3/1/9-12

March 2016

1. Shriji Maharaj's affection towards his devotees (only incidents from 'Two letters wrote from Bhadra - 'Travels in Kutch')

1. Here Lalji Suthar took diksha on our words. This is difficult to do. 2/20/298
2. Maharaj does prostrations to the new sadhus. 2/20/302
3. Have you come from your mid marriage rituals-tears in Maharaj's eyes-you have done an awesome act 2/20/303
4. Ate Vishram bhagat's lentil (math) khichadi. 2/20/314
5. There is no salvation without bhakti. Bhakti cannot be attained without knowing the manifest form of God-fulfilled everyone's wishes. 2/20/316
6. Accepting Kutchi devotees' prayers, he sat down to eat annakut thaal, gave darshan in two forms. 2/20/325-327

2. Shri Hari and Gunatitanand Swami in Sarangpur.

1. Maharaj accepted the flower decorations that Gunatitanand Swami lovingly brought. 3/8/222
2. At Rathod Dhadhal's residence, Maharaj saw Gunatitanand Swami coming and spoke out, Oh, this is Sadguru! Maharaj gave him diksha 2 years back and made him Sadguru-Maharaj sang Kabir's pad: Jogiyaa taarat janam ka faasla...-jug jug jiyo ye jogiyaa. -Koti Vishnu name math, koti Krishna jode haath, koti Brahma kathe jnan..... 3/8/223
3. Question to Anand Swami and Muktanand Swami: 'Who is such a Sadguru?'-Response: 'Maharaj! You are such a Sadguru!' We are the Supreme Purushottamnarayan and the greatness of the Sadguru mentioned in the pad is for this Gunatitanand Swami'-Kabir was a mukta from Akshardham and he used to believe in God having a form. He had the knowledge of Akshar and Purushottam's form. That Sacchidanand Brahma is our form! In the form of Dham, that Akshar sustains us and all the muktas! And in the manifest form, that Akshar is in our service in Akshardham as well as here! That form of dham is this Gunatitanand Swami himself! He is forever Sadguru, the gateway to liberation, He is the true form to know our greatness and the medium to become brahmarup! And when you realize him, then you will know our true form and knowledge. With his relation, you all will become brahmarup and will-gain the right to do our bhakti. 3/8/224-225

3. Human exploits by Shri Hari (only incidents from 'Two letters wrote from Bhadra - 'Travels in Kutch' to 'Fights with lolangar's bawas in Khokhra') 1.

1. Maharaj fled from Ahmedabad due to Lolangar's tyranny-asked Bhaguji to bring a horse-Lolangar bawa and his bawas came down to catch him-Vakhatba 2/18/374-375
2. 'Do you want to eat Ladwa or sand'-Maharaj made Brahmanand Swami Swaminarayan 2/20/318-320
3. Brahmanand Swami sits on God's throne. 2/20/321
4. 'He is a devotee, and this is God'. Khaiyya's mother recognizes Parbrahma. 2/20/323
5. We did not know about our powers. To devotees in Ahmedabad. 2/28/471
6. 'Lolangar will come down to catch us.' Maharaj. 2/28/474
7. 'We got energy from your fear'. Vakhatba to Maharaj. 2/28/475
8. Lolangar and his bawas are after us. To Vakhatba 2/28/475
9. 'Your actions make us love you.' Jaisinghbhai of Vehlal to Maharaj. 2/28/476

March 2017

1. Failure of political power against divine power (Only incidents from 'Again in Kutch').

1. 'Where are we not present, is not what you have to think.'-responded to unruly Kutch's diwan Jagjivan 3/1/24

2. 'We are God of Gods, avatari of all avatars, if you worship us, then only you will attain liberation.' –intolerable words for Jagjivan. 3/1/24
3. Diwan sent two prostitutes like ladies to Maharaj-his instincts changed-defeat of Diwan. 3/1/26
4. Jagjivan's soldiers who were sent to capture Maharaj were sent back by Fatehmahmad's soldiers. 3/27-30

2. Ignorance of manifest Shri Hari due to fault of nature (Only incidents from 'Again in Kutch' to 'The famine of 1869').

1. Vishwaschaitanyanand Swami broke the command-disregarded Maharaj's agnaa-without restrictions, one falls to materialistic pleasures-Maharaj 3/1/7-8
2. With Maharaj's blessings and powers, Ravji Suthar becomes comparable to Maharaj and breaks the four conducts that Maharaj had given. Loses his achievements. 3/1/9-11
3. Once you speak Swaminarayan, then you will be liberated. Why would one have greed? - old woman's adamancy. 3/2/35-36
4. Shobharam became blind in four days. 3/4/126
5. Maharaj had said, "Sell your household items and collect grain.' But did not trust Maharaj's words and trusted Mulji Sheth's words-had shortage of grains. 3/9/258
6. By not listening and obeying Maharaj's words for collecting the grain, Veribhai fall to his nature and invited trouble. 3/9/262

3. Shriji Maharaj fulfilling wishes knowing himself (Only incidents from 'Again in Kutch' to 'Festival of Vasant in Dharampur').

1. If he allows me to wash the dhotiyu, then he is God indeed. (fulfilled Bhavsar's wish on the bank of the river in Lakrod) 3/1-1
2. How would be God? Gave darshan of 24 avatars to garasiya. 3/1/2-3
3. Celebrated annakut in Bhuj to fulfil Hirjibhai's wishes. 3/1/16-17, 22
4. Shri Hari visits miyaji's house. 3/14/392
5. Manifest form of God will hold your hand-wish while hearing the discourse 3/15/400

March 2018

1. Shri Hari crushes non-religious elements (Only incidents from 'Again in Kutch' to 'Raso Vai Saha').

1. One should not touch anyone's things.
2. Non-violent yagna in Dabhan. -reestablished the faded dharma.
3. During the festival of Fuldol in Sarangpur, why is there distinction between male and female? - we have to follow the rules. 3/8/221-222
4. We have to keep the tongue under control-if there is control, then bhakti would outshine-preaching to Sombafai. 3/14/355

2. Shriji Maharaj – Beholder and promoter of forgiveness (Only incidents from 'Troubled in Anand' To 'Grand Victory Achieved by Muktanand Swami').

1. Opposition in Anand 4/3/47-53
2. Defeat of Vedantacharya in Vadodara 4/4/58-65

3. Shri Hari and festivals (Only incidents from 'Raso Vai Saha').

1. Festival of Kapilachat in Gadhpur. A.S. 1871 3/14/359-360
2. Festival of Diwali and Annakut in Vartal. A.S. 1871 Hindola of Virat. 3/14/367-370
3. Festival of Vasantotsav in Gadhada-Festival of Fuldol in Machiyav. 3/14/372-377

March 2019

1. Yagnas done by Shriji Maharaj amidst opposition. (Only incidents from 'Yagna in Jetalpur' to 'Mahayagna in Dabhan'.)

1. Scriptural debate with Bansidhar-one who worships with alcohol and meat is adulterated-proponent of non-violent yagna. 2/25/424-426
2. The vairagies are eager to hinder the yagna in Dabhan. So, bring your armed men so that the yagna can be done without any hindrance. – Maharaj to Jalimsinh darbar-call your men from the villages -Bamnoli, koli from Vadtal, Kathis from Kathiyavad, etc. 3/2/43
3. The carts of ghee were stopped- pots were full of ghee- 'Swaminarayan is a magician who can turn water into ghee'. 3/2/55-57
4. Vami brahmins' plans failed- it is not a sin to hurt false Brahmins that eat meat, drink alcohol or commit adultery-they could not do anything bad because of the guards 3/2/58-59

2. Shri Hari is hungry for affectionate devotion. (Only incidents from 'Wrote Two Letters from Bhadra - Touring in Kutch' to 'Yagna in Jetalpur'.)

1. Maharaj ate math-khichadi from Vishram bhagat-Vishram bhagat made math-khichadi in Mahidas's field- 'Bhagat! Your feelings are great, so the uncooked khichadi will be cooked in our stomach.' -Maharaj 2/20/313-314
2. Bhuj devotees insisted Maharaj to eat before Thakorji-heard their prayers-Maharaj Sat down first to eat-Maharaj gave darshan in two forms. 2/20/327-328
3. Maharaj eats Jivan bhakta's thaal- description of Jivan bhakta's poverty and thaal Description-other haribhakta's thaal- 'Maharaj! Please do not eat! It has rotlo and Bhopatari bhaji. Bhaji does not have any masala.'-Jivan bhakta to Maharaj. 'This rotlo tastes very sweet to me.'-while eating thaal describes the murti of Maharaj. Brahmanand Swami's plot-all santos get prasadi-by accepting a poor man's rotlo you fulfilled my wish of 18 days. – give this bhakta 10 shers of sugar. 2/25/433-435

3. The new style of devotion: Abhel Babu's farming. (Only incidents from 'Divine Incidents in Sarangpur'.)

1. Matter of plowing 1800 acres of Abhel babu's land-gave agnaa to Jagannathanand Swami 50 of his sadhus to live on that land and set up the bhandar there- Bhagwan na bhakta ni seva tej bhakti- it seems like Maharaj is forever for his bhaktas. 3/6/162-163
2. Doing seva for such an uttam bhakta is a bhakti. During the occasion of seva, sitting in a corner and doing mala, or kirtan is not bhakti- just as one gets involved in bhajans one should get involved in farming- In this manner Maharaj showed the way to moksha through seva. 3/6/163-164

Q.8 *Describe any THREE of the following incidents and give your thoughts. (Write incidents in eight lines and thoughts in four lines.) (Total Marks: 12)*

March 2015

1. Ate Vishram Bhagat's khichdi made of math. (2/20/313-315)

Incident: Mahidas's assistance Vishram was working in his fields. Having firm conviction in Shriji Hari, the materialistic pleasures seemed like burden to him. He always thought of when he would be free from this burden. When Shri Hari came to the field, he started running confused to find something to welcome him.

He prostrated to Shri Hari and sat in front of him. Knowing his heart's sentiments Shri Hari said: 'We are very hungry. Give us something to eat if you have anything.' Vishram did not have anything ready, so he started cooking math khichdi. It takes a while to cook the math. Shri Hari persistently kept on asking: 'Is the khichdi cooked?' Finally, he said, 'Now the khichdi is cooked. Bring it for us. Vishram Bhagat did not have any utensils, so he washed off the stone with water, cleaned it and served khichdi on it. Shri Hari started eating half-cooked khichdi but Vishram thought 'The math are uncooked so it will definitely hurt in Maharaj's stomach. Shri Hari replied: 'Bhagat! Don't worry. The outer fire has kept the math uncooked, but the inner Vishwanar fire is me. It will be cooked inside our stomach. Your feelings are genuine. Uncooked khichdi will be cooked in us.' Then Vishram sat in peace.

Thought: Bhagwan always craves for feelings. To reincarnate on this earth is also one of his motives to fulfil his devotee's aspirations. Hence whoever has aspirations, Bhagwan always fulfils his wishes whether he be rich or poor. He does not have distinction of rich and poor.

2. "I find it difficult to embrace you even once." (3/9/255)

Incident: Shantanand Swami also had come from Surat with a bottle of pickle. Maharaj finished eating and embraced Gunatitanand Swami, then Shantanand Swami said: Please also give me this advantage. The antaryāmi Maharaj said: 'Sadhuram, you acted independently. You had told Muktanand Swami that I will go even if you say yes and I will go even if you say no! Shantanand Swami felt guilty. Then Swami said to Maharaj: 'Maharaj, this sadhu has greatly served me on the way. So, it would be nice if you embrace him.' Then Maharaj while embracing said: 'I did not find it difficult embracing this Gunatitanand Swami 22 times as much as I find it difficult to embrace you even once. We do not have love for one who does not follow our words.' Shantanand Swami fell into Maharaj's feet and asked for his forgiveness.

Thought: Any act against Maharaj's agnaa does not make him happy. If Shantanand Swami had told Muktanand Swami that I would go only if you give me agnaa, then he would have made everyone happy. Muktanand Swami needed someone to go with Gunatitanand Swami so he would have anyways agreed for Shantanand Swami to accompany Gunatitanand Swami. Hence, we should always think what we speak so that any of our good deeds do not go in vain and that we do not have to regret and ask for forgiveness for our good deeds.

3. Chorashi of Brahmins in Sarangpur. (3/6/185-186)

Incident: Maharaj called Jivakhachar and said: "Tomorrow, we want to perform Chorashi of brahmins. Start the preparations." Jivakhachar started preparations under the khijada tree near the south of Sarangpur. Made big forges nearby. Brahmins started cooking on each forge. Maharaj fed brahmins for seven days. When the brahmins came down to ask for permission to leave, then Maharaj said to Jivakhachar: We want to give dakshina to this brahmins. So, bring in rupees.' Maharaj gave each brahmin a rupee from Jivakhachar's money. When the rupees were short, Maharaj addressed to the satsangis: 'Whoever has money, bring it in. Seeing this, Hajo Bharwad brought a bag of Rs. 200 that he had buried in his home and placed it near Maharaj's feet. Maharaj started giving dakshina from the bag. After all the dakshina was given, Maharaj called Hajo and giving him his bag said: 'There you can take your bag back'. While taking back the bag, Hajo said: 'Maharaj this bag is as heavy as it was. It doesn't seem like there is anything gone from this bag! Then Maharaj replied: 'We do not keep anyone's debt!'

Thought: Bhagwan and his sadhu are able to do whatever they wish. They do not keep any obligations. They payback with interest. The establisher of righteous dharma always fed the brahmins who propagated dharma and preached them to establish righteous dharma.

4. "Brahmachari serves me even in his dreams."

Incident: Once Mukund Brahmachari started dosing in the assembly. His snoring started disturbing the assembly. Then Brahmanand Swami said to Maharaj: 'Your server is enjoying his deep sleep beside you. So,

hit him with a bead so that he does not break the niyam.' Maharaj replied: 'He is not sleeping. He is serving us.' Brahmanand Swami said: 'The assembly is the witness. You are Bhagwan, the truth-teller, so we cannot say that you are lying, but we say for sure that you are doing partiality! Maharaj said: 'You will just see and believe our words.' Saying that Maharaj hit a small bead on brahmachari's head. Brahmachari woke up and picking up Maharaj with his seat, started running. The assembly stared at this in awe. Maharaj asked brahmachari: 'What are you doing?' Hearing this brahmachari woke up and said: 'Maharaj! There was fire where you were seated, so I ran picking you up. Then Maharaj said to Brahmanand Swami: Swami! Did you hear that? Brahmachari serves me even in his dreams!'

Thought: We should also completely indulge in Maharaj and Swami's service in such a way that, we could only think about him in all the states of mind. We would also get to stay in Maharaj's service and gain Mukund Brahmchari kind of devotional state.

5. **Mamaiya Patgar remembers Shriji Maharaj. (3/6/187-189)**

Incident: One-night Maharaj suddenly woke up in Polarpur and said: 'Everyone get ready, we want to go to Kundal right now. Mamaiya is thinking about us. So, we want to go.' Mamaiya Patgar was continuously chanting 'Maharaj! Swaminarayan' in his bed. Maharaj shouted: 'Mamaiya...Mamaiya opened his eyes and Maharaj was standing in front of him. He said: 'You were in Bhimnath. How come you here now?' Maharaj said: 'Weren't you thinking about us? We have to come right?' Mamaiya said: 'But Maharaj! I have formed a habit of chanting your name!' So, we always come. Whenever our devotee calls us, we are always there. But today we can in person to give you darshan.' Maharaj embraced Mamaiya. Mamaiya experienced peace in his heart.

Thought: There is oneness in Bhagwan and his devotee. If we remember God emotionally, then God always comes. But sometimes, he also proves it to reinforce faith like this. During annakut in Sankari, Thakorji always eats thaal. Hari Krishna Maharaj ate Yogiji Maharaj's thaal in Bhavnagar. Ganeshji drank the milk in several places. In such a way, God sometimes proves it to reinforce faith.

March 2016

1. **Raheshe tamara mukh nu pani. (3/14/383-385)**

Incident: In 1869, Sukhanand Swami went to Gwalior from Jetalpur. That was his birthplace. He talked about Satsang to his caste, made them followers and went to Brindavan. Here one of the brahmins of Bengal had made a mandir of Radha Krishna. He would feed the pilgrims with sweets but would eat dry food himself. Sukhanand Swami talked about Maharaj's glory and so the brahmin desired to have Maharaj's darshan. He wrote a letter to Maharaj and gave it to Sukhanand Swami. With that, he also gave a bottle of perfume and penda. Sukhanand swami came to Gwalior. Here he died and so his two brothers brought the bottle of perfume and the pendas to Maharaj in Vartal and presented to him. Maharaj applied the perfume on the nose of each sadhus and said: "All other sadhus will be demolished but tamara mukh nu pani raheshe. Reading Sheth's letter, Maharaj said: "We do not get along with the rich, they have pride for their wealth and power, and we have pride for devotion and sacrifices. So, none of us would surrender to each other." Then both the brothers urged Maharaj to give them diksha, so Maharaj gave diksha to both of them. Hearing Santos' kirtans, Maharaj gave them kasumbi pagh and Muktanand Swami's kevda topi as prasadi.

Thought: Rich wealthy people have pride for their wealth, so they do not get along with God. Both of them are engrossed in their own world, so none of them surrender to each other.

2. **Vakhatba's austerities are working. (4/3/31-32)**

Incident: Maharaj came to Vahelal. He resided on the outskirts of the village. When the kirtans were over,

Maharaj said to Raghunathdas: 'We are hungry! How long is it going to have food ready?' He replied: 'The food is ready, but all the cooks are here to have your darshan. So, it will be a little while. These are 4-5 baskets of mangoes here. So please eat those and distribute them to everyone. Maharaj distributed mangoes to everyone but the mangoes did not deplete from the baskets. When Raghunathdas asked the reason, Maharaj said: 'Your daughter Vakhatba's austerities are working really hard. Hence the mangoes are not lessening. Raghunathdas knew about his daughter's devotion since she was a child-widow but did not know that it would result into this miracle. This would only be Maharaj's doing. Maharaj ate and fed the kathi darbars and the Santos forcefully. When Maharaj came to the outskirts of the village, a villager with a mango cart was passing by. Maharaj asked for the mangoes. He said yes and so Maharaj got up from the assembly and got onto the cart. He distributed mangoes to all the devotees and even then, the cart was full of mangoes, so the devotees were surprised. Maharaj said: 'It was your feelings and so the mangoes never got short.

Thought: God and his sadhu would not be the master of any good action. They always credit others for the good deeds.

3. True ahimsa. (2/28/473-474)

Incident: Maharaj did not want a cowardly non-violence. To him giving lesson to the one who gives pain to the poor and pollutes the society was like a cowardly non-violence to him. That was the reason he had to get rid of the ten thousand bawas in Jagannathpuri. Wherever he met such devilish bawas, he smartly got rid of them. He only used the tools of non-violence only on himself or on his sadhus. That is where the real manliness was, that is what he used to say. But in order to purify the society, to protect the country, he had created a class of Kshatriyas and for them the principle of ahimsa was applied to all incidents except war. Bravery, courage, not to turn back in the war, donation, and devotion are all the natural virtues of a Kshatriya. Oh Kshatriya! Thinking about your dharma, your hands should not tremble in the war in killing a person with weapons. Shriji Maharaj had principles of dharma as his fulcrum instead of following the rules of non-violence adamantly. Violence which protects the dharma is the true ahimsa. He had convinced people to give up weapons, but when it came to an instance to protect people and kingdom, he had instructed them to raise weapons. He was indeed Purushottam Narayan himself, so to him there was no difference between violence and non-violence, dharma and adharma! He would be engrossed in himself but would act accordingly when time came. The troop of Lolangar bawa was harassing people, the Suba was also troubling the poor and the innocent. So, Maharaj wiped out them with kathi darbar's and parshad's help. His principle was not to show back to the treacherous. That was the real principle of ahimsa. That was his true dharma.

Thought: Whenever the people and the country are to be protected, one should not turn back. There is no ahimsa in the war. It would be considered cowardliness, if one maintains ahimsa in the war.

4. Modesty is the sister of Dharma. (3/15/408-409)

Incident: Santos had sat down to dine in Dharampur, and Maharaj was in the rounds to serve them. Kushalkubarba said to Maharaj: "These Santos have undergone great austerities, so now we would like to keep them here for six months and feed them new dishes every day.' She again requested Maharaj 'The ladoos are made from sugar, so please tell the Santos not to add water otherwise they will be difficult to digest.' Hearing this Maharaj said: 'Today the Santos look very happy.' So Kushalkubarba thought that Maharaj meant to keep them here for six months and that is why they look happy; but Santos understood Maharaj's comment. Rajmata had requested to not add water and that was the real reason for the Santos to be happy and so they became ashamed and looked down. And there was also Maharaj's agnaa to follow the niswadi vartman. So, they did not break that agnaa. In the evening assembly Maharaj said: 'Modesty is dharma's sister, character is a fortress. Whoever has modesty will never fall from dharma.

Today when he said implicitly to the Santos, the Santos felt ashamed and looked down. So, if there is modesty in the Santos, there is dharma. This is one of the virtues of a sadhu.

Thought: Whoever has modesty follows dharma naturally. If one does not have modesty, one would not care for anyone's words. He would only follow dharma according to his wish and will.

5. **“My Akshardham and I are both true.” (3/14/350)**

Incident: Muktanand Swami said to Maharaj: “Maharaj! You have obliged us and called us to have your darshan and talk to us, so please let us know how we can make you happy. We will try anything to make you happy.” Hearing this Maharaj became happy. He said: “Listen Santos! When it came to an end for all your efforts, then you will have acquired this invaluable gain. When you got Purushottam Narayan that is when all the fruits of your efforts are gained. After that whatever efforts you undertake are to make him happy. So, what are those efforts? So, to make us happy, sing our hymns-to all our mandals and their Santos. The disciples think that we are Muktanandi, Brahmanandi, Krupanandi, Atmanandi so our guru is our head: but this arrangement is done for our Santos facilities. The head of the mandal gives knowledge to the disciples, makes them follow niyam-dharma and so they are forefront in that perspective, however, all your gurus are our disciples. All those gurus follow our principles. So, the disciples should not blindfolded follow their gurus. Gurus should also follow our principles to attain liberation and vigilantly direct everyone to realize our true form but should not direct the disciples to follow them. If one does not understand this secret, then the disciples will be attached to the gurus and the gurus will attain pride. Maharaj kept on speaking and the Santos were listening attentively. Then Maharaj said: “You have attained this satsang, so please keep friendliness for each other. In spite of that, also understand be vigilant to understand the difference between sant and asant. One should also not understand all chaitanyas (jivas) to be the same. The mind is greater than the senses, jiva greater than mind, Ishwar greater than jiva, therefore each one is greater than one another. And above all we are the greatest, Parmeshwar. My Akshardham and I are both true and eternal. Whoever says them to be untrue are atheist. He may be called mine, but they are not mine. He will only understand our greatness and ability if he understands our true form with conviction.”

Thought: Maharaj had created mandals(groups) for organization and had assigned sadgurus as the heads. But eventually everyone had to join in Maharaj. In the same way for organization purpose, presently, we have zones, sant nirdeshak, sanyojak, nirdeshak, mandal sanchalak, etc. but we should bind in any zone or status. Our aim should be only to make Maharaj-Swami happy.

March 2017

1. **I become humble like you. (2/25/410-411)**

Incident: When Shri Hari arrived in Jetalpur, the devotees and female devotees welcomed him with devotion with flowers, gifts and sweets. However, looking at Shri Hari's divine form, they felt like there was something short in their devotion. They felt like how high was Aksharadhipati Purna Purushottam Maharaj and how low were the local jivas on this earth! Shri Hari smiled at their thoughts. He had implicitly said: 'I accept your gifts and become humble like you.

Thought: How big is the elephant and how small is the ant! There can be no comparison between them, but if the elephant becomes small like an ant, then the ant can experience the happiness. In the same way, Maharaj becomes humble like us so that we can experience the bliss and develop affection in him.

2. **Maharaj in Umreth (4/3/39)**

Incident: When Maharaj left Mahemdabad, there were a big crowd of 250 nand Santos and devotees. Muktanand Swami asked Maharaj: 'Where are we stopping now?' Maharaj immediately said: Rupram Thakkar, Narbheram, etc. have written us a letter inviting us during the mango season. So, we should go to

Umreth.' Maharaj was seated on Manki. He would make Manki run ahead and then come back to give darshan to haribhaktas and Santos. He would not let go even a moment without a glimpse of his darshan. The devotees would also keep their eyes on Maharaj. If Maharaj went to a distant, they would constantly stare at him and when Maharaj would come close, they would come back to their senses. With this leela, they reached the skirts of Umreth. The devotees of Umreth came by to welcome them. Maharaj entered Umreth town through the Thamna gate. Maharaj gave donations to the Vedpaathi brahmins. Maharaj was given accommodation at Narbheram Dave's residence and the main Santos were given accommodation at Rupram Thakkar's residence, some Santos were given accommodation at Jaagnath Mahadev, the kathi devotees were given accommodation at other devotee's houses. Maharaj came to Jaagnath Mahadev for darshan. The brahmins of Umreth came down to do darshan of Rupram's God. Brahmins are always Shivpanthi. Since Rupram and Narbheram became Swaminarayan followers, they believed them to be converted. They wanted to ask Maharaj several questions. To fulfil their curiosity, Maharaj decided to hold an assembly here.

Thought: God never keeps his devotees away from him. The devotees also keep their senses towards God. Maharaj had always kept the brahmins happy with gifts and donations. Maharaj always satisfies the curiosity of everyone.

3. Aren't you proud of atma (soul)? (3/1/8)

Incident: Govind swami told Maharaj: 'When we follow your agnaa, we have to suffer lot of fasts and it becomes very difficult. So, Maharaj said: 'Fine then, you do not have to fast even if a woman touches you.' Hearing this Govind swami became confused. He said: 'Maharaj! I do not talk about myself. I talk about Nrusinhanand swami. Maharaj immediately said: 'So let him be free and you can also be free. Anything else.' Then he slowly said: 'This jain sadhu fast for 2 months and it is never difficult to them and you say it becomes difficult for you for just couple of fast?' The Santos were seated surrounding Maharaj. When they heard about the jain sadhus, they said: 'Maharaj, the jain sadhus are full of pride because they always brag about their atthai fast and varsi fast!' "So, don't you have pride for Narada and Sankadik? Aren't you proud of your atma (soul)? Those great people had done severe austerities and you could have followed the same path! Once you develop the pride of your atma (soul), you will realize its strength. It will not be difficult." Maharaj reprimanded them.

Thought: "Kanak tajyo, kamini tajyo, tajyo dhatuko sang, tulsi laghu bhojan kare jive maan ke sang.' Men can leave everything easily, but not pride. In the same way, if we leave pride, then the path of sadhana would not be difficult for us. Maharaj tries to explain the Santos.

4. Those who liberate are true relatives. (2/19/294-296)

Incident: With one letter from Maharaj, Aja Patel broke all the relations and got ready to go to Maharaj. So, his nephew Kalyandas, who was getting married also got ready to go with his uncle. Mother Devubai gave her son's hands to her brother and said: 'Word 'mama' had gotten a bad impression since mama Kansa appeared for God and so this is the time to erase all the bad impression of a mama. Didn't you say those who liberate are true relatives? Today is the instance to liberate your nephew so why are you leaving him? Kalyandas asked for blessings and permission to go to Maharaj. His arrogant father also gave permission saying that 'Your name is Kalyan, and so may you do kalyan (liberate) for everyone. When his future father-in-law asked about his daughter's future to Devubai, she said: 'I will keep your daughter with me, and we will worship God. She will be happy.' The newly wedded bride fell at her mother-in-law's feet and said: 'Mother! I will stay with you and worship God, I have been in hell for many lives and so now I want to attain liberation and be free from all ties.' No one could speak anything. Aja Patel and Kalyandas left with the group to meet Maharaj.

Thought: One who puts us in maya are our relatives but ones who liberates us from maya and connects us to God are our true relatives.

5. The queen herself is Annapurna.

Incident: When Maharaj became hungry one night in Dharampur, brahmachari brought rotlo, pot of yogurt, pickle and a bowl from Kushalkuvarba. A sadhu was grinding the rotlo in a bowl. Seeing this, Kushalkuvarba said if the sadhus go away, I can grind the rotlo. The sadhus went away, so Kushalkuvarba ground the rotlo finely, added yogurt and served it to Maharaj with pickle. Maharaj said: 'The queen herself is Annapurna.' Our sadhus would not have done such a perfect job. Kushalkuvarba listened to him with her head bowed down. In the same position, she was constantly having Maharaj's darshan. Maharaj then asked: 'We had to wake you up late night, so please forgive us, but we get hungry at odd times and if we don't have anything to eat, we don't feel at ease.' Kushalkuvarba said: 'You are God indeed. You do not have to think about odd times, but you have blessed us with an understanding that all times odd or convenient are equal to us. You have obligated us a lot God, that you created such an instance and rendered us knowledge. Brahmachari so far had not made such good rotlas. Even if he makes laddoo, then they are big and fat. Daal would also be thick with extra salt; but with today's meal is so nice that it tells that you have cooked it.

Thought: 'Je Je Lila karo tame laal, tene samjoo alaukik khyal' all of Maharaj's divine action are for the happiness of his devotees. Kushalkuvarba also had realized Maharaj's glory. Maharaj's divine actions are for the goodness sake of his devotees.

March 2018

1. "When will this cursed named of Swaminarayan leave?" (Ch 3/1/5-6)

Incident: Maharaj was residing in Bhuj. A brahmin approached him-Maharaj sent food material with Dhanji Suthar. -on Maharaj's instructions to Suthar, he said to the brahmin: 'Maharaj! Please tell us when will this cursed name of Swaminarayan leave? I am fed up. 'Now that I met you, I will get solutions.' -The Vairagi said: 'Don't worry son! There are 50 like me who are after Swaminarayan, but so many people roam around him that I am not able to put my hands on him. Dhanji: 'All my food material will be wasted. -Dhanji told everything to Maharaj. Dungarji parshad heard all the talks and suggested to advise him. Maharaj denied. Early next morning Dungarji blocked the Vairagi's way. He offered to take the food supplies that Maharaj had sent for him, but seeing an open sword, the Vairagi understood everything and fled from there. - Maharaj asked Dungar bhakta: 'Where did you go early morning?' -I went down to give alms to the brahmin but seeing me he ran away-Maharaj said: 'Who would not be afraid seeing an open sword in your hands?' Nothing is hidden to Maharaj.

Thought: 'Tan ki jane, man ki jane, jane chit ki chori...'. Nothing is secretive to Maharaj.

2. "There is only one Swami – Vallabh Swami." (Ch 4/5/71-72)

Incident: Vanashaa of Sundariyana asked his father to come for Gopalanand Swami's darshan. -Himraj Shah said: 'There is only one Swami-Vallabh Swami. The rest are ordinary sadhus, debauchers and deceitful monks. So, if you are involved, get out so that the family's modesty is not harmed.' -Vanasha talked about the deceit in the Vaishnav samaj and the enlightened satsang spread by Swaminarayan Bhagwan. Gopalanand Swami felt under the weather-Himraj Shah went to Dosa khachar's darbar to see him-since Swaminarayan Bhagwan and his sadhu has come, your darbar has become pure. I have come down to check swami's health-Himraj Shah said 'Jai Shree Krishna' to swami-Swami replied 'Jai Shree Krishna' with joined hands. Himraj Shah had an impression that Swaminarayan sadhus don't speak 'Jai Shree Krishna'. But in this instance, Swami himself first spoke 'Jai Shree Krishna'. So, he developed respect and affection for Swami.

Thought: One should develop hearty affection for anyone before making him a satsangi. Once he develops affection, then he would agree to all the satsang talks. Swami created his respect in Himraj's Shah's heart and so Himraj Shah became a satsangi.

3. At the Narsinh Mehta square. (Ch 2/17/255-256)

Incident: Maharaj went to the square where Narsinh Mehta resided. -He became happy with the memories from Narsinh Mehta. -his caste had left no stone unturned to harass him-he was free of greed and used to believe that whoever worshipped Shamadaji was a true Vaishnava. He had equality for all in his opinion. He had gone to a lower caste residence to worship and that created great chaos in his caste. 'Jagya lok narnari puchhe.... eva re amo eva re....' Maharaj sat at the square thinking about the Mehtaji's actions. There a bawa said to Maharaj: 'Why are you sitting on Narsinh Mehta's square?' I am Mehtaji's guru. Maharaj looked at him and he went into samadhi-he saw Mehtaji paying respect and worshipping Lord Swaminarayan-he also saw Radha, Laxmi, etc. all deities worshipping Maharaj-he woke up and fell into Maharaj's feet.

Thought: The countless wonders which have occurred in the past, those which are currently taking place, and those which will occur in the future are all only due to the manifest form of God that I have attained.

4. "We will be liberated when manifest God holds our hand." (Ch 3/15/399-400)

Incident: Ramdas swami's question to Muktanand Swami: 'What is the plan for taking Maharaj to Dharampur?'-Muktanand Swami replied: 'Paramchaitananand Swami has been upset and he has gone to Dharampur. Maharaj had sent Gunatitanand Swami and me to Dharampur to bring him back. Paramchaitananand Swami was seated on an elephant in a procession. Seeing us he goes down and asked: What is Maharaj's wish? Instructing us to stay there, he left to see Maharaj. The queen used to listen to discourses on Bhagwat daily. We used to sit with the brahmins. Once during the kidnap incident of Rukmini, the queen said: 'You will end up your lifespan with discourses and I will end up my lifespan listening to your discourses. Just as God had held Rukmini's hands, I will be liberated only if God will hold my hand.' Since then the queen had utmost desire to invite Maharaj to Dharampur. When we came to Gadhpur, we talked to Maharaj about this. Maharaj accepted the invitation to fulfil her desire. Ramdas swami became happy on hearing this.

Thought: Paramchaitananand Swami was disappointed, but when he received Maharaj's agnaa, he accepted it gracefully. He immediately left for Gadhpur. Maharaj accepted the queen's invitation and fulfilled her wishes.

5. Mulji Sharma's brother comes to fetch him. (Ch 2/28/458-459)

Incident: Sunderji Sharma from Bhadra came to Gadhada looking for Mulji and said to Maharaj: Is Mulji here? He left the field without informing anyone.' Maharaj called Mulji bhakta and instructed him to go home. The brahmin companion advised: 'One can live a householder life and worship God. Hence, one can do both.' Mulji replied: 'Mind can only concentrate on one, it can be either on God or to earn materialistic pleasures.' Thus, it is not possible to do both at the same time. Since it was Maharaj's agnaa, Mulji went home.

Thought: One cannot focus on two things at once. To worship God was the most ideal path for Mulji. He was also inclined to walk on that path, but it was also important to follow Maharaj's agnaa. So, he went home. Later on, he also followed Maharaj's wish and became a sadhu.

March 2019

1. I will liberate the whole village of Adaraj. (Ch 4/5/83-84)

Incident: Maharaj became upset and decided to leave satsang in Adaraj. Then Sujaanba sent message

through her son Ratu khant to Maharaj, 'We made a mistake, so please forgive us. You are talking about leaving this satsang, so what would become of liberating our menial souls?' -Maharaj said: 'We will liberate the whole village of Adaraj. Today the whole village has associated with us, so you do not need to worry.' -Sujanba and the villagers became happy on hearing this. -the next day in the assembly of santos and haribhaktas, Brahmanand Swami asked: 'What should we do and how should we behave such that you stay in satsang?' Nirvikalpanand and Haryanand could not bear the respect of Muktanand Swami. If one behaves without any courtesy in Satsang, how can we stay here? If everyone respects the elder santos and behaves accordingly, then we would be happy. We would be free of stress.' -Nityanand Swami then said: Maharaj! Whichever santos you designate as respectable, we will honor them. We would like to act only as you wish.' Maharaj became pleased on hearing this.

Thought: If we do not respect each other in satsang and do not respect the elders, God and his sadhu are never pleased. We should all act with samp, suhradbhav and ekta to please Maharaj and Swami.

2. Which is the best amongst four? (Ch 3/14/362-363)

Incident: Gunatitanand Swami asked a question to Shri Hari in the spiritual assembly. "Maharaj, out of the four means, namely, doing meditation, remaining in state of atmarup, serving the sick and discoursing, which is the best?" Shri Hari was pleased with the question because it was very important. When Muktanand Swami arrived, he said that meditation was the best of all means. Then Shri Hari asked Muktanand Swami, "How were the 10,000 boys of Daksh Prajapati inspired with detachment for worldly things?" The first three means, namely, meditation, remaining in the state of atmarup and serving the sick benefits only oneself on the path of liberation. But the last means, discoursing on spiritual matters, liberates both the speaker and the listener. Daksh Prajapati's sons renounced through the discourses of Naradji. Today, the progress in numbers of devotees in the Satsang fellowship is due to the discourses given by sadhus. Therefore, you should all discourse to others. Then only will my descent on earth be worthwhile and fruitful. So, from today you should all form the habit of discoursing."

Thought: Discoursing on spiritual matters, liberates both the speaker and the listener. Both of them get eligible for liberation.

3. Are you Jivanmukta? (Ch 2/20/307)

Incident: Maharaj was talking underneath a tree near a pond. A group of bawas came there on seeing Maharaj and his sadhus. Maharaj said: 'Mahantji! Would you like to eat anything?'-If Ramji wish, I will Find food'-Maharaj asked Gangaram Mall to bring in Jalebi, Saata and other desserts-When Maharaj Went down to give him, Mahantji asked: 'Are you Jivanmukta? Maharaj said yes-then we will not eat-Fine then eat from this hand when your fortune shines- Maharaj said to Gangaram Mall to take away The sweets and feed everyone at home- 'Please come to our community, see our wrestling game and Then we will eat-a wrestle was organized at Nathu's house-first feed them milk, sugar and rice and Then start the wrestle.' Maharaj also wanted to feed the santos and devotees.

Thought: One only gets God's prasadi if he/she is fortunate. Even though Brahmaji became a fish to get Shri Krishna's prasadi, he did not get it. In the above incidence, the mahant readily got the prasad, but because of his adamancy, he did not partake it.

4. Beware of the animals. (Ch 3/15/402-403)

Incident: Maharaj stopped by the sugarcane fields near Udhna on his way to Dharampur. Maharaj warned every one of the predatory animals and to keep the fires burning all night. Maharaj was getting ready to sleep. When Maharaj was preparing to sleep, an owl-like bird screeched. Shri Hari called Sunder Pagi and asked him what it meant. The brave Kathi devotee replied, "The bird forebodes of a tragedy. A tiger or cheetah will taste the blood of someone tonight." Shri Hari alerted all the devotees and told Sunder Pagi and his men to tighten their security further. Then, late at night, a tiger's growl suddenly awoke Shri Hari.

Maharaj awakened everyone and they started shouting in the dark. In the light of the burning fire they saw a tiger disappear in the inky darkness. "See, if anyone is hurt," Maharaj immediately ordered. The guards found that the tiger had pounced on one of their oxen. But because of their shouting the tiger ran away, only slightly mauling the ox.

Thought: Just as the eyelash protects the eye, the hand protects the throat, a mother protects the child, in the same way God and his sadhu are always in our protection.

5. In the pilgrim place of Vartal. (Ch 2/14/204-205)

Incident: Maharaj was staying at Vaasan Suthar's house in Vadtal. The kathis and other devotees were lodged at Vadeu mata inn. -Maharaj decided to carry out all functions from Vadtal. -Khodabhai and Hathibhai of Budhej had dream of Maharaj in Vadtal-Maharaj seated facing north-in order to make sure, they decided to go to Vadtal-they saw Maharaj as he was in their dreams-and they were convinced. Swaminarayan is surely God. -Maharaj called them and said: 'Get into the fellowship and be followers. You will be happy.'- explained them rules. Discoursing them, he said: 'God does not need to wait for any era (yug) to incarnate; whenever there is unrighteousness, He always takes birth on earth to subside the evil and establish righteousness. He cleared their misconception about God not being present in Kaliyug.

Thought: 'Yadaa yadaa hi dharmasya glani bhavati bharat. Abhyutanam adharmasya tada atmanam Shrujami aham.' Whenever there is adharma, God always incarnates to destroy the evil. He does not have any binding of time.

Q.9 Describe the personality of any ONE of the characters below through incidents. (Total Marks: 8)

March 2015

1. Kushalkunvarba

Incident:

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. When God himself will hold my hand, then only will I be liberated. | 3/15/399-400 |
| 2. Maharaj's grand welcome in Dharampur. | 3/15/403 |
| 3. First devotees, then Maharaj-you are the root of all avataars | 3/15/405 |
| 4. I have sinned against you. | 3/15/407-408 |
| 5. Modesty is dharma's sister-the group of Surat comes in. | 3/15/408-409 |
| 6. This attire is suitable for a grand ride on an elephant. | 3/15/410-412 |
| 7. The mandal is coming from Gadhpur. | 3/15/413 |
| 8. We cannot even survive without Dada khachar. | 3/15/413-414 |
| 9. We want to completely purify you. | 3/15/414-415 |
| 10. 'Brahmchari! We are hungry'-I will myself come down to feed Maharaj-Kushalkunvarba | 3/15/417 |
| 11. Rajmata is 'annapurna' incarnate. | 3/15/418 |
| 12. Your antaryamipanu did not come of use-Shriji Maharaj | 3/15/419 |
| 13. What region is 'Anirdesh'? -Kushalkunvarba | 3/15/427 |
| 14. Maharaj's puja-Maharaj, would you accept this kingdom? -Kushalkunvarba | 3/15/428 |
| 15. Don't keep the greed for spreading your kingdom-Shriji Maharaj | 3/15/430 |

Personality: In spite of having all the responsibilities of her kingdom, the queen had equal passion for liberation. She would listen to discourses daily. She would imbibe the essence of the discourse and try to put into practice in her life. She staunchly believed that only God liberates everyone. When she met God in human form, then she realized his divine form and devoted her life and lived it accordingly.

2. Hathibhai of Budhej

Incident:

1. Maharaj gave darshan to Hathibhai and Khodabhai in their dreams-residing in Vartal in the dharamshala of Vadeu mata-Went to Vartal and confirmed-Maharaj advised: 'Accept vartmaan and become satsangi, you will be very happy'- their belief that there is no God in Kalyug was falsified 2/14/205
 2. Maharaj's assembly on the banks of the lake in Vartal-monkeys chanted the mala-sung the chopais of Ramayan-Maharaj's advice-Hathibhai and Khadabhai are present in this assembly-mounds of miracles-divine knowledge-divine bliss calmed down their senses-recognized Maharaj's divine form-invitation to come to Budhej 2/14/207-208
 3. Introduced everyone to Maharaj in Budhej-Maharaj is the supreme- 'He has incarnated to liberate us all-surrender to him, take niyams, do vrats and follow his virtuous path'- When Maharaj said to ask for a boon, he said: 'Make our village a pilgrim place such that whoever bathes in here is liberated.' Maharaj was pleased with his request and had a lake dug on a dried land and filled it up with water. He bathe himself and blessed that the lake will never dry up-named it 'Haritalava' 2/14/211-212
- Personality:** One who is a mumukshu from his last births will immediately recognize Maharaj's divine form. If he gets the supreme attainment, he will not keep it to himself, rather he will also try to instill utmost conviction of Maharaj's divine form in others.

March 2016

1. Mulji Brahmachari

Incident:

1. Understanding Maharaj's ruchi and to fulfil Lakhucharan of Samadhiyala's wishes, he made the food accordingly and took care of both God and his devotee. 2/14/215
2. How can I attain the knowledge of your divine form? Mukundanand brahmchari's question to Maharaj. 3/1/14-15
3. Your father is the one who has gone ahead. I am his servant-Mulji brahmachari to Jalimsinh bapu 3/2/39
4. Lord! Even if you throw and stone or do anything- I am not leaving without you-following Maharaj like a shadow-when Maharaj goes to Visnagar. 3/4/114-115
5. 'He is kaliya, baliya and chhaliya' everything! -to Rajput devotee of Kanthariya 3/4/116
6. Following Maharaj's agnaa, gave samadhi to the Arab inspector-in Visnagar 3/4/124
7. Our guru is Lord Swaminarayan himself-to Bhaanji Mehta of Vadhwan 3/4/128
8. 'He is in our service. He is not sleeping.'-when Maharaj established the niyam of throwing a bead in the assembly to whoever was sleeping. 3/4/139
9. Maharaj respects you by giving you a status of 'Saptarishi' and you still keep pride in Maharaj's presence? -to Alaiya khachar 3/9/251
10. Just as one does not know the sweetness of the jaggery without eating it, in the same Way, one does not understand or know your talks without knowing your form 3/14/351
11. I have come here to do the rituals of annakut-the real rituals will happen only after Maharaj eats 3/14/368
12. Brahmchari! You were feeding us in your dreams, so now feed us in reality. We are Hungry-in Dharampur 3/15/417
13. Brahmchari! Go ahead, I will come myself to feed Maharaj. 3/15/418
14. Brahmchari! Our antaryamipanu did not come of use today 3/15/419
15. Maharaj! Eat a little. Who knows what will happen there? - In Samarkha before going to Anand. 4/3/48

Personality: He served Maharaj in all states-whether awake or in dreams. He had understood Maharaj's divine form. He knew the importance of serving the human form of God.

2. Kalo Makvano (Kariyana)

Incident:

1. In A.S. 1868, Maharaj told Kalo Makvana to celebrate the festival of Dushera in Kariyani- Where will you bring the expenses from-you're the Lord of Laxmi so why do we need to worry about cost-Minbaima sent in money-Didn't I say? Laxmi came in and gave us money-Makwana was not cheated 3/4/110-111
 2. In A. S. 1868, Maharaj stayed in Kariyani for 5-6 days-He talked about leaving-at night Maharaj called Makvana and went to the restroom-gave him his personal services- They saw Ram, Laxman, Janki, Draupadi, Shri Krishna, Baldevji passing by-You are the Supreme God. All these forms immerse in you and evolve from you; what is the surprise in seeing everything according to your wish-you fulfilled my wish of serving you personally- 'We have come here to fulfill our devotee's wish.' 3/6/174-175
- Personality:** Even though he was illiterate, he had the wisdom to recognize God. Maharaj himself tried to misguide him but he did not deviate. He did not lose respect even in Maharaj's human acts.

March 2017

1. Parvatbhai of village Agatrai (Only incidents of 'Affectionate to Devotees').

Incident:

1. The human form of God resides in my heart. He told us from my heart that he is coming Here to celebrate the Krishna Janmashtmi, so prepare everything-during the Janmashtmi festival in Agatrai. 3/4/103
 2. 'Parvatbhai sees us in all 3 states.' 3/4/103
 3. Parvatbhai was such a devotee that Maharaj used to send great nand sadhus to be in his company and listen to his discourses 3/4/105
 4. Parvatbhai has great respect in his heart and Surakhachar's nature is like chaarani, such that no one would tolerate him. 3/4/111
- Personality:** He used to see Maharaj in all 3 states. He used to function in accordance to Maharaj's wish. Even though, he saw Maharaj in all 3 states, he had equal affinity and importance for Maharaj's in person darshan. Maharaj always used to tell his santos for Parvatbhai's samagam.

2. Khaiyo Khatri (Mandvi) (Only incidents from 'Wrote Two Letters from Bhadra-tour in Kutch).

Incident:

1. We will serve the group based on our ability, but before that he will have to show us His Godliness-Khaiyao Khatri to Sunderjibhai 2/20/317-318
2. He was a great scholar of Vedant, intelligent and recognized Maharaj who was seated on the bottom. 2/20/320-321
3. Khaiyo asked 108 questions. 2/20/321-322
4. Son! Speak softly. 2/20/322
5. The one who I was searching for so many days, I got that Parbrahma Swaminarayan today. Recognize him if you can-Khaiyo to his disciples. 2/20/323
6. Maharaj! You have entered in him and so he is able to do this, once you get out of him, he will be confused'-when Maharaj placed the turban on Vanza bhagat's head and took all the household items out, Khaiyo says this to Maharaj. 2/20/324
7. 'This is the seashore. The water is salty.'-Khaiyo-when Maharaj made him realize his divine form. 2/20/325

Personality: Scholar of Vedant-he thought Maharaj to be a magician-recognized the jewel-heard the real voice in Maharaj's speech. -Once recognized Maharaj, he became his disciple. He diverted his disciples to follow Maharaj. He realized the true form of the one who sweetens the salty water.

March 2018

1. Kalyanbhai from Kadu (Only incidents from 'Two Letters Written from Bhadra – Touring in Kutch').

Incident:

1. The darbars who had set out to be paramhansas joined Aja Patel's nephew Kalyandas's marriage ceremony. 2/20/292
2. I am included in this 'etc.' word-question to his mama: 'Do you want to throw me in hell? 2/20/293-294
3. Father! Carry on the auspicious occasion, I have found God. You all bless me. 2/20/295
4. Go son! Your name is 'Kalyandas' and so may you liberate all of us'. -Sangha Patel 2/20/295
5. 'Your name was not written.'-what is this mindan for? –You have done an amazing task-
Maharaj 2/20/303
6. 'Please do not do agnaa to me. How am I going to home with this face? Please oblige me.
Request to Maharaj- 'Please stay. From today onwards you will be called 'Adbhutanand'
Maharaj's agnaa. 2/20/331

Personality: He used to stay with his mama since childhood. He had satsang training from his mama. He sacrificed everything on Maharaj's one word, 'etc.' and that too from his wedding stage. Such was his valor. Maharaj advised everyone to go back even then he was not tempted to go back home.

2. Naja Jogiya (Only incidents from 'Affection Towards Devotees').

Incident:

1. Native of Lakhankaa-left Laakhanka due to grudges from the villagers and went to
Bhadli-left Bhadli due to harassment from Bhaan khachar and went to Bhojra-darbar
Vasur khachar was devilish-asked Naja Jogiya and asked: 'Where is your Swaminarayan?'
Maharaj in Visnagar-He should be present here tomorrow. I will break your knees. -
Prayers to Maharaj-Maharaj went from Visnagar to Bhojra-message with the charan- 3/4/129-130
2. Your prayers will reach our ears no matter what happens to Brahmand-so this is
very close by! You have passed your test in devotion Naja-Maharaj 3/4/131
3. Maharaj sneakily came to Naja's aid-he had thorns in his feet-we attain our body only
for our devotees. 3/4/131-132
4. Went to Vasur khachar's place with Naja Jogiya-your God is great 3/4/132-133
5. Naja do you want to get out of here. Come to Gadhada and live with us. -Maharaj's agnaa 3/4/134

Personality: Very firm conviction of satsang-come what may but would not budge from bhakti and Maharaj- used to understand every wish and will of Maharaj and served him accordingly.

March 2019

1. Gunatitanand Swami. (Only incidents from 'Divine Incidents in Sarangpur' to 'Shri Hari's Illness in Jaliya'.)

1. Aksharbrahma Gunatitanand Swamis' urge to do darshan-incident of standing under the
roof 3/6/166-167
2. Maharaj wore the flower decorations brought by Gunatitanand Swami and Nishkulanand
Swami 3/8/222-223
3. 'Sadguru khele vasant'-raas in Sarangpur-Who is that Sadguru? 3/8/223-225
4. Bring the sadhu from Bhadra to us quickly-Maharaj told Swami to say each devotee's name
and hugged him 22 times. 3/9/253-254

5. "Hugging you once was hard"-Maharaj hugged Shantanand Swami at Gunatitanand Swami's request 3/9/255
6. Different seva given to santos-engrossed in seva-if you get darshan, don't miss it- If he had chance to be in presence of Maharaj, then he would also sing kirtans 3/10/285
Personality: Being Aksharbrahma himself, he was always desperate to have Maharaj's darshan.
- 2. Mamaiyo Patgar (Kundal) (Only incidents from 'Wrote Two Letters from Bhadra - Touring in Kutch' to 'Famine of 1869'.)**
1. Maharaj wrote letter to 18 haribhaktos to become tyagis. Mamaiyo Patgar was one of them- He left home as soon as he received the letter. 2/20/291
2. Mamaiyo Patgar remembers Maharaj-Maharaj wakes up in instantaneously Polarpur and and leaves with kathis to arrive in Kundal-weren't you remembering me? Don't we have to come?'- 'I have formed a habit of remembering you.'-We have also formed a habit of coming! When our devotee remembers us, we are always there, but we gave you in person darshan today. 3/6/187-188
3. Maharaj told Mamaiya to prepare a tasteless food item from wheat chaff. But Mamaiya wished to entertain the sadhus with a feast. He appealed, "Maharaj, have pity upon Your emaciated sadhus. They have become weak through observing one-and-a- half years of khatras. There is no shortage of provisions in my house. So, allow me to prepare a feast for them."-Maharaj gives agnaa to santos to give up the vow of khatras 3/9/266-267
Personality: Was always desperate to follow Maharaj's agnaa. Always remembered Maharaj. Would be unhappy with santos pain.

SECTION 3: BRAHMASWARUP YOGIJI MAHARAJ SANKSHIPT JIVANCHARITRA AND GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ESSAY

Q.10 Write the main points on any ONE of the following. (Total Marks: 12)

March 2015

- 1. Yogiji Maharaj's lifelong moto: Bhagwan sau nu bhalu karo (May God do good unto all) (Ch 23)**
- (a) It was Yogi Maharaj's jivan mantra – Bhagwan sau nu bhalu karo. His ultimate desire was to redeem maximum number of souls and have them experience the divine bliss. His goodness also extended to nonliving things like oceans, mountains and vegetation. He made these wishes all the time. Once while in Mumbai he expressed a wish that may all the people of Mumbai become satsangis and may we have thousands of sadhus. Once, Swamishri was visiting an ailing devotee Bhikhabhai at Sarvodaya Hospital in Ghatkopar. There he blessed all the patients and prayed to Maharaj for their wellbeing.
- (b) Once the Kirti Express train got into a tragic accident where many passengers died on the spot. Swami sprinkled water in that area and wished that all that died in the accident be born in the satsang and attain Akshardham.
- (c) During his tour of England, Swami bathed Shri Harikrishna Maharaj in the River Thames and proclaimed that from now onwards whoever that will bathes in the Thames shall become a devotee of Maharaj in their next life. While visiting Adalaj stepwell near Ahmedabad, he granted moksha of everyone who helped build the well. At another occasion he blessed and granted God's abode to all the people that witnessed the procession in Amreli.
- (d) Once after lunch at Ramanbhai of the Alembic Company. Swamishri sanctified a bath tub and gave blessings that whoever bathes in this bath tub will attain moksha.

- (e) While visiting Vrindavan gardens in Mysore, he blessed and gave moksha to everyone that helped create the gardens, to all the current gardeners and to all future visitors. Swamishri blessed and gave moksha to living beings in the ocean while visiting a beach in Madras.
- (f) Swamishri patted and blessed the trunk of a tree that was used as a pillar at the sawmill of Narayansingh and said that it has become sacred so keep this memory in your hearts.
- (g) He liberated the whole Nairobi city from the cycles of life and death during the farewell assembly. He blessed and granted moksha to airport officers that came to see him on the plane. That way, millions of men and women can be drawn to Satsang and grow spiritually.
- (h) While flying to Kisumu from Nairobi Swamishri left his spitting bowl on the plane. On enquiry, it was found that it was not in the plane and that someone had probably stolen it. Expressing sorrow over it, Swamishri still blessed the person who ever that may be with goodness in life.
- (i) Swamishri took a stroll in the garden of the bungalow he was staying at Kisumu. He sat under the mango tree and blessed it saying that this mango tree also must have been waiting for us for many years.
- (j) After leaving Kampala, Swamishri was flying over Lake Victoria and wished that whoever travels or bathes in this lake will get moksha. After the plane landed at Mwanza, the devotees took Swamishri to Bismarck Rock, on the bank of Lake Victoria. Swami observed it keenly. Then, he plucked a flower from the garland offered to Thakorji and asked Mahant Swami to sprinkle this rock with petals so that it is liberated. He said that it had been observing penance for ages.
- (k) At another instance in Mwanza Swamishri was attending a sabha. As he was walking towards the assembly hall, some red ants crawled onto Swamishri's dhoti and yet Swamishri sat through the assembly for more than an hour while the ants bit him. He said that the ants have been liberated from the cycles of life and death and will be reborn in satsang as human beings.
- (l) When flying back to India from Africa Swami proclaimed that all living beings on the land beneath the plane, for the entire distance will attain moksha.
- (m) Swami even gave moksha to a mouse that took away his mala and it nibbled at it. Once during Bhadra murti-pratishtha Swamishri sat under the banyan tree for an assembly. He placed his pagh down by his side and minutes later a bird defecated on it. Swamishri instantly blessed the bird with a wave of his hand and said that it will attain moksha.
- (n) Once Swamishri got burnt on his neck from a flicker of an ember. Swamishri simply smiled and said that both the ember and the tree out of which the coal was made are redeemed from the cycles of birth and death as they were in some way related to the spark.
- (o) While going to Rajkot, Swamishri asked the driver to pull up the car after covering a distance of two miles. Swamishri arrived at this devotee's farm, and walked to the areas where there were two small mangoes trees. Swamishri touched their trunks and said that these trees had been doing penance for the last

10,000 years He took the trouble for the sake of blessing the mango trees for their moksha.

- (p) Swamishri ultimate goal was to draw millions of men and women into Satsang, help them grow spiritually and ultimately be redeemed and be liberated. He wished the same for all the things on this earth like bodies of water, trees, insects and much more.

2. Extraordinary vision of Yogiji Maharaj to endure opposition. (Ch 9)

- (a) Once Yogiji Maharaj and Purushottamvallabhdas Swami visited Narayan Dharo on the occasion of Amas. Swami Uttamcharandas and Swami Naranprasaddas came with an ulterior motive to hit Yogiji Maharaj with stones but were not able to carry out their evil plan due to scores of devotees present. So, the sadhus abused Yogiji Maharaj verbally. Yogiji Maharaj tolerated quietly and left the scene.
- (b) Yogiji Maharaj, upon the earnest request of the devotees Sodhi visited their village near Dholera. Soon, the word spread to Dholera mandir that the bandiyas have arrived to Sodhi. So, rivals immediately rushed

from Dholera to Sodhi, in wild rage to hurt Yogiji Maharaj. Yogiji Maharaj had to leave immediately, leaving the pot of food on the mud stove unattended.

- (c) Once, Yogiji Maharaj and some sadhus came face to face with the sadhus of Muli at Chachana. As soon as they saw Yogiji Maharaj, they became furious and started assaulting him both verbally and physically. The Darbar Jilubha came to his rescue and freed him from hostile sadhus. Without the feel of any animosity Yogiji Maharaj recollected this event with a touch of humor and said that his body was now sanctified by their holy touch.
- (d) Once, Yogiji Maharaj was in Sundariyana. On receiving the news of his presence there, one spiteful sadhu left for Sundariyana with his mandal to hurt him. Balubha, a village officer, who was concerned about Yogiji Maharaj's safety, informed him to quickly finish their lunch and leave before mean sadhus arrived. Just as Yogiji Maharaj hurried to leave, the spiteful sadhus arrived and started abusing them both verbally and physically. They destroyed their belongings and threw away their grains collected in alms. Yet, Yogiji Maharaj and his sadhus left the village quietly without retaliating.
- (e) One time Yogiji Maharaj and some sadhus were visiting Keriya, a village near Ningala and stayed at the old Swaminarayan mandir. As Yogiji Maharaj was retiring for the day, a group of sadhus arrived from the old sect in Gadhada. They locked the mandir doors from inside and beat up Yogiji Maharaj and the sadhus savagely. Soon the word spread in the village and a lawyer named Odhavjibhai came to their rescue jumping over the wall. He roared to merciless sadhus and led Yogiji Maharaj and other sadhus out of the room. He gave a dressing-down to the offending sadhus. As Yogiji Maharaj was walking out of the mandir precincts, a spiteful sadhu lifted Yogiji Maharaj from the waist and threw him against a wall. When Kuberbhai of Bhavnagar heard the news, he suggested to report a complaint against the barbaric sadhus. Upon hearing this, Yogiji Maharaj sympathetically denied and said that we should not think of prosecuting Shriji Maharaj's sadhus. Even if someone beats us black and blue, we should still wish well of them well.
- (f) Once Yogiji Maharaj visited the old mandir at Karbala Street in Calcutta. Sadhus at the mandir did not care to welcome him and ignored him completely. With great humility, Yogiji Maharaj sat down on the mattress meant for the devotees. So Hansrajbhai and Koyabhai requested Yogiji Maharaj to sit on the mattress placed for the sadhus, but an elderly sadhu denied rudely and asked him to remain seated where he was. When Yogiji Maharaj tried to start a conversation with the sadhus, they showed animosity and left angrily to their accommodation. Yet Yogiji Maharaj being egoless said that he was a good sadhu since he at least allowed us to have darshan.
- (g) Sometimes, the sadhus of the old mandir would not allow to have darshan at the old mandir. It happened so once in Umreth. The devotees greeted Yogiji Maharaj and took out a procession. After that, Yogiji Maharaj went for darshan to the old mandir, but the pujari closed the doors. So, Yogiji Maharaj reverently touched the closed door and then left egoless.
- (h) Once, Yogiji Maharaj went to Junagadh mandir for darshan after which he greeted Jai Swaminarayan to some old sadhus at their seats and bowed down. Some young sadhus at the mandir made a mockery of Yogiji Maharaj. The youths accompanying Yogiji Maharaj could not bear the insult but Yogiji Maharaj remained unmoved. He said that we should remain stable both in insults and in honor and consider these sadhus as crowns of our heads as all these sadhus are from holy Junagadh where Gunatitanand Swami lived.
- (i) The opponents from Vartal Swaminarayan mandir once published a despicable article out of jealousy and ill feelings demeaning both Shastriji Maharaj and Yogiji Maharaj in its monthly publication. The devotees and leaders of the society thought of taking a legal action. Therefore, the secretary of the Sanstha drafted a letter in defense of the Vartal article. As Ambalalbhai of Surat began to read the draft to Yogiji Maharaj, he asked to see it. He immediately handed it over to a devotee seated by him and asked him to tear it up into pieces and said that our mission in life is to worship God and to inspire others to worship.
- (j) Once after his foreign tour in 1955, Yogiji Maharaj's popularity grew in Mumbai and Gujarat. Envious members of the old Sampradaya printed defamatory claims that Yogiji Maharaj gets funds from abroad

to hold grand assemblies to welcome and honor themselves. But Yogiji Maharaj assured devotees that he did not get any funds from their foreign tour and that they should treat this flyer as a warning so that they don't think of such an idea in future. Thus, Yogiji Maharaj remained brave and unmoved in the face of grave assaults, insults, indifferences and ill-feelings of the opponents.

3. Youths are my heart

- (a) Twenty-year-old youths were greatly attached to Yogiji Maharaj. They would anxiously wait for summer vacation to join their beloved guru. Yogiji Maharaj too showered them with his motherly love and care. He always said that youths are my heart.
- (b) Once Vinubhagat was resting as he was sick with fever. So, Yogi Maharaj massaged his feet and made him feel better. At another time Yogi Maharaj massaged Jagdishbhai's head at 2 o'clock in the morning as he was burning with fever.
- (c) Once Yogiji Maharaj learned that Narayan Patni was coming over, so he sent couple of youths to receive him from the railway station. As they were walking back, Narayanbhai's slipper broke and he ended up walking bare feet. Due to the scorching heat he developed blister on his feet. When Yogiji Maharaj learned of this he became distressed and embraced him dearly. He said that you have come to see God's daas, or servant and you are a God's devotee, so I will free you from this materialistic world.
- (d) Once a youth named Khodabhai came for Swamishri's darshan for the first time. Swami was leaving for Dangra. All the other youths made their travel arrangements and left. Since Khodabhai was new he stood away in one corner thinking what to do. Just then Yogiji Maharaj saw the youth as his car was passing by. He requested the driver to stop the car, squeezed a bit in an already cramped car and made space for Khodabhai. Khodabhai was overjoyed and instantly decided to sacrifice his life for Yogiji Maharaj.
- (e) Swamishri looked after the youths with utmost care and affection which made them feel at home. His selfless love stirred the youths to obey his every agnaa and were inspired to learn and memorize Vachanamruts, Swamini Vato and kirtans and do all kinds of seva including making rotlas. Swamishri too joined in seva with the youths.
- (f) When youths returned home after summer vacation, Swamishri wrote letters to them and advised them to study well and remain spiritual. He inspired the youths to take vows for conquering their base instincts. Swamishri also emphasized the significance of fasting and regularly inspired them to fast nirjala.
- (g) Once Swamishri arrived to Bochasan at 11:30 pm and was very tired and yet met 60 youths who arrived at midnight. He blessed them and gave them all a fast for the next morning for Guru Purnima. Once he said to couple of youths to teach him English. So, the youths said, "Swami say tomorrow fast." So, whoever came for Swamishri's darshan he would say, "Guru, tomorrow fast."
- (h) Once Swamishri started doing dandvats or prostrations in the direction where all the youth were sleeping. Vinubhagat asked Swamishri as to what he was doing. He said that he was prostrating to these youths since they had left behind the comfort of their home, like Mumbai making a huge sacrifice, bearing great hardships and are sincerely obeying my agnaas. He used to take great care of the youths who were travelling for any reason. He fed fresh breakfast to the youths who were leaving at 4:00 am in the morning for All India Cycle Yatra. He also packed some magas for their journey.
- (i) Swamishri captured the hearts of the youths through his divine love and affection and ultimately initiated 51 youths as sadhus in Gadhada during the Suvarna Jayanti Mahotsav on 11 May 1961. He visualized his dream to liberate the youths from the shackles of worldly life and make them sadhus to propagate the Akshar Purushottam philosophy in the universe.

March 2016

1. "Greatness through serving not commanding" Yogiji Maharaj (Chapter 11)

- (a) Seva was inseparable part of Yogiji Maharaja's life. He believed that seva was both gnan and bhakti and when carried out selflessly, with pure heart worship it can attain help moksha. By doing seva Satpurush enlightens and brings divinity in one's heart. Once a youth asked Yogiji Maharaj, how come everyone is drawn towards you and that how did he attain such capability (glory). To that he gave a short response saying that it is by washing dishes.
- (b) Yogiji Maharaj idolized the seva done by Shriji Maharaj, Gunatitanand Swami, Shastriji Maharaj, Sadgurus, paramhansas and past haribhaktas and he looked up to them as his role models. He too did selfless seva just like his ideals mentioned above.
- (c) Once a group of 75 devotees arrived in Sarangpur to spend a night, at midnight since their bus broke down. Shastriji Maharaj welcomed them and inquired if they had dinner yet. The devotees hadn't had any dinner yet so Shastriji Maharaj thought of Yogi Maharaj and said, "Only Jogi will come to my rescue", and he woke him up to prepare meals for them at 1:30 am.
- (d) Once Yogiji Maharaj said that he has served for 40 Sadgurus travelling in and out of Sarangpur. He would wake up at 3am in the morning and make 150 rotlas and pack them to go for the departing groups of sadhus. He said that since I have served these great sadhus, I feel peace at heart. He also said that it gave him great joy in serving meals to everyone and that he had never eaten before anyone else.
- (e) Yogiji Maharaj constantly searched for seva opportunities. Once during the African trip, he washed the laundry of the youths travelling with him. At another time he put out Babubhai's wet dhotiyu to dry in the sun. At one time during Shastriji Maharaja's 85th Janma Jayanti Mahotsav in Atladra, C.T. Patel of Mombasa was trying to find a place to sleep at midnight so Yogiji Maharaj who was still awake made sleeping arrangements for him.
- (f) Once in Ramod He was doing katha and Manat Swami was preparing thaal for Thakorji. The firewood was cooking meals was too fresh and made a lot of eye stinging smoke. So Manat Swami left and went to sleep. After Katha Yogiji Maharaj saw that thaal was not prepared so he himself made the thaal with smoke stinging his eyes and offered it to both Thakorji and Manat swami.
- (g) Even during his old like in late 70's he did various seva like cleaning the weeds in the garden, washing dishes, cleaning cow dens, making various pounds of rotlis, and taking personal care of visiting devotees. Doing seva was in his blood and he couldn't bear to see even a moment wasted without doing seva.

2. Confined knowledge of Akshar-Purushottam spreads to foreign countries. (Ch 18)

- (a) Tireless efforts, against tremendous hardships and obstacles, were made by Shastriji Maharaj to propagate the knowledge of Akshar Purushottam Upasana. Yogiji Maharaj too made passionate efforts to further the spread of Akshar Purushottam Upasana through vigorous Vicharan, countless padharamnis and constant katha varta for the spread of Akshar Purushottam upasana in, and around India. At the same time Swamishri constantly motivated the devotee in Africa to increase the Satsang.
- (b) At age of 65, in 1955, Yogiji Maharaj traveled to Africa and did untiring vicharan for the spread of Akshar Purushottam Upasana during the murti pratishtha of Mombasa mandir. Again, at age 70, he travelled back to Africa and did the murti pratishtha of Akshar Purushottam mandirs in Kampala, Jinja and Taroro and on his third trip to Africa in 1970, he did murti pratishtha of Nairobi mandir. Finally, in June of 1970 Yogiji Maharaj did murti pratishtha in London and the same murtis that Shastriji Maharaj had once performed puja and aarti to, in 1948 were installed in the mandir. This was a noteworthy accomplishment on part of Yogiji Maharaj.
- (c) This was the start of the growth and the spread of Akshar Purushottam Upasana. Our gurus faced immense struggles and countless obstacles to proclaim Shreeji Maharaj as Purushottam and Gunatitanand as Akshar. This Upasana which was once criticized as "khuniyu gnan" or gnan that was practiced only within closed doors was now openly practiced in various parts of the world. It only became possible because of our Gunatit gurus' staunch faith, hard work and powerful sankalps. It seemed like Yogiji Maharaja, effortlessly made people understand the importance of Akshar Brahma and spread the satsang activities worldwide.

3. Courageous in following niyam-dharma: Renunciation and detachment. (Ch 12)

- (a) Yogiji Maharaj observed all the niyams and dharma set forth by Bhagwan Swaminarayan very strictly. Shastriji Maharaj used to greatly complement on Yogiji Maharaja's both his zeal for seva and his devotion towards penance and sacrifice or tap and tyaga.
- (b) Once Yogiji Maharaj a katha on Harilila-kalpataru was organized in Anand Ashram in Jamnagar. The mahant of the Ashram out of affection towards Yogiji Maharaja for his bhakti and simplicity gifted him an expensive shawl. Yogiji Maharaj instantly but politely said the shawl was very precious and will drape well on the murti of Ghanshyam Maharaj. When the mahant insisted him, he said that we as sadhus cannot drape such shawls because of our niyams as per Shikshapatri.
- (c) Once during the farewell assembly in Mumbai, Krishnashankar Shastri was drawn towards Yogiji Maharaja's simplicity and childlike innocence. He draped a beautiful yellow scarf with silver border. Swamishri lovingly placed the scarf back on Shastriji keeping his wow of vairagya intact.
- (d) Yogiji Maharaj was to travel to Africa and the sadhus were concerned if he would be able to bear the cold over there. So Jayantibhai an affectionate devotee brought a woolen shawl for him. He liked the shawl but wondered if he can wear it. He also inquired the cost and Jayantibhai informed him that he inquired at few stores and found the best shawl at the lowest price. Only then did Swamishri accepted the use the shawl. Yet another time when Swamishri was in London a devotee brought a pair of woolen socks and urged him to accept them. Swamishri remained steadfast in his niyam and did not accept the socks.
- (e) Swamishri shunned all luxurious objects no matter how much a haribhakta out of his bhakti may desire Swamishri to have it. At one occasion a haribhakta Thakor sahib, out of deep affection offered Swamishri some milk served in a silver cup. Swamishri took the cup of milk, offered it to Harikrishna Maharaj and placed the cup into Thakor sahib's hands and immediately stood up to leave the palace.
- (f) Yogiji Maharaj strictly abided by his vows despite old age or sickness. Once during hot summer sadhus offered Swamishri to wear fine dhotiyas instead of thick ones, but Swamishri did not budge. Due to Swamishri's ailing health his doctors and the devotees urged him to sleep on bed instead of sleeping on the floor. Swamishri gave a deaf ear to them but then upon earnest requests from the devotees he gave in reluctantly gave in, saying that now I can no longer take pride of my sadhuta. He also hesitated to eat almond, cardamom or any other nuts even if it was for his ailing health. Such was his staunchness in following Maharaja's every agnaa. He was a true idol of tyaga and vairagya.

March 2017

1. Jina Bhagat in Krishnacharandas Swami's group. Jina Bhagat of Krishnacharandas Swami's mandal (Ch 3)

- (a) Krishnacharandas Swami ordained Jinabhai into parshad order and named him Jinabhat. Krishnacharandas Swami always emphasized the importance of seva in his discourses and stressed that for Swaminarayan sadhus seva should be their life. Jinabhat took this message seriously and made seva flow in his blood stream.
- (b) Jinabhat did all kind of sevas while he was in Junagadh. All day long he various sevas like cleaning, washing, grazing the cows, cutting grass, bringing tooth sticks or daatan, make plates and bowls from leaves and plastering the floors with cow dung. Jinabhat willing performed laborious and tiring chores. Once he actively helped Krishnacharandas Swami build a mandir in Sardhar. He worked strenuously with the construction of the mandir like digging the foundation and moving huge stones. Jinabhat never viewed this seva as arduous labor but considered it as absolute devotion.
- (c) He did vicharan with Krishnacharandas Swami disregarding the weather conditions like extreme heat, rain or biting cold. He also bathed with very cold water in the mornings. Upon reaching a village he used to

- clean up the place thoroughly, build a makeshift toilet and did all kinds of chores including washing the dishes. He memorized kirtans, Vachanamruts and Bhaktachintamani by heart while doing various chores.
- (d) Jinabhatgat joined Krishnacharan Swami when he moved to Gondal. For him Gondal was very sacred since it was Gunatitanand Swami's samadhi place, the Akshar Deri. He did daily darshan at the Deri both in the morning and in the evening, bathed in the Gondali River and associated with Maandan Bhakta, who had been blessed by the darshan of Shriji Maharaj. He listened to the prasangs of Shriji Maharaj from Maandan Bhagat with great devotion.
- (e) Once Krishnacharandas Swami's mandal had to go to Samadhiyala. The darbar was to send the bullock cart for their ride to Samadhiyala. While they were waiting for their ride to arrive Jinabhatgat recited several Swamini Vato and sang kirtans filling the air with divinity. He left everybody including Krishnacharandas Swami spellbound and they swayed their heads with joy of devotion.
- (f) Jinabhatgat served all the sadhus very keenly. He regularly prostrated to Krishnacharandas Swami, Tyaagvallabhdas, and Narancharandas Swami in Junagadh. He also looked after a handicapped sadhu named Dharmajivandas Swami, Balmukund Swami and the elderly sadhu Madhavpriyadas Swami with great devotion. In Rajkot he came in association with Krishnaji Ada, Pujajibapu, Merubha bapu and some other devotees. He was thrilled to listen to their talks about the glory of Gunatitanand Swami and about Jagabhatgat. He yearned for the darshan of Jagabhatgat, so once Jaga bhatgat appeared in his dream and advised him to stick to two things, namely a habit of reading spiritual scriptures and keep the company of a virtuous sadhu.
- (g) Jinabhatgat learned about the scholarship of Shastriji Maharaj and about his zeal for the spread of Akshar Purushottam Upasana from Madhvpriyadas Swami in he was in his service. Once when Krishnacharandas's mandal was in Rajkot at the same time Shastriji Maharaj was there staying at Krishnaji Ada's place. Finally, Jinabhatgat met with Shastriji Maharaj for the first time and prostrated to him. He also gifted Shastriji Maharaj with a rosary and a gourd that were once used by Gunatitanand swami. The joyous meeting of the two great souls was the most auspicious moment for the entire beings of the universe. The great strides in the cause of Akshar Purushottam Upasana were to begin.

2. Renouncing things which may be regarded as luxurious (Ch 12)

Same answer as #3 from 2016. Refer to answer #3 Ch 12.

3. Shastriji Maharaj clears doubts about the abilities of Yogiji Maharaj. (Ch 14)

- (a) Shastriji Maharaj knew the strengths of Yogiji Maharaj. He knew that Yogiji Maharaj will undertake numerous tasks for the future of the Sampradaya and that he will spread the pure knowledge of Akshar Purushottam Upasana far and wide. Therefore, whenever anyone questioned Yogiji Maharaja's competence, Shastriji Maharaj instantly eradicated any such doubts from their minds.
- (b) Once Tribhovan Mistry a staunch believer of Akshar Purushottam Upasana, expressed his doubts about Yogiji Maharaja's abilities to manage the Sampradaya that time Shastriji Maharaj assured him that no one will be able to match the managerial skills of Yogiji Maharaja.
- (c) Once Khengarjibhai asked swami that when the Satpurush leaves for his abode, what will happen to his humble and loving devotees. Shastriji Maharaj dispelling his doubts, said, "Do you think that this sadhu is just an ordinary sadhu? God himself is present here and the Satpurush always leaves behind a worthy sadhu to carry forth his work. Yogiji Maharaj is will take care of everyone and will carry on the work."
- (d) Shastriji Maharaj proclaimed Pramukh Swami Maharaj as the leader of the sanstha in his place and explained to him that Yogiji Maharaj is an eternally great in satsang. So, he does his seva with man (mind), karma (action) and vachan (obey his agnaas). By doing so you have my rajipo or blessings.
- (e) Kuberbhai told Shastriji Maharaj that if you want to build the mandir in Gadhada as per your wish then you have to get better. Shastriji Maharaj sensed the doubt in Kuberbhai's tone. He placed his gaturyu on Yogiji Maharaja and proclaimed that just like me Jogi will beg alms complete the mandir.

- (f) Once Babubhai Kothari also questioned Yogiji Maharaja's abilities to handle the sanstha saying that he was too humble and inexperienced. Upon hearing this Shastriji Maharaj asserted that Jogi is capable of running the countless universes and he is most able, competent, and efficient in all respect.
- (g) Once in his katha in Atladra, Shastriji Maharaj declared, "There is no difference between me and Jogi. I am Jogi, Jogi is me." Once Tulsibhai of Radhu asked Shastriji Maharaj that what will happen to all of us devotees when you depart for Akshardham. On hearing this he said that this sanstha belongs to Shriji Maharaj and Jogi Maharaj will take care of it. You must remain faithful to him since I see more virtues in him than all the virtues written in the Bhagwat.
- (h) At one time a haribhakta asked Shastriji Maharaj to give another Jogi for Gujrat, since the devotees of Kathiawad were too possessive of him. So Shastriji Maharaj said the he is an eternal Jogi and there is none other like him in all the universe put together, so how can he create another Jogi.
- (i) Once Shastriji Maharaj said to Mathurbhai and some other devotees that there is no sadhu like Jogi in the entire universe so if one attains his rajipo and earns his blessings then that person's soul will be redeemed in this very life.
- (j) Fearing that the sanstha will lose a great leader when Shastriji Maharaj will go to dham, Manibhai Bhatt of Salad asked Shastriji Maharaj to promise that you will consecrate the murtis and do the aarti of Gadhada mandir. Hearing this Swami said Jogi will perform the aarti at Gadhada mandir, and I have also instructed Jogi to give diksha and to do murti pratishtha. Thus, Shastriji Maharaj eliminated all the doubts of all the people and devotees regarding Yogiji Maharaja's competence to manage the sanstha in his absence.

March 2018

1. **Yogiji Maharaj immersing us in discourses (Only incidents from 'Showering Blessings').**

- (a) Yogiji Maharaja's gnan varta was like a constant flow nectar. The effect of his divine words was so profound that it pierced the hearts of the devotees, made them introspect within and understood the need to become brahmarup and ultimately become an ekantik bhakta.
- (b) In order to keep the sabha interesting and engaged, often times, Swamishri used to be humorous. Once, a haribhakta named Shambhusinh was dozing in sabha. So amusingly, Swamishri said to him that it will cost you to doze in sabha but then he said, if you were rewarded Rs.10000 then you will definitely keep you both wide awake and aware. So, keep devotees attentive in the sabha, Swamishri called out on their names, or clapped loudly or narrated humorous talks.
- (c) Sometimes Swamishri used to narrate hilarious prasangs from the Shriji Maharaj's time and through those prasangs he used to infer to the intent of Shriji Maharaj's message for his devotee. He narrated one such prasang where Dadakhachar took care of 500 paramhansas. One of the paramhansas complained to Shriji Maharaj that the flour that Dada gave had stones in them. So, Maharaj ordered all the Santos to mill their own flour. So, the Santos happily milled their flour while doing bhakti and singing kirtans inviting Maharaj to join them. Then Maharaj realized that these Santos are making me join in their chores. So, he withdrew the order. Thus, Maharaj used such endurance to test their nishta and nischay in His swaroop. Yogiji Maharaj too, through these stories taught the devotees to overcome the panchvishays and endure bhido without being mentally disturbed to attain the state of being ekantik.
- (d) Once Swamishri said that if one is not interested in kathavarta and if you try to encourage them to attend even then they don't attain any gnan. He narrated a story of Surdas, where he came to katha upon a haribhakta's request. He brought his work with him to sabha and fell asleep with his mouth open. A dog peed in his mouth. When he woke up the haribhakta asked how the nectar of the discourse was. He said it was salty. So Swamishri explained that if you force a person who is not interested will not gain anything.
- (e) In his discourses Swamishri talked about atma gnan, and atma nishta in Maharaj and swami. He did this by narrating stories. He said the Mulubha's son's hand got trapped in the door, and Mulubha screamed out because he loved his son dearly. He said that one should have such intense and constant love for

Bhagwan and Sant. This is necessary for attaining atyantik kalyaan. He gave an example of 18 devotees who were durbars and merchants, renounced everything and received diksha upon Maharaj's command. Swamishri said one should have such nishta and strong faith.

- (f) Swamishri's discourses were fun, free from ego and it touched the hearts of the devotees. Mahamandaleshwar and Kashikanandji proclaimed that they had read a lot about the glory of words in the Shastras, but they only felt the impact of it upon hearing the Yogiji Maharaj. His words were blissful, and it influenced them greatly.
- (g) Once in Zambia, Mr. Irane came for Yogiji Maharaj's darshan and sat through the satsang sabha every day while he was there. Veljibhai, a devotee asked him if he understood Swamishri's discourse. He replied that he couldn't understand anything, but he felt very peaceful within from listening to him. Similarly, an African person, in Mombasa, also attended Yogiji Maharaj's sabha because he attained peace within and felt loved. Once a European who came for Swamishri's darshan and had a private conversation for 15 minutes. When Swamishri spoke to him from his heart and he felt very happy and satisfied getting the answers to his questions. Thus, such a holy man does not have any language barriers. Swamishri's gnan varta appealed one and all. His spiritual talks stirred people's hearts and awakened spirituality within them. Those who were touched became staunch devotees.

2. Letter writing: An inseparable part of Yogiji Maharaj's work (Only incidents from 'The Office of Akshardham'). (Chapter 19)

- (a) Yogiji Maharaj wrote countless number of letters to devotees giving them spiritual guidance and solving their personal problems. On average he spent 6 to 7 hours on letter writing. He was very particular about writing the date and time in the letter and he also mentioned the significance of any special or specific day that may have occurred.
- (b) Swamishri had a thick inexpensive saffron colored pen that leaked all the time staining his fingers. Once a devotee offered his pen to him and he returned it right away after using it. The devotee insisted that Swamishri keep the pen, but he refused to accept it saying that he cannot keep such an expensive pen.
- (c) Swamishri read and replied to all the letters diligently. A devotee named Natvarbhai Shukla wrote to Swamishri on daily basis and often times just for the sake of writing. Once he posted five postcards at the same time each with exactly the same content. So Vinubhagat gave him one postcard to read, but Swamishri insisted to read them all. He read them all and reverently touched them to his eyes. He also requested Vinubhagat never to hold back any letter. Once a devotee had written a long letter and had jotted down 16 points. Mahant Swami read out all 16 point to Swamishri. Being pleased he blessed Mahant swami saying that Maharaj would give His Charanarvind if we do our seva with great care.
- (d) Often times Yogiji Maharaj wrote letters to children and youths emphasizing to study hard, apply tilak chandlo, go to mandir regularly, attend Sunday sabbas and abstain from eating out. To youths he inspired them to defeat maya and avoid any contact with women. To devotees he wrote asking them to stay united, understand each other's mahima, and consoled them for any difficulties they might be facing. Swamishri's letters brought profound peace and joy to the recipients.
- (e) Once Swamishri wrote a letter to a devotee, advising him to do a few mahapujas. Before mailing the letter a dispatch number 2043 was written on the letter. The devotee couldn't make out Swamishri's handwriting clearly and misunderstood that he had to do 2,043 mahapujas. So, he wrote back to Swamishri that he couldn't afford to do 2,043 pujas but will sponsor 200 Mahapujas instead. Swamishri burst out in laughter and said that he only expected him to do 25 pujas, but he sponsored 200.
- (f) Once a postman became annoyed when he couldn't make out the address written by Yogiji Maharaj. When Yogiji Maharaj learnt about it he burst out in laughter saying that he is getting paid so he should make an effort to decipher them. He further said that these are the words from Akshardham so if he can decode them, he can be liberated from maya.

- (g) At time Yogiji Maharaj placed two or more letters in an envelope and addressed it one devotee. Then he requested that devotee to personally hand deliver the individual letters to other respective devotees. His main intention in doing so was to do satsang samagam and create samp suhradaybhai and ekta in cities like Mumbai.
- (h) Swamishri write long letters to youths who had committed to become sadhus. He inspired them to renounce from worldly pleasures, advised them to observe celibacy, sleep on the floor, fast often, memorize Vachanamruts and Swamini Vato, meditate doing mansi and study for 8 hours a day. He constantly wrote with great affection to the sadhus, to bolster their spiritual pursuit.
- (i) Sometime devotees sent him letters with incomplete addresses. During Swami's trip to Africa, one such devotee from India sent him a letter with incomplete address. It only said "Yogiji Maharaj, Kampala. Miraculously he still received it.
- (j) Yet another incidence occurred during the same tour. While Swamishri was in Nairobi a haribhakta sent a letter to him. The postbox number of the Nairobi mandir was 570 but the letter was addressed to postbox 750, which belonged to a Parsi gentleman. Coincidentally, Swami paid a visit at this Parsi gentleman's home. The letter was delivered to Swami while he was visiting there. The Parsi gentleman felt very happy and he told Swami, that it was his good fortune that the sender wrote his post box number. Thus, Yogiji Maharaj's letters inspired each and every recipient to lead a spiritual life and ultimately become ekantik bhakta. It also created a personal bond between a guru and a disciple.

3. Yogiji Maharaj's ideals for service: Shriji Maharaj, Guru Parampara and other Sadgurus (Only incidents from 'That Is Why Our Mind Is at Peace'). (Ch 11)

- (a) Yogiji Maharaj idolized the seva done by Shriji Maharaj, Gunatitanand Swami, Shastriji Maharaj, Sadgurus, paramhansas and past haribhaktas and he looked up to them as his role models. Yogiji Maharaj often narrated the prasangs from their time. Below are the prasangs narrated by Yogiji Maharaj:
- (a) Once Gunatitanand swami was travelling with a group of 30 Santos to Bhal region. On the way it rained so hard that everyone's shoes got stuck in the heavy, sticky mud and they were no longer able to wear it. So Gunatitanand Swami placed everyone's shoes in a large piece of cloth, tied it up in a bundle and carried it on his head for the rest of their trip. Thus, he did seva of all the sadhus by carrying 40kg and cutting the distance of 16km. with their muddy shoes. Once Shastriji Maharaj walked 60 miles wading through 4 feet deep rain water to bring maisur, a sweet dish to Bhagatji Maharaj.
- (b) Even Shriji Maharaja washed Sadhus kaupins and made rotlas for them. Muktanand swami begged alms for sadhus, swept the mandir grounds. Once the Mahant of Tarnetar came for Swami's darshan for the first time. He enquired to Swami about the mahant of the mandir. Little later Swami arrived where the Mahant was waiting for the Mahant of Junagadh. The mahant was shocked to see Gunatitanand swami. He told Swami that just now you were sweeping the grounds. On hearing this swami said, "Here, the one who does seva is the Mahant."
- (c) Once, a devotee asked Gunatitanand swami that how he achieved his greatness. To that Swami replied that it was by scrubbing dishes of the devotees. His finger nails were all worn out by scrubbing dishes every day.
- (d) Once when the Diwan of Gondal came to visit Shastriji Maharaj, he was shocked to see him preparing plastering material for construction of the mandir. The Diwan was overwhelmed by Swami's humility and modesty and his respect for Swami grew even deeper. Thus, Yogiji Maharaj narrated such inspiring prasangs of seva to devotees and he himself did such seva too as he looked up to his ideals, Shriji Maharaj, Gunatitanand Swami and Shastriji Maharaj.

Q.10 *Write incidents on any TWO of the following topics. (Each should contain two incidents of five lines each) (Total Marks: 8)*

- 1. Vignandas Swami beating Yogiji Maharaj. (Only incidents from 'Living with Vignandas Swami'.)**
1. Once, on a hot summer's day, the guru-shishya pair reached a village near Dhandhuka. The Darbar of the village was an atheist. He did not welcome them. Rather, he treated them rudely. The Darbar's wife, though, was religious. At her repeated requests, the Darbar agreed to give food grains for cooking. His servant brought the grains to the mandir but forgot to take a small vessel full of ghee. Later, the Darbar reached the mandir for lunch. Yogiji Maharaj began to serve Swami Vignandas and the guests, including the Darbar. The chapattis did not have ghee spread on them. So, the Darbar started making a fuss, that the sadhus had consumed the ghee. He hastily finished lunch and went home grumbling. So, Vignandas Swami lost his temper, blaming Yogiji Maharaj. He stood up and started hurling abuses at him. When he fell short of words, he started beating him with his hands. Then he used firewood to inflict blows on Yogiji Maharaj. As a result, Yogiji Maharaj fainted. The guru, having vented his anger, lay on his bed, ordering a fast for the day to Yogiji Maharaj as atonement for being careless. (Ch 8. Pg. 40)
2. On a scorching afternoon, Vignandas Swami got off the train at a small station near Junagadh. As instructed by him, Yogiji Maharaj had written to the devotees to come to the station to receive them. But due to the heat no one had turned up. So Vignandas Swami lost his temper, thinking that Yogi had forgotten to write the letter. Yogiji Maharaj was a handy and easy prey for him to give vent to his anger. After calling him names, and unleashing offensive words and allegations, he began to slap, and rain blows on Yogiji Maharaj. (Ch 8. Pg. 41)
3. A carpenter, hailing from a region in Gujarat, had settled in Bhavnagar for business. He was addicted to opium. He often took vows from Vignandas Swami to give up the habit but failed to keep the vow. Vignandas Swami gave him strict vows of fasts as penance for his lapses. Once, Vignandas Swami spent the whole day at his house and forbade him to go out. By evening, the carpenter complained of severe body ache. He began to scream with pain. Out of compassion for him, Yogiji Maharaj could not bear the sight. He told Kanjibhai, a devotee, "The poor fellow is suffering much. Please fetch him some opium." Vignandas Swami came to know of it. He got angry with Yogiji Maharaj and ticked him off publicly. He also beat him up. Finding Yogiji Maharaj trembling with pain, the carpenter felt a chill down his spine; the sight was too much for him to bear. Then, with determination, he got rid of the habit after fifteen days. (Ch 8. Pg. 43)
4. Vignandas Swami often treated Yogiji Maharaj in such slavish manner. If he ever erred in reciting the Vato, he would be ordered to observe a fast. At times, Vignandas Swami even made him place his hand downturned and then hit his fingers with a rolling pin. Yogiji Maharaj trembled with fear but bore it without complaining. (Ch 8. Pg.43, 44)
5. Once, Vignandas Swami was at his worst, subjecting Yogiji Maharaj to untold torture. Yogiji Maharaj was having his meal on the first floor of a Hari mandir after serving Vignandas Swami and other sadhus. Yogiji Maharaj always sat on his haunches to eat a hasty meal. Once, Vignandas Swami came to him while he was having his meal. Roaring, Vignandas Swami picked up a pair of pincers from the kitchen and pinched the right calf of Yogiji Maharaj. Yogiji Maharaj's feet were thin, and the calf started bleeding profusely; the pain was excruciating. Yogiji Maharaj tried to rise to apologize (for no fault of his) without expressing contempt or pain, but because of loss of blood he fell on the floor. Watching his disciple writhing in pain, the cruel guru walked away. Then, the devotees got Yogiji Maharaj's calf bandaged. The black mark on the calf, however, remained as a mark of the untold suffering he had undergone at the guru's hands. (8. Pg. 45, 46)
6. Once, Vignandas Swami pushed Yogiji Maharaj from the open terrace down to the courtyard of the mandir in Sokhda. What would have happened to a person in such a situation is anybody's guess. But for Maharaj's protection he would not have survived the fall. (Ch 8. Pg. 45)
7. Vinu Bhagat was pressing Yogiji Maharaj's feet. Being with Yogiji Maharaj all alone was a rare opportunity. Seizing the opportunity, Vinu Bhagat asked Yogiji Maharaj what had been haunting his mind for a long time, "How did you get this black mark on your calf?" Yogiji Maharaj didn't say anything. But Vinu Bhagat insisted

on knowing it. For fear of disappointing Vinu Bhagat, Yogiji Maharaj spoke in hushed tones, “It was caused by Vignandas Swami who pinched with a pair of pincers. “Hearing this, Vinu Bhagat felt a chill down his spine. Then, he wanted to know more of Yogiji Maharaj’s bitter experiences. He urged him to share them. Yogiji Maharaj gave some details and said, “He had beaten me with sticks and rolling pins and punched and kicked me at least a hundred times. Perhaps, more than that.” (Ch 8. Pg.46)

8. In April–May 1936 (Vaishakh, V.S. 1992), Ranchhod Bhagat passed away in Dangra. Hence, Shastriji Maharaj deputed Yogiji Maharaj to attend to the after-death rites. Yogiji Maharaj was then 44 years old and the mahant of Akshar Mandir, Gondal. After the rites and the meal, the devotees and sadhus chose to rest. Yogiji Maharaj found a place for Khengarjibhai of Ahmedabad to sleep, and he, too, slept nearby. After a few minutes, Khengarjibhai, who was fast asleep, woke up, disturbed by the noise of beating, abuse and anger. It was indeed a terrible scene for Khengarjibhai to behold. Vignandas Swami, sitting on the chest of Yogiji Maharaj, was pounding his chest, face and nose with his fists. And Yogiji Maharaj was praying with folded hands to excuse him if he was at fault. Khengarjibhai simmered with rage. “Want to be guru, Jogta!” Vignandas Swami shouted, burning with jealousy and spewing venom while continually beating Yogiji Maharaj. Then the Kshatriya spirit in Khengarjibhai erupted and he roared at Vignandas, “Stop this brazen act of gurudom or else...” And he strongly pressed Vignandas’s mouth with his hand. Vignandas Swami didn’t expect this. He stood dazed. (Ch 8. Pg. 47, 48)

2. Darshan of the stepwell of Adalaj and Gnanjivandas’ intense austerities. (Only incidents from ‘An all-round Sadhu’.)

1. Jhina Bhagat, the parshad, was named Sadhu Gnanjivandas by Acharya Shripatiprasadji on 11 April 1911 (Chaitra sud 13 in V.S. 1967) at Vartal. The eleven sadhus who were initiated that day then left for Junagadh, led by Swami Chaturbhujdas. He wanted them to visit other Swaminarayan mandirs for a pilgrimage on the way to Junagadh. From Vartal, they first reached Ahmedabad and had darshan of the Nar-Narayan Mandir. Thereafter, they walked to the Adalaj stepwell which was sanctified by Shriji Maharaj. The to and fro visit was at least 36 km long. To everyone’s surprise, Swami Gnanjivandas and Swami Hariprasaddas had fasted on that day. At noon, all other sadhus gathered for lunch, but the two did not join them. Others failed in their efforts to persuade them to take food. Despite the waterless fast, Swami Gnanjivandas looked as fresh and agile as ever. (Ch 4. Pg.26)
2. The Swaminarayan sadhus of Junagadh had made a mark in their austerity. Swami Gnanjivandas stood out among them with his inclination for fasting. To please Shriji Maharaj, he fasted every three days. He also observed rigorous fasts like taptakruchha, chandrayan and dharna-parna earnestly. He shunned milk and ghee and was not at all keen on sweets. Whenever there was a feast, he chose to observe a fast. Simplicity was the bedrock of his life. He ate only a simple meal of rotlo, dal and buttermilk. A hessian cloth was his mattress and he used his hands as a pillow. Early in his days as a sadhu, the Jogi in him was discovered by the sadhus of Junagadh. (Ch 4. Pg.26)

3. The divinity shown in Gondal. (Only incidents from ‘Healing Touch of Divinity’.)

1. In the month of October 1957 (Aso, VS 2013), a yagna to celebrate Gunatitanand Swami’s birthday took place in Gondal. About 20,000 devotees came. Swami met hundreds of them individually. On the last day, Swami blessed the cooks also. He also blessed the Brahmins who performed the yagna and the volunteers who had offered seva. It is simply amazing how Swami managed to meet and speak to so many devotees. (Ch 22. Pg. 166)
2. A day-long discourse was held on the bank of Akshar Ghat in Gondal on 21 October 1958, on the occasion of Sharad Purnima. In the evening, the festival of Sharad Purnima was celebrated. Mr. V.C. Dave, District Judge of Gondal, was invited by Chhotubhai Vakil for the celebration. He came with his wife, but the volunteers explained that there were separate arrangements for men and women to go to the venue. The judge was upset at the segregation and returned home after having darshan of the Akshar Deri from

outside. The next day Swami appeared in his dream. He described the dream, "I saw Swami in a dream early morning at five o'clock. Swami rebuked me and asked me why I had gone back from the fountain, without attending the assembly by the river bank. Then I suddenly awoke. It was sheer divinity. This was enough for me to have reverence for him." Swami drew intellectuals towards satsang in this way. (Ch 22. Pg. 167)

3. Once, Swami was circumambulating the Akshar Deri with some devotees. He suddenly held the hand of Manibhai Brahmabhatt and Gordhanbhai Brahmabhatt of Ahmedabad, looked into their eyes and asked them smilingly, "Do you have doubts about what this Jogi will achieve? He will be loved by one and all and will complete all the works started by Shastriji Maharaj. Satsang will grow. From now onwards don't harbor any doubts about it." Both the devotees were amazed at Swami's words. They realized that Swami had cleared their doubts. (Ch 22. Pg.167)
4. Cured Akshar Mandir's bull of the cancer of horns by making it drink the sacred water of Akshar Deri. (Ch 22. Pg. 171)
5. Prayed at Akshar Deri for financial aid to pay wages to the masons and carpenters by placing a prayer note and chanting the Swaminarayan dhun. The aid came soon from Morarji Sheth of Rajkot and Shastriji Maharaj. (Ch 22.Pg. 172)

4. The foreign tour of 1970. (Only incidents from 'Without Haste, Without Rest'.)

1. When Swami was in East Africa, devotees from England also flew there for satsang and darshan. They invited Swami to visit England. The cold weather of England would not suit Swami. Yet, he decided to go there to please the devotees and consecrate the murtis of the mandir. He landed in London on 23 May 1970. The devotees had acquired an old St. John's Baptist Church to make into a mandir. They renovated it to make a shrine and an assembly hall measuring 40 ft. x 40 ft. There was also a large hall in the basement. (Ch 18. Pg. 140)
2. The mandir consecration ceremony was a historical event on the soil of England. A long, dazzling procession was taken out which passed through the main streets of London. The procession was to begin from Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park. Devotees and well-wishers came from Leicester, Luton, Cardiff, Cambridge, Manchester, Birmingham, Banbury, Bradford, Liverpool and Bolton. Some devotees came from East Africa and USA, too. (Ch 18. Pg. 140)
3. When Swami entered the mandir, the Kadir Brothers, who were the disciples of Bismillah Khan, were playing the bhairavi raga on their shehnais. The music lent an oriental and holy air to the occasion. A wooden throne for the murtis had been made by an English carpenter and was decked with flowers and lamps. There was a railing round the main stage. Press reporters and photographers were seated on the left side of the stage. Some TV channels had sent their crews to cover the event. There were close circuit TVs too, which showed the consecration ceremony for the devotees seated in the hall below and for those waiting on the road. The murtis were placed on a wooden simhasan or altar. Dr Pandit Narayanji and other scholars chanted Vedic mantras while Swami and the sadhus performed the consecration rituals. Swamishri and Pramukh Swami sat in front of the simhasan. Swamishri performed the nayas ritual. Swamishri performed the final part of the murti-pratishtha ceremony by holding a mirror before each of the murtis. All through this rite, the sadhus and the devotees chanted the Swaminarayan mantra. Pramukh Swami performed the ritual installation of Yogiji Maharaj's murti. Finally, the pratishtha rituals concluded with Vedic chants. (Ch 18. Pg. 141)

Q.11 *Write incidents on any TWO of the following topics. (Each should contain two incidents of five lines each) (Total Marks: 8)*

March 2015

1. **Almast Jogi (engrossed within with bhakti/seva) (Ch 6)**

- (a) Once Shastriji Maharaj invited Vignandas Swami and his mandal to Sarangpur. To welcome them, Nagji Sheth sponsored kansar, a sweet item, for their meals. Yogiji Maharaj, zealously went to beg alms and collected 50 kg of wheat flour. Yogiji Maharaj with the help of other sadhus prepared kansar. Shastriji Maharaj himself served kansar liberally to the sadhus from Junagadh. Yogiji Maharaj had taken a vow to abstain from milk and ghee, Shastriji Maharaj served him a lot of kansar, regardless, and insisted him to eat it. That event was the beginning of a robust guru-shishya relationship between the two.
- (b) When the land for the mandir in Sarangpur was acquired a fence around the plot had to be put up. Yogiji Maharaj would wake up at three o'clock in the morning and, after his bath and puja, make rotla and help out with fence building. Despite this hectic schedule, Yogiji Maharaj also looked after the blind sadhu Bhagwatswarupdas. He used to help him with his daily routine such as bathing, laundry, meals and make his bed. Such was his devotion to service.
- (c) Once Shastriji Maharaj invited these Junagadh sadhus to Bochasan to celebrate the Shravani Punam samaiyo. Motibhai went to the station with garlands to welcome the sadhus. To his surprise, he saw Yogiji Maharaj carrying five potlas or bundles on him and yet he appeared full of energy, very happy and jovial. Motibhai and other satsangis were touched by his saintliness. Yogiji Maharaj was sincerely engrossed in both seva and bhakti. The devotees attending the samaiyo were deeply moved by the fervor of seva and bhakti, and they enjoyed his fluent recital of Bhaktachintamani, discourses on Swamini Vato and Vachanamrut.
- (d) After the punam celebration, Shastriji Maharaj sent the sadhus from Junagadh to Chansad. Yogiji Maharaj took care of Mahapurushdas, besides cooking for all the sadhus and devotees. He was always on the lookout for more seva. Thus, Yogiji Maharaj cleaned dishes after lunch on behalf of an old parshad. When Mahapurush Swami learned about this he said, "Jogi has truly imbibed the essence of Vachanamrut Gadhada II 7. His seva far outweighs his young age." Thus, Yogiji Maharaj stayed almost or engrossed in seva and bhakti all day long doing all kinds of seva and memorizing Vachanamruts, Swamini Vato and Bhaktachintamani.

2. Introduction of Pramukh Swami Maharaj. (Ch 26)

Yogiji Maharaj had decided to go to dham and had taken ill for some time. He declared to Harshadbhai Dave that he will not survive for long. Upon hearing this Harshadbhai was deeply saddened and said, "Bapa, you are our heart and soul. Who will care for us when you are not here?" Swamishri immediately said, "Pramukh Swami is with you. He will give you more happiness than I did."

Yogiji Maharaj, too had declared, "Now, my task will be taken over by Pramukh Swami. Pramukh Swami is everything to me." Even Shri Krishnashankar Shastri supported this in his address at the public memorial, held to pay homage to Yogiji Maharaj. He said, "Shriji Maharaj and Shastriji Maharaj worked through Yogiji Maharaj. Shastriji Maharaj spoke through Yogiji Maharaj and all that Yogiji Maharaj wishes to speak, he will say through Pramukh Swami. "Pramukh Swami is the face of Yogiji Maharaj. "Yogiji Maharaj will now speak through Pramukh Swami."

3. Efforts for the pure upasana of Akshar-Purushottam. (Ch 5)

While still being in Vartal, in Samvat 1961 Shastriji Maharaj installed the murtis of Akshar Purushottam Maharaj in Vadhvan. After Shastriji Maharaj left Vartal and in Samvat 1963 he inaugurated first Akshar Purushottam Mandir in Bochasan. He tirelessly advocated Akshar Purushottam upasana which echoed everywhere including Vartal, Ahmedabad and Junagadh regions. In Junagadh Swami Gnanjivandas was greatly influenced by Akshar-Purushottam upasana. He left Junagadh on July 9, 1911 to be united with Swami Yagnapurushdas to freely propagate the gnan of Akshar Purushottam Upasana.

4. Compassion for the jiva, but not the body. (Ch 12)

During the Suvarna Kalash Jayanti of Gadhada mandir, 51 youths who got Bhagwati diksha had observed a nirjala fast. One of the youths Mahendra Bhagat felt very weak and dehydrated from the severe hot weather, so he was resting. When Yogiji Maharaj visited him after the nightly katha, Mahendra Bhagat was not able to speak as he was completely drained out. Swamishri did not permit him to have water at that time but advised him to rest till 12 midnight and drink water after taking bath and doing puja. In matters of observing a fast, Swamishri never showed any pity no matter how much the youths suffered as he cared more for the jiva (soul) than the body.

Once, a young child named Hitesh Parekh observed a nirjala fast. When it was time for Swamishri's evening bath, Hitesh too joined the rest of the youths. When Swamishri enquired who had observed a fast Hitesh informed that he had observed a nirjala fast but was not able to bear it any longer. So, one of the youths urged Swamishri to show some mercy and let Hitesh have some water but Swamishri refused. He said, "You pity his body while I pity his jiva."

March 2016

Q.11 *Write incidents on any TWO of the following topics. (Each should contain two incidents of five lines each) (Total Marks: 6)*

1. Respect for other religions: Meeting with the firm of Anandji Kalyanji and Peter. (Ch 24)

- (a) Respecting Yogiji Maharaj for his holiness and charisma the trustees of Sheth Anandji Kalyanji firm of Palitana invited Swamishri. He accepted their invitation and visited the firm. Then they led him to their upashray (place of worship for Jains). Swamishri's simplicity and respect for their faith deeply touched the organizers and employees of the firm. Soon the word of Swamishri's visit spread among some devotees of the juna mandir. They felt that a Swaminarayan sadhu should not visit a Jain mandir since the Jain sadhus do not ever visit the Swaminarayan mandirs. A devotee spoke to Swamishri about this, but Swamishri said politely that we did not go alone, [the murti of] Thakorji was with us too.
- (b) Yogiji Maharaj's respect towards other religions can be seen from his encounter with Mr. Peter Langley, then chief officer of Scotland Yard Police for race relations. Peter was very religious. He read out some moral aphorisms of Solomon from the Bible to Swamishri. He gifted a translated version of the Old and New Testaments and some other biblical literature to Swamishri. He said, "What can I gift to you? So, I give the Bible, a book of our religion." Swamishri called Peter to be an incarnation of Sir John Malcolm. (Shriji Maharaj had gifted the Shikshapatri to Sir John Malcolm in Rajkot. When Dada Khachar brought a horse to gift it to Malcolm, the latter said, "The Shikshapatri that Maharaj has gifted is greater in value than any number of horses.")

2. Unique experience of letters during second visit to Africa. (Ch 19)

- (a) During Swami's second trip to Africa, a postcard with only 5 paise stamp arrived from India. Swami looked at it inquisitively and asked Vinu Bhagat, "Can this postcard be delivered here?" Vinu Bhagat replied, "No, Bapa. It should have had 15 paise stamp. An airmail letter with 15 paise stamp is available separately. Swami amazingly, looking at the postcard again said that then the sender should have used that letter. How can this incident be viewed, whether by singing the glory of Swamishri, understanding the mahima of the postcard sender's feelings or appreciate the mahima of Africa's postal services?
- (b) Yet another incidence occurred during the same tour. While Swamishri was in Nairobi a haribhakta sent a letter to him. The postbox number of the Nairobi mandir was 570 but the letter was addressed to 750, which belonged to a Parsi gentleman. Coincidentally, Swami paid a visit at this Parsi gentleman's home. The letter was delivered to Swami while he was visiting there. The Parsi gentleman felt very happy and he told Swami, that it was his good fortune that the sender wrote his post box number. From the above prasangs it is noted that how the letters miraculously reached Yogibapa.

3. Leaflets hindering the work of the true upasana of Akshar-Purushottam (Ch 9)

- (a) The Vartal Swaminarayan mandir once published despicable article demeaning both Shastriji Maharaj and Yogiji Maharaj in its monthly publication. The devotees and leaders of the society thought of taking a legal action. Therefore, the secretary of the Sanstha drafted a letter in defense of the Vartal article. As Ambalalbai of Surat began to read the draft to Yogiji Maharaj, he asked to see it. He immediately handed it over to a devotee seated by him and asked him to tear it up into pieces and said that our mission in life is to worship God and to inspire others to worship.
- (b) During Yogiji Maharaj's first visit to Tabora, East Africa in 1955, a devotee came to see Yogiji Maharaj with pamphlets and a copy of Africa Samachar which contained slanderous writings against him. The devotee was quite angry and informed Swamishri to read it and suggested to take legal action against them. Yogiji Maharaj did not even care to look at the flyers and the newspaper, calmed the devotee and said not to take any action against it. He further said that Maharaj will take care for us.
- (c) Due to Yogiji Maharaj's popularity after his foreign tour in 1955, members of the old Sampradaya printed defamatory flyers demeaning Yogiji Maharaj. Yogiji Maharaj laughed it off saying that we should not feel offended by it but instead treat it as a warning so that we don't act in that manner in future.

4. Fasts ordered by Vignandas Swami on Yogiji Maharaj. (Ch 9)

- (a) Once, on a hot summer's day, the guru-shishya pair reached a village near Dhandhuka. The Darbar of the village was an atheist but his wife was religious. Upon her request, the Darbar had his servant bring the sidhu or cooking ingredients to the mandir but forgot to bring a small vessel full of ghee. When the Darbar arrived at the mandir for lunch he grumbled about gheeless chapattis and left hastily. So, Vignandas Swami lost his temper, and severely abused Yogiji Maharaj both verbally and physically and ordered him to fast for the day. When the Darbar realized that the small vessel of ghee was left behind at home, he hurried back to the mandir only to find Yogiji Maharaj beaten up very badly. The Darbar realized that what had happened to Yogiji Maharaj was due to his lapse in not bringing the vessel of ghee. He prostrated to Yogiji Maharaj with deep remorse and what he saw was enough for him to repent for his actions.
- (b) Once Yogiji Maharaj and Mahatam Swami cooked a meal served all. When they were about to eat Vignandas Swami, who envied Yogiji Maharaj's popularity, decided not to allow him to eat. Before he could eat even a morsel or two, Vignandas Swami roared, "Jogi, observe a fast today." And he snatched his bowl. So, Yogiji Maharaj stood up. The devotees urged Swami Vignandas to let him have his meal, but he did not relent. In the evening, Yogiji Maharaj went for a bath at the well on the outskirts of the village. Narsinhbhai and Jethabhai, two devotees, happened to pass by. They enquired Yogiji Maharaj, "Why don't you protest when Vignandas Swami ill-treats you for no fault of yours? You should leave him." Yogiji Maharaj, holding their hands, stopping them by saying, "Do not utter such words. The guru's rebuke and criticism are always for the betterment of his disciples." Hearing this, the devotees were amazed to see Yogiji Maharaj's rare virtues as a sadhu.
- (c) Whenever Vignandas Swami and Yogiji Maharaj visited Mirsapur, they stayed at a farmhouse of Jivabhai Ranchhodbhai. Once, Yogiji Maharaj cooked the meal and offered it to Thakorji. When it was time for him to eat, Vignandas Swami ordered him to fast. Yogiji Maharaj quietly put back his pattar in the bag. Jivabhai and his relatives requested Vignandas Swami to relent, but he stuck to his guns. Then Yogiji Maharaj himself tried to pacify them and advised with a smile, "We must honor the guru's words. Don't ever displease the guru."

March 2017

1. Talks about eagerness in the youth assembly and washed the clothes of youths. (Ch 11 page 94)

- (a) Yogiji Maharaj often spoke about his zeal for seva to the youths on his love for seva. He said that he had offered seva to as many as 40 Sadgurus. He would wake up at 3.00 a.m. to prepare 150 rotlas. He would pack them with gur and pickles and get the lunches ready for the departing groups of devotees. He said that he felt utmost joy and so content serving great sadhus and devotees that even if he were to die right at that very moment, he would have no regrets. Even at the age of 70 Yogiji Maharaj used to say that if I were asked to cook today, I am able to cook for and serve food to more than fifty people without getting tired. Yogiji Maharaj's spirit to serve was very obvious to the youths around him. Expressing his passion for service, he used to say, "Do seva well. Only the fortunate get such chances. I have served for 40 years. I have always had my meal at the end doing with the leftover food. Serving selflessly earns oneself a great merit."
- (b) Once, Yogiji Maharaj was Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. He went to use the shower at the mandir and found a pile of unwashed clothes left by the youths. So, he locked the door from inside and washed all the clothes. He felt a great pleasure doing that seva. Only when he came out of the bathroom did everyone realize that he had washed all the clothes.

2. Swamishri at the pilgrim place of Chhapaiya. (Ch 21 pages 236-238)

- (a) During the pilgrimage of Chhapaiya, Swami had the darshan of the murti of Ghanshyam Maharaj closely. Then he went to the well where Ghanshyam bathed and had the stone scroll read out to the devotees at the memorial shrine built there. Then Swami undid the knot on his upper cloth to retrieve some flowers kept from his puja to scatter them into the well.
- (b) He visited the most scared birthplace of Shriji Maharaj. They had to use torch to light the dark and narrow passage so that Swami could have darshan of the room. Here he picked some sacred soil from the spot where Maharaj was born and reverently placed it on his head and touched it to his eyelids. He asked the sadhus to pack some sacred soil. Then he and the sadhus chanted the Swaminarayan dhun.
- (c) In the late afternoon, he had darshan of the memorial shrines of Dharmapita and Bhaktimata, where he prostrated and did pradakshina. Swamishri learned about the history of the various places in greater details from the guide at the site. Swami had darshan of the old tree where Kalidatt was killed and redeemed by Maharaj. He offered his prostrations before it. He had darshan of the triangular farm and the Meen Sarovar where Maharaj transported the fisherman into samadhi, showed him hell and inspired him to give up fishing as his livelihood. On the way to the village, behind the mandir, he had darshan of the jambu tree where Maharaj had climbed and eaten jambus from. Swamishri drank water from the prasadi nearby. He had darshan of Khampa Lake where Maharaj was wounded by the stump of a tree. There he sprinkled some water from the lake on his head.
- (d) On their way back from the Chhapaiya pilgrimage Swamishri wished to have darshan of the peepul tree which was far away in the field. Swami's chair was behind the cart so he requested someone to bring it out so that he could be carried to the Peepal tree. Gunvantbhai the accompanying haribhakta did not want Swami to visit the peepul tree because of difficulty in getting there but Swamishri pleaded to him for the darshan of the peepul tree. Upon Swamishri's strong desire to have the darshan here, Ishwarcharan Swami asked to Swamishri saying, "Bapa, is this place so sacred?" "Of course! This is a great pilgrimage, at this place Maharaj had climbed up to the peepul tree, to seek us all, out" Swami explained the glory of the place. Swami sat in the chair and had the devotees carry him to have the darshan of the place where once the peepul stood.

3. Nagji Sheth gave oil and Manat Swami slipped. (Ch 10)

- (a) Nagji Sheth once, gave a bottle of cooking oil worth four annas to Haridas swami. Few months later Nagji Seth asked Haridas Swami if he wanted some more oil. Haridas Swami never used the cooking oil in the first place. He would crumble up three days old rotlas and add buttermilk to it.

- (b) While travelling to Rajkot, Yogiji Maharaj showed a river to the sadhus accompanying him and told them that he and Manat Swami crossed that river regularly in order to collect alms. They used to walk back in a foot-deep water carrying flour, rice and dal. Once, they lost 20 kg of flour when Manat Swami slipped and fell in the water while cross back and they returned only with the rice and dal that were in Yogiji Maharaj's bag.

4. Jokes regarding handwriting. (Ch 19)

- (a) Once, a devotee was advised by Swami to sponsor a few mahapujas in his name. Swami instructed the assistant to write the letter and address it to the devotee. He asked him to put the dispatch number of the letter before posting. The dispatch number written on top of the letter was 2043. Details of the mahapuja were also given in the letter. The devotee could not fully decipher Swami's handwriting. He took the dispatch number as the number of mahapujas. He wrote back to Swami, expressing regret that he could not afford that many mahapujas, but will sponsor 200 pujas. This letter raised laughter when it reached Swamishri. Swamishri said that he had only expected 25 mahapujas but he committed for 200 pujas. This is how Swami's handwriting sometimes caused merriment.
- (b) Once, Vinu Bhagat was trying to rewrite what Swamishri's written but was not able decipher certain words. So, he approached Swami for help. Swami tried to read the words, but he too could not decipher them so, scratched and laughing out loud said that he too can't decipher them.
- (c) Usually, the assistant addressed the letter, but sometimes Swamishri addressed the letter too. This frustrated the postmen since he couldn't decipher his writings. So, a postman sent a message complaining that who writes in this way and requesting him not to address the letters. When Yogiji Maharaj learnt about it, he broke into laughter saying that it is his job to make out the words. Then he said that if he can decipher the words from 'Akshardham', then he will be liberated from maya." Sometimes, through such candid statements, Swami revealed profound truths.

March 2018

1. Introduction of Pramukh Swami (Only incidents from 'Departure to Akshardham'). (Ch 26)

- (a) Shortly before going to Akshardham Swamishri declared to Harshadbhai Dave that he would not survive for much longer. Harshadbhai was deeply saddened upon hearing this and asked Swamishri that who will care for them when he was not here. Swamishri at once replied that Pramukh Swami is with you and he will make you even happier than he did.
- (b) Yogiji Maharaj often said, "I and Yogi are one." So, "Now, Pramukh Swami will carry on my task." Pramukh Swami is my whole and sole."
- (c) After Swamishri's cremation, Sant Swami also confirmed it in his address that Swamishri has not passed away and he is very much alive in Pramukh Swami.

2. Jhino will definitely become a great devotee in the future (Only incidents from 'Radiant Early Life'). (Ch 9-10)

- (a) Once the teachers of the school took the students to the neighborhood mango grove for picnic. When it was time for lunch, Jhina spread a piece of cloth imprinted with the images of Sahajanand Swami and Gunatitanand Swami and offered his snacks with reverence. Upon request Jhina patiently and lovingly offered other students picnic lunch to the murtis. The teachers wondered how different Jhina was and someday he will become a great devotee.
- (b) Whenever other students indulged in gossip with the teachers, Jhina would go in a corner and worshipped God. Observing him the headmaster, often said, "I strongly feel that Jhina will grow up to be a great devotee."

3. Yogiraj: Immense faith in the Akshar Deri. (Only incidents from ‘Those Were Also the Days...’). Yogiraj’s staunch faith for Aksharderi (Ch 10)

- (a) Once, Shastriji Maharaj asked Hakabhai who managed the Gondal mandir accounting if things were going well at the mandir. Hakabhai gave updates about the current situation of the mandir to Shastriji Maharaj and told him that Yogiji Maharaj does dhun every evening after aarti making unrealistic sankalps or wishes. He prays to Maharaj for increasing the number of devotees and for the satsang to spread in the whole universe whereas only two devotees, Keshavji and Narayanbhai, come every evening. He makes sankalps that may the sadhus increase and may there be mounds of money whereas there’s no money at all. Yogiji Maharaj assured Hakabhai that everything will turn out well and did dhun with utmost faith.
- (b) Once Hakabhai brought the accounts statement to Yogiji Maharaj showed him that there was no money and the construction crew’s wages were overdue. Yogiji Maharaj took the statement and wrote in red ink, “Swami! Maharaj! The Merciful! Please send money for the construction crew wages. It is for your sake only.” Then they went to Akshar Deri and placed the statement on the charanarvind of Bhagwan Swaminarayan and chanted Swaminarayan dhun continuously for two hours. Hakabhai grew impatient but Yogiji Maharaj kept chanting tirelessly, with eyes closed. At twelve noon, Morarjibhai Sheth came from Rajkot and offered thirteen hundred rupees as donation. Yogiji Maharaj asked Hakabhai, get the receipt for Shethji. Just then a registered envelope arrived from Shastriji Maharaj with a money order for two thousand rupees.

4. The Kundalini was awakened, and the tiger became a cow.

- (a) Amthlal Barot, a native of Jaska, was quite a learned and a great philosopher. He worshipped the goddess Jagdamba. He had studied every single religious book in the library of Jaska. He defeated any spiritual leaders and organizations in a philosophical debate. However, whenever he debated with his nephews, Ambalalbai and Pratapbhai, of Unava, they explained the philosophical points to him on the basis of the Vachanamrut and talked to him about the saintliness of Yogiji Maharaj. They persuaded Amthlal to come for Yogiji Maharaj’s darshan and he finally agreed. Swamishri welcomed him joyously and blessed him by patting his back. Amthlal felt the awakening of his kundalini and saw Jagadamba before his eyes. The miracle made him become attracted towards Yogiji Maharaj. He studied the Vachanamrut and the Swamini Vato and became a great scholar in them and by the grace Swamishri he understood the Akshar-Purushottam upasana.
- (b) Vashrambhai Ladhambhai Patel was the village chief of Kamarkotda. He was mean and cruel, heavily built and carried a double-barreled gun. Once, Haribhai Patel of Bhavnagar visited Vashrambhai and spent a whole night talking to him about the greatness of Yogiji Maharaj. Vashrambhai went to Gondal the next day and became a satsangi after having the darshan of Swamishri’s jovial face. When he returned to his village, everyone was surprised to see Vashrambha with a mala in his hand instead of his usual gun.

March 2019

Q.11 Describe any TWO of the following incidents and give your thoughts. (Total Marks: 6)

1. Let’s embrace: At the River Und. (Ch 21. Pg.159)

Incident: Preparations were afoot in Bhadra for the murti-pratishtha of the mandir. Swami, who visited Bhadra for the purpose, saw the well that was being dug at the other end of the Und River to get water supply for the occasion. Simultaneously a pipeline was also being laid to carry the water. Then, Swami went to the sacred banyan tree, prostrated before it and stretched his arms to embrace it. A brief satsang assembly was also held in the shade of the tree. Kalvani was another important sacred place for him. It was here that Maharaj initiated 500 paramhansas in a single day. Whenever Swami visited Kalvani, he became

absorbed in darshan and would not leave the place too soon. He also prayed here to have his wish fulfilled of giving sadhu diksha to more youths.

Thought: Whenever we visit any pilgrim places, we should contemplate on divine actions of Maharaj and Gurus. Maharaj and Gurus are always present in those places. We should do darshan with such thoughts.

2. On the visit of the several local mandirs in Nairobi. (Ch 24. Pg. 179)

Incident: Swami visited several local mandirs during his visit to Nairobi. He would always do it during his visit to cities and towns. He would meet the devotees engaged in seva, bhajan and worship and fortify their faith. During his visits to mandirs in India, he would always tell the devotees travelling with him to offer donations to the pujari and the mandir.

Thought: Dharma brings man closer to spirituality. In the name of dharma, man instead of creating feuds, respects everyone and worships God with strength and unity.

3. Yogiji Maharaj's magic. (Appendix: 5 Pg.216)

Incident: The renowned Gujarati folk poet, Dula Bhaya Kag, was fascinated by Yogiji Maharaj's yogic aura. He wrote, "Jogidã ne jovã gayã re, jonãra jhadpãñã, jñã Gangã ma tanãñã..." The words mean, "Those who went to see Jogi were captivated and swept away by his spiritual wisdom..." Whoever met Yogiji Maharaj even once felt drawn towards him. His presence was so mesmerizing, one became oblivious of the surroundings and experienced inner bliss. With his holy touch, even the most hardened criminals turned into honest, law-abiding individuals. In his shadow, many atheists turned into believers and the pleasure-seekers became sadhus by renouncing worldly life.

Thought: in a kingdom, the queen's authority is equal to that of the king. In the same way, that sadhu possesses as much majesty as God. So, by forgiving human beings, he can convert atheist into a follower, and can guide people to follow a spiritual life. 'Saune shital chhayaldi Yogibapa deta, trividh tapo nivare rahemthi.'

4. Shastriji Maharaj: 'He is a Gunatit purush.' (Ch 12. Pg. 74)

Incident: In the early days of January 1949, Yogiji Maharaj had put up at Khengarjibhai's house at Rangila Pol in Ahmedabad. During his stay, Kamalshibhai, Yogiji Maharaj's brother, came for the darshan of Shastriji Maharaj. Seeing him, Yogiji Maharaj at once walked away to the kitchen and busied himself in seva. Kamalshibhai was anxious to have his darshan too. Shastriji Maharaj tried to call Yogiji Maharaj, but he would not come out of the kitchen. Then, Shastriji Maharaj told Kamalshibhai, "He is a Gunatit Sadhu. There is no way he would meet you. Now, I will not call him." Kamalshibhai was a genuine devotee, so he did not insist and left with greater respect for Yogiji Maharaj.

Thought: 'Dharma, gnan, vairagyana ung, icche sacha santno prasang....' Yogiji Maharaj would not budge at all from Shriji Maharaj's agnaa. One who has shunned once, would not remember anything. Having relationship with friends and family is like an obstacle in the path of liberation.

Q.12 *Describe any TWO of the following incidents and give your thoughts. (Total Marks: 6)*

March 2015

1. The allure of his gaze. (Pg. 333-334)

Incident: In the agricultural fields of Anand, satsang sabha would happen at Dr. Ramjibhai's house. Manibhai, Naranbhai and Ambalal (Kalyan Yojna) would go to talk about satsang in Anand. On sabha days, Ambalalbai would go earlier and talk to Ranchhodbhai about the glory of the Sampradaya, Shikshapatri

and Vachanamrut. Ranchhodbhai would get irritated listening to these talks. He had gotten into a quarrel with a satsangi, so he would often say bad words but Ambalalbai would continue with his talks. One time on a cold winter morning, Ambalalbai went to Ranchhodbhai's house by bicycle. He woke up Ranchhodbhai and said, "Yogiji Maharaj has come to Anand, so come for his darshan." Ranchhodbhai showed contempt and refused to come. After Ambalalbai left, he wondered with what motive he would come at 5 in the morning. He changed his mind and went for Swami's darshan. Manibhai introduced Ranchhodbhai to Yogiji Maharaj. Swami looked at him with compassionate eyes and removed jealousy and spite from his heart. Ranchhodbhai's heart felt light as a flower. Swami opened the gates to his heart and showered him with lots of affection.

Thought: 'Deto deto ne deto Jogido deto deto ne deto' (Compassionate Yogi just gave and gave; never asked for anything in return. Without uttering a word, he would teach customs, good conduct, and modesty; all day he would just give and give.)

2. Don't displease the guru. (Pg. 55)

Incident: Whenever Vignandasji and Yogiji Maharaj visited Mirzapur, they would stay in a building on the farm of Jivabhai Ranchhodbhai. One-time Yogiji Maharaj prepared food. When he offered the food to Thakorji, Vignandas Swami at once told Yogiji Maharaj to fast for one day. Yogiji Maharaj obeyed this command right away and put his bowl back into his bag. Jivabhai and his family members requested Vignandas Swami, but he didn't give in. Yogiji Maharaj laughed and explained to the family, 'We should obey all the commands of our guru. Please don't upset the guru.' Vignandas Swami saw all this, but he still didn't put his obstinacy aside.

Thought: Shriji Maharaj has clearly stated, 'If your celibacy is to be broken, then under no circumstances shall you obey your guru's command. Other than that, all other commands should be readily obeyed.' This is why Yogiji Maharaj accepted the fast and explained to the family not to upset Vignandas Swami.

3. Had darshan of Chhapaiya. (Pg. 4-5)

Incident: When Jinabhai was about 7 years old, he climbed up to a high branch on the limbdo tree. His elder brother Kamalshibhai said, 'Zina! Why did you climb up?' Jinabhai said, 'I have climbed up to do darshan of Chhapaiya. I can see Chhapaiya from here. Do you want to see? Come up here and you'll see too.' Kamalshibhai always thought of Jinabhai to be truthful because he never lied even when joking. Out of curiosity, Kamalshibhai climbed up the tree and he truly saw Chhapaiya from there.

Thought: Great men don't make things up. They are great from birth. Ghanshyam Maharaj climbed the peepul tree and did darshan of his devotees on the west side. Similarly, Jinabhai climbed the limbdo tree and had darshan of his Lord's birthplace and gave the same darshan to Kamalshibhai. The talks of great men are strange; they aren't restrained by time and place.

4. Yogiji Maharaj's home visits in Ahmedabad on Ekadashi. (Pg. 173-174)

Incident: Even at the age of 70, to make his devotees happy, Swami never looked after bodily difficulties and would remain engrossed in spiritual visits. In Amdavad on days like Ekadashi, there would be an even bigger crowd. His schedule on 1960's Kartik sud Ekadashi in November went like this: Swami went to do spiritual visits at devotees' homes from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. When he returned to mandir, there was a huge crowd of devotees. They had waited for Swami since the morning, so by the time Swami arrived, their patience had been lost. When it came time to do close darshan of Swami, discipline, peace, management, modesty and obedience all disappeared in their immense love for him. There was so much disorder that Swami had to manage himself. Swami then rested for 10-15 minutes and volunteers came to get him for more spiritual visits! Swami, who loved his devotees, readily agreed and showed just as much enthusiasm. He returned to mandir at 8:15 p.m. and did discourses until midnight.

Thought: For Yogiji Maharaj, this type of chaos was devotion. He loved his devotees, so he never cared for his body. His focus was to make his devotees happy, and he always did so.

March 2016

1. Poet Trapajkar understood that Swamishri knows about the past, present and future.

Incident: Swamishri arrived in Trapaj. Poet Trapajkar had invited the king of Bhavnagar Krushnakumarsihnji via letter to be there when Swamishri arrived. Swamishri had said not to do so from before. The king declined the invitation because he had a prior commitment. The poet didn't like this, but he forgot all when Swamishri arrived. As if a mountainous magnet had come, everyone from the village including Hindu, Muslim, and Jains all went to the outskirts of the village to welcome Swamishri. Swamishri left Trapaj at 10:30 p.m. to go to Tansa. On the second day, Trapajkar received a letter stating that the day before at 11:00 p.m., the king passed away due to a heart attack. The poet then understood why Swami had said not to invite the king.

Thought: Maharaj and Aksharbrahm forever reside in Swamishri; therefore, he knows the activities in all 3 states of time (past, present, future) easily. Swamishri shows this quality of his from time to time.

2. Vinubhai's intense stomach pains.

Incident: Swamishri would advise the sadhus, "If any sadhu or devotee is sick, take care of him. If he is new in satsang but remains ill for 20 years, even then take do his seva." Swamishri would take care of ill devotees himself. He wouldn't look at the ill devotee or sadhu's age or position." One time during spiritual travels, Vinubhai's pichoti moved. He had a severe stomach ache because of this, so he was resting upstairs in the mandir. Swamishri went to Vinubhai. He sat directly in front of him and met the soles of his feet to Vinubhai's soles. Then he held Vinubhai's hands in his hands and he pulled him to make him in a sitting position. He then told Vinubhai to bend and hold his toes. This put the pichoti back in its place and Vinubhai felt relieved. Swamishri then went to the kitchen, rolled some ghee, jaggery and ginger powder into a ball, and had Vinubhai eat it.

Thought: Instructions and advice are not there to only be given. When the time comes and one follows them themselves, they make a strong impact.

3. Pushed the car.

Incident: October 12, 1959 Swamishri was on his way to Gadhada. On the way, the car stopped 2 to 3 times. They would restart the car by pushing it, but the last time this didn't work. Swamishri then came out of the car and started to help push it. Due to rain, the mud was irritating their legs. Swamishri would keep everyone's spirits up with his talks. Another car with devotees came. They tied the cars together with ropes to pull the stopped car, but the ropes broke. Swamishri eventually had to leave for Gadhada in the other car, but before leaving he instructed the devotees to use a tractor to pull the car out.

Thought: Even in difficult times, Swamishri stayed with devotees and helped them. In unfavorable circumstances, he made every effort to keep everyone happy. He never thought that because I'm the guru, I can't do such things.

4. "I ate at an aunt's place."

Incident: Jagjivan Jivraj Kotak of Morbi would often come to Gondal for business. He was in satsang from the beginning. One time when he came to Gondal, Swamishri asked him to eat, but he politely refused saying that he had eaten already. Swamishri asked him where he ate, and he said at Masiba's house. Swamishri then asked him whether his relatives live here in Gondal. He said no, Masiba's house meaning in Loj. Swamishri then said that I didn't know that; you should eat here only. This mandir is for satsang. He

said, "Swamishri! I can't eat where I donate!" Swamishri said, "Don't think like that. This is your house only. Don't go to Loj to eat anymore." Kotak saheb then said, "Due to business work sometimes I run late or early, so it's not good to trouble the Santos; that would be bad. That's why I don't eat here." Swamishri said, "We have no trouble here. When devotees like you eat, then Maharaj and Swami eat with you and they become happy with us."

Thought: Yogiji Maharaj followed commands and injunctions very strictly, but this wasn't one-sided. He understood difficult circumstances and other's emotions as well. Because of this, he would offer the solution himself.

March 2017

1. 'We had not gone alone.'

Incident: The trustees of the well-known Sheth Anandji Kalyanji Trust of Palitana thought of Swamishri to be an influential Sant, so we should invite him to our bank. They went to Swamishri and invited him. Swamishri agreed to go there. He also went to the Jain Santo's residential meeting place (apaasaraa). The managers and servants experienced Swamishri's divinity and were very pleased. This news spread to the devotees of the old mandir (Vartal) and their thought was that a Swaminarayan sadhu shouldn't go to such places because Jain sadhus don't come to our mandirs. Someone told Swamishri this, and he replied, "Who said we went alone? Thakorji went with us." Here, the doubt, question, and reply aren't of importance; what is important is Swamishri's delightful, affectionate visit to other religious places.

Thought: If all the leaders of all religions keep equanimity with all religions, then all people will follow the same sentiment.

2. Experience of yoga.

Incident: In Sarangpur stayed Maganbhai of Sojitra. He knew yoga really well. He felt a unique experience when he first had darshan of Swamishri. At 3:00 p.m., he sat behind closed doors in Shastriji Maharaj's room with Harshadbhai. Maganbhai thought, "I am sitting in the divine presence of Shastriji Maharaj and Yogiji Maharaj." His senses became dull. He forgot time and place. Maganbhai felt this unprecedented experience of being desire-free and passionless for the very first time. This meditative state lasted for 1 hour and 40 minutes. He hadn't experienced this type of meditation even in the Himalayas in the presence of great yogis! He said, "Today I've experienced the happiness of being in the presence of God." Swamishri was a wish-yielding tree (kalpataru). He wanted those who knew yoga to experience this state of enlightenment, those who were knowledgeable to experience deep meditation (Samadhi), and those who wanted to experience God, that type of experience. His aim was to bring everyone closer to God. When Maganbhai would put his experience into words, he would say, "There are many great yogis, but the true yogi is Yogiji Maharaj, the one from who I attained something. He is one who has light, and who can give light? I experienced this compassion from my very first darshan of him."

Thought: Swamishri is like the kalpavruksh (wish-yielding tree). He would find out a person's inclination and use it to bring that person closer to God.

3. Shastriji Maharaj asked to fast for 51 days as repentance.

Incident: One time, due to false instigations by some sadhus, elderly and knowledgeable Akshar Swami (little) scolded Swamishri. He forgot his modesty in doing so. He found faults in such a sadhu in whom Maharaj resides on Earth, one who is Gunatit and told him a few words. Swamishri didn't say a thing; he just listened. But that night, Shastriji Maharaj came in Akshar Swami's dreams and told him, "Why did you hurt such a yogi-like sadhu?" Asking for forgiveness, Akshar Swami said, "Swami! I made a mistake." Shastriji Maharaj told him to do 51 fasts as penance. Akshar Swami then opened his eyes. He felt extremely guilty on the inside. He asked Swamishri for forgiveness, offered coconut and some sugar at his

feet, and did his puja. Swamishri just smiled as if nothing had happened. Akshar Swami completed his 51 fasts in Mumbai, and thereafter started talking about the glory of Yogiji Maharaj to devotees.

Thought: It is hard to understand the actions of the present form. Due to bad company, we sometimes see faults and end up doing what we aren't supposed to. But God and His Sant are compassionate. They forgive our faults and guide us on the right path. They also give us penance for our mistakes.

4. **In my mind, the engine is running, but the mice were making a squealing noise.**

Incident: When in Ambardi, Swamishri did darshan of Jaga Swami's birthplace and upon returning stayed the night at Naranbhai's house in Badhada. His house was made of mud, so there were mice running around at night. There was rain that night, so the mice stayed inside. All night they were making noise. In the morning, Swamishri said, "In my mind, I thought an engine was running but it was the mice who were making 'chu, chu' sounds." Then talking about the past, Swamishri said, "On our way to Africa in 1959, we slept in this room only. A mouse took my rosary. I had told them to look for my rosary. Then through a letter, I found out that the mouse broke the rosary. The mouse attained salvation."

Thought: Shriji Maharaj has said that He has come to Earth to liberate countless souls. This goal of his can only be completed through a manifest Sant. Yogiji Maharaj also has granted liberation to those who come in his company or even his things.

March 2018

1. **Mohanlal Motichand's experience.**

Incident: After Shastriji Maharaj reverted to Akshardham, Yogiji Maharaj returned to Sarangpur, after which everyone felt peace. Swamishri offered prostrations to Shastriji Maharaj whose body was seated in a palanquin. Yogiji Maharaj sat down right next to the palanquin. Devotees had gathered in numbers. Yogiji Maharaj and Pramukh Swami Maharaj did the funeral rites of Shastriji Maharaj in the presence of thousands of devotees. The words of God from the Bhagwat were echoing in the air, 'When I leave this Earth, only Uddhav is the most fit for propagating my knowledge, for he is the greatest amongst those who have knowledge of the soul.' As if he was experiencing this emotion, Mohanlal Motichand told Haka Bapu, "Look, there is divine light shimmering on Yogiji Maharaj's face. I can see how Shastriji Maharaj is present in his every pore. The work of Shastriji Maharaj will carry along."

Thought: God never leaves from this Earth. He changes forms and stays on Earth to give His devotees happiness and fulfill their desires. He also makes his devotees realize this fact.

2. **Please forgive me if I have spoken or done something wrong.**

Incident: Amdavad's Dr. Jitubhai Desai got liver cancer after his bout with jaundice. His friend Diwan Saheb and Chudasama sir talked to Swamishri. Swamishri gave them consecrated water and instructed them to feed a spoonful to Jitubhai every day. In two months, Jitubhai completely recovered. He came to Gondal for Swamishri's darshan. When leaving to return, Swamishri told Jitubhai, "Please forgive anything I may have said or done." Jitubhai asked Swamishri, "Bapa! When will I have your darshan again? When will you call me again? Will you come to Amdavad?" In response, Swamishri just gave a light smile, giving a signal of what was to come ahead (Swamishri's reverting to Akshardham).

Thought: The Satpurush will sometimes tell the future in an indirect way but the jiva doesn't understand this. When it does, it's often too late.

3. **The divine meeting between Swamishri and Puri's Shankaracharya.**

Incident: On July 12, 1965, Shankaracharya Niranjandev Tirth from Jagannathpuri came to mandir for darshan. Swamishri welcomed him with a garland of flowers. On the telling of Chimanlal Shastri, Champakbhai Sheth had Harikrishna Maharaj's and Jagadguru's puja done. Anoopam Shastri, the head

volunteer of Dwarikapith said in a speech, that the meeting of Acharya of Jagannathpuri and the great Sant of the Swaminarayan sect Yogiji Maharaj is a joyous one.” The sadhus then briefly explained the Akshar Purushottam philosophy. They also explained the significance of Shriji Maharaj initiating 500 paramhansas in one night. Swamishri spoke only for a few minutes. Then Shankaracharya Niranjandev Tirth said, “The work of Bhagwan Swaminarayan and Yogiji Maharaj is nourishing the Hindu religion. It will take it forward and keep it alive.”

Thought: When two religious leaders meet, their members also meet. A soulful bridge forms a connection amongst one another. The concept of “the world is one family” comes into place here.

4. Hanuman Bapa! Are you there?’

Incident: Swamishri went to visit Bhikhabhai of Rajula at Sarvoday Hospital in Ghatkopar. The head of the hospital Kantilal as well as the doctors and staff requested Swamishri to visit the wards and he agreed. After visiting the wards, he did darshan of Hanumanji’s murti. He was very pleased, and he said, “Hanuman Bapa! You are here, right? Relieve all the patients of their misery. Cure everyone.” He then went to the food storage area. Swamishri said, “The owner is very nice! You are doing good to others, so your storage will always remain full. Maharaj won’t let the supply deplete.” On his way out, Swamishri took a look at the hospital. He said, “Wouldn’t it be nice if everyone was free of disease? May God be kind to everyone. May all the patients be cured. Maharaj will cure everyone.”

Thought: “Ati dayalu re...” (Swami’s nature is that of compassion. He rids others of misery.)

March 2019

Q.12 Write concisely on any ONE of the following. (Total Marks: 10)

1. Pleasant memories for Yogiji Maharaj. (Only incidents from ‘A Hard Life’.)

1. After Yogiji Maharaj went to Buchanan with Vignandas Swami, Shastriji Maharaj posted him at Chansad for a year or so. Yogiji Maharaj I used to do all the chores, from cooking to sweeping floors. I was seventeen then. The rest of the sadhus once recollected those days, “There, I was both the guru and the disciple. Were old. I was quite spirited and energetic. I used to sing kirtans loudly. Ranchhod Bhagat used to comment humorously, ‘See that the roof tiles are not blown away due to your loud voice.’ My discourses could be heard half a mile away. Even loudspeakers would break. I used to go for an early morning bath to the Vanzari well. Then I used to sing five pads as of ‘Dhir Dhurandharã...’. The entire day was engaged in spiritual discourses. I used to read Vachanamruts and learn by heart the Chosath Padi. I was never tired of singing kirtans. And on days of fast, I would walk ten miles carrying a bundle of twenty kilos.” Talking of the financial crunch, he once said, “We had only one broad-rimmed utensil to cook rice in Sarangpur. So, Kothari Naran Swami used to cook kodri (cheap coarse grain) ten times a day and serve the devotees. How divinely inclined he was!! Shastriji Maharaj commended his efforts. I sing his praises because of his services in difficult times.” Yogiji Maharaj once recalled the miserable times in Sankarda, “In Sankarda, I could make do with about a kilo of ghee for three months as only a drop of it was used for cooking. We were seven sadhus and three parshads. I used to cook only bavto and kodri. Buttermilk and curd were available plentifully. (Ch 10. Pg.59, 60)
2. Reminiscing further, he said, “Haridas was an old sadhu. He was posted at Sarangpur. He used to go from house to house for getting provisions for meals and did chores. I used to go to Kariyani for collecting grains. We did not have an ekko (a one-horse carriage). The toll man collected toll against a bagful of grains. He would get it weighed. I used to take the other route to evade him, but he would confront me nonetheless. When the Sarangpur mandir was being built, a tax official collected Rs.10,000 as taxes. “Nagji Sheth once gave a bottle of cooking oil worth four annas. He asked Haridas Swami, ‘Do you want more oil?’ Haridas Swami did not use the cooking oil. He would make a powder of three days’ stale millet loaves (rotla). Then

he would filter buttermilk brought by a parshad and two sadhus from Lathidad. Then he would add buttermilk to the loaf powder and add water.” Travelling from Gondal to Rajkot, Yogiji Maharaj showed a river to the sadhus accompanying him and told them, “I and Manat Swami used to go for collecting food grains after crossing this river. It was one foot deep. We used to get flour, rice and dal. Once, we were coming back from the village. While wading through the river, we found that the riverbed was slippery. Manat Swami told me, ‘Don’t worry. You won’t slip.’ So, I walked on. Half way, Manat Swami slipped. About 20 kg of flour got drenched. We returned with only the rice and dal that were in my bag.” Thinking of jholi (begging for provisions), Yogiji Maharaj once said, “I used to go for jholi with Swami (Shastriji Maharaj) in Bhavnagar. The Sarangpur mandir was under construction then. Kuberbhai was a new satsangi. He used to accompany us and carry the jholi. Shastriji Maharaj’s voice was loud, and so was mine. There were 700 Kanbi houses. It took us two days to visit them all. We used to collect about 200 kg of wheat flour.” (Ch 10. Pg.60,61)

3. Yogiji Maharaj also recollected his visits to Mumbai. “We used to walk from Chhipi Chawl to Chowpatty. There were only a few of us. We used to leave at 8.00 a.m., after having hot milk for breakfast. Then we would deliver discourses for at least four hours. Then at 1.30 p.m., we used to go to see Dr Dhruv. Since a horse-drawn carriage was not available and the city buses had women passengers, we used to go to Bhaiculla on foot to reach Ramjibhai’s place. If he wasn’t there, we would come back. “Those were the days when we had only a couple of satsangis in Mumbai: Bhagwan Sheth and Kashibhai. In those days the rats were this big [showing their size with his hands]. Today, there are large bungalows. Those were the days when even a ‘Jai Swaminarayan’ uttered by us was frowned upon.” It was 28 January 1964. Yogiji Maharaj was surrounded by sadhus after singing thaal in the afternoon. Feeling nostalgic, he said, “I want to show you the Johnson Company. It was at Chhipi Chawl. The place was infested with five big rats. I used to go on foot to deliver discourses at Dr Dhruv’s house which was close to the seashore. And we came back at twelve midnight. I would wake up at 4 o’clock the next morning and leave at 5 o’clock for satsang. We couldn’t afford even spiced milk then. Bhagwandas was the only devotee. Who else other than him would offer provisions to us?” In those days going for satsang from place to place during summer was quite difficult. For transport, it was either a ramshackle cart or a tractor. The roads were bumpy and dusty. So, dust assailed one’s nose, throat, eyes and ears. Those who were particular about their health could not bear this. But Yogiji Maharaj never seemed to bother about such things. He was enthused by the thought of furthering Shastriji Maharaj’s mission of promoting the Akshar-Purushottam upasana. Once, Yogiji Maharaj left for Rajkot after the Guru Poonam celebration in Bochasan. He boarded a train from Bochasan bound for Vasad. No seat was vacant. So, Yogiji Maharaj had to stand near the door. Worse was to follow as it rained heavily. Yogiji Maharaj got drenched. His luggage also got wet. But Yogiji Maharaj stood there, braving chilly winds. Then he caught a cold and a fever. (Ch 10. Pg.61,62)
4. The period before and after the construction of Akshar Mandir in Gondal is memorable in the context of Yogiji Maharaj. That phase will remain as the golden period in the history of the organization. A high-level A high-level meeting was held in Rajkot in 1931 for acquiring land for Akshar Deri. Shastriji Maharaj, Vignandas Swami, Yogiji Maharaj, Kuberbhai, Pujaji Bapu, Ranchhod Bhagat and other devotees gathered at the Hari mandir in Kadiya Lane. A discussion followed about building a mandir and the installation of Akshar-Purushottam Maharaj above Akshar Deri. Finally, a deal was struck, and the document was obtained in October 1931 CE (Kartik, V.S. 1988). Shastriji Maharaj immediately performed the foundation stone laying ceremony and started the construction of the mandir. The foundation ceremony was held in the presence of Maharaja Bhagvatsinhji. Shastriji Maharaj appointed Yogiji Maharaj to look after the construction. Gondal, a place dear to Junagadhi Sadgurus and the disciples of Gunatitanand Swami, saw the gradual creation of Akshar Mandir. First, the mandir foundations were laid. A little away from Akshar Deri was an orchard. Two small rooms were built there – a storeroom and a kitchen. Another room in the shade of the banyan tree was used as a cow pen. Whenever Shastriji Maharaj was scheduled to come, the room was cleaned for his stay. Yogiji Maharaj used to care for the sadhus and devotees who came to Gondal. He

served them piping hot meals. Service had deeply entrenched him. His brahmic state and his urge to serve the devotees coalesced and he treated his service to one and all as worship. (Ch 10. Pg.62)

5. Construction proceeded at a fast pace. Once, an untoward incident took place. There were three rooms near the tamarind tree for the sadhus to stay. Yogiji Maharaj was sleeping at night beside Shastriji Maharaj. In the middle of the night, a black cobra bit the index finger of Yogiji Maharaj's left hand. He got up, reached for the lantern and found the large cobra hiding under a trunk. The noise awakened Shastriji Maharaj also. He had Yogiji Maharaj taken to the Akshar Deri and started chanting the Swaminarayan mantra. The poison began to spread in his body, blackening it. Yogiji Maharaj was slipping into a coma. The devotees were anxious to call the doctor but Shastriji Maharaj refused. The chanting went on. In a few hours, the effect of the poison faded but it ate into the bone of the index finger. In no time, Yogiji Maharaj was back to seva. He and other sadhus worked strenuously in laying the foundation and building the Akshar Mandir at Gondal. Yogiji Maharaj's most outstanding service was cooking meals for the masons and all the sadhus. He used to make rotla for them almost single-handedly. Fifteen days before the consecration of the murtis in Akshar Mandir, Yogiji Maharaj founded the Kishore mandal in Rajkot. At that time, roofing for the mandir pradakshina was in progress. Yogiji Maharaj used to fill the troughs with lime and the youths carried them to the site. In the evening, all the boys pounded the brick fragments and mortar for the roofing with iron or wooden pounders. The stones were brought from the Paneli stone mine, about 20 km from Gondal. Gopinath Purani and two other sadhus worked at the mine. Yogiji Maharaj cooked meals for them also and had it delivered to them regularly. (Ch 10. Pg.62, 63)
6. The panchdhatu murtis of Akshar and Purushottam were installed by Shastriji Maharaj in the sanctum sanctorum of Akshar Mandir, Gondal, on 24 May 1934 (Vaishakh sud 10, Samvat 1990), with great fanfare. The next day, Shastriji Maharaj discoursed at length on the significance of the holy shrine of Akshar Deri. Then he said, "Since the holy place is associated with Akshar [Gunatitanand Swami], its mahant should also be Akshar or Gunatit. So, I appoint Jogi Maharaj as mahant of this mandir." Shastriji Maharaj applied the auspicious vermilion mark on the forehead of Yogiji Maharaj and garlanded him in the assembly of sadhus and devotees. All of them welcomed the decision and congratulated Yogiji Maharaj. He honored every word of Shastriji Maharaj. Once, Shastriji Maharaj instructed him, "Serve the Darbars well." Since then, Yogiji Maharaj himself made puffed chapattis for them and served them earnestly. He even spread mats for them to sit on and prepared hot water for their daily bath. At times he even washed their clothes. He served the devotees with reverence. Once, the Darbars in Gondal complained to Shastriji Maharaj, "Yogiji Maharaj never attends the spiritual assemblies. Please ask him to do so." Shastriji Maharaj fittingly replied, "Jogi can spare time to attend katha only if you do not insist on having hot chapattis to eat." Seva was in his veins. After waking up early, and having his bath, he used to perform arti and mahapuja. Then he would go to the kitchen to work. After offering thaal, he would serve meals to all the sadhus and devotees. Then he would wait for the guests who came by train. He would serve them, too, and only thereafter did he eat his meal and clean the utensils. (Ch 10. Pg.63)
7. Very few devotees visited Akshar Mandir in those days. Once, Shastriji Maharaj came to Gondal and enquired about the financial situation of the mandir from Hakabhai Khachar, who used to write the accounts. He told Shastriji Maharaj, "Bapa, Jogi Swami daily prays after arti that may there be satsang in the whole universe. But only two devotees, Keshavji and Narayanbhai, come every evening from Gondal to light a lamp at the Akshar Deri. The third is Viramjibhai and the fourth is Mavji Luhar. No one else visits the mandir. Apart from them, if someone does come, then he is from out of town. How will satsang flourish in the whole universe? He also wishes that the number of sadhus may increase. Of the seven sadhus here, two to three want to go to Gujarat along with you. And lastly, he prays for our financial situation to improve. Since I keep the accounts, I know what cash there is at hand and how cash-strapped we are. I wonder how we will get lots of rupees?" The finances were indeed in a precarious state. The masons working at the mandir were paid on a monthly basis. Hakabhai was once writing accounts three days before pay day. Yogiji Maharaj was writing a letter there. Thinking anxiously about payment to the masons,

Hakabhai unwittingly spilled ink on the account book. Yogiji Maharaj saw it and he at once said, “Hakabhai, this indeed is a good omen.” Then Hakabhai prepared an accounts statement and showed it to Yogiji Maharaj wondering how to pay the wages to the masons. Yogiji Maharaj took the sheet and wrote in red ink, “Swami! Maharaj! The Merciful! Please send money for the masons’ wages. It is for your sake only.” Then he gave the statement back to Hakabhai and told him, “Bapu, let us go to Akshar Deri and chant the holy name of Swaminarayan. Swami will provide the money.” Then Hakabhai accompanied Yogiji Maharaj to Akshar Deri. Swami placed the statement on the charanarvind of Bhagwan Swaminarayan and offered flowers. Then, sitting there, they started chanting ‘Swaminarayan’. They continued for two hours. Hakabhai grew impatient. But Yogiji Maharaj was still chanting, with eyes closed. At twelve noon, Morarjibhai Sheth came from Rajkot. “Where is Gnanji Swami?” he enquired and entered the Akshar Deri. Yogiji Maharaj was still chanting the Swaminarayan mantra. He opened his eyes. The Sheth touched his feet respectfully and said, “Swami, take these thirteen hundred rupees as donation.” (Ch 10. Pg.63, 64)

2. Yogi Bapa’s bhakti means hardship. (Only incidents from ‘Hardship was Bhakti’.)

1. In those days, Swami’s tour schedules were often drawn haphazardly by the devotees themselves as no senior devotee accompanied him. Among sadhus, there was only the taciturn Balmukund Swami and Chuni Bhagat (a parshad) was too meek to say anything. After his vicharan in Gujarat, there would be a certain place in Saurashtra on the itinerary. Then, a couple of days later, he would be back again in Gujarat or in Ahmedabad. Moreover, the devotees invited him for marriages, housewarming, inaugurations and other functions. Swami attended them all and pleased the devotees despite his old age and poor health. (Ch 16. Pg. 118-119)
2. One can imagine the hardship Swami had to bear during his vicharan from his Speech to the youths on 11 October 1958. It was early morning, three o’clock to be precise. He spoke, “I am suffering from about 17 diseases, but I do not worry about them while doing padhramanis. My legs ache a lot. “In September 1959, despite the heavy rain, Swami visited 175 houses in a day in Nadiad! Swami remained happy even in hardships. He also wished that the devotees would learn to face hardships. (Ch 16. Pg.119)
3. On 12 October 1959, Swami was on his way to Gadhada via Botad where he inaugurated a new shop. The car developed some mechanical trouble and stopped thrice. It had to be pushed to start it, but the third time it conked out. This time Swami himself got out of the car and tried to push it with the others. Since it was raining Swami’s feet sank into the soggy ground. Despite their efforts, the car did not start. Meanwhile, another car full of devotees arrived. To tow Swami’s car ropes were tied to the other car, but they snapped, and Swami had to go by another car. (Ch 16. Pg.119-120)
4. A devotee requested Swami in Bhensdad to visit his newly built house. When other local devotees came to know of it, they too desired that Swami visit their homes. Swami visited about 30 homes. It was 10 p.m. and Swami had to go to Jaiwa. So, the devotees accompanying Swami tried to explain to the devotees of the village that Swami was getting late. Swami overheard this and asked them not to say it. He said, “The devotees of the village are very affectionate. It doesn’t matter if we reach late. So, don’t rush them!” Swami had been travelling since morning and had not rested at all during the whole day. He pleased all the devotees by neglecting his rest and health. Then, after his home visits, he returned to the mandir, had some milk and immediately left for Jaiwa. (Ch 16. Pg.120)
5. He continued home visits even while fasting on ekadashi. Swami was in Ahmedabad on 3 October 1960 (Kartik sud ekadashi, V.S. 2017). He left at 9.30 a.m. for home visits and returned at 6 p.m.

When he came back, devotees were waiting at the mandir for his darshan. They fell over each other to get close to Swami to touch his holy feet. In such loving euphoria, all lessons of discipline, order and courtesy slip into oblivion. Then Swami took rest for about 15 minutes or so. Thereafter, there were more invitations for home visits. The volunteers arranging the visits prepared to accompany Swami. He returned to the mandir at 8.15 p.m. and discoursed till 12 midnight. Swamishri never disappointed devotees when they requested him to visit their homes, even if it caused delays and changes in his schedule. (Ch 16. Pg.120)

6. Swami once arrived at Piplag from Vasad for laying the foundation-stone of a housing society. After the ceremony, Swami visited houses while being carried in a chair for three hours. For one so old and weak, sitting for long hours in a chair is not comfortable. Furthermore, the road was bumpy. Yet, Swami ignored it all to please the devotees. (Ch 16. Pg.120)
7. Swamishri used to stay either at Mumbai or Gondal when he was not well. Whenever he came to Gujarat after recuperating, a hectic schedule awaited him. The devotees doted so much on Swami that it never occurred to them that it would affect Swami's health. Swami, however, pleased them all despite his old age and ill health. (Ch 16. Pg.120)
8. Swami was prone to catching a cold every winter, especially when he did not get enough rest. It happened though he was very sparing in matters of food – no sweets, no spices, no oil. He used to have puffed rice and hot milk every morning and evening and only one bland meal in the afternoon. When he caught a severe cold, he had to take antibiotics. He did not let it be known when he had a mild fever or body ache. Only when he could not bear with it, would he take rest. (Ch 16. Pg.121)
9. At times Swami spoke on how Shriji Maharaj and Shastriji Maharaj took discomforts and hardships in their stride. In his early morning discourse, he often spoke on the lives of the 500 paramhansas. He said, "Five hundred paramhansas lived with Shriji Maharaj. Some slept on the banks of Ghela River some in the market and some elsewhere, but they held Maharaj in divine awe. His darshan mattered most to them. They did not seek bodily comforts. They had to grind grains themselves. Maharaj tested their endurance; they passed his tests quite satisfactorily. We have to sing the glory of Akshar-Purushottam and spread it far and wide. If we realize the glory, we will not grudge discomforts." (Ch 16. Pg.121)
10. At times some devotees took advantage of Swami's kindness and affection. Many devotees were not very demanding, but some of the devotees would insist on having Swami's personal seva as a matter of right. Whether it was Housewarming, marriages, foundation-stone laying or birthdays, they wanted Swami's presence. (Ch 16. Pg.121)
11. Even while observing a waterless fast in Ahmedabad his schedule of Padharamnis would be set for the whole day despite his old age and fast. The devotees would simply forget all this on seeing Swami in a cheerful mood. Some even argued that Swami was brahmswarup and so he won't get tired or feel pain. Nevertheless, Swami kept up his satsang vicharan for the uplift of all. For Swami, enduring discomfort was another form of worship. (Ch 10. Pg.121)
12. The devotees were witness to Swamishri's buoyant spirit for the spread of Satsang. His sterling saintly qualities left a profound imprint on the devotees, sadhus and others. As a result, they had great faith in Swamishri and in whatever he said. (Ch 10. Pg.122)

3. Jhinabhai's holy departure to walk the path of celibacy. (Only incidents from 'Renunciation'.)

1. Jhina used to light up the incense stick and the lamp and then offer arti devoutly to the charming murti of Shriji Maharaj. Drawing water from the well, he would tend to flower plants and grow creepers on the mandir walls. He plucked flowers and made varied garlands for the murtis. Like Mirabai, who was never tired of worshipping the murti of her Girdhar, Jhina worshipped the murti of Shriji Maharaj meticulously and with exemplary devotion, certain that Shri Hari resided in it. He also offered food to Shri Hari while singing the thaal penned by Premanand Swami, “Avināshi āvo re, jamvā Shri Krishna Hari...” (“Welcome, Krishna Hari, the immortal, to savor the exotic food...”) This is how he spent the day. Jhina was inspired intensely by the discourses of the sadhus from Junagadh who visited Dhari frequently. Once, Jaga Swami also came with them for collecting donations. Jaga Swami, who was close to Gunatitanand Swami, blessed five-year-old Jhina, who came with his grandfather, Virambapa. Krishnacharandas Swami also visited Dhari very often to enlighten the devotees on the knowledge of Gunatit consciousness. Since satsang ran in his family for Generations, Jhina was accustomed to practicing the moral code prescribed in the Shikshapatri and fasting on Ekadashi, Janmashtami and Ramnavmi. He would go on foot with his elders to Kunkavav every year to attend the religious gathering on the occasion of Bhim Ekadashi. And he never felt fatigued. From Kunkavav, he would go to Junagadh by train. (Ch 2. Pg.17)
2. On the way to Junagadh, Jhina used to stay at the house of his paternal aunt, Manekba. Though a householder, Manekba scrupulously observed religious vows and fasts. Finding Jhina deeply devoted, Manekba would treat him fondly, just like her own son. Jhina’s neatness and precision in whatever he did pleased her very much. He would begin all his activities by saying ‘Jai Swaminarayan’. Wondering how little Jhina could have acquired such rare qualities, Manekba felt he must have realized the knowledge of the self. She was convinced that Jhina was not just another child, but an accomplished yogi. (Ch 2. Pg.18)
3. Aksharbrahma Gunatitanand Swami had been pleased with Krishnacharandas Swami’s saintliness. Once, some sadhus from Junagadh visited Dhari with Swami Krishnacharandas. Jhina tirelessly served them with reverence. Swami was pleased with Jhina and he also appreciated Jhina’s friends, who did their homework and study at the mandir. He blessed them all. The boys then told him, “Jhina thinks only of worship. He meditates in the early morning and inspires us all to chant Swaminarayan.” Then Swami asked, “Jhina, would you like to become a sadhu?” Jhina replied innocently, “Swami, it would be nice if you initiate me into the order. For quite some time, I have been wanting to urge you to do that. You have proposed that which is very much on my mind. After becoming a sadhu, I would like to serve you well. It would be kind of you if you take me along.” (Ch 2. Pg.18)
4. Krishnacharandas Swami was satisfied with the response. Swami knew Jhinabhai’s elder brother, Kamalshibhai, well. So, he asked him to coax his parents into permitting Jhina to become a sadhu. Kamalshibhai always obeyed Swami’s instructions. He himself was ill at ease with worldly life. Also, he constantly had a feeling that Jhina would one day renounce home and become a sadhu. Kamalshibhai said with folded hands, “Swami, since you so desire, I will persuade my mother and send Jhina to Junagadh to be with you.” Ch 2. Pg.18)
5. Jhina shared his yearning with Jeram, his paternal aunt’s son. Jeram was touched by Jhina’s fluent talk on vairagya. Ultimately, both of them decided to leave home for good and take initiation as sadhus in Junagadh. (Ch 2. Pg.19)
6. Puriba’s grief at her separation from Jhina became inconsolable. Nanduba, Kamalshibhai’s wife, tried to comfort Puriba, “Mother, aren’t you aware of Jhina’s leanings? He belongs to divinity. He is born to worship God. So, let him have his way. You have other sons to live with. “Moved to the core, Puriba said in a faltering voice, “I do have other sons, but Jhina is simply matchless. How kind he is. At meals, he would give away all his sweets to his brother and make do with a rotlo. He would take only baked grams or puffed rice to school but offer it all to his classmates. He has never eaten enough. And he has never asked for anything. What will happen to him? He doesn’t take care of his health. I feel very anxious and tormented.” And Puriba once again burst into tears. It was a mother’s love for her son. So, Nanduba could do little about

it. Then, Tribhovanbhai, Kamalshibhai's younger brother, and Jagjivanbhai, Jerambhai's elder brother, left Dhari to bring Jhina and Jeram back home. Both the boys were spotted at the Swaminarayan Mandir in Mandanpura village near Bilkha. Tribhovanbhai explained with a heavy heart about the grief-stricken atmosphere in both homes. Jhina was resolute not to return, since the call of Junagadh was far more important to him. But, sensing the gravity of the situation, both of them came back to Dhari. (Ch 2. Pg.19)

7. Once back home, Jhina did not show any interest in domestic life. Sweetly Oblivious of the life around him, he threw himself headlong into worship and stayed at the Swaminarayan Mandir in Dhari. He felt impelled to rush back to Junagadh to see Krishnacharandas Swami. He ate only once a day. Puriba used to bring his lunch to the mandir. He would eat quietly. He was very taciturn. In this way, a whole year rolled by. Jhina talked to Kamalshibhai about his ardent desire and resolution to become a sadhu. Kamalshibhai knew about it long back but thought it better to get it okayed by their parents. So, he tried to persuade Puriba, saying, "Unwittingly, I have promised Krishnacharandas Swami to send Jhina. Jhina, too, is not interested in worldly life. So, pray, let us not displease him. Krishnacharandas Swami will also be happy. He once told me, 'Jhina is destined to become a sadhu and as a sadhu he would lend glory to sainthood.'" (Ch 2. Pg.19, 20)
8. Once, Jhina also urged Puriba, "Mother, kindly allow me to go. It will add meaning to my life." (Ch 2. Pg.19,20)
9. The depth of Jhina's words moved Puriba. At last, with a heavy heart, she gave her consent. But she wept profusely that day. She asked Jhina to spend a whole day at home with her before leaving. That done, Kamalshibhai got the approval of his father. And Jhina leapt with joy. (Ch 2. Pg.19,20)
10. On 31 October 1908 (Kartik sud 6, V. S. 1965), Kamalshibhai brought Jhinabhai home from the mandir at night. Puriba embraced Jhinabhai and lovingly served him food. Respecting his mother's will, Jhina stayed overnight at home after a long time. (Ch 2. Pg.19,20)
11. At daybreak on 1 November 1908 (Kartik sud 7, V.S. 1965), Puriba herself cooked kansar, a sweet dish reserved for auspicious occasions. Nanduba, Jhina's Sister-in-law, served Jhina kansar. Puriba also served him lovingly. Jhinabhai ate a little and then washed his hands. Finally, the appointed hour arrived. Puriba and Nanduba put a vermilion mark on his forehead and bid him farewell with a heavy heart. Puriba sent Kamalshibhai to see him off. He consoled his mother, "Do not worry, have patience. Shriji Maharaj will take care of everything else." (Ch 2. Pg.19,20)
12. Kamalshibhai accompanied Jhinabhai up to Kunkavav where they would separate for good, severing all family ties. Knowing that it was the last time he would be with his dearest younger brother, Jhinabhai, tears welled up in Kamalshibhai's eyes. But, as he was philosophical, he advised his younger brother, "Brother, bring honor to the family and stand out as a sadhu. Shriji Maharaj is going to be with you all always." (Ch 2. Pg.19,20)