



Children Loving

Lord Swaminarayan

Part-1

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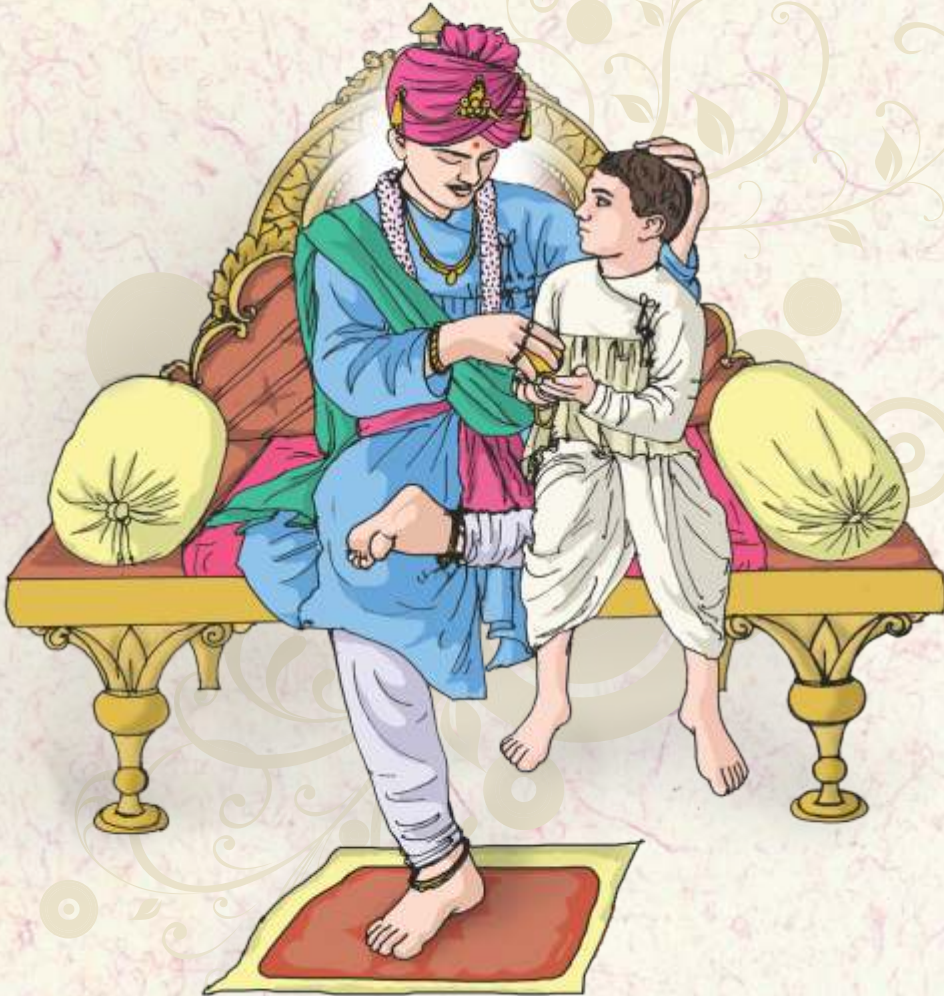
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HDH Bapji's Blessings

Dear kind Children and kind Parents/Guardians,

Childhood is the most important period of one's life. The way one is molded during childhood is the way they will stay for the rest of their life. That's why it is essential for children to learn how to live a life that will make Mahārāj and Bāpāshri happy. It is also essential for parents/guardians to learn how to shape their children right from childhood. This is why it's crucial to learn the proper technique to mold children. We have been showered with Shriji Mahārāj's grace, so we do not have to go elsewhere to learn these techniques. Closely studying the life stories of Supreme Lord Swaminarayan is in itself a prominent place of learning. For that reason, this book showcases many different stories where Lord Swaminarayan is interacting with children. Furthermore, this book incorporates stories on how Lord Swaminarayan interacted with children, made them happy and showed them their mistakes. From these stories, parents and guardians can learn how to mold their children. In addition, children can also learn from the morals, virtues, and dialogues given by Lord Swaminarayan in each story. By reading, understanding and implementing this book in our life, it becomes easy to become an ideal child and an ideal parent/guardian. For this reason, children, parents, and guardians should surely read, understand and implement this book. By doing so, Mahārāj, Bāpa, and Sadgurushris will surely shower grace upon us.

- Swami Devnandandasji's
Jay Swaminarayan

શ્રી મહારાજના ગુણ
ને કહી શકું



Preface

Swaminarayan sect's God, Lord Swaminarayan, is described by reverend sants as supreme, God of all Gods, cause of all causes, one and only, unmatched, and patron of all devotees. These attributes are very familiar to the devotees of the Swaminarayan sect. However, there is one attribute of Lord Swaminarayan that many devotees are unfamiliar with; Children-loving God.

Lord Swaminarayan's nearest and one of the greatest sants, Reverend Muktānand Swāmi, wrote a *kirtan* in which he uses this descriptor.

“Balsnehi re mohan mujane gamtā.”

Translation: I really like the child-loving God.

Why do we describe Lord Swaminarayan as child-loving? There is only one answer to that question; this book, “Children Loving Lord Swaminarayan”.

“Children Loving Lord Swaminarayan” contains Lord Swaminarayan's major interactions with children told in the form of moral stories. Oh, how much Shriji Mahārāj liked children?! How incredible your affection is towards children?! And how easily and minutely you understood children?! Reverend sants saw all of this with their own eyes and wrote it all down. This book tell the story of when Lord Swaminarayan interacted with children, made them happy and overall displays the extraordinary affection Shriji Mahārāj had for children in the form of different moral stories.

“Children Loving Lord Swaminarayan” is a collection of stories that shows Mahārāj's unique and entirely talented personality. Reading the book, children will easily understand how much Mahārāj adores them. Another benefit is that, this book is made in such a way, that both children and parents/guardians will find it very useful.

In most of the stories Lord Swaminarayan's personality becomes an inspiration for ideal parenting. For that reason, at the end of every story, morals are included for children and parents/guardians. Through these written morals, children and parents/guardians can take inspiration to live ideal lives.

We are very pleased to present “Children Loving Lord Swaminarayan”; a narrative of the affectionate connection between Mahārāj and children, as well as a display of the expected roles of parents and their children.



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1. Children Loving Lord Swaminarayan: A Study

A child is an ocean of happiness.

A child is the definition of curiosity.

A child is a laughing, blooming, and budding fragile flower.

A child is the symbol of innocence and humbleness.

A child is a sapling.

A child is our future.

A child is a blank page.

Children are unaffected, happy and energetic. Their inner selves are clean and tender. Due to these virtues, children were very beloved by Shree Hari and are beloved by Satpurush today. Shree Hari was very pleased by children's easy going nature. So childhood is the best age to please Shree Hari. Doing tough penance wouldn't please Shree Hari but by the innocent nature of children Shree Hari used to overflow with joy.

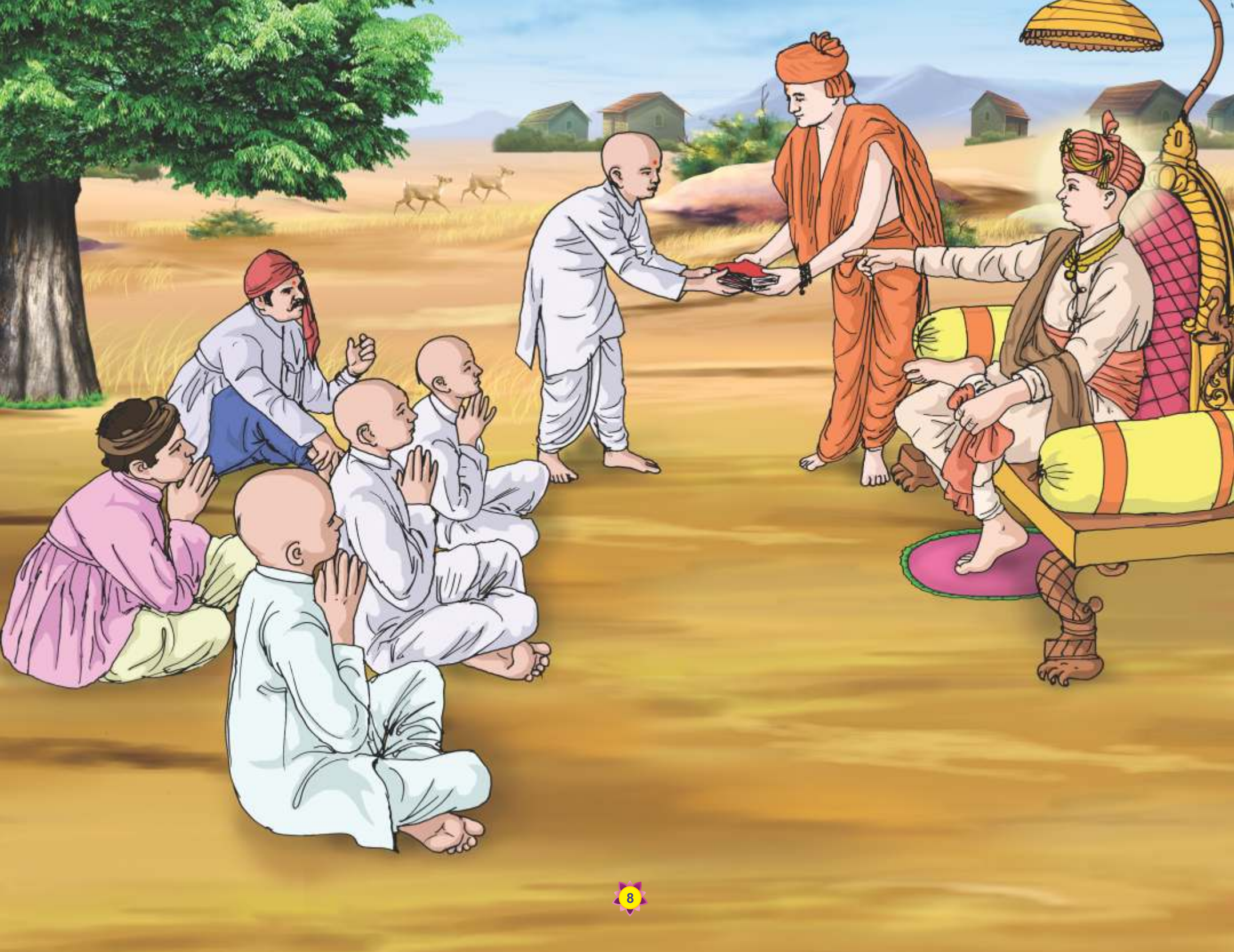
In both Chappaiya and Ayodhya, Ghanshyam Mahaprabhu was always surrounded by friends. Even though He was just a child He performed many *lilas* that gave joy to the children around him. Ghanshyam Mahaprabhu was very fond of the innocence of children and so He always lived omnisciently with children. Due to this, Ghanshyam Mahaprabhuji's personality was distinct, special and extraordinary.

Shriji Maharaj was the true guide of the children's inner self. He knew about the tranquility of children. He used to feel the children's joys, emotions and expressions. Moreover, we can see Maharaj's grip of the child psyche by the stories displayed in this book.

Shriji Maharaj understood the inner language of children. So he irrigated exceptionally religious virtues in children. In short, Mahaprabhu clearly understood the children's language of emotions and joys. Ghanshyam Mahaprabhu, a Swami of thousands of virtues, was dear to all children and so they showed sole love to Maharaj. Therefore Maharaj proved his title of Child-Loving God in all aspects.

Shriji Maharaj always showed lots of mercy towards children and gave them love. In fact, just noticing children, Shriji Maharaj use to become very pleased. Explaining His reason for being pleased by children, He used to say, "Children's mind, conscience and personality is filled with true innocence and that's why I am always glad when I see them."

Children's world of thinking is always full of curiosity. That is why they are always curious to learn, search and obtain new things. When they learn something new they always show amazement. Maharaj always gave time to these types of curious children.



Maharaj used to teach them morals through daily life examples. When children became even a little bit depressed, Maharaj used to get sad too. The God of infinite universes, Shriji Maharaj, used to please children and when needed He even use to apologize to them without any ego. All these talks prove that, as a guardian of children, Maharaj is successful at understanding the child's mind.

Even though he is supreme, he used to put his title of “God” on the side and interacted with children. One of His qualities was His intense renunciation but even He showed gratification, happiness and amusement. He used to sing, play, wrestle and even play pranks with children.

Lord Swaminarayan was the unique caretaker of children. By his parental warmth and loving company, children and elders can take inspiration. So now lets us relish some of His life stories and His child-loving stories and take inspiration. If we are a parent/guardian we should take parental inspiration and improve our skills. And if we are a child we should take inspiration to develop affection for Lord Swaminarayan, currently present HDH Bapji, and HH Swamishree.

One time, Shriji Maharaj, Sadguru Muktanand Swami and other sants visited Dhoraji. In Dhoraji, Shree Hari and the sants resided at Mavji Dave's home. Just a few days ago Mavji Dave had passed away.

Because of Shree Hari's arrival, Mavji's sister, Gangabai became very emotional. At that time, Shree Hari consolidated her.

“Oh Maharaj! Mavjibhai and his spouse left their small children and passed away. So what now about these orphans? What to do about their livelihoods? I am concerned for them,” prayed Gangabai. Then she sent all four children, Harjivan, Raghavji, Lalji and Keshavji, to do darshan of Maharaj.

All four children came to Maharaj. Maharaj saw the four children, became happy and told them, “Tell your aunt, Gangabai not to worry about you. The children are very obedient. They will take care of their own livelihoods.” Saying this much Maharaj asked Muktanand Swami to bring a scripture. Then Muktanand Swami brought some chapters of “Satsangijivan” and gave it to Maharaj.

Shree Hari equally distributed the chapters amongst the four children. Then He ordered, “Oh children! Please take turns and start reading the chapters.”

“Maharaj, we are not yet literate, so we won't be able to read,” said the children, while folding their hands.

Then Maharaj said, “I am telling you to read, so read. We are always with you...Start.”

Saying this much, all four of the children gained the ability to read. Everyone was surprised. On the other hand, hearing this news, Gangabai became shocked and started thinking, “All this is due to Shriji Maharaj's kindness, grace and compassion.”

“Swami! Send news to Gangabai to not worry about the children. Now these children have become scholars. They will now manage themselves.”

Saying this much, Maharaj placed His hands over their heads and gave them love.

Ālemiyā was from the Rānpar village. He had understood the glory of Shriji Mahārāj. Hence, he conveyed special worship

towards Shriji Mahārāj. He always kept Shriji Mahārāj in his thoughts.

Once, Shriji Mahārāj visited the Rānpar village. Ālemyā received news of Shriji Mahārāj's arrival. There was no limit to his happiness. Alemyā quickly got ready to go and meet Shriji Mahārāj. Just then, Shreeji Mahārāj, Himself, arrived at his doorstep.

Seeing Mahārāj, Himself, in front of him, Ālemyā became very emotional. He folded his hands, and bowed down before Mahārāj, and gave a warm welcome, “Welcome... My Lord... welcome”

Prabhu became pleased with the child's emotions. Prabhu asked the child in a very loving manner “Is your father at home?”

“My father has gone out for some work. So what if he is not home? I am still here! I will take care of You even better than him. At least give me a chance by doing grace of coming inside.”

Saying this much the child called a brahmin, got a meal prepared from groceries and heartily served Mahārāj, His sants and devotees.

Shriji Mahārāj was pleased with his hospitality. Upon seeing Shriji Mahārāj's delighted face Ālemyā, asked with folded hands, “Oh Merciful! When will You give darshan again?”

“We will be present before you whenever you remember us. We grant you our Murti from today,” said Shriji Mahārāj while moving His hands on Alemya's head.

Shriji Mahārāj showered blessings on the child devotee and bid him farewell.

This is a story which took place in samvat 1868. Shriji Mahārāj went to Mānbhā's village, Mināpur, to bring Mānki, the horse. Surā Khāchar and Kāyāji, Darbār (the chief) of Bhesjāl village, also went along with Mahārāj. As soon as they entered the village, Mānbhā's court was spotted at a distance. Mahārāj arrived at the court with His companions. Mānbhā's ten year old daughter, Monghi, was playing in the courtyard. She did darshan of Mahārāj and became mesmerized by Mahārāj's charming face. She kept admiring Mahārāj's face for a long time.

During that time, Mānbhā's wife came out of the house and did Mahārāj's darshan. She also greeted Kāyāji who had come along with Mahārāj. She asked for the reason of their visit. Kāyāji shared the matter regarding purchasing Mānki, the horse. Mānbhā's wife told Kāyāji that, “Darbār is not home, so how can I sell this horse in his absence?” While this conversation was going on, Monghi went to the stables and came back to the courtyard along with Mahārāj's favourite horse.

After joining her hands in front of Mahārāj, she said, “What does it matter if father is not home. Here, I will give this horse to You. Mother, Mother! He has come to purchase this horse. He is the God. It's His kind grace that He has come to our house. Thus, we should please Him. We must give whatever He asks for,” Monghi told her mother innocently. Mahārāj was very pleased on her.

Thereafter, she went inside the house and brought the things needed to perform Mahārāj's puja. After doing Mahārāj's puja she bowed down to Mahārāj's feet and offered the horse to Him. Mahārāj was very pleased on her. He put His hand on her head and

showered her with pleasure. He also gave her 60 Rupees and a sugar candy.

Mahārāj gave her divine blessings and said, “Monghi you will become very precious just like your name. You will become a great queen and a great devotee.” Then, Mahārāj left for the village of Loyā with His sants and devotees, but Monghi kept admiring Mahārāj for a long time.

As time went by, this little girl became the queen of Gondal. She always favoured the sect and thus she was also known as a great devotee.

Once upon a time, Shriji Mahārāj went to visit the Ghodāsar village. Mahārāj was passing by the outskirts of the village. Mahārāj was followed by the sants, devotees and Mulji brahmachāri at a distance.

Many children were playing on the outskirts of the village. Amongst these children was the son of the village chief (Darbār). Seeing the children play, Mahārāj stopped for a while. Just then, the chief's son started shouting, “Look a sage! Look a sage!” Hearing this, Mahārāj felt like playing a joke on the children and said, “Oh! We are not a sage. The one who is following us is the true sage.” Mahārāj said this much and left from there. Meanwhile, Mulji brahmachāri arrived on the outskirts. Seeing the brahmachāri, the child started to shout again, “Look a sage! Look a sage!” Hearing this, the brahmachāri said, “We are a fake sage. The real sage is the one that went ahead of us. He is the God Himself and we are merely His devotees.”

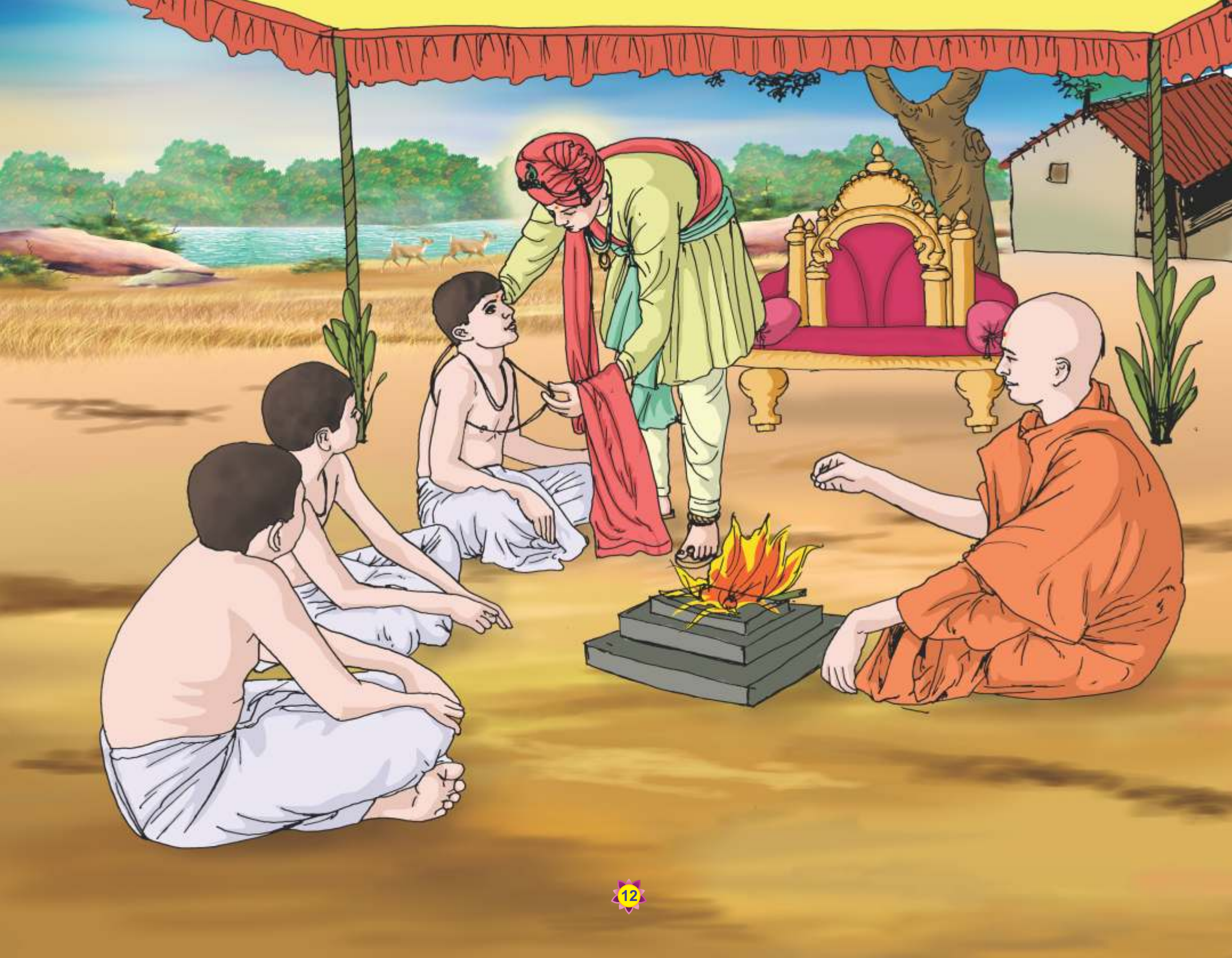
Upon hearing this, the chief's son immediately took his horse and went in the direction that Mahārāj had gone. He was the chief's son, so he knew how to ride a horse very well. He caught up with Mahārāj in no time. “Oh sage! Please stop. You are the true sage, You are the God. Your devotee that's coming behind you told me the truth. You are the God and I am Your child. Be pleased on me.” Saying this much, the child jumped off his horse and requested Mahārāj, “Please be seated on my horse and allow me to sit with You. I want to go with You.” Shriji Mahārāj became pleased on the child. Mahārāj placed His hand on the child's head and showered Him with love. Mahārāj also climbed onto the child's horse and allowed the child to sit with Him. Mahārāj took the child with Him to the village of Dabhān.

Mahārāj went to the Bāmroli village to fulfil the wishes of His beloved devotees. In Bāmroli, Mahārāj had decided to stay at Tikhā Bhagat's home. There, Mahārāj played with Holi colours along with sants and devotees.

The next day, Mahārāj went to visit the homes of devotees for *padharāmnī*; during which, three boys came for Mahārāj's darshan. Mahārāj saw that none of the boys had worn the sacred thread (*janoi*). So, Mahārāj said, "We want to perform the act of bearing you with the sacred thread because you are the sons of a brāhmin."

"Ok your kindness! You may do as you please. We are Your servants. You are our father. You are everything to us. We will stay according to Your wish. If You are not pleased because we have not worn the sacred thread, then we want to please You now. Oh Kind God! Please be pleased on us."

Mahārāj became pleased by their wisdom and performed a grand ceremony of giving them the sacred thread in Bāmroli. “We



are pleased on all three of you because you did not delay in following our command. You easily put your liking aside after coming to know about our liking.” Upon saying this, Mahārāj showered the boys with pleasure.

The stories mentioned above clearly show Lord Swaminarayan as the children-loving God. It is truly a divine opportunity to receive *darshan* of this unique aspect of Mahāprabhu. This quality is the best among all the qualities used to describe Shree Hari. It clearly describes Shree Hari's bonds with children.

In scriptures, reverend sants who lived with Shriji Mahārāj, have noted down Mahārāj's affection, attachment and attraction towards children and His understanding of the children's language, and mentality. Shree Hari's affection for children is eye-catching in these scriptures.

From Lord Swaminarayan's divine talks and examples given in the Vachanāmrut, one can conclude that He had closely examined the mentality of children. Thus, according to the Vachnāmrut, Mahārāj's divine personality as a child psychologist is unfolded before us.

In His discourses, Shriji Mahārāj used to give examples of children in order to explain His principles and opinions. Even someone who continuously lives with children all the time cannot observe children's mentality at such a minute level; whereas, Shree Hari, who had very little contact with children, was able to observe and understand children with fine detail.

Shriji Mahārāj has explained the nature of children with an example in the 23rd Vachanāmrut of the Gadhadā middle chapters:

“The behavior of the mind is like a child. A child tries to grab hold of a snake, a burning coal and even a sword. He becomes unhappy if we allow him to hold these things. And, if we don't allow him to hold these things, he also becomes unhappy. Similarly, if we do not allow the mind to enjoy the propensities then it becomes unhappy and if we allow it to enjoy them then it becomes agnostic and unhappy.”

Shriji Mahārāj has presented His own principle and opinion after showing the innocence of a child in the 24th Vachanāmrut of the Gadhadā first chapters. Through this Vachanāmrut it becomes very clear that Shriji Mahārāj was very experienced with regards to children intelligence.

“Even if a child has an enchanted jewel in his hand, he does not feel its pleasure. It is because he does not know its value. Similarly, it is a great drawback for a devotee if he does not feel zeal and content in his heart despite having attained the almighty God.”

Similarly in the 27th Vachanāmrut of Gadhadā last chapters, Shriji Mahārāj talks about the ignorance of a child.

“When a child holding a copper coin is asked to give it up, he won't give it up. He responds similarly when holding a Rupee or a gold coin. Then it can be said that the child has considered the copper coin, the Rupee and the gold coin to be of equal value. This is the ignorance of the child. And if one has a copper coin in his hand and a thief comes

and says, "Give it up or else I will behead you with this sword." At that time, if he is wise he will give it up while a fool would not give it up."

Shriji Mahārāj has said in the 32nd Vachanāmṛut of the Gadhadā first chapters that:

"When rajogoon prevails many thoughts prevail but one should not be upset upon thinking these thoughts. The conscience is like a small child, a monkey and a fonder of a baby. It has a habit of fidgeting; thinking without any purpose."

Shriji Mahārāj has also shown the innocence of a child in the 56th Vachanāmṛut of the Gadhadā first chapters:

"Just like how a child has no sense of pride. A sant should also remain humble like a child no matter how much adoration and honour he receives."

Shriji Maharaj has said in the 3rd Vachanāmṛut of the Kāriyāni chapters that,

"Virtues and vices are mainly prevalent during one's youth but they are not prevalent during childhood or in old age. It is because one may not be good in his childhood but become good in his youth while one may be good in his childhood but get spoiled during his youth."

Like such, Shriji Mahārāj has used a child's mentality to explain His concepts in many Vachanāmṛuts.

Glancing at Shriji Mahārāj's life, when He appeared as a human to humans, it reveals many incidences which displays lots of qualities like His unbound affection for children, His soft spot for children and His conversations with children in their child-like language. Shree Hari's presence was like meditation (dhyān) to the children. It was like the centre of enjoyment. Due to this, the children did not like to stay away from the children-loving God, Shree Hari. Shree Hari was an expert in pleasing the children.

One of the principles grasped from the entire life of Shree Hari, after heartily studying it, is that He had a special place for children in His life. This is why He was affectionate toward children.

Children-loving Lord Swaminarayan's bond with children has stayed strong till date. Lord Swaminarayan has been renowned as 'Children – loving' and currently the founder of **SMVS**, Guruvarya HDH Bāpji is carrying forward this title. This is proven by the vast span of children activities being performed internationally from the inspiration of Guruvarya HDH Bāpji. At present, showered by the love of Guruvarya HDH Bāpji, there are many children all over the globe singing these words with pride:

*"Ame nānā nānā bāl, kāran satsangnā rakhwāl;
Āvyo avsar rāji karvā, rāji kari laie."*

Translation: We are the small kids of Karan Satsang here to uphold it.

Now it's the time to please Mahārāj and Motāpurush so let's do it.

The affection that Lord Swaminarayan showed for children is experienced even today through Guruvarya HDH Bāpji. Bhagwān Swaminarayan's grand tradition's first and greatest successor was reverend Gopālānand Swāmi. Guruvarya HDH Bāpji is carrying forward this tradition and under His observance more than 700 spiritual children groups are active today.

Through these groups Lord Swaminarayan's love for children is being spread worldwide. In India, the children activities organised by Shree Swaminarayan Mandir Vāsna Sansthā – **SMVS** are known to be the best activities for an all-rounded development in children.

These children activities are all completely free of charge. These children activities are spread all over the world from the smallest tribal hut in Panchmahāl to countries such as UK, America, Canada, Australia, New-Zeland, Dubai, Uganda, Kenya and India. In these spiritual children assemblies, every year fifteen to twenty thousand children take a part in children activities to establish a strong foundation in the spiritual, social and educational fields.





2. Desire for Kesh

This is a story of the time when Shriji Mahārāj was residing in Gadhpur.

A ten year old peasant boy had extreme love for Shriji Mahārāj.

This child wanted something from Mahārāj as a token of permanent memory of Mahārāj. With an intention to fulfil this desire he maintained close proximity with Mahārāj.

One day, Mahāprabhu called the barber of the village. At that time, the child was listening to the conversation between Mahārāj and the barber.

When the barber was returning to his house, the child followed him and politely told the barber with folded hands, “O kind man! Jay Swaminarayan. I want to tell you one thing.”

“What do you want to tell me?” asked the barber.

“I want Shriji Mahārāj's divine *kesh* from you. Would you give me Mahārāj's *kesh* tomorrow?” asked the child anxiously.

Acknowledging the child's desire, the barber smiled and said,

“OK! I will give you Mahārāj's *kesh* tomorrow morning. Are you happy now?”

The child returned happily to his house.

It was morning and Mahārāj was getting His head shaved. The child came and stood in a corner. He was rejoiced to have gotten darshan of Shree Hari. Today his joy knew no bounds. Meanwhile, the barber finished shaving Shree Hari's head.

The barber picked up his shaving instruments and the *kesh* and then left from the opposite side of the courtyard. He completely forgot about the promise he gave the child.

The child's inner desire was not fulfilled. So he started sobbing. Hearing the sound of sobbing in such a peaceful atmosphere, Shriji Mahārāj went to the child. Seeing the child weeping in this manner, Mahārāj became sad. Shriji Mahārāj cannot stand seeing anyone unhappy, so how can He tolerate seeing an innocent child unhappy?

Shree Hari started caressing the child by moving His hands on the child's head. While caressing him, Shree Hari asked,

“Oh! Why are you crying? Did anybody say something? Did anybody scold you?”

“Mahārāj! No, nothing like that,” the child sobbingly replied.

The child didn't mention his inner desire in his reply. But the God easily understood the feelings and emotions as He was affectionate towards them. So Shree Hari lovingly asked the child,

“My dear child, won't you tell Me? I know everything, but I want to hear it from you. Tell me why did you become so sad?”

Mahāprabhu's divinity, made the child open up. He frankly told Mahārāj about the conversation which took place between him and the barber the day before.

After listening to it, Mahāprabhu said, “Oh! You cried this much for such a small matter?”

“Here! I'll give you a lock from the tuft of my divine *kesh*. OK.”

Shree Hari pulled some *kesh* from the tuft on his head and gave it to the child.

On receiving Mahāprabhu's divine *kesh*, the child was extremely happy.

Wow! God, wow! What great kindness! How children loving you are! To make the child happy, You gave him Your divine *kesh* from the tuft on Your head. Shree Hari! That child would never have forgotten the grace you showered upon him.

O God! Children are very dear to You!

Moral:

For Children:

- ❁ The child had a deep bondage of love with Mahāprabhu! We should also develop such motherly affection for Mahārāj and Satpurush.
- ❁ What great glory the child had for Mahārāj's divine Prasad! We should also understand the glory of the divine food, clothes and ornaments offered to Mahārāj. We should accept and eat the offerings from Mahārāj's dish with glory. We should show respect for the divine clothes, ornaments and other offerings of Mahārāj by touching them with great reverence.
- ❁ The child's desire was selfless. So Shree Hari fulfilled his wish. Similarly, if our desires are pure, Mahārāj and Satpurush will surely fulfil our desires.

For Parents/Guardians:

- ❁ When the child was crying Shree Hari didn't silence him by shouting or scolding but rather He gave the child love and warmth. In the same way, as a guardian, we should learn to treat our children with love.
- ❁ When Mahāprabhu asked about the reason for crying, the child didn't answer. But Shree Hari understood him and his desire from his facial expressions. Then, the God pleased him by giving him what he wanted. Likewise, as a guardian, we should also learn to understand the language and the feelings of our children. Moreover, we should learn to satisfy their needs from which love and warmth is most important.



3. Aren't You Afraid?

There was a village named Kundal. There were many jujube trees on the outskirts of the village.

The trees were laden with many bunches of jujubes. Ripe, sweet, red and juicy jujubes.

Having heard the praises of such jujubes, three – four girls went there.

“Wow! Look at how nice these jujubes are! I will relish them until my stomach is full. And then I will also take some for my brother,” said one of the girls while collecting and eating the jujubes.

Another girl said, “I will eat the jujubes after going home. I will also feed my younger sister and my parents.”

Among these girls, one girl was completely quiet. She was joyously collecting the jujubes. But till now she hadn't tasted any of the jujubes.

The name of this girl was Amar. She was a great devotee of Shriji Mahārāj. She always constantly chanted Shriji Mahārāj's name.

Today, she was collecting the jujubes for Shree Hari. While collecting, she thought to herself, “Today I will offer these jujubes to Mahāprabhu.” One of the girls among them said, “O, friends! Amar will offer these jujubes to Mahārāj. That's why she is collecting them.” Meanwhile, another impatient girl said,

“What is the value of your cheap jujubes for the God? He gets to eat many different and delicious items every day.”

“My God is fond of love and devotion. He has no value at all for various types of food items.” Saying this much, Amar began remembering Mahārāj again.

At that time, the sound of a galloping horse was heard from the east. A cloud of dust arose on all sides.

Afraid of this situation, the girls started running toward their homes. But Amar was engrossed in the thoughts of Mahārāj so she continued sitting there, while all the other girls ran away.

Within a short period of time, some horse riders were seen. Among them one rider looked like a king. He had tied a piece of cloth to cover his face. There were *kāthis* behind him. Suddenly, all these horse riders came near Amar and stopped. Amar awoke from her thoughts, but she looked at the horse riders without any fear.

In the meantime, the horse rider who looked like a king demounted the horse. He removed the piece of cloth from his face. Upon seeing his face, Amar happily said,

“O my Lord! You?! I could not recognize you. O gracious! Please be pleased on me!” Saying this much she bowed down at the feet of God.

Shree Hari asked, “Amar! What are you doing right now in this wilderness?”

On showing a small bundle of jujubes she said, “O gracious! I was collecting jujubes to offer to you.”

“But aren't you afraid in this wilderness?” asked Shree Hari.

“No, Mahārāj! You are always with me, so how can poor fear come to me? God, your devotion has made me fearless.”

Having listened to Amar's answer, full of understanding, Mahārāj was pleased. The *kathis* were also surprised. Then Mahārāj accepted Amar's jujubes and started eating them on the spot. While eating the jujubes, Mahārāj said, “These red like vermilion and sweet smelling jujubes are very good. I have never eaten such jujubes before! Really, these jujubes are extremely sweet!”

“It is all your grace. All the jujubes became sweet as honey by the touch of your divine hands,” Amar said politely.

Shriji Mahārāj became happy with Amar's faithful devotion. The God put His hand on her head affectionately and pleased her. The God asked the brahmachāri for a tin of patāsā. Emptying the whole tin into Amar's lap, the God said, “For now accept this offering of mine and later I will give you the bliss of My *Murti*.”

Having said this much, the God mounted on Manki (a divine and obedient mare). Then with the entire troupe, He progressed towards the Kundal village. For a long time, Amar kept doing darshan of the child loving God.

Wow! God, how children loving You are! How affectionate You are towards children! You Yourself came to fulfil Amar's wish by accepting her jujubes and eating them.

Wow! God, as a reward of the jujubes, you gave her a promise to give her the bliss of Your *Murti*.

Moral:

For Children:

- ✿ Before eating anything, we must always remember Mahārāj and offer it to Him first.
- ✿ What a wonderful affection the girl had with Mahāprabhu! Before starting any work, she always remembered Mahārāj. In the same way, we should always start all our activities by remembering Mahārāj first.
- ✿ Disregarding the thoughts of the other girls, Amar continuously thought about how to please the God. Similarly we must also keep the constant thought of pleasing Mahārāj in mind.
- ✿ Having felt affection for Mahārāj, Amar was not afraid of anybody. In the same way, we must also develop affection for Mahārāj to become fearless.

For Parents/Guardians:

- ✿ The God considered jujubes superior over various others food items and ate them just to please Amar. In the same way, to return the love and affection of the child, we must accept them as well as their things.
- ✿ In our children, we must cultivate the habit of offering edible items to Shriji Mahārāj before eating them. We must also teach them to offer all new things to the God before using it.



4. O God! Protect Me.

“O, gracious! Shriji Mahārāj! Please, save my son...”

“What happened?”

“O gracious! My son will be dragged in the flood. Please, save him...” Having uttered this much the farmer became unconscious and fell down.

At that time, the people of the village huddled around him.

The story was something like this. At that time, Shree Hari was residing in Gadhpur. It was the season of monsoon. One night, a heavy rain suddenly broke out. The water spread all over the village. The largest river of the village, Ghelā was flooded.

The flood was so strong that animals, trees and even the people of the village got carried in its current.

The rain stopped in the morning. Mahāprabhu Himself, came with a group of sants to see the flood in Ghelā.

At that time, amidst the Ghelā river, a child hanging on to a large rock and was shouting, “Please save me. I will drown. O God! Protect me.” At that time, that rock was the only support for this child. Yet, the child continued his prayers believing Mahārāj to be his only support. Suddenly, the flow of water increased in the upper part of the river basin and the rock vanished from sight. The people standing on the river bank were stunned with fear. All the peoples' eyes were fixed on the child.

Who will save this child? Having seen all these events, the child's father who was a farmer had already broke down and fainted.

How can the children loving Lord Swaminarayan, see the plight of this crying child? How can He tolerate this? Mahārāj prepared Himself to save the child at any cost. Everybody knew that it was very difficult to bring the child out alive from the strong current of the river.

Yet, in spite the odds, Shree Hari was ready to save the child. Meanwhile, Ratanji, the pārshad, who had come along with sant requested, “Mahārāj! Don't step into the river in this heavy flood. Offer this service to me.” Then all the sants and devotees started requesting the same to Shree Hari.

“No matter what happens, I want to save this child. So, don't stop me.” said Shree Hari.

Everybody was afraid. But Ratanji bowed down at the feet of Shree Hari and said,

“O gracious God! Please offer this service to me. Mahārāj! Only You are the sole doer of all things. O gracious! Stay with me.”

“Ok, go. I am always with you.”

Thus, receiving the order from Shriji Mahārāj, Ratanji plunged into the heavy flood without delay. Swimming in the flow of the river, he progressed towards the rock. But the tremendous force of the water, made his journey challenging.

The people standing on the river bank were shouting; some were screaming loudly. Some people were praying mentally to Mahārāj while the others were silently looking at this horrible sight with their eyes wide open.

With great efforts, Ratanji reached the rock and picked up the child immediately.

He was very tired because of the sharp blows from the strong currents. Yet he didn't rest on the rock. He plunged into the flood once again, with the child.

Wrapping the child around his neck and facing the strong water currents, he finally reached the river bank with great efforts.

Everybody heaved a sigh of relief. Everyone's joy knew no bounds. Everybody hailed together, "Victory of Shriji Mahārāj."

Having seen the child come back alive, his father's joy knew no bounds.

As soon as the child reached the river bank, the children loving God picked him up lovingly. The God caressed the child by moving His hand over his head.

The crying child calmed down by the affection of Mahārāj.

Wow! God, how children loving You are! Children are very dear to You, so You were ready to do anything and make others do anything for this child.

Wow! God, wow! What great kindness!

Moral:

For Children:

- ❁ The child who was trapped in the flood and who was uncertain about his life believed Mahārāj to be his sole protector. In the same way, if anything bad or dangerous befalls us, we should have faith in Mahārāj to be our protector. But we should never lose hope.

For Parents/Guardians:

- ❁ When the child was in a dangerous situation, Shriji Mahārāj, Himself was ready to come to his rescue and when he was saved, Mahārāj showed affection towards him. In the same way, if anything bad or difficult befalls our child, we should be their support and show affection towards them.
- ❁ If our family is passing through a crisis, if we want to save our children from bad company and if we want them to go on the right path we should surrender ourselves to Shriji Mahārāj, Satpurush and sants.
- ❁ The only reason why Mahārāj saved the child, in spite of not knowing him, was Mahārāj's kind and emotional nature. As a guardian we should have such a nature towards any child.



5. Good Intentions

A big congregation was held in the court of Dādā Khāchar in Gadhpur. Shriji Mahārāj was seated on a throne in the courtyard. Sants and devotees were also seated in the courtyard. Mahāprabhu was showering his grace upon them through His discourses. Suddenly people started shouting in the assembly: “Stand up... run away... stand up... black snake... long snake...”

In no time a stampede started in the whole courtyard.

When the place of the assembly was vacated, everybody found a long and black snake under the carpet. Everyone was terrified by the sight.

Looking at the snake Shriji Mahārāj also immediately stood up and addressing everybody, He said, “Everybody keep away from the snake. It is poisonous.”

Hearing Mahārāj's command, everyone gathered in a safe corner in the courtyard.

However a 5-6 year old child of a Brahmin devotee ran after the snake believing it to be a toy. Before the Lord could stop the child, he started running after the snake. Seeing this Shriji Mahārāj shouted immediately, “Hey boy! Come back. It is not sensible to go near it.”

To stop the child, Shriji Mahārāj, himself, started running after the child. Shriji Mahārāj got a hold of the child's arm.

Yet the child strived to catch the snake. Now Shriji Mahārāj could not bear it. He lightly tapped child's head and pulled him away from the snake.

Being hit on the head, the child started crying and he left the courtyard.

On the other hand, two – three devotees skilfully caught the snake, put it in a sack, and released it outside the village. Now all the devotees of the assembly took a sigh of relief. All the devotees took their seats in the assembly once again.

Sitting on the throne and looking at his hand, Shriji Mahārāj was thinking:

“After manifesting in this universe, I have never hit anyone with this hand. And on this child!!! Oh!!! The child must be hurt badly.

The child got hurt by me. I made him unhappy.” Mahārāj became sad with this thought. So the sants asked Him, “Mahārāj ! Why are you so sad?”

Informing the reason of his sadness, Mahārāj said, “Today I forcefully tapped a child's head. So my hand is still tingling. So find the boy from anywhere and bring him before me. I want to make him happy.”

According to Shriji Mahārāj's command, the sants and devotees set out to find the child.

At last, a sant found the child in mānekchawk. He was sitting outside the temple. He was still crying. The sant went to him and explained to him that,

“Oh! You are a Sahajānandi lion. (A lion of supreme Lord Sahjanand Swami) Then why are you crying? Please stop crying. Mahārāj is calling you. He will shower happiness upon you.” Explaining this to the child, the sant brought him to Shriji Mahārāj.

Seeing the child, Shree Hari immediately stood up from his throne. He went toward the child, picked him up and hugged him.

Then caressing him and moving His hand gently on the child's head, Mahārāj asked him,

“My son, are you hurt badly due to my forceful blow on your head? But what can I do? Even though I told you to stop, you were running to catch the snake. From today onwards always listen to your elders. Never displease them.

Your behaviour made me sad. But now I am pleased to see you happy. Today I will shower happiness upon you.” The child became happy to hear that he will be showered with happiness.

Ordering Mulji *brahmachāri*, Shriji Mahārāj said, “Mulji *brahmachāri*! Today, bring my beautiful turban, a dish of sugar lumps and two rupees and give them to this child. I am pleased with him.”

Thus, Shriji Mahārāj pleased the child by giving him gifts.

Wow! God, what a child loving God You are! For the welfare of the child, You tapped him gently on his head, yet you became sad and showered happiness on him and you pleased him. Wow! God wow! You are very kind!

Moral:

For Children:

- ❁ At present, *Satpurush*, sants and elders are our guides. We must act according to their orders. Their orders are always for our wellbeing.
- ❁ If they scold us, sometimes hit us or get angry with us, we should still go near them with natural and innocent feelings.

For Parents/Guardians:

- ❁ When we command our children for their wellbeing, and if they oppose, we should still scold them as required. However, they are Mahārāj's *mukts* so we must still please them and understand their glory.
- ❁ We shouldn't make our children sad by repetitively showing them their mistakes in front of others.



6. This is my language

There was a village named Loyā. Surā Khāchar was the prominent person of Loyā. Shāntibā was his wife.

They had a daughter who was seven years old. Her name was Vālubā. Vālubā was very playful. So everybody loved her.

Vālubā was not only dear to everybody but her speech was also very sweet. She was able to imitate anybody's speech.

Sometimes Surā Khāchar and Shāntibā were also mistaken due to this skill of Vālubā.

Once, Shree Hari had come to Loyā. Surā Khāchar and Shāntibā were listening to Mahārāj's discourses. Suddenly there was a voice near the front door, "Narayan Hare... Satchitānand prabho...!"

Mahārāj also heard this sound of a begging sant. So He told Surā Khāchar,

"O Surā Khāchar! Please go to the front door. It seems that one of our sants has come for alms.

Listening to Mahārāj, Surābapu said, "Mahārāj! This is not your sant. But this is our sant."

Mahārāj did not understand. So He asked, "Who is your sant?"

Folding his two hands before Mahārāj, Surā Khāchar told Him, "Our daughter Vālu is our sant. It is the voice of Vālu, and not the voice of any sant."

Shree Hari could not believe him. So He went to the door. As soon as He opened the door, little Valu was seen. She had a begging bowl of sants in her hand. She was repeatedly making cry for alms. Mahāprabhu was surprised to see Valu.

"Oh! Such a small girl she is, but how clever she is! She speaks as if she were our sant."

Saying this, Mahārāj called Vālu and asked her, "Daughter, why are you begging for alms like our sants?"

"Oh Mahārāj! This is my language," Vālu said frankly.

"No, it is not your language but it is the language of our sants." Mahārāj told her.

"Mahārāj! It's ok if it's your sant's language, but when sants are hungry, they ask for food in this way. Likewise when I am hungry, I also utter the same words and then I also get food."

Having listened to Vālu's sweet childish language, Mahārāj was pleased and told her, "Valu you have a tendency to learn the customs of our sants and *paramhansas*.

So when you grow up you will surely learn to follow in their footsteps. Hence, you will get divine happiness just like our sants."

Then the God went to the kitchen. He brought a chapatti of millet and curd. Sitting in the porch of the house, Mahārāj started feeding Vālu. Like a child, Valu ate morsels from the divine hands of Mahārāj.

The joy of Surā Khāchar and Shantibā knew no bounds because what a grace it was that the ruler of infinite universes Himself, was feeding their daughter.

This was the moment when they felt the most grateful in their lives. They watched this divine *lilā* of Shriji Mahārāj with sheer joy.

Wow! God, how children loving You are! You feed the hungry. You make them happy.

Thus, your ways to encourage the skills of children are wonderful.

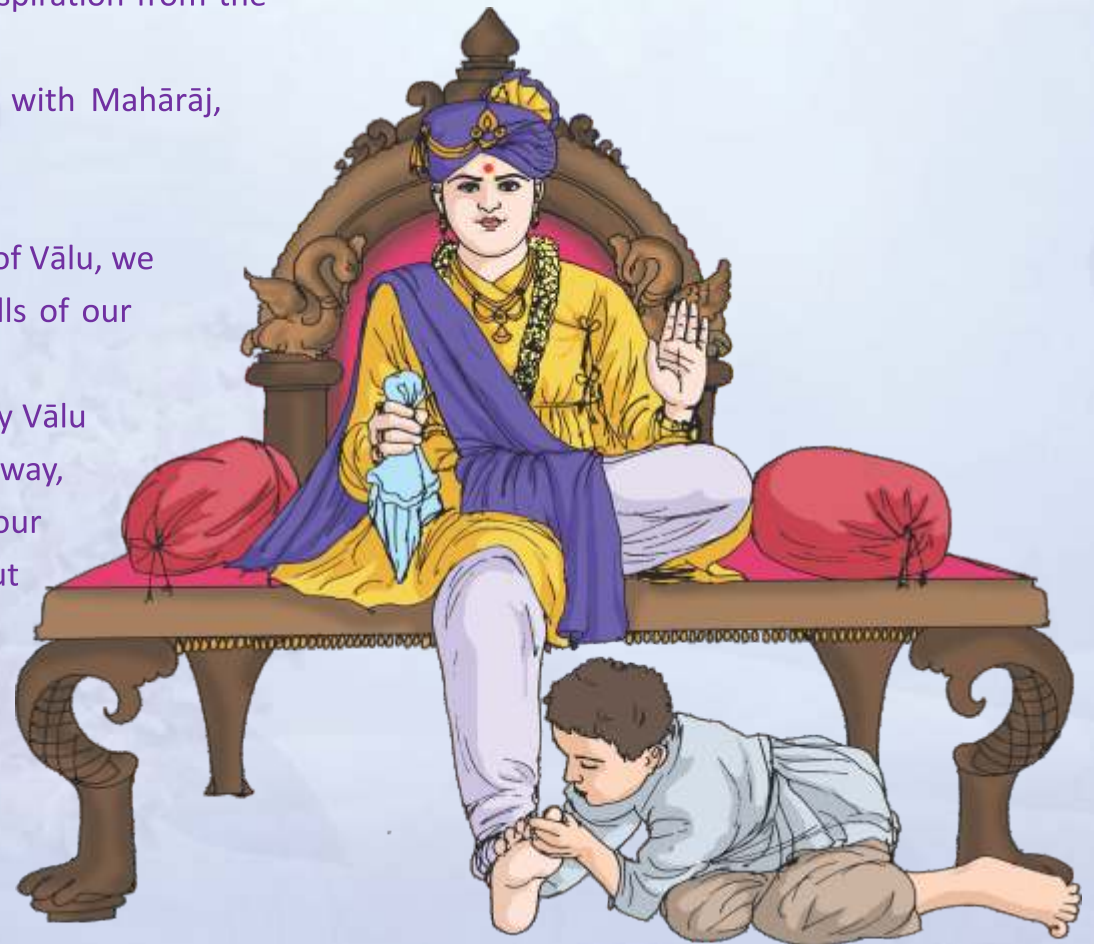
Moral:

For Children:

- ❁ Children should use their skills to please Mahārāj and *Satpurush*.
- ❁ Children should live a divine life, getting inspiration from the divine life of *Satpurush* and sants.
- ❁ We should behave honestly and egolessly with Mahārāj, *Satpurush* and sants.

For Parents/Guardians:

- ❁ Just like Shriji Mahārāj encouraged the skill of Vālu, we should also find out the potentials and skills of our children and we should encourage them.
- ❁ Did you notice how innocently and childishly Vālu was behaving with her parents? In the same way, we should become near and dear to our children so that they are not afraid of us, but rather they can behave freely and friendly with us.





7. Victory against his Mind

There was a village near Vadtāl. Its name was Mahudiyu paru. A child lived there. His name was Saluk Pagi.

Saluk's maternal uncle was a devotee of Lord Swaminarayan.

Once, Saluk grew watermelons in his farm. When the first two watermelons grew in his farm he decided, "Out of these two watermelons, I will offer one to my maternal uncle and the other to my maternal uncle's God, Lord Swaminarayan.

"There is a celebration in Vadtāl after a week, so I will go there and offer the watermelon to the God myself. Thinking this, he dug two pits in the ground and buried the two watermelons and covered them with sand.

After one week, Saluk decided to go to the celebration in Vadtāl. Before going to the celebration, he dug open the two pits again to take out the watermelons. But what was this?

The foxes had already dug up the pit and they had eaten the watermelon that was for his maternal uncle, while the watermelon for Lord Swaminarayan was still intact. Of course it would be so! The Lord protects everything which surrenders to him.

He took Mahārāj's watermelon and set out for Vadtāl. But as he walked a while, his eyes were attracted to the watermelon in his hand. Seeing the nicely ripe watermelon, Saluk thought, "O foolish! Silently eat this nice watermelon. Is there any shortage at Swaminarayan's house? There are so many devotees to gift him. Finish it."

Thus, his mind was slackened. So, he sat under a tree. He took out a knife from his pocket and as soon as he was about to cut the watermelon, a thought crossed his mind again.

"O foolish! Aren't you ashamed? How can you eat something that you have already dedicated to Lord Swaminarayan? Hey, you will eat Mahārāj's food as well?"

He put the knife back into his pocket and he started walking forward with the watermelon in his hand. Having gone no further, his mind was tempted again upon seeing the watermelon and he thought, "Your watermelon will be crushed in the crowded celebration. Who will take care of you? Nobody will call you among so many people. Secretly just finish it here!"

Having thought this, he took out the knife from his pocket but a thought crossed his mind once again, "It's ok even if Mahārāj doesn't eat your watermelon, but at least your love will be known to Mahārāj! He is omniscience; then why shouldn't you give it to Him? In this way, torn between the conflict of his soul and his mind, at last Saluk reached Vadtāl.

In Vadtāl, Mahārāj was sitting on a throne in a big assembly. Saluk arrived and stood behind the assembly.

At a time, Shriji Mahārāj told the assembly to make some space for Saluk. Shriji Mahārāj sent someone to bring Saluk to Him. Amidst the assembly He said,

"Saluk! Give me the watermelon. You have brought it for me, haven't you?"

Then Mahārāj took the watermelon from his hand, got it cut and started eating it in the assembly. While eating, Mahārāj told the assembly,

“Sants – devotees ! This Saluk is greater than all of you because he has gotten victory over his mind. If he had not kept control over his mind, I would not have gotten a chance to eat this watermelon. So today, we are blessing Saluk to get eternal peace along with Muktanand Swami!

Like so, Mahārāj was very delighted and gave these blessings to Saluk.

Wow! God, how children loving you are! And how pleased you are with the smallest offering from children! You showered grace upon Saluk because he controlled his mind and regarded him to be greater than everybody sitting in the assembly. Oh... God! Your grace has no bounds.

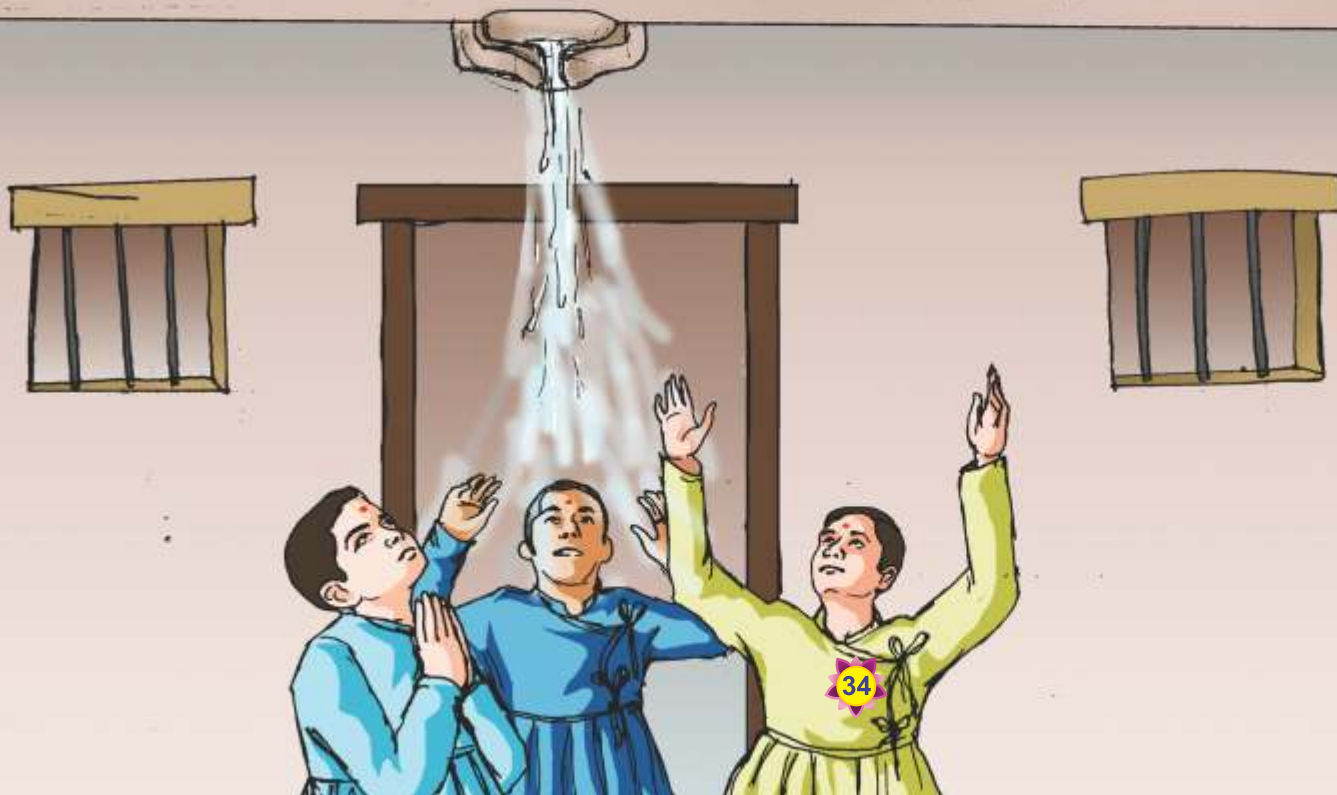
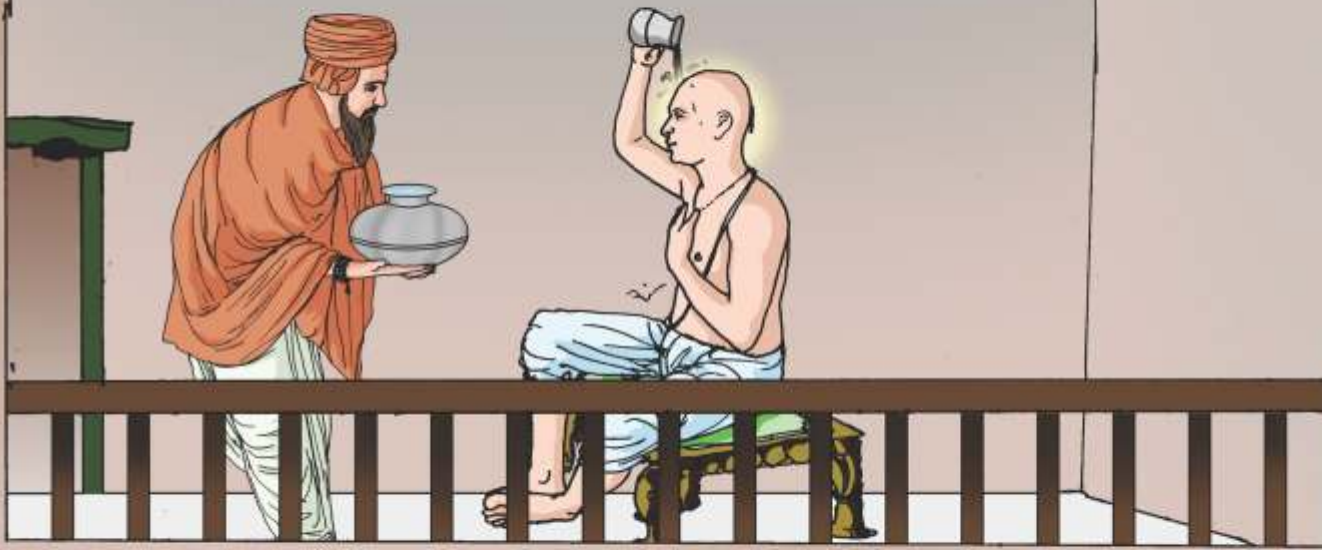
Moral:

For Children:

- ✿ Whatever food we get, we should first offer it to Mahārāj and then we should eat it. Moreover, we should also remember to offer the food in the temple and to sants who are our real relatives.
- ✿ As Saluk pagi gained control over his mind to please Mahārāj, we should also put aside our desires and fix our vision on pleasing Mahārāj and Satpurush. In the matter of following rules and regulations, we should gain control over our mind and please them. This is so that we do not get swept away in worldly activities such as eating, drinking, watching or listening to anything that is against the command of Maharaj.

For Parents/Guardians:

- ✿ Just as Mahārāj displayed Saluk's virtue in front of the entire Sabha and showered pleasure upon him, we should display our children's virtues to our family. This way they will be motivated to gain more virtues.



8. Shower of Grace

Once upon a time Shree Hari came to take a bath on the first floor of Hari *mandap* in Vadtāl.

Mulji *brahmachāri* welcomed Shree Hari with great reverence.

Shree Hari gladly sat on a beautiful golden table.

Then *brahmachāri* started bathing Shree Hari with warm rose water from a copper bowl.

He started massaging Shree Hari's body with different fragrant oils of *champā*(Plumeria), mogra and, musk. He was also softly singing:

*“Attar tel fulel anupam, mardan karva māvāne;
Aang chole dhole jal upar, rasiyoji rizāvāne.”*

Shree Hari was smiling while listening to this stanza. Meanwhile, Mahārāj heard a sudden uproar.

So, Shree Hari asked immediately, “What is this noise?”

Folding his two hands Mulji *brahmachāri* said, “Mahārāj, It's the children making noise. Let me go and find out the reason for it.”

Brahmachāri looked down from the balcony and said, “Mahārāj! It is some children from the village.”

“Oh! What are they doing?” asked Mahārāj.

“They are playing in the dripping water with which you have taken a bath. Some are splashing the water on one another. And some are bathing in it.” To silence the boys, *brahmachāri* loudly shouted, “Hey boys! Why are you making so much noise? Keep quiet.”

One of the children spoke, “O Kind *brahmachāri*! We are enjoying and bathing in the pious water with which Mahārāj has taken a bath.”

Looking at this child the *brahmachāri* said, “If you are just bathing then why are you shouting? Mahārāj is getting disturbed while listening to these devotional stanzas. So, go away from here.” Because Mahārāj was very kind and loving, He stood up immediately, while bathing. Then Shree Hari watched the innocent playful games of the children and He said,

“*Brahmachāri*, let them play. Don't drive them away. It's ok if they bath. They are taking a bath in My pious water after all. Let them have a bath. All the children will be pleased. They don't understand your scolding. They only know how to enjoy. Let them bath. Then, Shree Hari started filling a jug from the copper bowl and began pouring water on the children.

When they felt a sudden shower of grace, the children looked up, and saw Shree Hari.

All the children were in a frenzy of joy. They all started dancing and jumping enthusiastically. They all hailed victory of Mahārāj.

Seeing the children this happy, Mahārāj said,

“*Brahmachāri*! These children are not only bathing in my pious water, but they are also bathing in my shower of grace. It doesn't matter whether they know Me or not, but I know them very well. I have put an end to their infinite birth cycles. And I have made them worthy of the bliss of My *Murti*.

Seeing Mahārāj's shower of grace, *brahmachāri* spoke to himself.

“Wow Mahārāj! What great kindness...! You made these children very much grateful.”

Wow! God, how children loving you are! How minutely you thought about the children's delicate minds. Even though they were making too much noise, you didn't drive them away. Moreover, you bathed them with your own hands and easily granted them the bliss of your *Murti* which cannot be found even in infinite universes. Wow gracious! You showered a lot of grace....

Moral:

For Children:

- ❁ While playing, we should take care not to disturb any family members, elders and other people living in the surrounding area. We should also take care not to disturb Mahārāj, *Satpurush* and sants in the temple during their service to God.
- ❁ When *Satpurush* are taking a bath, we should sprinkle some of the pious water on our head with due respect. With similar respect, we should prostrate before sants when they are having a meal.
- ❁ We should understand the greatness of the offerings given to us by *Satpurush* and sants and we should accept them with divine feelings.

For Parents/Guardians:

- ❁ Just as Shriji Mahārāj didn't hurt the children's feelings and bathed them in the shower of his grace, similarly, we should also be kind and generous towards our children. We shouldn't disappoint them. We should always keep them happy.



9. I Will Feed Him

Once, Shriji Mahārāj had come to Bhuj, Kutch. He had held an assembly for female devotees. He was delivering a religious discourse to them.

During the daily assemblies the women would have to sit far away from Mahārāj, whereas today they got an opportunity to sit close to Mahārāj in the assembly.

Hence forgetting everything else, all the women were engrossed in listening to the discourse.

Meanwhile, there was the sound of a crying child from one side of the assembly. Mahāprabhu stopped delivering His speech and asked,

“Who is the mother of this crying child?” Engrossed in listening to discourse none of the women answered Mahārāj's question.

So Shree Hari asked again, “Are you all listening? Someone's child is crying.”

Hearing the child's cries, a woman stood up. She was Laxmibāi, the sister of Bhagavānji Sutār of Bhuj. Mahāprabhu recognized her.

So Mahāprabhu realised that this child's mother is Laxmibāi, He immediately said,

“Please go quickly and first calm down your child. We should first take care of our child and then we should attend the assembly.”

Laxmibai immediately went to the child, took him in her lap, hugged him and gave him maternal love.

She fed the child, and he eventually calmed down. So, she went to attend the assembly again, but the child started crying again. Hence, the God ordered her to go back to her child.

She went to the child and tried very hard to calm him down but he continued to cry. At last he finally became silent.

Then his mother laid him down in a cradle, covered him with a cloth and went to sit in the assembly again.

Then the discourse started again and continued for a long time. Everybody was very grateful to have received Mahārāj's darshan and discourse. The assembly was over.

Everyone was returning to their homes. Laxmibāi was also going to her home but, Mahārāj called her.

Bāi! You got a chance to do my darshan today, but your *Bālmukt* (child) hasn't done my darshan yet. I want to give him My darshan. Please take Me to him. As soon as Mahārāj said this much, Laxmibāi became very excited. Then she led Mahārāj to her child.

Mahārāj removed the cloth that was covered on the child. When Mahārāj saw the child, Mahārāj felt compassion towards him and said,

“Oh, this child is very thin. He is not getting enough food to eat!” Then scolding Laxmibai, Mahārāj said, “You are not giving your child food on time. If you give him nourishing food, then he will grow healthy. Please promise me that now onwards you will take care of his food and nourishment.” Having said this much, the God picked up the child.

The God was showering His affection on the child by caressing him on the head. The child suddenly woke up from Mahārāj's divine touch. Then he started staring at Mahārāj's face. It was as though his weak body got a new jolt of energy.

Then *Mahāprabhuji* told Laxmibāi, “Go and fetch some milk and hotchpotch from your house. Today, I will feed him with My own hands.”

The mother's joy knew no bounds. She immediately brought milk and hotchpotch from her house and gave it to Mahārāj. Caressing the child with His own hands, Mahārāj fed the child and then made him sleep in the cradle.

“From today onwards, you have promised me, that you will feed this child with nutritious food every day. Take care of him. Moreover, before attending any assembly, take enough care of him. Ok, now I am taking your leave.” Mahārāj departed after saying this much.

Wow! God wow! How children loving you are! Seeing the child's weak body, you felt very sad. Then you fed the child with Your own hands, and showered him with Your affection. Wow Gracious! How graceful You are!

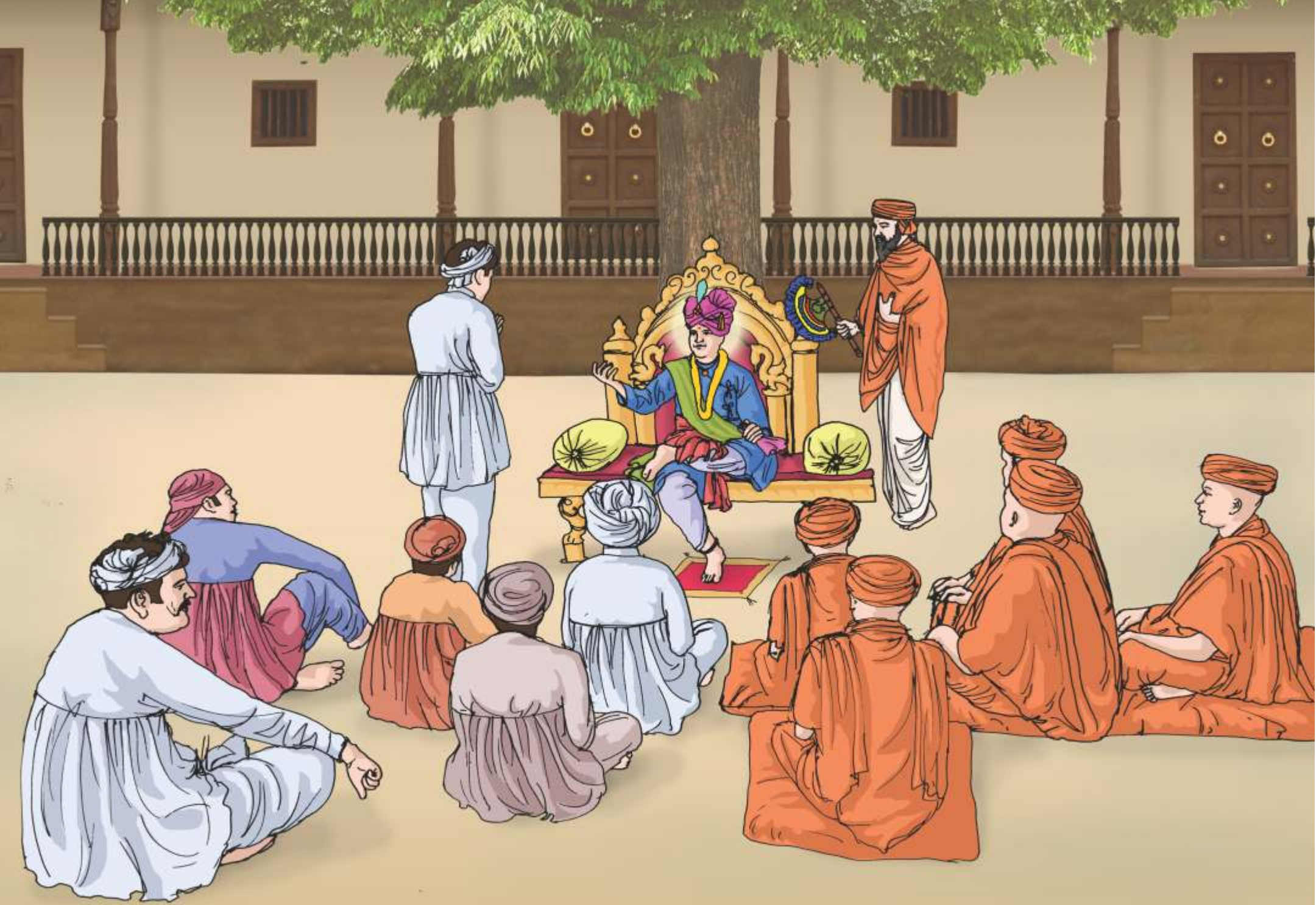
Moral:

For Children:

- * This child was very small but we are of course very wise children! So, whenever we go to the temple, during an assembly, we should never trouble our parents or anybody else with our mischiefs or by crying.
- * We should never behave in such a way that our elders or parents get scolded due to our misbehavior.
- * We should take our meal at a proper fixed time. We should never be stubborn or picky in food related matters.

For Parents/Guardians:

- * We must always remain satsang oriented, but at the same time, we must acknowledge our children to be *Anādimuktas*. Hence, we must serve them at proper times and take good care of them.
- * As a guardian, while performing our social and spiritual responsibilities we should never disregard our child's health. We must be very aware about regularly giving our child nutritious foods.
- * Just as Mahārāj fed the child with His own hand, we must also insist on feeding the child with our own hand up to a certain age to shower our love and to ensure good health.



10. Foolish and Wise

This is a story of two children of the Kerā village in Bhuj. One's name was Khimo and the other's name was Bhimo. Khimo was eleven years old while Bhimo was eight years old.

Both used to frequently come to the Bhuj temple voluntarily to offer their service. Both used to wash and dry the sant's clothes. Moreover, they would also wash and wipe the utensils.

They also use to do the service of keeping the temple clean. They would perform all big or small services in the temple with enthusiasm.

They would run errands for the whole day in service of the sants. Yet they never experienced tiredness or boredom. Simply, they both happily offered their services.

If the sants command, "Go, and fetch water from the river." Both would run at once to fetch the water.

Once, Shriji Mahārāj visited the Bhuj temple. Mahārāj was sitting on a throne in an assembly and both the boys came to the assembly.

First, they prostrated before Mahārāj. Then they both sat in the front row of the assembly. Shree Hari was pleased to see both of them.

"Hey boy! What is your name?" Mahārāj asked, pointing His finger at one of the boys."

"Mahārāj! My name is Khimo."

"Ok, sit down. The boy sitting beside Khimo, what is your name?"

"O gracious! My name is Bhimo."

"Ok, you too sit down."

Seeing both the children, Mahārāj thought of playing a game. Shree Hari decided to take a test of the two children.

"I want to ask both of you a question. Are you both ready?" asked Mahārāj.

"Yes, Mahārāj! You may ask." They both replied with folded hands.

"Khimā! From the two of you, who is foolish and who is wise?" asked Mahārāj.

"Mahārāj! I am foolish and Bhimo is wise." Khimo replied sincerely.

"Very well, sit down. Bhimā! Now it's your turn. From the two of you tell Me who is foolish and who is wise?" Mahārāj asked lovingly.

“Mahārāj! I am foolish and Khimābhāi is wise.” Bhimā also replied with folded hands.

Mahāprabhu was very pleased hearing the children's answers. Then Mahārāj openly asked the question to the whole assembly, “Dear devotees! Out of these two children, who is the wise and who is foolish?”

Upon hearing Mahārāj's question, all the devotees in the assembly replied unanimously, “Mahārāj! Both the children are wise.”

“No, everybody's answer is incomplete. Who will give Me the correct answer?” asked Mahārāj.

All the devotees in the assembly gave an answer but, no one was able to give the correct answer. So Mahārāj said, “Listen, all of you gave an answer but none of your answer was like that of Khimā and Bhimā. All of you said that both the boys are wise, but at the same time you also considered yourselves wise.

On the other hand, both the boys consider themselves foolish and the other to be wise. Do you have this kind of wisdom?”

Hearing this point of Mahārāj, the whole assembly was stunned and the assembly went silent.

Then Shree Hari spoke again, “All those devotees who have an understanding like these two boys are wise and the rest are all foolish. This satsang is like community living. And when we are living in a community, we must strengthen an understanding like that of these two boys. Only then we can become wise and polite.” Having said this, Mahārāj called the two boys up again.

Then spreading His arms widely, Mahārāj hugged both of them. Mahārāj also showered His grace on them by moving His hands on their heads.

Wow! God, how children loving You are! You showered Your grace upon these two boys seeing their humbleness and deep wisdom. God, how well-versed You are about the behaviour of children, that within a moment You came to know about their wisdom.

Moral:

For Children:

- ✿ Whatever service we get from the temple or from the sants, we should perform it with the understanding of its great value. While performing the service, one should constantly have only one thought in the mind, “Whose service is this? And I am chosen to perform it! Moreover, by performing lower status services like cleaning, cutting vegetables, drying clothes, etc; one gets special grace of God.

- * Bhimā and Khimā mutually declared the other to be wiser and they declared their own self to be foolish. In the same way, we should understand others to be more superior to us. Likewise in all other things except for earning Mahārāj's grace we should try to remain in the background. We should always remain inferior and we should promote others to come in the spotlight.
- * Humbleness and politeness must be developed in us right from childhood.

For Parents/Guardians:

- * During the vacation period, we should send our children to be in proximity with sants for two to five days. This is so that virtues like those of Bhimā and Khimā are developed in the children from the very childhood.
- * Though Bhimo and Khimo were small children, the firm understanding they possessed was a result of regular satsang. Hence, Mahārāj told the whole assembly to strengthen this type of understanding. In the same way, though our children are small, but the great virtues and understanding that they possess due to regular satsang, can sometimes even teach us many things.





11. Aren't you Hurt ?

One day Shriji Mahārāj was seated in an assembly at the court of Dādā Khāchar. The assembly was overflowing with sants and devotees.

While the assembly was going on, a snake passed between the devotees. All the devotees were afraid of the snake, so they started running everywhere.

Seeing the devotees in such a state the God stood up from the throne and ran behind the snake to catch it.

When a seven year old child saw God running, he started to clap. He liked the way the God was running.

So the child happily ran behind Mahārāj to catch him. The child decided in his head that, "I want to touch the God's feet today."

The God's attention was focused on catching the snake, while the child's attention was focused on touching the feet of the God. The God was running after the snake in a frenzy to catch it. When the child came in front of the God to touch His feet, the God's knee hit the head of the child.

Thus due to the collision, the child was thrown to one side. However, the God was not aware of this incident.

Mahārāj was still running after the snake to catch it. Before Mahārāj could catch the snake Bhaguji and Mulji *brahmachāri* came forward, caught it and trapped it into a pot. Then Mahārāj ordered them, "Go and release the snake far away in the jungle." Then, the God came and sat on the throne again.

The whole assembly was restored again. But at that time the God was thinking, "In a frenzy to catch the snake, I injured a child. My knee is still paining. So the child might also be very hurt."

With this thought in mind, the God suddenly stood up from the throne and started to look for the child in the assembly. Just then, Mahārāj's gaze fell on the child. The child was still crying and rubbing his head.

Having extended His hand, the God called the crying child near him. While wiping his tears, the child came towards Mahārāj. After coming near the God the child first touched the God's feet. Then he prostrated in front of the God. The God became pleased with the manners of this child. Then the God picked him up and moved His hand over the child's head in a loving manner. Then the God sat on the throne with him.

The God started playing with the child. On seeing the God in a light mood, the child was pleased. Seeing the child laugh, Mahārāj asked him,

"Son! Aren't you hurt? While catching the snake, I hurt you."

"Yes, Mahārāj! I am hurt but I am responsible for my own injury. It was my mistake. Please forgive me." The child said politely.

Shree Hāri was pleased with the innocence of the child. So He hugged the child again. Mahārāj was caressing the child to create

a divine impression in the child's heart. It was such a pleasant *lilā* that the child would have never forgotten it.

Due to Mahārāj's affection, the child even forgot his injury.

Seeing the delicate face of the child, Mahārāj also said, "Son! I am very pleased with you today. Today, I will give you whatever you ask for."

"Mahārāj! I don't want anything. I will happily accept whatever You give me," said the child. The God was pleased with the child's innocence and so He said,

"What do you like to eat? Ask for it and I will give it to you." "Mahārāj! I like mangoes very much." He said frankly.

Acknowledging the child's wish, the God ordered Mulji *brahmachāri*, "Bring two very large and ripe mangoes."

Hearing the God's command, Mulji *brahmachāri* brought two ripe mangoes and gave them to Mahārāj.

"Take these two fruits as a symbol of our happiness. Eat them while remembering Me," said Shree Hari while giving the mangoes to the child. The child became very happy. He accepted the offerings from the God. Mahārāj also continued to shower affection on the child.

Having seen this event, all the devotees in the assembly became happy. Everybody gave a standing ovation to Mahārāj.

Wow! God, how children loving You are! How you cared about the child when he bumped into you and how easily you pleased him afterwards! What greatness!

Moral:

For Children:

- ✿ The child collided with Mahārāj and he got hurt. When Mahārāj asked him if he got hurt, he replied accepting his own fault saying, "It is my mistake." But he did not get sad and he did not get detached from Mahārāj. Likewise, we must always find our own mistakes and we should not get detached from Mahārāj, *Satpurush*, sants, our parents and elders.
- ✿ If we hurt somebody by mistake, we should learn to apologize by saying, 'please forgive me' and 'sorry'.
- ✿ When Mahārāj told the child to ask for something, the child said, "I will accept whatever you give me happily." But he didn't insist on fulfilling his own desire. In the same way, if Mahārāj and *Satpurush* tell us to ask for anything, we must only ask for showering their pleasure upon us.

For Parents/Guardians:

- ✿ Mahārāj unknowingly collided with the child, yet Mahārāj was very sad. He even tried to please the child. In the same way, while scolding our children, if we hurt them knowingly or unknowingly, we must apologize and make them happy.
- ✿ By giving the child his favourite item, Mahārāj has taught us how to please our children.



12. The Game of Golita

Once, Shriji Mahārāj was residing in Gadhpur. He used to please the sants and devotees by performing various different *lilās*.

One day, Shree Hari went along with the *kāthis* to the bank of Ghelā River to take a bath. At that time, some children were playing a game of beating each other with clothes which were twisted and knotted. Having seen this, the God asked, “O *kāthis*! What are these boys doing?”

“O gracious! These boys are playing a game of *golitā*. This is a well-known game from our country, Saurāshtra”, answered one of the *kāthis*.

Mahārāj was surprised with the *kāthi*'s reply. So He said, “O, *kāthis* I have never played this game before. If you want we can go to the court and play this game there.”

The *kāthis* were happy with this proposal of the God. Then everyone took a bath with Mahārāj. After bathing, Mahārāj came back to Dada's court along with the children who were playing *golitā*.

The God called an eight year old child and asked him, “How do we play this game? Please teach me.”

“Mahārāj! Jay Swaminarayan. O gracious! In order to play this game we must first make two teams. Then when we get a hold of the opposite team's player, we get to beat them with a *golitā*. This game is this simple.”, the child replied to the God.

“Ok, let's first make the teams. O Brahm Muni! Come here. We are going to play *golitā*. One of the team is Brahm Muni's, and the other team is Surā Khāchar's. All the sants will be in team of Brahm Muni's team. These *kāthis* will be in Surābāpu's team. And my team will be completely separate. These children will be in my team. Is it ok?” Mahārāj said happily.

All the teams were ready to play *golitā*. Meanwhile Sadguru Brahmānand *Swami* was in deep thoughts. Mahārāj divinely acknowledged *Swami*'s problem and said, “*Swami*! Stop worrying. *Kāthis*! You also stop worrying. I am telling you before we start the game. During the game, forget the thought that 'I am the God, and that you should not beat me. If it's my turn, you may happily beat me.”

Having seen the God's love for this game, the eight year old child said; “O gracious! I want to be on Brahmānand *Swami*'s team. I want to play against you.”

“Ok, you are in *Swami*'s team. Happy now? You are to beat me with the *golitā* with your own strength. Ok?” God said lovingly.

The game of *golitā* started. Everyone was playing. Whoever got caught, would get hit with the *golitā*.

The sants and devotees beat each other with the *golitā* with divine feelings. The children were also happily playing.

But meanwhile the eight year old child playing against Mahārāj became jealous of other children because, other children were playing with the strength of Mahārāj.

They were beating everyone with the *golitā* while this child was not getting a chance to beat anyone with the *golitā*.

He became sad and started crying. Meanwhile Mahārāj's eyes landed on this child. Mahārāj came to the child and asked, "O boy! Why are you crying?"

"Mahārāj, the other children are getting a chance to beat the *golitā* while I am not getting a single chance. So I am jealous of the other children.", the child said frankly.

"O boy! We don't like it at all if one becomes jealous of another. So you shouldn't be jealous. Moreover, you went against my will and decided to do as your mind pleased. You fulfilled your own desire. That is why you are not getting the chance." said Mahārāj.

"Do you want to beat anyone with the *golitā*? Then first, give up your jealousy. Put aside your own desires. Then you will get a chance." Having said this much the God moved His hand on the child's head. The God provided the child with strength.

Then, the child acted according to Mahārāj's will. He left his jealousy aside and he started playing in the children's team with unity.

Seeing the child very happy, the God was also happy! The game was over after a while. Everyone earned Mahārāj's pleasure and departed.

Wow! God, how children loving You are! Look at how childlike You became just to teach children about Your likes and to get children to act according to Your likes!

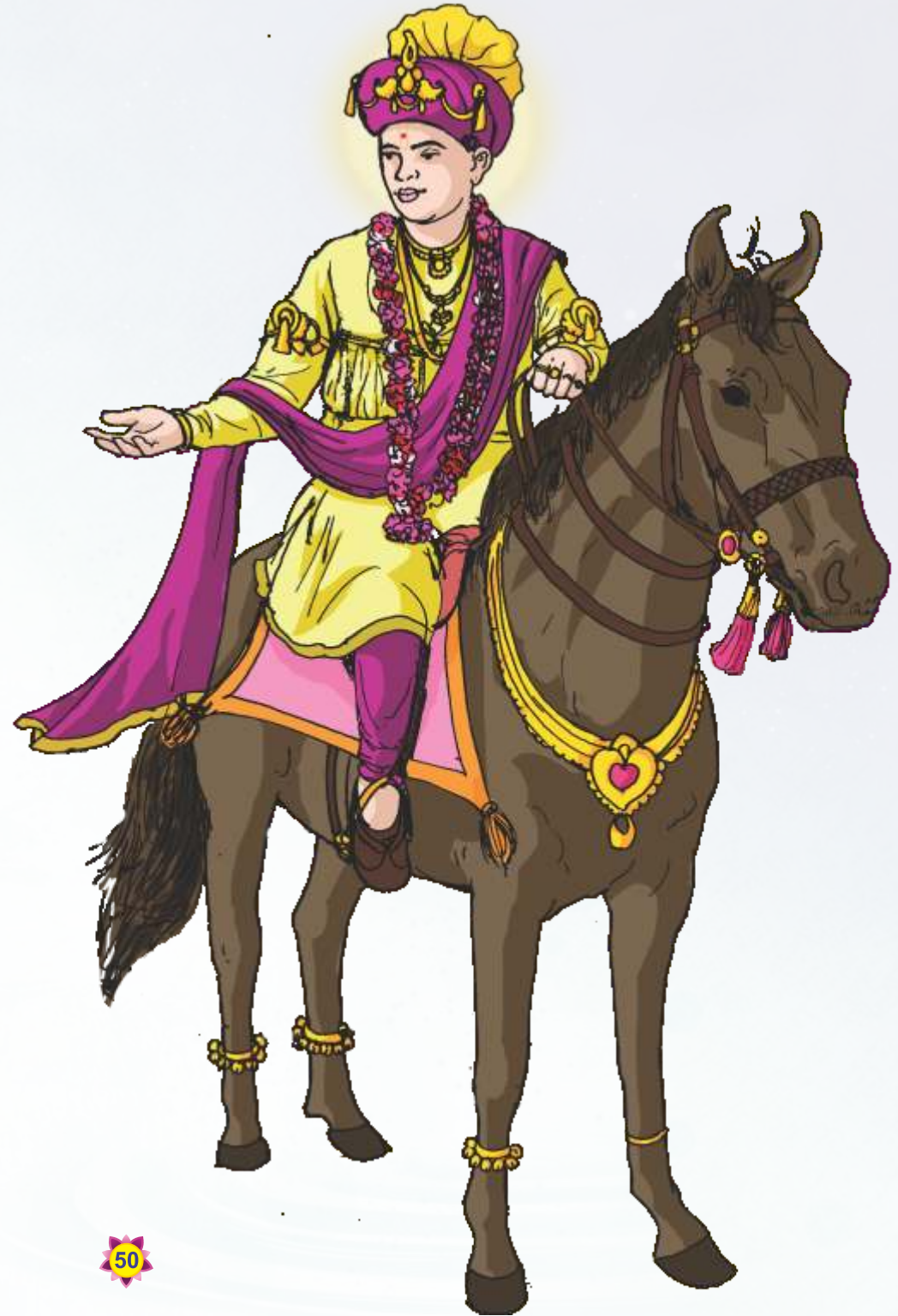
Moral:

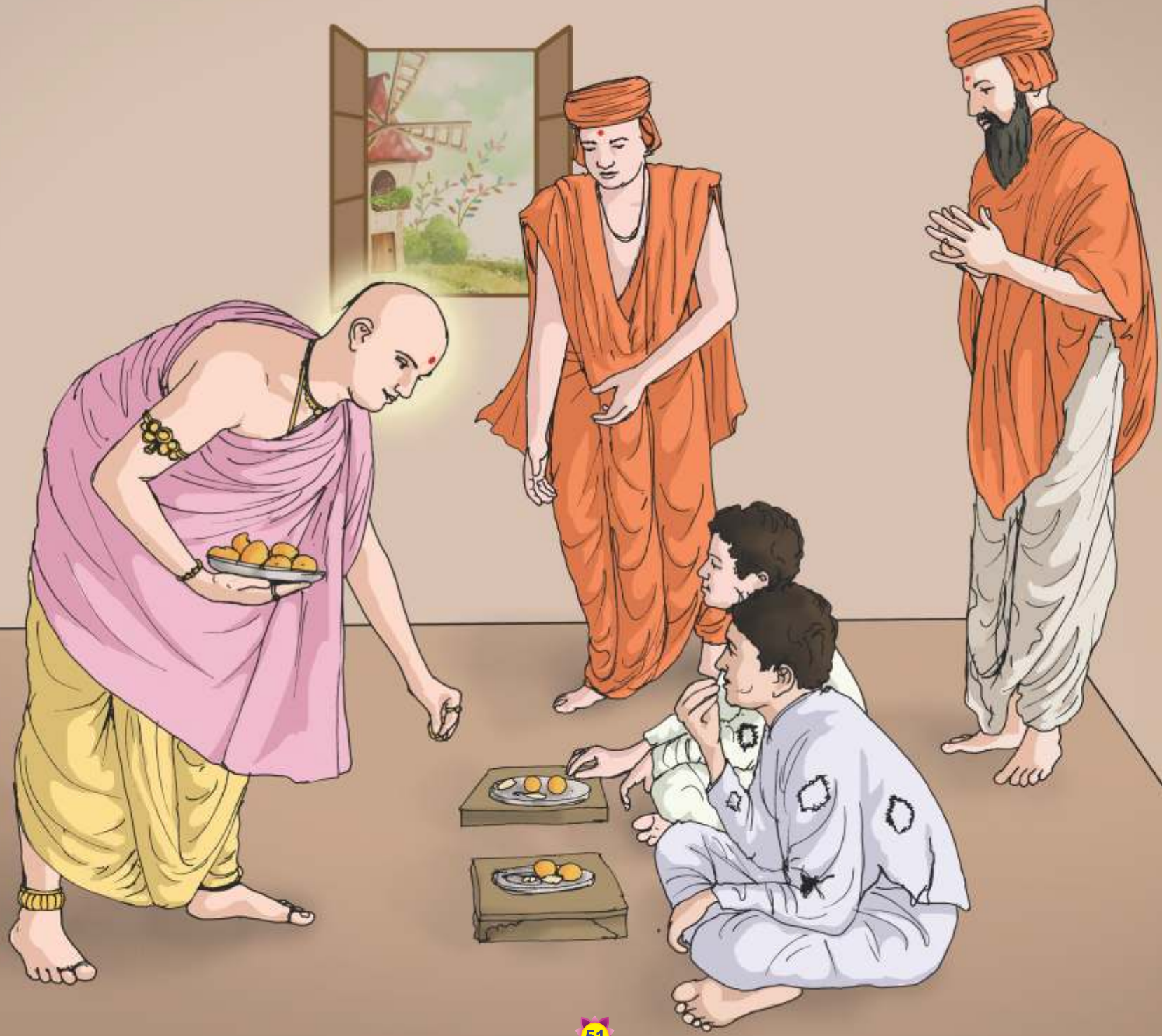
For Children:

- * Mahārāj told the child His own opinion that our children should never be jealous of anyone. According to Mahārāj's will, we should also never be jealous of friends or anyone younger or older than us in matters such as playing, studying etc.
- * The child was unhappy because he had tried to fulfil his own desire. In the same way, if we behave according to our own free will, we will also face disappointment. "One who is *manmukhi*, (behaves according to his own free will) is always unhappy and one who is *gurumukhi*, (acts according to the desire of the Guru) is always happy. So according to this precept, we should never try to enforce any of our own desire in front of Mahārāj, *Satpurush*, sants, parents or elders. We should not act according to our own free will, but rather should always act according to their will.

For Parents/Guardians:

- ❁ It wasn't that Mahārāj liked playing this game, but through this game He actually wanted to bond with the children and to convey his wish to them.
- ❁ Hence Mahārāj became childlike with the children. As a guardian, if we want to mould character in our children we will also have to be childlike with the children.
- ❁ Mahārāj became childlike with the children, not only to play the game, but Mahārāj's aim was to inform the children His own heartily desire.
- ❁ In playing the game, Mahārāj didn't miss this aim at all. When the time came, Mahārāj also suggested that we should not be jealous of anybody and we should not do things according to our own free will. So as a guardian we should not pamper the children, but we should teach them important lessons at the appropriate times.





13. The Begging Princes

This is a story of the Gadhpur village. Once, Shree Hari was seated in an assembly in Gadhpur. Mahārāj was giving the bliss of discourses to sants and devotees.

At that time two children came and stood there. Their clothes were torn and their faces were withered. From their appearance it seemed like they belonged to a poor family. For a long time, they stood there with folded hands.

Suddenly, the God's eyes fell on them. Gesturing His hands, the God called both of them forward. Hesitating, they came near the God.

“O, Princes! Come closer to me.” All the devotees in the assembly were surprised by how Mahārāj addressed the children.

They came near the God and started prostrating before Him. Mahārāj stopped them from prostrating and said lovingly, “O brave children, who are you? And why have you come here?”

“Mahārāj! We are the children of a poor family. Despite of our clothes, why are you addressing us as 'princes' and 'brave children?’” said one of the children with folded hands.

Shriji Mahārāj replied, “I am not looking at your clothes but I am looking at your soul, and so you are innocent. How can such innocent children be poor? You may look poor but in reality you are 'princes' and 'brave children'.”

The poor, helpless children could not understand Mahārāj's superior language. And of course, how could they understand it?

But all the devotees in the assembly understood the God's words.

Then with folded hands, the second child said, “O God! Our native place is very far. There hasn't been good rain for the past four years. A drought has struck the area. So we have left our native place and now we live in utter poverty. We used to satiate our hunger by eating dry & stale food given to us by the village people. But due to the drought, people didn't even have enough food for themselves so, who would give us food?

This is why we have left our native place and have come here.”

Upon listening to the sad story of the two children, Mahārāj became depressed, “Oh! Such delicate children are in such a miserable situation!”

Immediately Mahārāj called Jivubā from the court and told her, “Immediately prepare food with whatever is ready in the kitchen. I want to feed these two children.”

Jivubā made all the arrangements to feed the children. Mahārāj went to the mess (dining hall) with sants, *brahmachāri* and the children. After getting their hands washed, Mahārāj made the children sit on wooden stools.

Meanwhile Jivubā brought two large millet chapattis (*rotlo*) and jaggery. On seeing the millet chapattis, the God told Jivubā, “Well done, but also bring the chapattis which you have made for me.” Mahāprabhu's kind nature touched everyone. Jivubā brought two other large millet chapattis (*rotlo*) and gave them to Mahārāj.

Mahārāj served each boy two chapattis and jaggery with His own hands.

After getting Mahārāj's permission, both the children happily started eating.

Shree Hari was very pleased at the sight of the children eating.

After eating, both the children prostrated before the God and set out from there.

Then looking at Bhaguji and Jivubā, Mahārāj said, “I haven't only given chapattis to these children but I have also given My *Murti* with it.”

Wow! God, how children loving You are! How You are a saviour of the poor. You are so kind that You can never see the children in any type of misery. And because of Your kind and charitable nature, You served the two poor children with Your own hands! Wow! God, wow!

Moral:

For Children:

- ✿ We should never consider ourselves insignificant or inferior to others. We should have pride that after getting to know the supreme Lord *Swaminārayān* and *Satpurush*, we have been given a very high status.

For Parent/Guardians:

- ✿ Just like Mahārāj, we should also be very kind. We should heartily feel sad by seeing our own or any other children in distress. Only then we will be able to share others' misery.
- ✿ Mahārāj didn't look at the outer appearance of the children but He looked at their souls. In the same way, we should not hate or detest children based on their external appearance or nature. However, we should behave with them with love and sympathy.
- ✿ To bring the two children out of their insecurity, Mahārāj addressed them with the powerful words like 'princes' and 'brave children'. Similarly as a guardian, to save our children from drifting towards low self-esteem we should also address them with such words and encourage them to progress forward.



14. Extra Ten Years

This is a story of Khimā and Bhimā, who were natives of the Kerā village. Their father passed away and got the bliss of *Murti* when both of them were very small.

Their mother faced many hardships in upbringing them. Both the brothers stayed on the farm for the whole day. They worked on the farm while constantly remembering Mahārāj's *Murti*.

One day, their mother was making millet chapattis at home. Both the brothers were at the farm. No one else was present at home.

Suddenly something happened to their mother and she passed away while making millet chapattis.

Both the brothers were working on the farm while chanting the Swaminarayan *Mahāmantrā*.

Meanwhile, someone from the village informed them that, "Mahārāj has come to Ratnā *Bhagat's* house in the Baladiyā village."

Baladiyā was 1.5 kilometres away from the Kerā village. So both the brothers thought, "We will go for Mahārāj's darshan in the evening."

In the meantime, another message came from the village, "Your mother has passed away. Come home urgently." Both were very small in age.

Hearing such shocking news, they became distressed. After reaching home, Bhimā started weeping very loudly.

So making an effort to calm him down, Khimo said, "Bhimā! We are not supposed to cry. Please calm down."

"Brother! Our mother has passed away. What will happen to us now? This is why I am crying," said Bhimo while weeping.

"Bhimā! Our sants are our real mother. And Lord Swaminarayan is our real father. Then how are we support less?"

Hearing Khimā's encouraging words, Bhimo calmed down. Bhimo finally recovered his poise and said, "Yes, brother! You are right. We are not support less. Mahārāj has come to Baladiyā. Brother! Baladiya is only 1.5 kilometres away from here. Let's go there and pray to Mahārāj. He will surely accept our prayers." Then they both hurried to reach Baladiyā.

Mahāprabhu was seated in an assembly in the courtyard of Ratnā *Bhagat's* house.

The God was giving the bliss of his discourses to everyone. Meanwhile, the two brothers came running into the assembly.

Looking at Mahārāj, Bhimo said, "Mahārāj! Our mother has passed. O gracious! Our mother has passed away."

"O Bhimā! What are you saying?" The God stood up from the cot and hugged both of them.

Stroking both the boys by moving His hand on their heads, Mahārāj said, "O, devotees! These are my sons. They are very dear to me. O Bhimā! Stop weeping. Who told you that your mother has passed away? Let's go and see."

Then Mahārāj ordered to get the Mānaki prepared. Mahārāj made both the boys sit in front of him on Mānaki and directly arrived at the courtyard of their house.

Mahāprābhū went near their mother's dead body. While sitting on the Mānaki, He stretched his right leg and placed it on the lady's stomach.

“O lady! Get up, your children are crying.”

And behold! The lady became conscious again. Then folding her hands to Mahārāj she said, “O gracious! Jay Swaminarayan Mahārāj.”

“O lady! We have gifted you extra ten years of age to bring up your children. Happy?” said Mahārāj happily.

“Yes, Mahārāj! Ten years are ok.... But if you gift 20 years then...”

As soon as the lady spoke this, Mahāprābhū pressed His second leg on the lady's stomach and said,

“Granted. I am gifting you another extra ten years of age. Now, they are my children. Take care of them. Bring them up. We will always be with these children.” Having said this, Mahārāj handed over both the children to their mother.

All the devotees who had followed Mahārāj from Baladiyā saw this course of events and said, “Mahārāj, You are the ocean of kindness. You are the symbol of mercy and compassion. You have showered so much grace on these children. Why so?”

“These children have always pleased Me and My sants. That's why we have showered our grace on them.”

Wow! God, how children loving You are! Because these children always acted according to your will, you granted extra twenty years of age to their mother. Moreover you pleased them by promising to be always with them. Wow! O gracious, what a treasure of mercy you are!

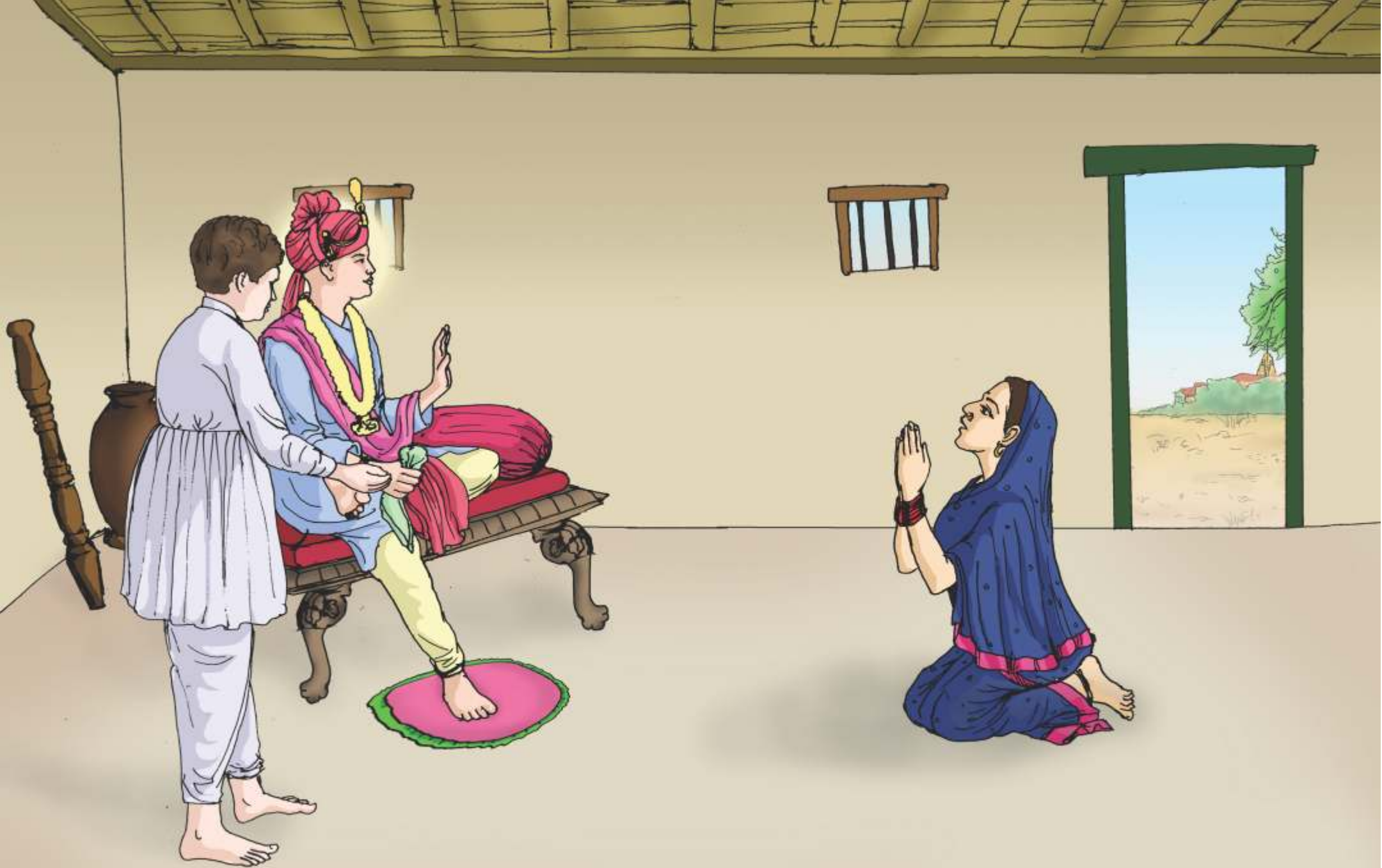
Moral:

For Children:

- ❁ Lord Swaminarayan is the real father of our soul and Guruji HDH Bāpji, Dear HH *Swamishree* and sants are our real mothers. So if we live under their protection, we will never be unhappy in life.
- ❁ Mutually, we should provide the encouragement of satsang and we should encourage the devotees to act according to the will of the God.

For Parents/Guardians:

- ❁ As guardians, we must teach our children lessons about how to lead a life full of wisdom from the very childhood. If we teach them lessons such as, “Satsang is our house, Mahārāj is our father, *Satpurush* and revered sants are our mothers. Mahārāj and *Satpurush* are always with us.” – Our children will never be depressed or disappointed in life.



15. Devasi's Invisible Guide

There is Pithavājāl village in the Amreli district. Devasi was a child devotee of this village.

He had developed a great fondness for satsang. But his family members and relatives were not *satsangis*. So everyone troubled him a lot. They would throw away his daily pooja.

They would rip up Mahārāj's *Murtis*. They would force him to eat garlic and onion. They would beat him and even make him starve. Oh! They would continuously taunt him throughout the whole day.

In spite of all these troubles, he never forgot the God. He tolerated all the pains with a smiling face because he had firm faith like the words of this stanza:

“Dradhtā joine re; teni madad kare chhe morāri.”

Translation: The God helps those who have firm faith

Meanwhile, a troupe of his village was going to Gadhpur for the God's darshan. Devasi also decided to go along with this troupe. He never used to eat food from anybody's house. So, he was compelled to take food from his own home. So, he told his mother, “Mother! I want to go to Gadhpur for Mahārāj's darshan. So can you please prepare me a tiffin box?”

“Devasidā! What is there for you to see in Gadhpur? If you want to go, you can go there. But, I will not prepare any food for you,” his mother said with anger.

Hearing this, Devasi was very disappointed. The devotees came to know about this situation. They condoled with him, “Don't worry. We will feed you from our tiffin.”

The troupe reached Gadhpur after two days. Everybody had Mahārāj's darshan. They took full advantage of the divine discourses, darshan and service for five days.

Devasi did not leave Mahārāj's side for one second. The troupe got ready to take their leave.

“Remember everything you learned and saw during these five days and reflect upon it.

During all your activities, keep remembering the moments we spent together and I will surely always be with you,” said Shreeji Mahārāj.

Devasi consolidated this command in his life. He reached Ghelā with the troupe.

At this time, Mahārāj gave him divine darshan. He started to happily follow Mahārāj. Later on, the God walked a little ahead and Devasi also walked behind Him.

Mahārāj walked further and Devasi followed right behind Him.

Devasi was following close behind Mahārāj. So the devotees of the troupe stopped him and said,

“Devasi! Why are you walking ahead of the troupe? Walk along with everybody, otherwise you will get lost.”

“Look! Our guide Shree Hari Himself is walking in front of me. He is my true support. Then, why should I worry?”

The troupe reached Dāmnaṅar. They took a night halt there. Next day, after finishing their morning chores, the troupe walked further. But for Devasi, Shree Hari Himself was leading him and Devasi was following Him.

In this way, Devasi reached his village. Having reached his house, Mahārāj knocked on the gate. His mother was sitting in the front

yard of the house. She opened the gate.

As soon as she opened the gate, first she saw Lord Swaminarayan Himself and Devasi entering the house. Seeing the God, Devasi's mother was very astonished and she asked, "Who are you?"

"I am Lord Swaminarayan. Your son constantly remembers me. Moreover, I have come here all the way from Gadhpur just so that your son doesn't get lost." Having said this, Mahārāj entered the house, and took a seat.

Devasi's mother's joy knew no bounds. Then, she ran over to Devasi.

She hugged him and told him lovingly. "Oh! My son! You have finally arrived! How did you come here by yourself?"

"Mother! Mahārāj Himself has come to drop me home." After hearing this, she acknowledged full faith in the God. She ran to Mahāprabhu and bowed down at His feet.

"Mahārāj! Please forgive all my crimes. I have offended both you and Devasi very much. Please make me a devotee." Saying this Devasi's mother started to cry.

Mahārāj pardoned all the crimes of his mother. He offered her *vartamān*. Putting his hand on Devasi's head, the God showered His affection upon him and also hugged him. Tears of joy flooded into the eyes of Devasi and his mother.

Both of them kept looking at Mahārāj for a very long time, and soon the God disappeared.

Wow! God, how children loving You are! The child remembered your *Murti* and your actions while You removed all his sorrow. Wow! God, you are very kind.

Moral:

For Children:

- ❁ Just like Devasi stayed with Mahārāj for five days and listened to the religious discourses, we should also stay with sants for some days. After listening to their discourse, we must reflect upon it daily.
- ❁ We must learn to always obey the orders of Mahārāj and *Satpurush* and to live according to their will.
- ❁ We should never eat food that is not cooked according to our code of conduct. We should also avoid eating food from anyone's house where the rules of satsang are not followed.
- ❁ Even if our parents create many hurdles for us when we try to keep our satsang, we should still never disrespect them. Moreover, we should pray continuously for Mahārāj's help to overcome such hurdles.
- ❁ We must develop a deep affection for the proximity of Mahārāj, *Satpurush* and sants. We must please them by staying with them and serving them.

For Parent/Guardians:

- ❁ We should never stop our children from going to satsang and religious assemblies, but we should rather insist on sending them so that they become virtuous and so that Maharaj, Himself, becomes their sole protector.
- ❁ During the social and spiritual activities of our children, we must ensure that their rules of satsang are sustained.
- ❁ As a guardian, if we have committed any mistake, we must humbly accept it.
- ❁ To ensure that our children don't lose their way in life, we must walk ahead of them and guide them in new directions.

Glossary

A

Anādimukta The top category of mukts
They have achieved oneness with God and have the same form as God

B

Balmukt A child devotee
Bapa Abjibapashri
Brahmchari A type of ascetics from the Swaminarayan Sect who are usually in the service of God or his idol; Used to refer to Mulji Brahmchari

C

Chaturmas 4 month period (Asādh Sudi 11th to Kārtik Sudi 11th Vikram Samvat) that is considered by Hindus to be a religious time period

D

Darbār Title given to chiefs (people in power); A surname
Darshan One who sees God (idol) with a firm belief that this God (idol) is not a human, photo or stone but rather is the Supreme Lord who is always present in his divine abode and that he is entirely divine
Derasar Jain temple

H

Holi Festival of colors

K

Kāthi A caste found in the region of Saurāshtra, Gujarat
Kesh Divine hair
Kirtan Devotional song

L

Lilās Divine miracles and events performed by Mahārāj or Satpurush

M

Mahamantra The great and glorious name, Swaminarayan
Mandap The location setup for an assembly
Mukts Liberated souls;
Short form for Anādimukta

Murti An idol of Lord Swaminarayan;
God's divine form

N

Nand Saints that have become ascetics in Mahārāj's time

P

Paramhansa A type of ascetics from the Swaminarayan Sect

Padhramani Spiritual house visit

Prasad Divine items;
Food and any items sanctified through offering to or through contact of Mahārāj or Satpurush

Puja Worship which usually involves some form of physical rituals

Patasa An Indian Sweet

S

Sadguru The topmost post offered to a Sadhu

Satpurush Divine being whose complete doer is God himself

Sant (in Hinduism and Sikhism) a saint

Satsang Holy association of God, saints, scriptures and one's soul;
An assembly where speaker gives the discourses

Satsangi A person who follows Satsang also known as a devotee

T

Thāl

Food offered to God with affection as devotion;
A type of Devotional song sing during offering the food to god

V

Vartmān The 5 vows prescribed in the Shikhshāpatri;
The physical initiation ritual performed through which individuals attain salvation; Present tense

Vachnamrut Most sacred and foundational scripture of the Swaminarayan spiritual tradition

Note :

Maharaj, Shriji Maharaj, Shree Hari, Mahaprabhu, Prabhu are the names and nouns used for Lord Swaminarayan.