

PUSHTI LITIGATION

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Pushti sect (sampradāya) within the Vaishnavism Hindu religion is more than five centuries old. The road to be traversed upon in one's lifetime, be it at the individual level or the institutional level is, by necessity a bumpy road. The test lies in how one faces the vicissitudes and overcomes the bumps. Besides this, there has been a deterioration in values all around on account of the unstoppable invasion of the western culture. No religion, faith, sect or denomination has been able to escape this invasion. The Pushti sect, established by Shri Vallabhacharyaji (Shri Mahaprabhuji) is no exception.

The Pushti sect is an organised form of Pushti Marg which has existed since times immemorial. There had been a concerted effort to tear into the rich Hindu heritage of India, first by the muslim invasions and later by the Christian missionaries. Nonetheless, a ray of hope still exists which can bring the revival of the Vedic culture, may be in a refined form to suit the present times.

While establishing the Pushti sect, which is a Bhakti Marg, Shri Mahaprabhuji laid down sound and easy-to-follow principles. The principles are aimed essentially to divert our ego and attachment towards that Supreme Reality which the Vedas describe it as Brahm, the Gita as Parmātmā and Bhāgwat as Bhagwān, thereby helping the devotee to gradually increase his rapport with Krishna, which the aforesaid scriptures

unflinchingly proclaim to be the ultimate reality. The principles propounded by Shri Mahaprabhuji were scrupulously followed, in letter and spirit, till at least the first hundred years of the sect. In fact, the sect was at its zenith during these hundred years. However, after the first hundred years, the slide started gradually. Today, after five hundred years of its existence, it is anybody's guess whether it has reached its nadir or is yet to reach there! The tragic part of the story is that the damage is caused more by the descendants of Shri Vallabh. They have strayed away from the path laid down by Shri Vallabh, who had faith in his heirs down the line. It is not for nothing that Shri Gusainji said :

“Bhuvi Bhaktipracāraikakrute Svānvayakrut Pitā |
Svavanśe sthāpitāśeṣaswamāhātmya Smayāpahaḥ ||

(Sarvottam Stotra – 22)

Tiruvalluvar, the legendary poet saint has said :

“Those wedded to their spotless heritage will do nothing unworthy or false.”

Unfortunately, the later descendants of Shri Vallabh, sort of divorced themselves from their spotless heritage. In fact, Shri Mahaprabhuji had the inkling of the times to come and hence cautioned the prospective followers to be scrupulous while selecting a Guru :

“Kṛṣṇasevā Param Vikśya Dambhādirahitaṃ Naram |
Śribhāgwattatvajnaṃ Bhajet Jijnāsurādarāt ||

(Tattwārthadeepnibandha – 2/227)

Perhaps, Pushti sect is the only denomination where a disciple/follower is given the right to examine a person before selecting him as a Guru.

Be that as it may, diversion from the real Pushti path has proved to be disastrous in many ways. Shri Shyam Manoharji, the author of this book and my revered spiritual Guru points out the maladies inflicting the sect through some of the court cases. He has gone into the etiology of each malady to dig out the causes of the illness. Possible remedies too have been suggested after deliberating upon it with other Goswamis.

It is significant to note that it is not the personal opinion of Shri Shyam Bawa that a particular conduct or system is improper. They are termed improper in the backdrop of the principles established by Shri Mahaprabhuji, Shri Gopinathji, Shri Gusainji and scores of Ācāryas of yester years. A rich collection of these words of wisdom have been included in the book as annexures. Hence, the devout Vaishnavas too may get adequately informed. In the light of these facts, the relevancy of the book need not be over-emphasized.

Present generation's leaning is more towards the English language. Moreover, there is a sizeable Vaishnava population across the shores of India. Though curious to know more and more about Pushtimarg, they feel left out, not only by the distance but more by the fact that most of the sectarian scriptures are either in Sanskrit, Hindi, Gujarati or Vrajbhāshā. This book is not about sickness alone. As mentioned earlier, it contains various preachings and teachings pregnant with profound wisdom. In the backdrop of these teachings, the present sickness is diagnosed to be

chronic. The reader is set to gain by learning the core principles of the sect and hence its translation into English language.

So far as I am personally concerned, my education in Pushti Marg started in the year 2013 at the Mumbai University, mainly under Shri Shyam Manoharji. After the completion of this formal education in 2016, my informal learning continued under him either through private classes, public discourses or informal conversations. The learning continues till today. I was eternally blessed by Shri Thakorji through Shri Shyam Manoharji when the latter formally initiated me into Pushti Marg in 2016. While translating this book and the earlier one "Ahamkār Mimāmsā", I had to dive deep into the unfathomable ocean of Upanishads and other scriptures. More often than not, I found myself bewildered, perplexed and mystified. I couldn't understand the meanings of scores of words and thoughts. However, with the blessings of Shri Thakorji, Shri Mahaprabhuji and Shri Shyam Bawa, I could extricate myself from the labyrinth of metaphysics, epistemology, ontology, axiology and what not. All said and done, in accomplishing this task, I stand today less ignorant so far as Shuddhadvait philosophy and Sākār Brahmavād are concerned. Understanding the psyche of Pushtimargi followers has been quite amusing.

We Pushtimargi Vaishnavas are abundantly grateful to Shri Shyam Manoharji for his divine blessings and tireless efforts for leading us on the right path.

Pradeep Parikh

SHRI KRÍSNAYANAMAHA
ŚRIMAD ĀCĀRYACARAᅇKAMALEBHYO NAMAHA

RELEVANCY

Since long, SHRI VALLABHACHARYA TRUST has been providing platform to discuss various facets of Vallabh Sect like Vaishanava Vārtā, eligibility (adhikār), sādhanā praᅇāli, śaranāgati, guᅇagān, Bhagwat Sevā and so on. Once the tools or means of devotion have been discussed, discussion regarding reward (Fal) obviously follows. The fruit will not taste sweet if it is obtained without hitting road blocks along the journey. Hence, before venturing upon the discussion on rewards, it was quite befitting to first discuss the limitations, restrictions and prohibitions one encounters along the path of Pushti Bhakti and refuge (Prapatti) in the Lord. A seminar on this aspect was organised in September, 2006.

In the said seminar Pujya Goswami Shri Shyam Manohar (Parla – Kishangadh) had presented a paper in Hindi on the encounter between modern judicial system and Pushtimargiya worship tradition. The said paper was published in the form of book also and later its Gujarati version too followed. The present publication is an attempt to provide a fair translation in English so that it may be helpful in courts of law if similar disputes arise again.

Disputes are with regard to Bhagwat Sevā performed in the houses of the Gurus (descendants of Shri Vallabhacharya) and the parties involved may have been either the disciples, family members or the contemporary establishment. In this historical record of judicial disputes, Shri Shyam Manohar has highlighted the causes of the disputes and the irreparable damage done to the sect as a whole. The whining by Pujya

Shri is not a bald one. His lamentation is followed by suggestions to at least minimise such controversies, if not avoidable totally.

The historical narrations make it clear that the root causes of the disputes are : ignorance of sectarian principles and emotions, irrelevant knowledge and information, doubts, lack of faith and dedication. Therefore, the solution lies in creating awareness of the fundamental principles and bring about an awakening to scrupulously follow these principles.

Siddhāntavacanāvali and Amrutvacanāvali have been taken as source material and hence they too have been included with necessary changes and amplifications. Financial help by donors is duly acknowledged which has enabled the distribution of this publications at no cost.

For Shri Vallabhacharya Trust
Sharad Goswami (Mandvi-Kutch)

PREFACE

One particular ideal should never be erased from the mind of any Pushtimargi follower, be he a Pushtimargi by birth or an entrant from some other faith. That ideal is - it is much more beneficial to understand what Pushtimargi lifestyle expects from us rather than what we expect from a Pushtimargi lifestyle. This noble thought requires deep meditation in order to build up our determination.

It is soothing to note that Shri Vallabhacharya Trust (Kutch-Mandvi) has been playing a complimentary role in organising seminars, not only with regard to our sect, but inviting scholars from other denominations and philosophies to have their view points. This may not be palatable to many followers of our sect, but I firmly believe that in future, the contemplations taking place in such discussion will prove to be the fulcrum in the annals of Pushti contemplation.

Despite continuous study of sectarian scriptures, these deliberations have helped clarify and sharpen my intellectual and emotional thoughts pertaining to my own sect. Hence, despite initial hesitation, I am not shy of expressing my acceptance.

We may repeatedly listen to a song appreciating and understanding the musical notes it is composed of, but the beauty of its subtleties cannot be experienced unless we stretch and strain our own vocal chords. We may appreciate the painting of a beautiful landscape but it will not touch our heart unless we roam about in that landscape. Similarly, the solemnity

of our own doctrines and the nuances thereof cannot be understood unless they are collectively discussed without chicanery and the sole purpose being to become wiser.

The present situation of Pushti Sampradāya has become utterly deplorable. The decency, decorum and dignity attached to the title of Dharmācārya is eroded to such an extent that even the descendants of Mahaprabhuji have the audacity to shamelessly say –

“When we initiate the followers of Pushti Marg, the term ‘Vitta’ (finance) is used in the Brahmsambandh Mantra. Since the dedication (Samarpaṇ) is before our deity, then how can the use of financial offerings by Vaishnavas in the worship of our deity be faulted with?”

If this avarice resulting into financial frenzy is fairly understood, then why it cannot be the other way round, that the deity of the so called Dharmācārya be handed over to the one who is initiated because the Mantra speaks of dedicating everything – own self, house, family and all the remaining things. Why servants are employed to carry on the business of worship? It is well understood that when dedication is effected through the Mantra before a deity, such dedication is not deity-specific. The said deity symbolizes the Lord who lords over the universe. In that case the least that can be expected is to avoid the use of the financial offerings in Bhagwatsevā, of those who merely come for darśana and who are not initiated into the Pushti fold. This is the result of the unforgivable out and out erosion of the sectarian doctrines, the pride of co-habitation with the

Lord and above all, the pride of being the descendant of one of the most adorable teachers of Hindu philosophy.

Recently Shri Vallabhacharya Trust had organised a seminar on “Restrictions in Bhagwatsevā” in which I had submitted a paper on these thoughts. Of course, the paper could not be discussed due to time constraints, nonetheless, we Pushtimargis will have to contemplate on these aspects at some time or the other. However, I do acknowledge the gesture of the above Trust for having published the paper before the deliberations at the seminar were published.

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Goswami Shyam Manohar

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ENCOUNTER BETWEEN MODERN JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND PUSHTIMARGIYA WORSHIP TRADITION

(In the context of Prohibition in Bhagwat Sevā)

1 Engaging Terminology

The expression 'Modern Judicial System' came in vogue after India's colonisation by the Britishers when written law came to be implemented in British India. Gradually it became prevalent in the princely states which had British influence. More or less, the same system found shelter in the Constitution of India after independence. Similarly, the expression 'Pushtimargiya Worship Tradition' implies what was preached by Shri Vallabhacharya orally as well as through the several treatises authored by him. The expression also takes within its fold the commentaries on these treaties written by subsequent scholars.

2. The perimeters of Fundamental Supportive underlying the subject-matter

Be it the judicial system or worship tradition, neither can remain bound in the form it was originally established or propagated. The continuous transformation is contributed by several factors like, the understanding of subsequent scholars, the expediency in pursuing old practices and geo-temporal conveniences or otherwise. The consequences of these evolutionary forces may be sane and healthy but equal possibility is it getting perverted.

It is indeed a fact that many such provisions and disparate situations have arisen due to geo-temporal reasons. In such a situation it is apt that scriptural preachings will command more respectability than the later date perversions. At times, the prescribed principles which are stretched with caution and at times the rot caused by undesirable influence or sophistry, both have a tendency to become customary. Any custom, after a long usage, has the tendency to assume scriptural colour. In that eventuality it is the moral responsibility of the followers to bring back the situation in its original form. In absence of such a pious effort, it is wholly Immoral to connect the rot with the original source. It is more a self-deception than deceiving others. Accordingly, in the ultimate analysis, the parameters of the present subject-matter lie within the Pushtimargiya scriptures only.

3. The parameters of the subject-matter

Within the larger spheres of Modern Judicial system and Pushtimargiya Worship Tradition, only smaller areas will be discussed. It is neither possible nor desirable to discuss all the areas within the larger sphere in this write-up.

Further, to avoid the intimidating length of the write-up, I will be quoting from Siddhāntavacanāvali, a catalogue of Pushtimargiya principles compiled from the sectarian scriptures. This compilation was prepared for the conference organised to deliberate on Pushti principles. The said conference was held from 10th to 13th January, 1992 at Vishwakarma Baug, Vile Parle, Mumbai. Out of the catalogue, only four points are desired to be presented, namely : Sevāsthal (place of worship) Sevāswaroop (the form of the deity) Sevādhikāri Sevākartā (eligibility of the worshipper), and Sevāparicārak Sevāswaroop (the format of worship).

Again, four issues are integrated within Sevāswaroop, namely Sevopadeśa (preaching and initiation for Sevā) Sevāpradarśan Exhibitionism), Sevāprayojan (purpose of Sevā), and Sevārth-Ājivikā (Sevā for livelihood). Hence, apt quotations will be referred to from Siddhāntavacanāvali.

4. Relevant clarifications

A fair translation of the original doctrines was presented at the conference. Till date nobody has pointed out any serious shortcoming in the principles nor has anyone come up with a different interpretation. Albeit, some childish chatter was indeed published. Interestingly, some critics did publish statements contradicting their own earlier statements. It was quite puzzling to determine as to which of these statements should be considered to have been made in good faith. The inner voice guided, “better to keep mum in the interest of everyone”.

In the light of the above; it becomes imperative to determine that in Pushti Sampradāya-

1. The residence of the worshipper is the place of worship.
2. The deity in the house is exclusively meant for worship by the occupier of the house and his family members. It is not meant for general public.
3. Impliedly, the worship of the deity in the house by other than a family member is strictly barred unless expressly permitted by the person to whom the deity belongs.

4. Obviously, the form of worship (Sevā Swaroop) is also exclusive to the occupant of the house and not for public.

Accordingly,

- (a) The sectarian initiation, namely, Brahmasambandh is only to acquire eligibility to worship personally or with family members at home. It is not meant merely for admission into the sect, not for Darśana at public sectarian temples, not for providing money to someone else to do the Sevā nor to buy Prasād.
- (b) It enjoins that, the rights and duties attached to Bhagwatsevā and Darśana are restricted.
- (c) The same applies to the purpose of Bhagwatsevā. Enhancement of Bhakti is the purpose of Sevā through the application of self-declared belongings which have the tendency of inflating the ego and causing painful attachment. The purpose of Sevā is not for general welfare or Pushti education.
- (d) In conclusion, Bhagwatsevā of the deity at home means to tread on enchanted ground, relish the presence of the deity at home which bestows pleasure and bliss to the self. It is not, under any circumstances, a means to earn livelihood either for the worshipper or his family members.

(Siddhi.Vaca.1 – 8 and Pg.5-38 of the Discussion Note)

Considering the above unquestionable principles of Pushtimarg, it is very evident that in present times a wholly perverted form of Bhagwatsevā is going on in an unrepenting manner. We, so cold preachers are left with

no confidence to gainfully employ ourselves and have succumbed to the lure of the lucre. As a result, the gullible public have been tempted to move away from the original principles. These preachers are seducing the general public by claiming that custom prevails over the textual commandments. However, the asseverations of ancestral Ācāryas have been compiled in this book under the heading 'Amratvacanāvali' as an annexure to Siddhāntavacanāvali. It is for the seducers to see as to what extent the so-called customs are opposed to the actual truth.

It does not lie in the mouth of anyone to say that principles which are not implemented have lost their efficacy and hence a nullity. Theft, robbery, homicide have existed since human evolution, yet they cannot be said to have received societal acceptance. They remain culpable offences. Consequently, practices (or malpractices!) adopted by the Pushtimargiya preachers which are contrary to Siddhāntavacanāvali and Amratvacanāvali amount to insubordination of the doctrines declared by Mahaprabhuji.

If the doctrinal approach is not adopted, then unfortunately, the rut of treating Vallabh descendants as Purushottam and such other ruts also will have to be considered as Pushtimargiya worship. As a matter of fact, the English judges had almost accepted such propositions in the Shri Yadunath Maharaj libel case. I fail to understand as to how contumacy can be taken to be Pushtimargiya ideal merely under the pretext that logic and wisdom are futile before statutory authorities. The reason is not far to seek. Even a habitual offender would not have accepted such cussedness as a canon but for the severe criticism Pushtimarg received under the then prevailing pressure of Victorian morality. Today we see blatant violation of

Pushtimargiya principles by the followers. Taking advantage of this, the preaching class too, quite ostensibly support these violations under the garb of legal intricacies. This was the earliest embargo in our worship tradition emerging from the modern judicial system.

Nonetheless, those desirous of pursuing the Pushtimargiya principles in their pristine form, their freedom to do so should not get obstructed. This should mark the end of judicial activism vis a vis Pushtimargiya principles. Needless to say, constant dialogue and deliberations on the declared fundamental principles is advantageous to all concerned.

5. Chronological Division of Pushtimarg Annals :

Generally speaking, four generations of a clan endure for a period of hundred years. In this light, the first hundred years of Pushtimarg history signal the dawn of the sect in which Mahaprabhuji and the succeeding three generations were deeply involved in propounding and propagating Pushti faith and inspiring confidence in the people that it rests on the strong foundation of Hindu scriptural philosophy as enshrined in Śruti, Smriti and Purāṇa. The next four generations were engaged in enhancing the faith of the people and this century saw Pushtimarg shining bright like the midday sun. The bright light seemed to be gradually fading during the period of the third set of four generations (i.e. from 9th to 12th generation) when the sun was approaching the twilight zone. For ardent loyalists it was a period of struggle to somehow keep the faith alive. Just as dusk culminates into darkness, so also Pushtimarg saw a downturn during the period of fourth set of four generations (i.e. thirteenth to

sixteenth generation) and even the present seventeenth and eighteenth generations of the fifth century can be connected with it. Barring a thin streak of light which radiates some hope, there is total decadence and erosion of faith. At this juncture, painful expression of some conscious Ācārya need to be revisited :

1. “The desire of Śrīmadācārya is not known _ _ _ _ earlier, where there was a daily regime to be followed, it has yielded place to gastronomical and gossiping indulgences, fun and frolic. This is our character. Only Mahaprabhuji can save us !!
2. Of course, over a hundred years ago the Goswamis, their wives and daughters were well aware of the self. In the present times it is not so because of irritable food habits and bad company. The divine beings (Daivi Jeevas) have already left for Vaikunth, but aping them, āsuri jeevas also took Brahmsambandh. No ‘sambandh’ was established with Brahm but Goswamis fell in their company. As a result, the Goswamis forgot not only the self but also God’s Swaroop. They ceased to walk the path of divinity they had embarked upon and instead succumbed to sensualities. Lifestyle turned luxurious. They spend money on material pursuits without offering it to Thakorji dwelling in the house. The austere lifestyle practiced and preached by Mahaprabhuji is no longer a norm. There is debasement of affection for our Thakorji by taking shelter of the filthy rich.

(120 Vacanāmrut 30; Shri Govardhan Vacanāmrut 21)

Therefore, we the sixteenth-seventeenth generation of Goswamis are left with nothing but to nurture the so-called customs which are devoid of any foundational platform. Some of us, a hopeless minority who are in quest of restoring the pristine glory of Pushtimarg, are groping in the dark, waiting only to hear the death knell. In this scenario, the question is, to what extent should the modern judicial system be held responsible for all the collisions?

6. Comparison of historical disputes and the recent ones :

(1) (a) Amongst the first four generations, the first incident worth noting took place during the lifetime of Mahaprabhuji. This incident concerns Shri Damodardas Sambhalvale and forms part of the “Stories of Eighty-Four Vaishnavas”. In those days, it was a law that a Hindu converting himself as Muslim, would acquire unencumbered hereditary rights in the property. One who did not convert had to get his succession right approved from the state. To take advantage of the law, Sambhalvale’s son got himself converted. When Sambhalvale died, his widow did not wish that the entire property which was dedicated for Bhagwatsevā goes into the hands of the muslim son. Accordingly, all the movable property as well as the deity (Shri Dwarkadhish Swaroop) were consigned to Mahaprabhuji. Mahaprabhuji saw that along with “Lakshmi”, “Narayan” too had come. He retained only the deity but rest of the movables were immersed in Shri Yamunaji. Possibility of legal tangles and disputes that would have ensued was thus averted by Mahaprabhuji (84 Vaishnava Vārtās 3/8).

Only if we, the descendants of Mahaprabhuji had the same resoluteness, many encounters with the judiciary could have been avoided.

There have been a number of judicial precedents discussing the thin line between tax avoidance and tax evasion. Tax evasion is frowned upon, whereas, barring a few cases, avoiding tax through planning within the four corners of law has been upheld. The few cases where even avoidance was not upheld, the courts had to pierce through the corporate veil and uncover the real picture. One such dubious method was to convert the personally acquired property into trust property and most Vallabh descendants too adopted this method. However, affairs were so arranged that they did not have to sacrifice right to enjoyment, right of arrangements and succession rights. One can see that this was merely an eyewash as the distinguishing line between public trust property and private right to arrangement would eventually disappear. Nonetheless, Pushtimargiya Goswamis received judicial approval. As if this was not enough, they were also permitted to exercise the above three rights in respect of public trust property which was not dedicated to the deity, despite they being the trustees. Paradoxically, the trustees themselves were the beneficiaries. However, in the process, the deity consecrated for private worship had to be thrown open to the masses. It is like that illusory wedding where the newly wedded wife is meant for enjoyment by others. This is a classic example of contrariety. It is justified under the garb of comfort to the deity (Bhagwatsukh). To lend legitimacy to such arrangements, the trustees should have sacrificed at least their private and personal consumption. In this connection, the utterances of Mahaprabhuji and Gosainji will not be out of place :

“One who consumes all that belongs to Shrishakurji will not be considered to be mine and my sevak who is devoted will never consume that belongs to God (Devdravya). If he does, he will face complete annihilation “. (A.V.1)

“Any of the nine forms of Bhakti (Navadhā Bhakti), if indulged into to earn livelihood, such activity is a plebeian activity not different from agriculture. It is like using the holy water of Ganga to clean toilet. No better purpose is served by such activity. In fact, the indulgent violating the code accumulates only sin.”

(Bhaktihans)

(1)(b) A stormy issue of succession arose in the second generation during the sunrise era of Pushtimarg. This issue was raised by Krishnadasji who was one of the frontline Sevaks of Mahaprabhuji and also one of the eight main Kirtankārs of Pushtimarg. It relates to the restriction imposed on Shri Gusainji from performing sevā of Śrināthji at Jatipura. Of course, at the relevant time the temple was open to public. However, later it became a private place of worship which fact is conveniently forgotten.

At the relevant time Mahaprabhuji was not married and was constantly travelling. It was not possible to carry the large Swaroop during the travel. Hence, his desire was always to respectfully place it in the house of some sevak so that sevā can be performed as per principles established by him with the loving and reverential emotions akin to that performed by Nand and Yashoda in Vraj. However, no sevak was willing to take up the responsibility. Finally, it was suggested by Sadu Pānde that

there are some Bengali Brahmins residing at Rādhākṛishna Kund who can be entrusted the sevā of Shrināthji (Vaishnav Vārtā 48/2). Thus, neither these Bengali worshippers were ceremoniously initiated into the Pushti sect, nor could Śrināthji be worshipped in the house of a sevak as per Pushti principles. At the same time, Mahāprabhuji had accepted the worship as per Maryādābhakti if Pushtibhakti was not possible (see Bhaktivardhini 8, Tattvārthadeepnibandh 2/255, Sādhan Deepikā 36). Accordingly, at the first instance, Śrināthji was seated in a public temple where worship was as per Maryādā tradition. Funds to construct the public temple were provided by a non-Brahmin Shripuraṅmal Kshatriya as a result of which the said donor was granted permission to perform Sevā (84, Vaishnava Vārtās – 24/1). Kshatriya Rāmdās was entrusted to perform Bhog Sevā from delicacies collected from the villagers (84 Vaish. Vārtās 48/2). All these things were not prevalent in the sevā of Shri Madanmohanji, Shri Gokulnathji or Shri Vithalanathji, who were all enthroned in the house of Mahāprabhuji. Further, the task of collecting food items from surrounding villages for the purpose of offering to Shrināthji was assigned to Shrikrishnadāsji. This irked him and hence restricted Shri Gusainji for doing sevā. Shri Gusainji accepted this without any opposition. Nonetheless, Birbal, prime minister of the then Mughal emperor imprisoned Shrikrishnadāsji. Even then, Shri Gusainji thought it wiser to perform sevā only when permitted by Shrikrishnadāsji, the authorised representative of Mahāprabhuji, rather than following the imperial order (see 84 Vaish. Vārtās 84/7). This also proves that Shri Gusainji attached more sanctity to the orders of the sectarian head and not that of the state. “Shri Gusainji would go on doing śringār without uttering a word. If anyone asked him anything, he would plead ignorance and direct the person towards Shri Krishnadasji” (84 Vaish. Vārtās 84/2). When a religious teacher accepts supremacy of law over scriptures, he

guilefully accepts the supremacy of law officers over himself. Law can be supreme in society in matters other than Dharma. Law and Dharma, both have their own operational limitations. We the descendants of Shri Vallabhāchārya have lost confidence and only we are to be blamed for judicial intervention in the affairs of our religion. Issues in Pushtimarg relating to place of worship and form of deity have got entangled in legal squabbles on account of our conduct contrary to our own code of ethics and principles. Our worship tradition which was supposed to be a secluded family affair, has instead, become worship for the people, by the money of the people and as representative of the people. This has been accepted by us as the ultimate worship tradition.

(1) (c) Another stormy issue arose in third generation of the sunrise era. Shri Gokulnathji, fourth son of Shri Gusainji was involved in it. Under the influence of some ascetic, Mughal emperor Jehangir prohibited the wearing of Tilak and Tulsi Mālā, the two essential symbols in Bhagwatsevā. Without being intimidated, Shri Gokulnathji appeared before the King and presented his case. The King asked, “why have you not removed the Tilak and Tulsi Mālā?” The fearless reply was, “they can be removed only if I am beheaded”. In that event, the King told him that he will have to leave Gokul. Without hesitation, Shri Gokulnathji accepted the alternative. He left his estate at Gokul and resided at Soram (Māloddhār Mangalya 5-6). Where do we find such dedication today for our own Dharma! So, this is the story of disputes in Pushtimarg during the sunrise era.

(2) One notable incident pertaining to the group of next four generations (5 to 8) has been recorded by Shri Girdharlalji at serial number 60 in his 120 Vacanāmrut. The issue was if the eldest brother dies without leaving

successor, then who should be adopted – whether the eldest from the family of the next brothers in line or one who is older in age amongst all the families. The issue also was whether the widow of the deceased had unfettered freedom to adopt whomsoever she wanted or whether any particular tradition was prevalent in the clan/family. In this case, the decision of the family was in accepting the widow's right to select the successor. It received the imperial sanction as well. However, later, some vested interest in the family was successful in enticing the Mughal emperor and got the decision altered. The deities were distributed amongst the families accordingly. A fear always lingered that the emperor could be influenced easily to change the decision. To tide over this fear, the two warring families relocated themselves, one in a Hindu state of Mewar and the other at Surat in British India. This dispute of successorship continues to engage the judiciary till date in different courts of India.

It may be noted that the above dispute was not in respect of any hereditary right in the estate of the deceased, but was in respect of right to worship the main deity reigning in the house. However, in the meantime, the dispute assumed a different dimension. Now the issue is whether deity is the decisive factor to determine the rankings of the houses (Gruha/Peeth) or whether the house of the worshipper is the deciding factor to decide the rankings of the deities. In short, the issue has boiled down to claiming a superior title. In this respect, I have written a chapter entitled "Pushtimargiya Peethādhish Swaroop Aur Kartavya" in a small booklet and is also published. The same may be referred to know my views thereon.

Be that as it may, here from the angle of Sampradāya the subject of worry is altogether different. Suppose, on the basis of some submission in the court, if the latter decides the ranking of the house according to the deity, then it may have several repercussions on issues like –

“The deity consecrated in the house is for private worship of the family and not for outsiders, that is not even for the followers of Pushtimarg outside the family. In other words, the right to worship is confined to the Sevākartā and subject to his approval, to the members of the family. It is not meant for anyone, even though initiated into the sect, nor for any Vaishnava, nor any general public.”

This and many such issues related to our doctrines will enter the judicial arena including the Supreme Court. Since, as per law, Supreme Court is final, the apprehension is that the Judge made law may apply even to those Pushtimargiya houses where there is no dispute. This is so because in lower courts the suits are not by those who claim to be the head of the Path but they are by the followers of the Peethādhiś. This will be suicidal in the sense that the Peethādhiś will be compelled to consider his deity as meant for public worship. The fundamental principle of house worship which is practiced more in the breach, will adorn the robe of judicial approval. The Supreme Court is final not because it is infallible, but it is infallible because it is final.

3-4 (a) The third and fourth centuries of Pushtimarg encompassing generations nine to sixteen are so full of litigations that one may lose count of it. It is not possible to narrate all of them in this small write-up. Yet, a few infamous episodes are worth mentioning which may help us appreciate the gravity involved.

The Goswami Tilakayits had migrated to Mewar from Gokul-Jatipura to escape the tyranny of Mughal King Aurangzeb. However, most of the Tilakayits still savoured the dream of taking back their respective deities to Gokul-Jatipura (1). It remained a dream only, partly due to the devotion of the Rāṇās of Mewar and partly in compliance of the royal injunctions. Amongst several covenants, the Friendship Treaty between Britishers and Mewar state, also covenanted that the dignity of Tilakayits will be maintained in the same manner as it was maintained in Mewar (2). Likewise, Mewar had agreed not to give shelter to those who opposed the Britishers. During the Indian rebellion of 1857, one of the freedom fighters Shri Tatya Tope fled to Mewar on 11th February, 1859. The Tilakayit Maharaj extended a generous hospitality to the rebellions for three days in Nathdwara. This generosity was triggered by the hope that if they turned victorious, it would pave the way for the Tilakayit to free himself from the shackles of the Rāṇā. This act on the part of Tilakayit soured his relations with the Mewar State. The relations got botched up to the extent that after the rebellion had died down and stability of British rule restored, Tilakayit had started sending emissaries to British Agent Richard Candwish pleading for independence (Vir Vinod Pg 1793-95). Finally, the enmity reached its zenith on 21st May, 1875 when Tilakayit Maharaj was imprisoned and then exiled. The following extract from Vir Vinod is noteworthy :

“During these days, Goswami Girdharlal of Nathdwara tearing apart the past traditions was arrogantly overindulgent and trying to escape from the princely state.... A lot of mess was created during this time. He also tried to obstruct the offerings to Shri Govardhannathji which used to come from Kota, Gujarat and so on.

(Vir Vinod. Pg. 2153-57)

Here it is worth noting that the religion followed by Vallabh sect was neither propounded by the King of Mewar, nor was it a state religion. It was also not a sect confined to the borders of the state (3). Undoubtedly, the principal seat of Pushtimarg had relocated itself to Mewar to escape the excesses of Aurangzeb. Obviously therefore, it was the sovereign authority of the state to determine about the continuation or otherwise of the right, title and interest of Goswami Tilakayitji over his property, both movable and immovable, located within the state of Mewar. However, it was certainly not within the authority of the state to decide whether he should continue to adorn the principal seat of the sect. Sending him in exile may have been in the interest of the state but to replace him on the sectarian seat by his son Shri Govardhanlal was a travesty of justice. The act of disentiing him from all properties was followed by other states like Hyderabad, Kota etc., wherever Tilakayitji had properties. Even his properties located in British Indian territories could not find favour from the courts in those jurisdictions. Documents establishing his right over the properties were placed before the Supreme Court but of no avail. Looking at the text of the judgement, one wonders whether the attention of the court was drawn to these documents.

It is worth noting that the title of Goswamitilakayit was not dependent on one being the main Pujāri of Śrināthji. If that had been the case, then in the earlier years of the Sampradāya, Bengali Pujāris who were entrusted with the sevā, would have been treated as the head of the Sampradāya (Dharmācārya) despite the veritable presence of Shri Vallabhacharya, Shri Gopinathji and Shri Vitthanathji. During the time of Shri Vitthalnathji, a partition was effected by virtue of which it was determined that the father's house was to be treated as the principal seat

and the houses of seven sons as subsidiary seats in the order of seniority. The partition was partial only in the sense that in respect of Śrināthji, the family remained undivided and by virtue of being the Kartā of the family, Goswami Tilakayitji was granted special right to perform Sevā of Śrināthji for a period not exceeding sixty days in aggregate during a year. Three hundred days were reserved for the rest of the Vallabh descendants. In fact, the main deity of Goswami Tilakayitji was Śri Navneetpriyaji. Therefore, till the present date, His Sevā is separately performed in separate premises with separate offerings. Moreover, when Rajbhog is offered to Śri Navneetpriyaji, two Thāls are served, the other in the spirit of being offered to Śrināthji. This also proves that the title of Tilakayit is not dependent on being the main Pujāri (120 vacanāmrut – 6,46,51,68). Historical records also clarify that “..... as such seven Swaroops and Śrināthji are one and the same leaving no room for any doubt in that regard, yet Mahaprabhuji and Gusainji have maintained the house of Śrināthji as a temple and the remaining swaroops dwell in the respective houses (supra 81). In the beginning this temple was public. However, when the idol of Śrināthji was shifted to Shri Gusainji’s satgharā, it was reconsecrated. The land surrounding Jatipura temple was acquired by him which was ratified by King Akbar (4). All these facts go to prove that later the public temple had become a private family temple. At the time of partitioning the family estate, this temple was treated as joint or undivided meant only for the family.

Despite it being an exclusive familial place of worship, the principal seat of the Sampradāya was declared as a Vaishnava temple subject to the state of Mewar. This was done under the pretext that at the relevant time, the son of the exiled Go. Tilakayitji was minor. The state had

appointed a managing committee to look after the affairs of the institution. It is noteworthy that in later years, Go. Tilakayit Shri Govardhanlal Maharaj had accepted the appointment of the committee on the condition that whatever the committee decides to do or not to do, it shall not be violative of the principles and traditions of the Sampradāya. This was conveyed by the Tilakayitji through a notification sent to the ruler of Udaipur. Besides this comforting condition, it was mentioned that no property meant for the deity will ever be deployed for his personal use. But at the same time, it was clarified that his legal ownership will continue in the ancestral property as has been the case so far and entries will continue to be made in the books of account accordingly (Amrut Vaca. 9). This declaration was never refuted by the Mewar Ruler nor had he held Shri Tilakayitji to have acted beyond authority. In the meantime, Shri Tilakayitji declared his son Go. Shri Damodardasji ineligible to occupy the seat of Tilakayit on account of the latter's involvement in some undesirable activity. Instead, his grandson Go. Shri Govindlalji was declared as his successor. This was ratified by the Mewar Ruler (5). Post-independence, during the sixties, Go. Tilakayit Shri Govindlalji volunteered to hand over the management of Śrināthdwārā to the government. This was challenged by other Goswamis in the Rajasthan High Court alleging that Shri Tilakayit and government both were guilty of encroaching on their rights and interest. Rajasthan High Court held in favour of the Goswamis. To nullify the effect of this judgement, Rajasthan Government took over the temple by an ordinance. Paradoxically, Go. Tilakayitji, challenged the ordinance in court alleging that it was in violation of his fundamental rights. The claim was partially upheld by the High Court. But Supreme Court held against Go. Tilakayitji. The top court formed a firm view that if government cannot take it over, then why in the first instance Tilakayitji himself had volunteered to hand over the reigns of the temple to the government (6).

This is the narrative of Sampradāya's encounter with the modern judicial system and of the discomfiture the former had to face. This is how the hallowed position of Dharmācārya was reduced to the position of Head Pujāri of Nāthdwāra temple and its managing trustee by virtue of heredity on the ground that he represented the Vaishanava public (7).

The perplexing aspect in this dispute is that the counsel appearing on behalf of Go.Tilakayit Maharaj had challenged the encroachment of his right to enjoyment and management of his property. The right to freedom of religion or incumbency was not contested. Not only that, even the sectarian scriptures authored by Shri Mahaprabhuji, Shri Gopinathji and Shri Vitthalnathji which propound the most cardinal principles explaining the subtleties of Gruhsevā, were not brought to the notice of the court for its consideration. Instead, non-sectarian treatises like "Vaishnavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems" by Dr.R.G.Bhandarkar and "History of Indian Philosophy" by Dr.Radhakrishnan were produced before the court. The former has not discussed about Bhagwatsevā, private or public. The latter did make a passing reference about sevā in private houses but without any support of the original works of Shri Mahaprabhuji or Shri Gusainji. A volume of doctrinaire documents explaining the concepts of Sevāsthal, Sevyaswaroop, Sevādhikar and Sevāprayojan and which were based on indisputably sound reasoning were produced in the court but unfortunately the court's attention was not drawn to them. This resulted into following observations by the court :

"Some temples of this cult may have been private in the past and some of them may be private even today. Whether or not a particular

temple is public temple must necessarily be considered in the light of the relevant facts to it. There can be no general rule that a public temple is prohibited in Vallabh School”.

(1963 AIR 1638 – Tilakayit Shri Govindlalji V
The State of Rajasthan & Ors.)

“if the temple had been private and the properties of the temple had belonged to the Tilakayat, it was another matter. But once it is held that the temple is a public temple, it is difficult to accede to the argument that the tenets of the Vallabh cult require as a matter of religion that the properties must be managed by the Tilakayat. In fact, no such tenet has been adduced before us.”

It is evident, therefore, that documentary as well as doctrinal facts are totally to the contrary. Moreover, the various Firmāns issued by the Rāṇās of Udaipur unequivocally declare that Go. Tilkayitji exercised complete domain over all the movable and immovable properties of the Institution, over the Nāthdwārā village and also over the idol of Śrināthji (8). Despite this, the judges observed that the exterior of the temple was a house-like façade merely to keep Aurangzeb at bay (9). Before the Mughals came to India, in fact during the time of Sikandar Lodi, it was firmly determined by Mahaprabhuji that sevā has to be done in own house only and if for any reason that was not possible, then, only as a second option public temple was to be made but with the sole purpose to perform Krishna sevā. Under these circumstances public temple came to be erected. Shri Gusainji was held in high esteem by Akbar as a result of which the former converted the public temple into a private place of worship as was the first and the

only option of Mahaprabhuji. This task was accomplished by personally acquiring the surrounding lands. The consecration of the idol in the public temple was performed on the auspicious day of Akśaya Trutiyā. But when it became a private temple, consecration again took place which was on Falgun Vad 7 which still continues till date despite the decay of conscience.

It is seen that in almost all the litigations, core facts have not been presented before the court with scriptural supportings as a result of which there has been a travesty of justice, the victim being Pushtimarg as a Sampradāya. It may be interesting to see that this twisted scenario also has given rise to varied confrontations which have led the warring factions to the court.

The next incident pertains to that branch of Vallabh descendants to which the author of this book belongs. Go.Shri Govardhaneshji (12th direct descendant of Shri Vallabhacharyaji) had no successor to take up the Sevā of the deity and hence when he was on the verge to cross over to the other world, he had appointed a committee of some Vaishnavas whom he trusted, to look after the affairs of the family temple till a suitable successor was found. When the widow of Go. Shri Govardhaneshji adopted Go. Shri Jivanlalji, the said committee was dissolved. As luck would have it, Go.Shri Jivanlalji too was without a successor and hence in the twilight years of his life, again a committee was appointed to look after the temple. The widow of Go. Shri Jivanlalji adopted Go.Shri Gokulnathji as a result of which the committee died its natural death. Go.Shri Gokulnathji had seven sons. When he was on his death bed, he effected partial partition of his estate. One half of the properties were equally distributed amongst the seven sons and the remaining half were

settled in a private trust meant for the family. All the deities formed part of this private trust. On the death of Go Shri Gokulnathji, dispute arose with regard to the worship of the main deity. The oldest of the seven sons had staked his claim to worship the main deity. In absence of any consensus, Charity Commissioner was approached. The remaining brothers had made up their mind that in the event of Charity Commissioner ruling in favour of the eldest brother, all the deities and the properties of the temple be converted into a public trust. To make this plan effective, it was cleverly thought out that when a Vaishnav devotee is initiated into the sect, he attains the right to worship that deity only before which Brahmsambandh is taken. As expected, the matter was carried to High Court. The High Court held the temporary committees appointed on both the occasions to be having the characteristics of a public trust. As if this was not enough, even the undivided property of Go. Shri Gokulnathji which formed part of a private trust, was treated as a public trust. In other words, the private family temple was treated as a public temple right from its inception in 1796 C.E. by Go. Shri Govardhaneshji. It is to be noted that if there was any evidence, direct or circumstantial, then holding the private trust would have been logical. And, if that had been the case, then the partial partition effected by Go. Shri Gokulnathji would have been void ab initio. But it was never held to be so in the past and before the court too, neither party to the suit raised this issue. This decision was rendered in the decade of sixties. However, in the thirties, there was a matter before the court in the then British India territory. Go. Shri Jivanlalji had a Haveli in Dharaṅgāon (Maharashtra). The committee which was appointed at the time of his death did not approve the successorship of Go. Shri Gokulnathji. Nonetheless, the court's decision was in the terms mentioned in reference note no.11.

It seems that the judges had at the back of their mind the set-up of Hindu temples similar to Christian Churches. When the matter was carried to the Bombay High Court, the Hon'ble Justice Gajendragadkar either did not pay heed to this aspect or his attention was not drawn to it and accordingly the residence of the Goswamis which was used for worship by the family, was declared a public temple.

Our residence in Mumbai, before my birth was known as 'Moti Haveli'. When and why, it became 'Motu Mandir' during my childhood is not known. Then came Gandhiji's revolution to permit Harijans into the temples. With a view to prevent public darśan, it was converted into a private residence again and it was named 'Govind Bhavan' after the childhood name of my grandfather Go. Shri Gokulnathji. All the family members had gathered to take this decision. It is distinctly etched in my memory as to how I stood a silent spectator to these happenings. Once the Harijan agitation decelerated, it was once again decided to raise the curtains to exhibit Bhagwat Sevā. The occasion of my cousin's birth was chosen to raise the curtains. Today, Govind Bhavan has become 'Badā Mandir Public Trust'. Our family members have to seek approval of the monied trustees whereas in courts it is always stated to the contrary that Vaishnavas are not permitted to perform Sevā without the permission of Goswami Maharajas.

Later Hon'ble Justice Gajendragadkar was elevated to the Supreme Court. At that time the matter of Go. Tilakayit Maharajshri was going on in the Rajasthan High Court. Following the judgement of the Bombay High

Court, the claim of Go. Tilakayit Maharajshri was partly allowed. Not being satisfied, he filed an appeal before the Supreme Court. Though the five judge Bench was headed by Hon'ble Chief Justice B.P.Sinha, the judgement was authored by Justice Gajendragadkar which was concurred by other judges. Hence, it was a foregone conclusion that no favourable judgement could be expected. The appeal was dismissed. The only 'silver lining', if it can be so called, was that Shri Tilakayitji was to be paid 20% of the income earned on sale of prasad. This was to compensate for the financial loss caused to him on the temple being taken over by the government. If there is any credence to the belief that the income of Nathdwārā belongs to the deity then it is open to question whether Shri Tilakayitji can succeed to the throne, that too belonging to the principal seat of the Sampradāya. As enjoyment of 'Devdravya' is prohibited in Pushtimarg ("Dāne Na Svaviniyogo Natu Nivedane"- Navratna Prakash 1, Amrat Vacanāvali – 1,4,8,16,17,18). If at all Go.Tilakyayit Maharaj has a right to enjoyment in the income of Nāthdwarā partially, as decided by the court, then impliedly the said income and wealth cannot be considered as belonging to the deity. Giving such right even partially goes against the principles of trusteeship, and particularly that belonging to the principal seat of the Sampradāya. But how do we convince the court and the followers about this principle?

When there is vulgar violation of principles in the principal seat of Vallabh Sampradāya, what to talk of other temples and havelis?

Later on, treating this judgement as the touchstone of all ideals, Haveli of Nadiad was declared a public temple by the Supreme Court. A

similar claim was made by some Vaishnavas to treat the residence of Kutch-Mandvi Goswami as public temple. Based on the Mumbai matter, right of Sevā acquired through Brahmsambandh was taken as right to worship that particular deity only. However, fortunately, the parties to the dispute shunned their differences and amicably arrived at a principled settlement before the Charity Commissioner.

Besides such judicial confrontations, another remarkable event occurred in the annals of Pushti Sampradāya. There has been an earnest intention to carry out required reforms based on actual principles.

Earlier a mention has been made about acquiring right (Adhikār) of Sevā through Brahmsambandh. This word 'Adhikār' has several shades of meaning in Sanskrit. Some of them are : beginning, dominion over doership, enjoyment and arrangements, eligibility, disciplined conduct and so on. No attention was ever paid to these varied aspects of the word 'Adhikār' and hence the matter slipped out of hands. As a matter of principle, the 'Sevādhikār' acquired by Brahmsambandh is in the context of eligibility or duty only. Actually, performance of Sevā in the houses of Goswamis was the principal duty of the family and entry to the public was totally forbidden (See “_ _ _ nivedanam_ _ _ sākśād Gokuleśbhajanādhikārarupatvāt ” – Navratana Prakash 1). With utmost self-penitence it has to be admitted that we Goswamis lured the public for darśan, bhent, prasād, manorath, only with a view to earn our livelihood. As a result, the followers and the judiciary both, accepted this unprincipled conduct as the Dharma of Pushtimarg (12). On the contrary, in our system of worship, barring a few of our own people, offering darśan to others is

totally prohibited (Siddh.Vacan. 3). Giving money to someone to perform his Bhagwatsevā, or accepting money for the purpose of our Bhagwatsevā is the most despicable act. Buying or selling of Prasād tantamounts to digging the grave of a sublime and solemn worship (see Siddh.Vacan. 2,4,7,11 and Amrut Vacan. 2,3,4,5,7,9,11,13,15,17,18). These clarifications were either not produced before the Bombay High Court or the attention of the judges were not drawn to them. Right to worship accorded to general public in the houses of Goswamis was never contemplated. Initiation of Vaishnavas through Brahmsambandh was essentially a duty cast on them to perform Sevā in their own houses. (Sidd.Vacan.5. Amrut Vacan.3,5,6,11,12,19,21). However, conduct to the contrary culminated into all sorts of perversions.

As an illustration, the son of Brahmin, Kshatriya or Vaish was considered to be 'Adhikāri' for marriage only after the thread ceremony. Here 'Adhikāri' is not in the sense of acquiring a right to snatch away the daughter of anyone as his wife. It is in the sense of acquiring eligibility to get married. On the other hand, the 'Adhikār' of a son to own and enjoy the property of his grand- father is not based on eligibility but acquires the right by heredity. By not construing the true purport of the term 'Adhikār' in case of Bhagwatsevā, spate of litigation ensued.

A worse situation arose from the judgement in the case of Junagadh Haveli where eighty percentage of temple expenses were met from the 'caraṅbhent' to the Guru. In the Nāthdwārā, Nadiad and Mumbai cases it was impressed upon the court that Vaishnavas themselves do not perform Sevā, but they get it performed through the Goswamis residing in the

Haveli by paying money to them commensurate to the 'Manorath'. As a result, Gujarat High Court held that Goswamis were merely conduits between the Vaishnava and the deity. It was also held that the Bhent received by Goswamis in their capacity as Dharmaguru belonged to the deity because in Brahmsambandh Dikśa, everything is supposed to have been dedicated (Samarpit) to God (13).

What does this Samarpaṇ mean? While being initiated into the sect through Brahmsambandh, a declaration (Nivedan) is made before God that everything belonging to me is dedicated to you. The subtle distinction between Nivedan, Dāna and Tyāg (declaration, donation and renunciation) needs to be understood. In Nivedan everything is dedicated to the other for his consumption and enjoyment. The property does not change hands and the giver is not divested of his legal ownership. In Dāna, the donor alienates his ownership and the property changes hands. In case of Tyāg the person does disown the property but the same is not renounced in favour of a particular person. He simply renounces all his rights over the property. In case this distinction is not appreciated and accepted, then the income and wealth of Vaishanava should belong to the deity of that Haveli where he has taken Brahmsambandh. Consequentially, all the income and wealth of the followers of Pushti Sampradāya becomes the income and wealth of the deity and hence becomes part of public trust property.

As mentioned above, all income and wealth were declared to be belonging to the deity. Nonetheless, we Goswamis were satisfied to the extent that in our capacity as trustees we had the right to enjoyment and

arrangement of properties. However, heavens were to fall on us when even personal 'caraṅbhent' was likely to be declared as property of the deity. This author was neither a plaintiff nor defendant in these suits. Nonetheless, almost all the Goswamis authorised this author to present the case on their behalf as a third party. Earlier, I had apprised the High Court of the principles guiding the points in dispute. At that time, I had not only covered the issues pertaining to Junagadh Haveli, but had also covered the issues relating to Nāthdwāra and Nadiād Havelis. Throughout the hearing in Supreme Court, lengthy arguments were advanced only around the issue whether property was private or public. Finally, the judges before rising, gave only ten minutes to the author. Despite repeated persuasion, the judges were not inclined to hear me out on principles of the Sampradāya guiding the issues on hand. Ultimately, we could not extract anything significant from the court except getting the decision of the Gujarat High Court reversed with regard to caraṅbhent. Finally, even those Goswamis who were on the same page as the author thought that discretion is a better part of valor and hence decided not to precipitate the issue further.

Later it was decided by the Pushtimargiya Dharmācāryas to issue a joint declaration. Cunning games were played to turn away from the said declaration after having attested their signatures on it. A conference was held to discuss Pushti principles which too was left unconcluded craftily. As if this was not enough, practices which were contrary to the real principles were projected as true principles. As an icing on the cake, these perpetrators were felicitated not only by those present but also by those who were not present at the conference. As a matter of fact, whatever was proposed by this author was earlier agreed upon by those who turned

hostile at the conference. These very antagonists were in all praise of a book written by Shri R.K. Bhatt on traditional conduct of Shri Vallabhacharya's philosophy. This book was taken into consideration while deciding upon the management policy of Nāthdwārā temple. (This is detailed in a book called 'Viśodhanikā which is in three parts by this author).

The issue is not whether I am right or the antagonists are right. But, (a) not apprising the courts about the principles, (b) refuting the concepts before the public which were approved earlier, (c) conduct contrary to principles, all these have placed the Sampradāya on the path of litigation without incertitude. A gentleman, some years back, had roaringly expressed “_ _ _ all the senses get engaged with God while performing Sevā post Brahmsambandh _ _ _ _ temple which in fact is the residence of guru, is meant only for learning, but Sevā has to be performed by the Vaishnavas in the respective homes only.” The same gentleman opposed and voted against my view-point. Later, he came to meet me one day. Despite voting against me, he had the audacity to tell me that all what you said is true, but then what happens to those who have already got their residences converted and registered as public temple trust? My reply was, “till a legal solution is found, the least one can do is to preach real principles to the public.” His face turned bright and said, “Oh! You mean that preaching is for the sake of preaching only, we thought that you are emphatic about practicing the preachings! my heart was not ready to agree as to how Shyam Manoharji can come up with things which are impracticable!!” I was shocked at my flattery! I have never felt so humiliated in my life, even when I have been criticized for my shortcomings.

I am writing this not to criticize any particular person, but to highlight the fact that due to vacillating faith in our own principles, and short-term selfish motives, we Goswamis are not able to foresee the long-term benefits of self-emancipation and as a result we keep on stumbling on the spiritual path. A litigation in respect of Amreli Haveli had ensued before independence in the court of Gaikawad state. Known scholars and erudite Vaishnavas had testified in that matter as a result of which the court held the Amreli Haveli to be a private place of worship. This precedence was cited in the Junagadh case and the judges' attention too was drawn to it. However, the High Court did not give due weightage to it because the Amreli Maharaj, despite the decision being in his favour, after few years, got registered his private temple as a public temple trust. Lack of honesty in our intentions has proved to be major stumbling block in our form of worship, namely Sevā. As a matter of fact, this wavering sincerity on our part has been a major cause for the courts to come down heavily on us.

We are well aware that as per present laws, sons and daughters have equal rights in ancestral property. Following this, the daughters of Guguli Brahmins who are pujāris of temples in Dwārka, are claiming father's right of puja where the Pujāris have no sons. It is quite likely that in our case also, daughters may make a plea in the court to inherit right for Sevā where it is financially beneficial. Even married daughters who have entered into inter-caste or inter-faith wed-locks may claim such right and the Goswamis may be compelled to accept the claim. Under reservation policy also claim for proportionate representation of scheduled caste members may have to be accepted for inclusion in the army of Sevākartās. Once the ball starts rolling in this manner, they will want

themselves to be elevated as Head Goswami. This claim too will have to be accepted since we have accepted Bhagwatsevā as a public activity. Initiation into Pushtimarg is the exclusive right of Vallabh descendants by tradition and which has been well accepted by the Pushtimarg followers. Nonetheless, recently, one Kiritbhai not a Vallabh descendant but a narrator of Bhāgwat Kathā, did make an adventurous attempt to grant Brahmsambandh and it has been the most debatable issue in the Sampradāya. In such emerging scenarios, we the descendants of Vallabhācārya who are carrying the load of tradition may have to bear additional load of such adventurism.

Finally, it is apt to delve into that case which clothed the Sampradāya with eternal infamy. This infamous case is popularly called 'Shri Yadunathji Maharaj Libel case'. Basically, there were two issues at the root of the matter : (a) whether 'Chhappanbhog Manorath' can be conducted in non-Pushtimargiya Shiva temple? (b) whether a widow has a right to remarry? On both issues, Pushtimarg Dharamagurus had created a hue and cry against the propositions. This invited a tirade against Pushtimarg by the triad consisting of, (i) Shiva devotees, (ii) reformists, and (iii) Fr. Wilson, the priest of a church located at V.P. Road, Mumbai.

It was the sectarian animosity between Shiva devotee Brahmins and Vallabh descendants which was at play. More than a century and a half ago some people had organised Chhappan Bhog in the Bhuleshwar Mahadeva temple in Mumbai. Pushtimargi Dharmagurus were of the view that Chhappan Bhog was the exclusive privilege of Pushtimargi Havelis

only. They feared losing followers if Shaivaites were able to attract more people by organising such feast. Hence, they raised an issue in this regard. Actual principle is quite different. It is wholly unwarranted to indulge in any sort of exhibitionism by filling up big baskets with a variety of sweet meats and delicacies. If a devotee is sincerely devoted and has the devotional zeal, he can fulfil his 'Manoratha' before his own deity dwelling in his house by serving the delicacies to the Lord in small containers. One can imitate Shri Nandrayji, head of Nandagaon, who invited Shri Vrishbhanji, head of Barsānā village, along with other villagers to participate in the Manoratha. If such Manoratha has to be publicly exhibited, then why only Pushtimarg, any sect can organise it, and why only 'Chhappan' (56), even one hundred sixty-eight (3 times of 56) may be offered.

At this juncture it will not be out of place to mention that much more delicacies, even more than 168 may be offered to God. But the most intriguing story is as to how the public is misled. It is believed that a Jeeva passes through the birth-death cycle 84 lakhs times, the last birth being that as a human. Hence, to avoid getting trapped into the cycle of 83,99,999 for the second time, they should appease the Lord by going for his Darśan and offer Bhent to Him, because $8+3+9+9+9+9+9$ equals fifty-six. Accordingly, one gets liberated by offering Bhent at the Chhappan Bhog festival. Question is not whether one really gets liberated by participating in such ridiculous Darśanas, but the grave issue is that by organising such frivolous festivals, Bhakti takes a back seat and such an exercise becomes merely a ritual with no useful purpose being served. Why can't such festivals be organised in Shiva temple or church or a mosque or for that matter in a five-star hotel or a plush banquet hall? If at

all it has to be organised, then the number of delicacies should be restricted to fifty-six only, else it will be a mockery of the equation $8+3+9+9+9+9+9 = 56$. Be that as it may, such indulgencies are far away from actual principles and the emotions connected with such principles. It has no relationship with Pushtibhakti, and through it, with self-emancipation as envisaged by Mahaprabhuji. Such public shows reinforce what the courts have laid down that our sevyaswaroop, Sevāsthal, Sevāprayojan and Sevāsvaroop are meant for public only. Surprisingly, we could not stand firmly even on the astrayed path when we Goswamis started participating in non-Pushtimargi temples (14).

Narmad was a well-known Gujarati poet and a reformist. In those days, that is, around mid-nineteenth century, remarriage by a widow was a taboo. Yet, being infatuated towards a widow, Narmad was contemplating to marry her (15). For this, he sought concurrence from Goswami Shri Yadunāthji Maharaj. So far as Pushtimarg is concerned, it has been clarified by Mahaprabhuji that as such Varṇāśram system (the class system comprising of Brahmins, Kśatriyas, Vaiśyas and Śudras) has collapsed and no purpose is being served by following the main Dharma of each class, yet one can remain in Dharma Marg by worshipping Krishna (Tattvārthdeep Nibhandh 2/223 & 215). Despite this clarification we almost toiled to buttress the point that widow remarriage is opposed to Varṇāśram Dharma. Does it lie in our mouth to raise pandemonium against it when our own hands are soiled by commercializing devotion to the lowest level. The Dharmaśāstras were already up in arms against our way of worship. How further can the widow fall in the pit on remarrying? But unnecessarily we tried to play the role of sentinels of Sanātan Dharma and invited the catastrophe of 'Maharaj Libel' case. Leave aside

everything, we never were, nor are we today resolute in Pushtibhakti which was not bound by Varṇāśramdharma. Even today, though not permitted by Varṇāśramdharma, we freely travel to Europe-America to collect dollars. To add to the banter, a contrition is also contrived to wash off the sins contracted on account of foreign tour. The Kashi Pandits had prescribed a donation of 12,000 cows for which a sum of Rs.5,000/- is determined. It is such a pittance that even 12,000 plastic cows are hard to be bought. So smooth is the path of Pushti that one can easily travel on it without a bump. But our devotion has been fickle and have failed to leave upto the expectations of Mahaprabhuji. As of today, the Goswami Maharajas have no quarrel either with remarriage or widow-marriage.

Many European scholars who studied Hindu scriptures felt that the Dharma prescribed in the Vedas has lost its influence and what is practiced today in India is either the Śaiva, Vaiśnava, Śākt or Paurāṇik religion. Hence, it was thought that if these can be ended, then Christianity can have an open field. Therefore, Max Mueller (16), Monier-Williams (17), the earlier referred to Fr. Wilson and many such Indologists commenced effort in this direction. Side by side, in the name of reforms, new sects too were established (18). Today, Europeans and Americans have started following our various faiths under the Paurāṇik religion. At the same time, we have started building castles in the air for monetary gains by indulging in sophism and inducing them into occult arts. It is only a guess whether our half-hearted decision will again invite our doom!

These were the root causes which dragged us to file a defamation suit in the libel case. What is more disturbing is that the definition of

Samarpaṇ, one of the pillars of Pushtimarg was twisted to mean that it encourages adultery. Allegations against the petitioner Shri Yadunāthji could not be proved to the hilt and commensurate with his reputation, damages of Rs.0.50 paise were determined in place of Rs.50,000/- as demanded and was exonerated of the charges levelled against him. But the sect and its principles were the casualty. The principles were dissected in a manner to debase them off the real crux and these are being often printed in newspapers, periodicals and books.

7. Ways to avoid present confrontations

In conclusion, I would like to state that normally, a Pushtijeeva in whom the seed of Pushtibhakti is deeply ingrained, is resolute to walk on the chosen path. For such a Jeeva, impediments, irrespective of the degree, and whether bearable or not, may not relish it as Prabhu Leelā but will have to, at the least, believe that it is Leelā. However, if we show any willingness to condescend to get used to the impediments, then such willingness itself will prove to be the biggest impediment in Bhagwātsevā and relishing it as Bhagwat Leelā. There is hardly any doubt about it. Nonetheless, if a Pushtijeeva is conscious of God's design to sow the seed of Pushtibhakti in him, then even in most hostile conditions he will be guided from within how to protect the seed. In absence of such consciousness, he is bound to lose direction despite all guidance. Still there is time to allow the seed to sprout and blossom, only if Mahaprabhuji's teachings are followed both, in letter and spirit. There is no way someone else can prevent our own spiritual upliftment if we fearlessly accept our responsibility to inspire each other. We need to

devotedly seek the refuge of God and have utmost faith in the words of Mahaprabhuji. We have to demolish the Cārvāk mentality. In the end, I would like to quote, Shri Hariray Mahaprabhu –

“Punaḥ Kutra Idaśam Janma? Kva Ācāryacarnāśrayaḥ? Kutaḥ Sādhansampattiḥ, Sāmagri Durlabhā Akhilā?

Dayālo ! Dinsauhārd !! Svasevāvimukham Janam Sevāyām Satataḥ pravartaya, Parātpara!!!

(Svaprabhuvignapti : 11-12)

That is –

When again we shall get this birth as a human?

Where else can we expect the refuge of Shri Vallabhacharyaji? Where else can we get the rare means that are available to us? Oh merciful! Oh tender-hearted, only You can bring back those who have turned away from You!!

SAKALĀNTARĀTMĀ ŚRIHARIḤ PRASANNO BHAVATU!

Reference Notes

(1) When the Mahārāṇā of Udaipur granted facility to consecrate Śrināthji in Sinhād village of Udaipur, his understanding was the same as Go. Tilakayit that once situation improves, Śrināthji will return to Vraj :

“Maharajadhirāj Mahārāṇā Shri Rajsinghji commands from the auspicious Udaipur the Jagirdar of Sinhad and Brahmans and all inhabitants. Be it known that Śrināthji residing at Sinhad let uncultivated land as may desire be cultivated till such time, when Śrināthji goes back to Brij the land of those to whom it belong will.... In fact. If anyone then obstructs in any way he will be rebuked. Grant Masani loghs in smt. 1729 on Asoj Sudi 15 Thursday.”

“Māhārāṇā Mahārājādhirāj Shri Rajsinghji commands from the auspicious place of victory. Brahman Joshi Krishna Khemia Mohan Hari Jagha and Hava Pitha and all inhabitants of the Kheda of Sinhad. Be it known that when Śrināthji goes to Brij from Sinhad Brahmans will get the land which is of the Brahmans. They will get the land as is entered in previous records. So long as Śrināthji Loghu in Smt. 1736 on Bhadwa Sudi 6 Monday.”

(As an Annexure No. 5/13, 5/13A along with appeal in Supreme Court case no. 652 and 757 in the year 1962 by T. G. against State of Rajasthan).

(2-3) Letter sent by Mahārāṇā Udaipur to British Governor General on 17th January 1825 :

“In time of Mahārāṇa Rajsinghji the God Shri Govardhannathji and ancestors of Gosainji or the High Priest of the Vaishnavas came from Brij to Mewar in the month of Falgun Samvat 1735. Our ancestors kept the Thakurji Maharaj and the Gosainji Maharaj at the village of Sinhad.....After this our ancestors and all other Rajas great or little i.e.Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bundi Kota etc. became followers of that religion and agreed to obey orders....These are the practices and usages confirmed from old times of our ancestors. All the former Rajas and chiefs of Hindosthan did obey and the present to obey the orders of Shri Thakurji and Sri Gusainji Maharaj. The orders will not be departed in any way.... As a friend I earnestly request Government to issue orders to the several Agents of Government, accredited at the courts of the different Rajas to see that in any case in which the Maharaj is concerned, no agent is to raise any dispute with regard to the above mentioned matters.

(As an Annexure No.13 along with appeal in Supreme Court case no.562 and 757 in the year 1962 by T.G. against State of Rajasthan).

(4) Firmān by Jalāluddin Mohammed Akbar Bādśāhe Gāzi :

“An order is thus passed in these auspicious times that Gusain Vitthalrai, resident of Gokul in village Jatipura, dist.Gordhan, is setting up gardens, constructing buildings, cow-sheds and workshop for Gordhannath temple and he stays there. Therefore, order is passed that above mentioned place is given to family, dynasty one after another in total possession of Gusain. Therefore, all present and would-be rulers, Zamindars and Jagirdas are so instructed to let this place remain in his full possession and not to interfere and/or to object and not to ask new order or permit year after year and not to go against this order. So that

Gusain who is spiritually advanced, should, subsequent to King's obligations, continue to pray for the prosperity of the King and his Kingdom
Dated 9 Khurdad month Ilāhi 39 Jalusi (1594 A.D)

(5) Imperial orders issued by three Mahārāṇās of Udaipur namely (a) Bhimsinghji dated 25-9-1826, (b) Sajjansinghji dated 25-3-1873, and (c) office of the Mahārāṇā of Udaipur State dated 10-10-1933 with regard to the succession dispute of the Nāthdwāra seat (Gādi).

(A) "Father Gosain Shri Damodarji Maharaj has departed this life, after which Gosain Gopeshwarji and Shri Krishnaraiji having raised despute.....you were found to be in the right. No one else has therefore heritable right to your house (estate), you are Malik (owner) of the Shriji's sewa.....". "Our salutation be knownto Shri Shri Dadi Kamala Bahuji Maharaj.... Moreover you may do service and worship of Shriji (God) in accordance with your wishes. It is your house. You are the owner. You live with pleasure."

(ibid. Annexure 5/4-5)

(B) "..... on 8th May 1876 A.D. Shri Maharajadhiraj Shri Sajjansinghji.....and the political agent..... Bahadur of Mewar enthroned on the seat of divine estate of Nathdwara Shri lalbaba Shri Govardhanlalji Maharaj after reminding him for the said seat.... Goswami Maharajshri Govardhanlalji Maharaj will enjoy the whole income movable and immovable concerned with the temple of Nathdwara. Now the owner of the said Devasthan Nathdwara and the properties of all kinds movable and immovable connected with it will be of the said Tilkayat Goswami Maharajshri Govardhanlalji alone. The said removed Maharajshri

Giridharilalji has no connection what so ever with the said Devasthan Nathdwara. Dt. 25th March 1878 A.D.

(ibid Annexure 15)

(c) "Nathdwara estate (Note : like the other 16 estates of Jagirdars of the then Mewar State. But nay, never, the main religious seat of Shri Vallabha's sect) has been established by Kingdom of Mewar and is dependent on it, in continuity Tilkayt Goswami Govardhanlalji Maharaj absented himself. The immoral character and the conduct against the eternal usage of his son Damodarlalji has not left him a fit person so that he can be appointed in the place of his father as Tilkayat Goswami of Nathdwara..... Beside this on the very day Goswami Govardhanlalji also after getting consent with the written letter of Damodarlalji presented the following in writing 'if the character of Damodarlalaji be not good then he should remain aloof from the office of Tilkayat and the seat, and my grandson Govindlalji will be the owner of the seat.'" "Government of Mewar order no. 7676 of 1948 : Government are pleased to order that the management of Thikana Nathdwara may be withdrawn with effect from 1st April 1948. The advisory committee appointed during the period of Minority of Tilkayat Goswami Shri Govindlalji Maharaj is also dissolved. Sd.S.V.Rammurty Prime Minister."

(ibid. Annexure 30)

(6) "The Tilkayat also expressed his concurrence with the proposal made in this report and signed in token of his agreement. It appears that after orders were issued in accordance with the decision of the Tilkayat, the two temples were treated as part of the bigger temple

of Srinathji. This is evident by the resolution which was passed at the meeting of the Power of Attorney Holders of the Tilkayat on the same day i.e. 15 October 1956. One of the resolution passed at the said meeting shows that the proposal regarding the Temple and Baithaks owned by His Holiness stating therein that His Holiness had been pleased to transfer the ownership thereof to Srinathji was considered. That proposal along with the list of temples and Baithaks was produced before the Committee. The Tilkayat was present at the meeting and he confirmed the proposal and put his signature thereon before the Committee. Thereupon, the Committee accepted the proposal with thanks and instructed the Executive Officer to do the needful in that behalf. Thus, the Tilkayat proposed to the committee of his Power of Attorney Holders that the two idols and their Baithaks should be transferred from his private estate to the principal temple of Srinathji and that proposal was accepted and thereafter the two idols were treated as part of the principal temple. After this transfer was thus formally completed it appears that the Tilkayat was inclined to change his mind and so, in submitting to the committee a list of temples and Baithaks transferred by him to the principal temple of Srinathji he put a heading to the list which showed that the said transfer had been made for management and administration only and was not intended to be an absolute transfer. This was done on or about 23 November 1956.”

(T.G.Vs State of Raj.A.I.R 1963 SC 1638).

- (7) “The Firman then clearly provides that the Tilkayat Maharaj is merely a Custodian, Manager and Trustee of the said property and

finally determines the nature of the office held by Tilkayat Maharaj. He can claim no better and no higher rights after the Firman was issued [Note : 1. Even after the Firman ex-Tilkayat in his declaration of the successor clearly intimated to the State of Mewar that his grandson would be *owner of the estat* Nathdwara which the State had also taken care to mention without any rebuke. 2. If the Tilkayats, were not de facto as well as de jure owners of the Nathdwara estat, where the temple of Shri Nathji was happen to be situated due historical and accidental condition, why the committee was dissolved?].

(T.G. Vs State of Raj. AIR 1963 SC 1638 para 34)

- (8) “If Shri Lal Baba of Goswami (Girdharlalji) Maharaj intends to come here, then it is proper now also that permission be got issued from Shriman Goswami Sri Tilkayat Govindlalji Maharaj for touching of feet and toilet (of deity) Therefore according to old custom, the independence of Sriaman Tilkayat Maharaj should be maintained.... In this State, *the owner* is minor.....”

(ibid The Annexure no.10)

- (9) “(Havelies).... Though they are grand and majestik inside, the outside appearance is always attempted to resemble that of a private house. This feature can, however, be easily explained if we recall the fact that during the time when Vitthalnathji with his great missionary zeal spread the doctrine of Vallabh, Hindu temples were constantly faced with the danger of attack from Aurangzeb.... Faced with this immediate problem Vitthalnathji may have started building

the temples in the form of Havelies so that outside nobody should know that there is temple within.”

(T.G.Vs State of Raj. SC AIR 1962 para 21)

- (10) Evidence showing second Pāṭotsava organised at the residence of Shri Vitthalnath Prabhucaraṇ on Fālgun Vad 7 after the first Pāṭotsava of Śrinathji at Jatipura on Akśaya Tritiya day :

“When the big temple was completed, at that time Sri Acharyaji Mahaprabhu came to Vraj.... And Śrināthji was installed in the newly constructed and big temple by Sri Acharya Mahaprabhu in Smt.1579 on Vaishakh Sudi 3 Akshay Tritiya.”

(ibid. the Annexure no 54).

**“Atha Phālgunotsavāḥ Atha Śrigovardhannāthprabhu
prākāṭyotsavaḥ : Atha utsavāḥ nirupyante māsi
Fālgunsanjake Falgunnyasitasaptamyāṃ
Śrimadgovardhanādhipaḥ premātiṣangbodhārthaṃ
premātiśayavatsalaḥ vyājaṃ laukikaṃ āśritya Śrivitṭhalgruhe
agamat. Utsavastu mahān āsit sa na śakyo asti verṇane
tadāgamanasanjātaḥ Śrivitṭhalkule tadā.....” .**

**“Atha Falgunotsvavidhiḥ atha Falgunke māsi
saptamyāṃ Kriśṇapakśake Śrigovardhannāthasya Prabhoḥ
Pattamahotsavaḥ.” (utsavapratāna : Śrivrajraykrut
samvatsarotsavakalpalatā Maṭheś Śri indreśkrut
samvatsarotsavavidhiprakāś Prakāśanvarśa – 1949).**

Now the festive occasion in Fālgun, the festivals of the manifestation of the Lord Śrigovardhannāthji are being narrated. On the seventh day of the dark half of the month of Fālgun, Lord Śrigovardhannāth who is extremely affectionate, assuming mundane form went to the residence of Shri Vitthalnāth. That festival is not capable of being described appropriately.

Now the celebration of installation (Pāṭotsava) of Shri govardhannāth, on the seventh day of the dark half of the month Falgun is described.

(Samvatsarotsavakalpalatā by Śrivrajrayji and Samvatsarotsava vidhiprakāśa by Maṭheś Śri indireśji. Year of Publication – 1949).

- (11) “This conclusion that a temple, which is managed out of the funds collected from the public, is the Maharaja’s property may seem startling, but it is non the less inevitable by reason of the particular tenets of the sect and the blind faith with which they were adhered to by its followers. The Maharaja having already acquired proprietary rights by what was done by himself and his devotees at the time of, and subsequent to, the construction of the temple, he can not be deprived of them by the mere modern change in the angle of the vision of some of his present devotees. The latter may disallow the tenets if they deem hard or unjust, refuse to pay contribution and even establish an independent public place of worship. But so far as the existing temple and its property are concerned, they are not at liberty to question the Maharaja’s title to them.” (The Judgement given on the date 1st June 1927 in the court of the District Judge, East Khandesh, at Jalgaon. In the civil suit no.2 of 1927 by The District Judge N.S. Lokur).

(12) (A) “The participation of the member of the public in the Darshan in temple and in the acts of worship or in celebration of festival occasions may be a very important factor to consider in determining, the character of the temple.”

(T.G.Vs State of Rajasthan para 23).

(B) “There is nothing on record to indicate that in the long past in Pāṭaḍi, any ruler had put any restriction on the use of temples for Darshan over a fairly long period during which public visited the temples, as if they were their temples and this establishes their right.... Although there was a sort of private passage running from Darbargadh to the public road, presumably meant for the use of ‘pardanashin’ ladies of royal family, this would not indicate that the temples were attached to the Darbargadh.... The general public and particularly the members of the vaishanava sect had unrestricted right of worship at temples as a matter of course and participated in the festivals of Hindola and Annakut functions and sevā”.

(Pratapsinji Vs Deputy Charity Commissioner Gujarat SC 1987).

(13) See pages 138-139,143-146,156-158,161-162 and 306 of the judgement in the case of Junagadh Haveli :

It is emphatically stated on these pages that once when everything is dedicated to the deity by taking Brahmsambandh Dikśā before It, the said person cannot claim title over such dedicated property. If this is true, then the same principle should apply to the followers of Pushtimarg. They too will have to forego their right, title and interest

in the property in favour of the deity. It is not that only Goswami Maharajas take Brahmsambandh Dikśā. Anyone who is capable of performing Bhagwatsevā in his house is eligible to take Brahmsambandh irrespective of caste, gender, age and economic status.

(14) Pushtimarg or the Path of Maharajas – Pages 416-417 :

“Around Vikram Samvat 1914-1915, some Brahmins had organised Chhappan Bhog at Bhuleśwar Mahādeva, Mumbai. The Maharajas were outraged at this on the ground that Chhappan Bhog cannot be organised for Mahādeva. Therefore, the 84 sub-castes of Brahmins held a congregation in which, with the help of some wealthy persons, it was established that the Maharajas were in the wrong. A Śiva devotee wrote the following about the emergence of Maharajas: “Mahisāsura was threatened away from heaven by Devi with her trident. To show his righteousness, he became a child with the help of his Māyā and surrounded himself with fire. Laxman Bhatt took him away. Before growing up he was a Paśu (animal) and therefore he established Paśumarg-Pushtimarg which is quite wayward not conforming to any fixed rule or pattern.

(15) “..... Writing at this juncture about my acts of commission and my natural tendencies may cause harm, somewhat to me but more to my relatives and hence I defer it writing at an appropriate time.” (Māri Haqiqat – P.94) – one more can be added to the list of weaknesses already narrated and that is Narmad’s weakness for women. He was hardly affected by moralities so far as his relations

with women were concerned..... Despite having a wife who was still alive, his decision to marry Narmadāgauri, a widow, indeed required some boldness, particularly when there was no cause of complaint so far as his wife was concerned. We can hardly vouch that the step was in the right direction. With conviction we can say that Narmad was guilty of adultery. (“Narmad” – pg 87-88 by Gulabdas Broker).

(16) (A) “India is much riper for Cristianity than Rome and Greece were at the time of St. Paul. The rotten tree has for some time had artificial supports, because its fall have been inconvenient for the government.....I would like to live for ten years quietly and learn language, try to make friends, and then see whether I was fit to take part in work by means of which the old mischief of Indian priestcraft could be overthrown and way opened for the entrance of simple Cristian teaching, that entrance which finds into every human heart, which is freed from ensnaring powers of priests and from the obscuring influence of philosophers.

(B) “..... the ancient Indian religion of India is doomed – and if Cristianity does not step in whose fault will it be ?”

(C) “That religion is still professed by at least a hundred and ten million of human souls.... and yet I do not shrink from saying that the religion is dying or dead.”

(‘Max Mueller and his contemporaries’ Papers read at seminar held at the RK mission Kolkata 15-16/12/2000 p.207-8).

(17) “.... I must draw attention to the fact that I am only second occupant of the Boden Chair, and that its Founder, Colonel Boden, stated most explicitly in his will (dated August 15,1811) that the special object of his munificent bequest was to promote the translation of the Scripture into Sanskrit, so as ‘to enable his countrymen to proceed in the conversion of the natives of India to Cristian Religion.’... I have made it the chief aim of my professorial life to provide facilities for the translation of our sacred Scripture into Sanskrit....”.

(in Preface to ‘A Sanskrit – English Dictionary’ by Sir Moneir William p. ix-x)

(18) Some notable facts candidly admitted by Veer Narmad in the later stages of his life and published in ‘Dharmavicār’ - (free translation from archaic Gujarati).

The wind at that time was blowing in favour of one God instead of several demigods of the respective Sampradāyas. This enabled the victory over Vallabhi Sampradāya in the court-room battle. Reformists appeared to be united. Krishnadas came into limelight. Other Vaiśnava sects rejoiced at the discomfiture faced by the Vallabhmārg. Christians had an obvious cause to rejoice at the embarrassment of Hindu religion. Dr. Wilson was helpful to Krishnadas in the court as well as later too (p.28). I fail to understand why reforms keep on chasing the Maharajas. Swāmi Dayānand is also weary of the Vallabh Sampradāya. Is it that other sects are free

of malpractices, misconduct and conspiracies? or is it that the act of adultery was more sinful than other misdeeds? Only Yamrajā and Chirtraguṇṭa knows (p. 35) ! the reformists were more keen on the material welfare of the natives, Pandit Dayānand, a self-proclaimed radicalist, being infatuated with the biblical philosophy, had obviously turned away from Vedas, their Dharma and their Devatās. How can he be expected to believe in idol worship? He questions the absence of any mention about idol worship in Vedas, whether in favour or otherwise when other physical discoveries are claimed to have found place in Vedas. And if there is no idol worship, then no role is left for other Karmas as well. If there are three stages of water as vapour, water and ice, if there are three types of Karmas, viz, mental, vocal and physical, then why not mental image, external image of God and revelation of God? One who believes in the omnipresence of God, the power of Mantras, the consecration ceremony and the accomplishment of Bhakti will not be against idol worship. Reforms to maintain the piety and hygiene-related cleanliness are already being observed by the Indians. But the issue is, to what extent alien religion can contaminate our religious environment. Foreign thoughts have illusioned our people and it takes a long time to remove such illusion. But without removing it our religion is not going to light up. What a matured intellect our ancestors had! (p.64).

INTRODUCTION

The biggest problem today in Pushti Sampradāya propounded by Mahaprabhuji Shri Vallabhacharyaji for preachers as well as followers is that when treatises written by earlier Ācāryas are accepted as testimonies, then what is going on today is wholly contrary to what is said in those treatises. Moreover, we are so infatuated with the current scenario that, leave aside forsaking it, we are accepting it as an ideal situation. In that case, all the declared principles will be rendered meaningless, irrelevant and not worth talking about also before the followers. To remove this dilemma, clarification is given below in respect of the issues generally raised:

- (1) Are we unaware of the principles of Mahaprabhuji – were our ancestors ignorant of the actual principles?
- (2) Mahaprabhuji had established his principles in consonance with the time, place and society prevailing at that time. Today the situation has changed and new challenges have come up. Unless the issues arising out of the changed circumstances are resolved, it is futile to be obstinate about the established principles which in turn may cause withering away of the entire sect.
- (3) It is obvious that the sectarian principles have to be followed by all those belonging to the sect. However, the secular character of the Constitution and high taxes have compelled us to resort to ways which are not in tune with the principles. Do the obstinate protagonists have any solution for this?
- (4) Do the advocates who are for strict adherence of principles, themselves follow the principles fully?

- (5) All religious decisions cannot be taken on the basis of written scriptures. Prevailing customs too have their importance.
- (6) Sectarian principles are undoubtedly meant for all those who belong to the sect. However, many scriptural tenets are for those followers who are on the top of the ladder. This tribe is a rarity today. Most of the followers belong to the lower rungs and for them whatever is going on is fine.
- (7) Today, the need of the sect is to have constructive programmes rather than enter into unnecessary debate over principles.
- (8) Our path does not depend upon scriptural principles. It goes beyond that and depends on the divine grace of God. Hence, if public temples are closed, then the sevā system of appeasing God through offerings, affection and ornamentation (Bhog, Rāg, Śringār) will gradually recede to oblivion. Eventually, the Vaiśnavas in our path will migrate to other paths.
- (9) Debate over principles should not be carried out publicly. Else, imprudent followers will not have any respect for the Ācāryas. Hence, such debates should be held in camera only.
- (10) Ideally, principles should be followed. But unless a convenient way to earn livelihood is found, exhibitionism attached to Bhagwat Sevā in public temples to earn livelihood should not be considered inappropriate.
- (11) We are free to do whatever we feel right, no one has a right to criticise us.

It is believed that there are eleven Rudras in the Hindu Pantheon and it is felt that these eleven Rudras have appeared for the demolition of Vallabh sect.

We shall have to search for peaceful solutions for these Raudra statements. We cannot claim that this effort of ours will satisfy each and everyone. Nonetheless, the purpose of this introduction is to express our meditative reaction to the Raudra statements.

- (1) Whether our ancestors were aware about Mahaprabhuji's principles, can be known only after they have departed, through the collection of their writings. Further, the term 'ancestors' should not mean merely father or grandfathers. The teachings of all the learned writers starting from Mahaprabhuji have been included in the annexed Vacanāvali.
- (2) Due to changing times, it becomes difficult to follow certain scriptural commandments. New challenges are thrown up due to changing circumstances which require new solutions. However, it is unethical to ascribe these solutions to someone else. If it has become extremely difficult to follow Mahaprabhuji's principles, then certainly a new path can be established. But the new path cannot be described as Mahaprabhuji's path.
- (3) Recently, Rajasthan High Court nullified all the actions of Government in an attempt to declare a Pushtimargiya temple as a public trust, and in doing so, the court analysed in detail the sectarian principles. Therefore, the pretext of 'helplessness' has no legs to stand on. The infatuation prompted by pecuniary

benefits and thereby bifurcating 'Tanu-Vittajā' Sevā into 'Tanu' and 'Vittajā,' exhibition of celebrations during various festivals etc. should be stopped at least gradually, if not immediately. If anyone creates hurdles in this remedial action, courts are always open to reconsider the issue. There are number of wealthy people in this country who may have adopted legitimate means to avoid high taxes. But it is unheard that any one of them has converted his home into a public rest house merely out of fear of high taxes. Then how can our houses which are meant for worship, be converted into a public temple?

- (4) It is not our claim that only we are following the principles of the sect, nor does our alleging finger point towards any particular person. If, fortunately we are able to follow the principles, or unfortunately are not able to follow them, in either situation, the principles established by Mahaprabhuji and other previous Ācāryas are not going to change. Our potency does not permit us to establish new principles, nor can our impotency destabilise the established principles.
- (5) We are not rejecting the traditions that are thriving today. The only condition is that any such tradition cannot be contrary to the teachings of the pioneer Āchāryas. A live human body is more prone to contracting illness compared to an idol made of stone or metal. Hence, it is imperative that whatever thrives should be healthy.
- (6) The scriptures have the arrangement to determine the worthiness of a worshipper, high or low. If this arrangement was not there, then one's imagination or self-serving facility could

have been acceptable. When distinction between sevā-kathā-prapatti is easily available in the scriptures, then there does not remain any need to follow the principles in breach.

- (7) If any constructive programme is to be presented with a religious fervour, it has to be in consonance with the religious tenets. Else, even liquor and gambling dens can be opened in the name of constructive programmes.
- (8) If our path does not expect adherence to principles, then why not Namāz in Pushtimargiya temples and why no animal sacrifice? If this is not possible on account of difference in principles, then it is amply proved that mere Pushtiśakti, beyond the realm of evidence, is not the determinative factor. Otherwise, many undesirable programmes will have to be permitted. The offerings, affection, ornamentation in Sevā have to be thoughtful and pregnant with emotions. It should not smack of showing off one's devotion. If the public is weary of Dharma and desires only extravaganza, then it is in the interest of Pushtimarg that they choose some other path.
- (9) When commercialisation of worship is within the gaze of public eye, then to what extent is it desirable to hold discussions in camera? If the followers of the sect are considered to be unwise, then it is the sign of irresponsible conduct or impotency of the preacher class.
- (10) If today we declare our due adherence of principles before the public, then the means to earn livelihood not opposed to principles will certainly surface.

(11) Of course, everyone is free to act as he wishes. Our task is merely to proclaim the established principles. We do not have the right to reprimand anyone. At the same time, rebuke from anyone is also not acceptable to us.

When an individual, be it a patient or a doctor, falls sick, he can be treated in a hospital. But if the hospital is inflicted with disease, then what! In the same manner, when an individual, whether a preacher or the preached, gets derailed from the path of religion, then it is a lapse on the part of the individual. But when a religious sect consecrates an exoteric set-up, then it is not an individual lapse. It is in this context we are proclaiming the established principles.

One clarification will not be out of place. All those gentlemen who have contributed in presenting the Vacanāvali, they need not be in agreement with the meaning conveyed in the annexed translation. But we do not mind it if the statements of previous Ācāryas are successful enough to destroy the infatuation caused by pervasive ignorance and thoughtlessness. It is towards this noble cause we have received the cooperation of all. In that sense, we are grateful to all those who have co-operated.

Goswami Shyam Manohar

26-12-91

Mumbai

Joint Publication

ŚRI HARI

Goswami Śrivrājprīyajī, Śrinīrajakumarjī, Śrīmanojjī, Śrīyogeshjī,
Śrīsharadjī, Śrīpīyushjī, Śrīpankajjī, Śrīmīlanjī, Śrīvitthaljī, Śrīgopeshjī,
Śrībhusanajī, Śrīsharadjī Mahodaya,

I am in receipt of the letter sent by you all who are well-wishers of our sect. I have also received the attached siddhāntvacanāvalī which was given be me to you. Before going further, I would like to compliment you for showing utmost loyalty towards our own path and thereby confidently sending this Vacanāvalī to all the Goswamis. For this initiative of yours the sect will ever remain grateful to you youngsters.

If we have the self-esteem of being Mahāprabhuji's descendants, and also appreciate our responsibility to hold out honest teachings of our religion, then the followers of the path will have to be addressed faithfully as to the true meaning of the statements in the Vacanāvalī. I do not think that any argument, wrangling or cavilling have any place in this regard.

As far as possible, I am trying to distribute the Hindi-Gujarati translation of the statements expressed with their purports and intentions to all concerned in advance. I will be extremely pleased if anyone points out any shortcomings in the translation. Those who are not comfortable in pointing out the shortcomings, may convey the true translation in writing or orally for video-audio recording in a manner that the same can be distributed in the meeting to be held on 10,11,12 January,1992, failing which it will be difficult to reach to a conclusion. All those who are holding

a different view-point, should not shirk their duty of expressing it. However, if they hesitate, and if I have a reason to believe that they have read it, then they will be deemed to be agreeing to my translation and it will be so announced in the conference. If, in my opinion, there appears to be lack of application of mind, he will be declared ineligible for all future deliberations on principles.

It is expected that those holding different opinions, will gather courage befitting a Dharmācārya, and come forward to determine their own course of action. Else, a laughable situation will arise like when a crying child is given a honeyed nipple to keep him quiet. What more?

Yours

Goswami Shyam Manohar

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|| ŚRIHARIḤ ||

|| VACNĀVALI ||

**Jayati, Srivallabhāryo jayati c Viṭthaleśwaraḥprabhuḥ Śrimān |
Purusottamaśca taiśca nirdiṣṭā Puṣṭipaddhatirjayati ||**

Śrivallabhamatābhyāse Krupayā yena dikśitaḥ ||

Dikśitaṃ Tamahaṃ Naumi Śritātacaraṇaṃ sadā ||

**Śrivākpatervāganugāminām vai sadyaḥswakartavyaviniścayāya |
Kruto mayā Tadvacanānuvādaḥ Puṣpopahāropama eṣa nunaṃ |**

Swalābhapujārthaparāyaṇāṃ Tadiyasiddhāntavilopakānāṃ |

Bhavet khalānāṃ khalu mastakeṣu padaprahāropaṃ eṣaeva ||

Victory to Srivallabhācārya, victory to Sriviṭthaleśaprabhu, who are the best amongst those on the path of Pushti and victory to the path. I, who have been initiated (dikśit) into the study of Srivallabh's doctrines, always bow down to the feet of the preceptor, my father Śridikśitji.

I have translated his preachings to confirm the duties of the followers of Śrivallabh, the Lord of speech, which indeed is like a garland of flowers. However, let the same be a kick on the heads of those wicked persons who refuse to follow the doctrines propounded by him.

I. INITIATION AND PREACHING FOR SEVĀ

(a) Kriśnasevā Paramvikśyam Dambhādirahitam Naram |

Śribhāgwattatvajyaṃ Bhajet Jigyāsurādarāt ||

(TDN – 2/227)

(a) This path is not for everyone, but may be for anyone on whom God bestows His blessings. Whether a person is bestowed with such blessings or not can be determined by one's interest in the Bhaktimārg or the path of refuge.

Those who are thus blessed, the tools available to them are described –

A person should be accepted as teacher only after being sure of his willingness for Krishnasevā, whether he is devoid of vices like hypocrisy; moreover, should have the knowledge of the essence of Shrimadbhāgwat Purāṇa (Tattvārthdeepnibandha – 2/227 TDN for short)

A person who has to instruct the disciples about Bhagwatsevā, is obviously expected to be himself willing and eager to do Sevā. Further, except devotion, the Sevā should not be guided by unnecessary pretensions, greediness, desires and so on. Sevā should be honest as per the teachings and preachings. If sevā is done with the mind wandering here and there, it loses its purpose. That is why the teachers should know the essence of Śrimadbhāgwat. Moreover, the to-be disciple has to have curiosity about the path and should not be merely indulging in experimentation. Thereafter the followers should do sevā with all emotions guided towards God. This is the only right way to do sevā (TDN – 2/227).

The use of the word 'Vikśya' signifies the distinguishing feature of this path. "IKŚ" means to see or to mark. When it is prefixed with 'Vi', Mahaprabhuji conveys that a person should be thoroughly examined before accepting him as a teacher. If the person does not possess the above qualities, then he is no more than a part of herd psychology. It is like one blind man following another blind man, where one falls and the other also falls. It is only to guide us as to how a teacher should be examined, Mahaprabhuji has published the "Jalbhed" treatise. Initiation into the path without due care has no utility. Thus, besides explaining as to who is eligible to get initiated, Mahaprabhuji has also explained who is not eligible to induct a person into the path.

(Āvaraṅbhang – 2/227)

**(b) 'Māhātmyagyāpanāyaiva Śravaṇam Guṇakarmanām |
Śastrāṇamupayogo'tra Tatrākāṅkśā Gurorbhavet ||
Kriśnasevāparam Vikśya Dambhādirahitam Naram |
Śribhāgwattatvagyan Bhajet Jigyāsurādarād ||
Dehadroṇyā Yiyusunām Param Pāram Bhavāmbudheḥ |
Guruṇā Karṇadhāreṇa uttāryā Svopadeśataḥ ||**

(b) It is imperative to listen to the qualities and leelās of God to appreciate His glory. Hence, the need of scriptures arises. Therefore, eagerness in Krishnasevā, absence of hypocrisy and knowledge of the essence of Śribhāgwat are essentially to be examined before a person is respectfully accepted as a teacher. It is the teacher's duty to see that his followers are on the right path and that they sail through smoothly before crossing over this life.

(Sādhan Deepikā : 9-11).

(c) **Kṣetrapraviṣṭāste cāpi Samsārotpattihetavaḥ**

(Jalabheda – 4)

(c) That is –

Those who narrate the Bhāgwat stories to earn livelihood for the family will give rise to attachment to the material world.

In the chapter ‘Śrikriśnajanmakhand’ of Brahmvaivartapurāṇa, we find the following –

Prithvi to Brahmāji –

“Kalyāṇ suktaśāmāni Harernāmaikamangalam Kurvanti Vikrayam Ye Vai Teṣām Bhāreṇa Piḍitā.”

Krishna to Nanda –

“Mannānavikrayi Vipra Nahi Mukto Bhaved Dhruvam Mrityukāle C Mannāmasmritimātram Na Vidyate.”

These two verses indicate that selling the name of God is sinful. An important question arises in this respect.

A teacher educates his student about the glory of God. In return, the disciple offers gift to his teacher. Will it be a sin on the part of the teacher to accept a gift in return of singing the glory of God? The answer is in the negative. Teaching is an obvious means of livelihood for the teacher and the same is also approved by the scriptures. Hence, such gift is acceptable. Shri Prabhucaraṇ also says, “a gift should be given only after considering the merits and demerits, in particular, one has to be extra careful while giving gift in the name of Shrikrishna, else, gift given in the name of Shrikrishna haphazardly will invite the donor’s downfall.” Therefore, if the gift is accepted by the teacher keeping in view self-

emancipation and the emancipation of the disciple, then there is nothing objectionable. However, if the initiation is affected only with a greedy motive and without considering the merits/demerits, then certainly the teacher will be guilty of, selling the name of God.

(Shri Purushottamji's commentary on Jalbhed – 4)

(d) **“Tadbhāve Svayam Vāpi Murtim Krutvā Hareḥ Kvacit |**

Paricaryām Sadā Kuryāt Tadrupam tatra ca Sthitam ||

(TDN – 2/228).

(d) That is –

“If one cannot find such a teacher, then one should select an idol himself and start worshipping, as the divine truth is always present in it.”

Any place where there are no people to come in the way of righteous people, one should consecrate an idol himself and worship it. This type of worship is considered to be the best in this path. Whatever is done to the idol, is deemed to have been done for God only (TDN- 2/228).

Mahaprabhuji himself has raised the issue that where one cannot find a teacher with required qualification due to the powerful influence of Kaliyug, then what should be done? Mahaprabhuji himself resolves the issue. In that case the tutorship is restricted to himself (Mahaprabhuji) and one should engage in Bhagwatsevā himself only. A person who engages in Bhagwatsevā in this manner, obeying the commandment of Mahaprabhuji is not condemnable for any religious breach – a breach which is condemned in the statement “Yastvichayā krutaḥ

Pumbhirābhāso Hyāśramāt Pruthak” – that is, “that which has been originated by men according to their own whim as apart from the Āśramas or stages in life is Ābhāsa.”

Those who are desirous of getting more information with regard to Sevā, can seek the same from anyone who is already involved in it. This is evident from what is stated above

(Āvaraṇbhang – 2/228)

II. THE FORM OF SEVĀ (SEVĀSWAROOP)

(a) “Cetastvatpravaṇaṃ Sevā Tatsiddhayai Tanuvittajā”

(Siddhāntamuktāvali – 2)

(a) When a devotee serves the Lord dutifully with his own physical exertion and own resources, then only it culminates into Krishna conscientiousness.

Mahaprabhuji explains that sevā can be performed in varied ways. It can be performed by handing over money to someone else who will put in the physical exertion. Conversely, a person may exert himself after taking money from another person. But in either of these forms, one cannot get wholly absorbed with Krishna and hence cannot result into Krishna conscientiousness. To buttress this point Mahaprabhuji uses the term “Tanu-Vittajā”, that is, body and money in a combined manner. This shows that by dedicating everything to God and engaging bodily to serve

Him, leaving aside all worldly emotions, affection for God blossoms, resulting into Krishna consciousness and conscientiousness.

When a person gives money to the other to do sevā on his behalf, it is Rājas Bhāva breeding arrogance and hypocrisy. On the other hand, when a person does sevā on behalf of another by taking money, his position is no better than a Purohit in a religious ritual. The Purohit is not entitled to any fruit from the ritual and likewise, such a person can never be Krishna conscious.

(Siddhānt Muktvāli Prakāsh – 2)

(b) **“Yad Yad Iṣṭatamaṃ Loke..... Tat Kriśne Sādhayed Dhruvam.”**

(TDN – Āvaran Bhang – 2/236)

(b) That is ---

“Whatever is best and most pious available, should be used in the sevā of Krishna.”

By this Mahaprabhuji conveys that the material dedicated to God should not be a subject matter of any dispute or bickering, it should have been obtained legitimately and no one else should have a share in what is dedicated. Offerings and dedications of such materials, substances, properties with blemishes are prohibited.

There is no doubt that whatever is dedicated to God has to be the best. However, a doubt is raised that at times some chicanery may have to be employed to please the people or excessive offerings may also have to be made. In such a situation, there is a possibility of being extrovert. To

dispel this doubt Mahaprabhuji uses the term 'Bhagwat'. Undisputed things also, when obtained by legitimate means will not lead to extroversions. To explain this Mahaprabhuji has used the term 'other' – i.e., 'Anyā'

(TDN – Āvaraṇ Bhang – 2/236).

(c) **“Svamārgiyaprakāro'yaṃ sarvopi Hi Nirupyate |**

Gruhitvā Nām Śaraṇam Gatvā Sarvam Samarpya C ||

Sevāsārthaktāsiddhayai Dehādināṃ tathā Punaḥ |

Anyatrāviniyogāya Kriyatāṃ Tanu – Vittajā ||

(Svamārgiya - Saraṇ - Samarpaṇ - Sevā by Shri Harirayji – 1 – 3)

(c) Accomplishment (Sādhanā) on the path we have chosen for ourselves can be either through basic initiation, i.e. Nām Dikśā or Śaraṇ Dikśā. The second method is through the more involved Śamarpaṇ Dikśā. The latter demands dedicating everything for sevā including our physicality. That is why 'Tanu-Vittaja' sevā is mandated so that our corporeal existence is not wasted in activities other than sevā (supra).

(d) **Yastu Svamārgiya – sevāswaroop – Jnānābhāvavān mārgarityā Śraddhayā yathākathancit swaroopsevam cet Karotiti tatsevāyāḥ kevalabhautikatvāt “Lokārthi Ced Bhajet Kriśṇaṃ” Iti nyāyasya jātatvāt tadā sarvathā sankliṣṭo bhavati,tadā bhajantyāgaḥ.**

(swarooptārtamyanirṇaya)

(d) When a Pushtimargi who is unaware of the form and structure of sevā, starts doing sevā simply as per tradition without understanding its

nuances, it is merely a ritual without purpose. It only justifies “Lokārthi ced Bhajet Kriśṇaṃ.....” (Siddhāntmuktāvali – 8) – that is, when sevā is done merely to obtain material gains, such a person remains in a state of distress and hence should discontinue such worship (supra).

III EXHIBITING SEVĀ (SEVĀPRADARŚAN)

(a) **Bhagwadbhāvasya rasātmakatvena guptasyaiva
abhivruddhisvabhāvakatvād āśramadharmaireva loke svaṃ**

**Bhagwadbhāvaṃ anāviṣkurvan bhajet Ityetadāśayen te dharma
uktāḥ. Gopane mukhyaṃ hetuṃ āha ‘Anvayād’ iti. Yato bhagvatā
samaṃ anvayaṃ = sambandhaṃ prāpya vartate, ato hetoḥ tathā.
Atra “Lyablope Panchami” etena yāvad antaḥkaraṇe sākṣāt prabho
prākatyaṃ nāsti, tāvadeva bahirāviṣkaraṇam bhavati, prākatye tu na
tathā sambhavati iti Jnāpitaṃ**

(Aṇubhāṣya – 3/4/49).

(a) Emotion towards God will be incremental only if it remains hidden. Therefore, one should worship under the cover of one’s Āśramdharma. Impliedly, one is not expected to shun his Varṇāśram duties but devotion within the heart should continue to pulsate. Devotion gets exhibited only if God is not dwelling in the heart. If God has firmly occupied His seat in your heart, there is no possibility of any blatancy (supra).

(b) **“Sviyān Bhaktān Pradarśayet”.**

(Sādhan Deepikā – 108)

(b) Darśan of our Thākorji should be allowed only to those whom we consider our own and are also devotees (supra).

(c) **38 tamo aparādhaḥ = Gurudevatayoḥ Guptaprakaṭikaraṇam**

Phalam = Śwānayonitrayam.

11 “Aprādhaḥ = Avaiṣanvasya svasevyapradarśanam. Phalam = Vārśikasevāniṣphalatvam.

Prāyaścitam = Pancāmruṭsnānam

36 tamo aparādhaḥ = Bhagwannāmnā yācanam. Phalam = upcārnaiṣphalam.

Prāyaścitaṃ = Pancaguṇita – Naivedya – Dānam.

35 tamo aparādhaḥ = Gurvagyollanghanam. Phalam =

Asipatrādi – Ghor – Naraka – Pātaḥ.

Prāyaścitaṃ = Vaiśnava – Guru – Prasādanam.

(Ṣatpaṣṭhiraparādhasatphalāni – Prāyaścittani – Ca by Shri Harirayji).

(c) 38th offence – To disclose the mysteries arising in our interaction with teacher or God.

Result = Three succeeding births as a dog.

11th offence = To exhibit our co-dwelling Shri Ṭhākorji before a non-vaiṣṇava.

Result = One year's sevā is nullified.

Remedy = Give a Pancāmruta bath to Shri Ṭhakorji.

36th offence = To accept gifts in any form, directly or indirectly, in the name of Shri Ṭhakorji, Shri Bhāgwat or Loṭiji of Shri Yamunāji.

Result = Entire sevā performed hitherto is nullified.

Remedy = Five-times of whatever is collected to be offered to God as

gift – not in the form of dedication (samarpan)

35th offence = To disobey the commands of Shri Mahaprabhuji.

Result = The delinquent will have a fall in the deadliest of the hells.

Remedy = To please Vaiṣṇavas and the teacher.

IV PURPOSE OF SEVĀ

(SEVĀPRAYOJAN)

(a) **“Na Laukikaḥ Prabhuḥ Kṛṣṇo Manute Naiva Laukikam |**

Bhāvastatrāpyasmadiyaḥ Sarvasvaścaihikaśca Saḥ ||

Parlokaśca Tenāyam Sarvabhāven sarvathā |

Sevyaḥ Saeva Gopiśo Vidyāsyatyakhilam Hi Naḥ ||

(Śikṣāpadyāni)

(a) Śrikriṣṇa is neither a plebeian God nor is He receptive of feelings which are plebeian. Our feeling with regard to Śrikriṣṇa is that He is everything to us, whether in this life or the life later. Therefore, He is ever worthy of being served with all the emotions at our disposal. He only will do everything for us (supra).

(b) **“Laukārthi Ced Bhajet Kriṣṇam Kliṣṭo Bhavati Sarvathā.”**

(b) That is – “If sevā is done merely to obtain material gains, such a person ever remains in a state of distress.”

What is the fate of a person who worships to earn livelihood and fame? The above verse is the reply to this curiosity. The word ‘Lok’ means worldly gains or material gains. Just as a businessman earns money through business, then such a worshipper will also earn money. However, money is meaningless and such worship too will nullify everything he may have done for his family, society, sect and so on. He will always remain in

distress. The fruits of commercial worship as mentioned are not restricted to this life. He meets the same fate in the next life too. That is why Mahaprabhuji has used the term 'Sarvathā' (ever). A person having even a semblance of knowledge or sacrament, will not conduct himself thus. But there is every possibility of a person to fall from grace who is devoid of such knowledge and sacrament. That is why the use of word 'If'.

(Commentary by Shri Gusainji on Siddh. Mukh – 16)

(c) **“Tasya Sevām Prakurvit Yāvajjivam Svadharmataḥ |**

Na Phalārthaṃ Na Bhogārthaṃ Na Pratiṣṭhāprasiddhaye ||

Śrimadācāryamārgeṇa Nānyenāpi Kadācana |

Na Kalpitprakāreṇa Na Durbhāvasamanvayāt ||

(Śriksāptra – 18/12-13).

(c) Shri Thākorji dwelling in our house has to be served considering it to be our prime duty and such service should be done with our own physical effort, own resources and engaging other family members as well. The service to the Lord should not be driven by a desire for reward or fame. It should be done in the manner prescribed by Mahaprabhuji and not by our imagination like the so-called public welfare. Also, there should not be any ill-feeling of competing with public temples (supra).

V PLACE OF WORSHIP

(Sevāsthal)

(a) **Beejadadharyaparakārastu Gruhe Sthitvā Svadharmataḥ.....**

Bhajet kriśṇam.....

(Bhaktivardhini – 2)

(a) The only way to nurture the seed of Pushtibhakti is to perform the primary duty of worshipping Krishna in our own house.

The use of word 'only' is a clear indication that there is no other way of worship except in one's house. Therefore, Mahaprabhuji has used the words indicative of worship in one's residence.

(Commentary by Shri Gokulnathji on Bhaktivardhini – 2).

Further, since worship in house only is emphasized, to go elsewhere for worship in the form of darśana, put bhent etc. is no worship at all.

(Commentary by Shri Balkrishnaji – 2)

(b) **Guḍhalilāparo Bhaktaguḍhabhāvarsātmakaḥ |**

Sevaniyaḥ Sāvadhānaiḥ Viparitagatikriyaḥ ||

Śrīmadācāryakrupayā Tiṣṭhati Svagruhe Hari |

Evamividhaḥ Sadā Haste Yoginaḥ Pārado Yathā ||

(Śikṣāpatram – 2/18-19).

(b) The ways of Almighty are unfathomable. His emotions are unpredictable. At times he may be joyful and at times melancholy. Hence, it is imperative that He is worshipped with extra caution. He is dwelling in our house with the grace of Shri Mahaprabhuji and not due to any effort on our part. Hence, all the more important to be cautious. If we are not cautious, He may be unhappy, just as, if a Yogi is not cautious, mercury may slip out of his hand

(supra).

(c) **Gruhe Sthitvā Sevanārthaṃ Svadharmeṇaiva Sarvathā |**

Kriśṇaṃ Bhajet Yato'dharmakaraṇāt Hinayonitā ||

Kriśṇamurtau Yathālabdhaiḥ Dravayaiḥ Sampujayed Harim |

Purvam Sthānaṃ Mandirādi Tathā Sinhāsanādi C ||

(Svamārge Śaraṇ Samarpaṇ Sevā Nirupaṇam 45-46)

(c) The sevā to be done at home should be as prescribed for the followers of the path and only Krishna is to be worshipped. If done otherwise, it will be violative of the prescribed duty, that is, it will be 'Adharma' which leads to a sub-human birth. The idol of Hari be worshipped with available substances. Before worshipping Him, the place where He sits, His throne etc. should also be worshipped decoratively (supra).

(d) **'Ācāryakulād' iti śrutyuktaritā gruhaeva sthitvā**

Bhagwadbhajaṇaṃ kartavyaṃ svadharmarahasyaṃ c

gopaniyaṃ iti siddhaṃ.

(Aṇubhāṣyaprakāś by Shri Purushottamji – 3/4/50).

(d) As mentioned in the vedic phrase Ācāryakulād, God be worshipped at home only and one should keep his worship secret (supra).

VI THE FORM OF THE SERVED (SEVYASWAROOP)

(a) (i) **Gupto Hi Rasaḥ Rasatvamāpadyate**

That is,

Only secret Rasa can inspire more Rasa.

(Subodhini – 10/18/5)

(ii) **Agupto Rasaḥ Rasābhāsaḥ Syāt.**

That is,

External manifestations of Rasa would be inappropriate.

(Subodhini – 10/56/44)

(b) **“Tadbhāve Svayam Vāpi Murtiṃ Krutvā Hareḥ Kvacit |**

Paricaryāṃ Sadā Kuryāt Tadrupaṃ c Tatra c Sthitaṃ ||”

(TDN Prakāś – 2/228)

(b) “If one cannot find such a teacher, then one should select an idol himself and start worshipping, as the divine truth is always present in it.”

Any place where there are no people to come in the way of righteous people, one should consecrate an idol himself and worship it. This type of

worship is considered to be the best in this path. Whatever is done to the idol, is deemed to have been done for God only (TDN – 2/228).

Mahaprabhuji himself has raised the issue that where one cannot find a teacher with required qualities due to the powerful influence of Kaliyug, then what should be done? Mahaprabhuji himself resolves the issue. In that case the tutorship is restricted to himself and one should engage in Bhagwatsevā himself only. A person who engages in Bhagwatsevā in this manner, obeying the commandment of Shri Mahaprabhuji is not condemnable for any religious breach – a breach which is condemned in the statement “Yastvitchyā Krutaḥ Pumbhirābhāso Hyāśramāt Pruthak “ – that is, “that which has been originated by men according to their own whim as apart from the Āśramas or stages in life is Ābhāsa.”

Those who engage thus in sevā, are desirous of getting more information with regard to Sevā, can seek the same from anyone who is already involved in it. This is evident from what is stated above.

(Āvaraṅbhang – 2/228).

(c) **“Gurudattāṃ Svyaṃlabdhāṃ Bhaktairapi Supujitām |
Vyangāngimapi Seveta yadi Bhāvo Na Bād hate. ||”**

(c) The divine form (idol of God) may have been bestowed on us by teacher, or by a devotee or obtained otherwise, whether wholesome or slightly deformed, ultimately it is a divine form ruling over us. Our emotion towards it should be intact and be worshipped singularly.

(Sādhandeepikā – 90)

(d) **Sevāvidhiḥ Samagropi Krameṇaiva Vilikhyate |**
Prakārottamattaḥ Purvaṃ Murtau Sevā Vidhiyate ||
Murtau Bhagwato Jnānaṃ sākāraśato Mataṃ |
Bhaktimārgprakāreṇa Jnāntastu tadātmatā ||
Pujāmārge Bhavenmantravidhānāt Pujyasevanaṃ |
Viśeṣo Bhaktimārgē'yaṃ Puruṣottamrupiṇaḥ ||
Maṇisparṣena Tāmrādi Sauvarṇamiva Tattvataḥ |
Atastatra Krutaṃ Sarvaṃ Sākṣātkruśṇe Krutam Bhavet ||

(Svamārgē Śaraṇ Samarpaṇ Sevā Nirupaṇam – 39-41)

(d) Now the process of sevā is being written step-wise. Being the best, idol worship is described first. It is faithfully believed that as per the path of worship (Bhaktimārg), the knowledge of God manifests in the idol and in the idol itself God enters. From the viewpoint of knowledge, everything is Godly and thereby the idol is no exception. As per Pujāmārg, the Lord is served through hymns, whereas as per Bhaktimārg, the idol itself is Puruṣottama. It is not in any representative form. Just as the touch of philosopher's stone (Pārasmaṇi), copper turns into gold, similarly, all the processes of worship applied to the idol, becomes, in substance, the processes of worship of Śrikriśṇa in person.

(Supra)

(e) **Svamārgasevyarupasya Cintane Ritirucyate |**
---Tadekahridayasthāyi Tadbhāvaḥ Kriśṇeva hi ||
Leelāsahasravalitaḥ Sāmagrisahistathā |
Bhāvaniyaḥ Sadānandaḥ Sadā Nandādilātitaḥ ||
Idamevoktaṃ Ācāryaiḥ Siddhāntasya Nirupaṇe |
“Ātmānandsamudrasthaṃ Kriśṇameve” Ti Yadvacaḥ ||
Tadāśayastu Vivrutaḥ Krupayaiva Prabhormayā |
Avagatya Janāh Sarve Cintayantu Harim Sadā ||

(Śrīmatprabhościntanprakāraḥ - 1 – 13).

(e) Now the process of meditating over the deity is being described. The emotion of bhakti enshrined in the heart of a Pushti devotee is Śrikriśna Himself who is full of sport (Leelās) and fully equipped to perform the Leelās. Such blissful form as worshipped by Vraj devotees should be meditated upon. In Siddhāntmuktāvali, Mahaprabhuji emphasizes this point by the phrase “Ātmānandasamudrasthaṃ Kriśṇameva Vicintayet” – that is, “only Krishna who dwells in the blissful ocean within the heart be meditated upon.” It is His grace only that I have described His intentions. With His grace only I have grasped the meditative form for Pushti Path and I earnestly desire that Pushti devotees always meditate on the said form of Hari.

(Supra).

(f) **Bhakimārgasthitaiḥ Śrīmadācāryapadasamśritaiḥ |**

Sevyamānaṃ Sadā Bhāvaiḥ Nirodhaṃ Sādhayed Dhruvam ||

(Svamārgiyaswaroopsthāpanprakāraḥ - 18).

(f) Those devotees who are fortunate to have the refuge of Shri Mahaprabhuji, will undoubtedly get habitually inclined to worship God with all the auspicious emotions and not by plebeian emotions.

(supra).

VII SEVĀ FOR LIVELIHOOD

(SEVĀRTH – ĀJIVIKĀ)

(a) **Yāmamātraṃ bhagwatsevāṃ vidhāya paścād aniṣidhdena upāyena jivanam sampādayet. Pāraparyajivanamapi niṣidhdena cet tadā tyaktavyaṃ. “Acaurāṇām Apāpānām” iti vacanāt. jivikāyāṃ cittaṃ vyāprutaṃ punaḥ Bhagwati yojnārthaṃ upāyaṃ āh “Paṭhecca Niyamaṃ Krutvā” iti Anena alpabahiramukhatāyāmapi Śribhāgwataṃ anusandheyam iti upāyaḥ kathitaḥ.**

(TDN – Prakāś – 2/232)

(a) After spending at least three hours in sevā, one should engage himself to earn livelihood through means which are not condemned by the scriptures. Even an activity which is carried on from generation to generation should be discontinued if it is condemnable by the scriptures

(like using God's money for personal consumption). A person who continues to engage himself in a condemnable activity, then it is violation of the expression 'Achaurāṇaṃ Apāpānām....' that is, one should not be a stealer nor a sinner. The mind established in livelihood should be directed towards God by regular reading of Bhāgwat. This remedy is suggested to control the slightest extroversion.

(supra).

(b) Śwānaṃ śvapākaṃ pretadhumaṃ devdravyopajivinaṃ
grāmayājakaṃ somavikriyaṇam citiṃ citikāṣṭhaṃ madyaṃ
madyabhāṇdaṃ sasnehaṃ mānuṣāsthīṃ śavaspruśaṃ
mahāpātakinam śavaṃ spruṣṭvā sacailaṃ ambho'vagāhya uttīrya
agniṃ upaspruśya gāyatryaṣṭaśataṃ japeṭ. dhruṭaṃ prāśya snātvā
trirācamed iti cyavanvacanāt.

Citīnca Citikāṣṭhanca Puyam Caṇḍālameva Ca |

Spruṣṭvā Devalakancaiva Savāsā Jalamāviśet ||

Devārcanaparo Yastu Vittārthi Vatsaratrayaṃ |

Sa Vai Devalako Nām Havyakavyeṣu Garhitaḥ ||

(Dravyaśuddhi – by Shri Purushottamji)

(b) A dog, a person wicked in deeds, inhaler of smoke issuing from a funeral pile, one who lives on money or things belonging to God, a degraded Brahman, vendor of Soma juice, a funeral pyre, wood meant for funeral, an intoxicant, a dead body – all these persons and persons coming in contact with such persons or things is a grave sinner and should

atone for his sins, it is recommended by Cyavan Riśi that the penitent should dive into the water with clothes on, touch the fire, mutter the Gāyatri Mantra one hundred eight times, observe fast and sip water three times (Ācaman) as atonement. One who touches the funeral pyre, wood meant for funeral, pus, a wicked person and substances belonging to God should dive into the water with clothes on. One who worships God with the motive of pecuniary gains for three years should be considered as censured to participate in the oblations and offerings.

(supra).

VIII THE DOER OF SEVĀ AND ASSISTANCE (SEVĀKARTĀ AND SEVĀPARICĀRAKA)

(a) **Bhāryādiranukoolaścet Kāryed Bhagwatkriyāṃ |
Udāsine Svayaṃ Kuryāt Pratikoole Gruhaṃ Tyajet ||**

**Evam pravrutasya bhāryādinām viniyogaṃ āha
“Bharjādiranukoolaśched” iti Bhāryādikaṃ Gruhaṃ,
Viśṇuparāṅgmukhāḥ bhāryādayo anyathā parityāge doṣaeva. Anena
avaiṣṇavaiḥ saha asminmārge na sthātavyaṃ iti uktaṃ bhavati.**

(TDN – Prakāśa – 2/231).

(a) If wife and other family members are cooperative then their assistance should be taken in Bhagwatsevā. If they are indifferent, then one should do the sevā all by himself only. If they are averse to it, then one should leave the house. In this manner it is being described to involve

the family members in sevā, but with the big IF that they are cooperative. Here 'Gruha' (house) includes the family members residing in the house. The advice to leave the house is applicable only if the family members have turned away from Vishnu and not otherwise. If one leaves the house for any other reason, then the same is inappropriate. The purport of the advice is that one should avoid cohabitation with non-vaishnavas.

(supra).

(b) **Tatrādaḥ Śaraṇaṃ Yātaḥ Kim Kuryāditi cocyate |**

Śrīmadācāryamārgiyaguruṇā Śaraṇam Gataḥ ||

Swamitvena Hariṃ Svam Tu Sevakatvena Bhāvayet |

.....

Evamāśritya Dharmo'yaṃ Sankṣepeṇa Nirupitaḥ |

--- Ataḥ Paraṃ Krameṇaiva Jeevaḥ Krutsamarpaṇaḥ ||9-10||

.....

Sevāsamskārarupatvād vidadhyātsevanāṃ Sadā |

--- Sarvathā Sarvadaivāpi Nacādyāsamarpitaṃ || 25-26||

Tadbhakṣaṇe Bhavedevābrahmsambandhi Vastutaḥ |

Sarvatra Brahmsambandh – Bhāvanā – Nāśaeva Hi || 27 ||

Yathā Samrapaṇe Yogyaṃ Yat Tathā Tat Samarpayet |

.....

Gruhe Sthitvā Sevanārthaṃ Svadharmeṇaiva Sarvathā |

Kruśṅam Bhajet Yato Adharmakarṇāt Hinayonitā || 45 ||

Kruśṅamurtau Yathālabdhairdravyaiḥ Sampujayed Hariṃ |

Purvaṃ Sthānaṃ Mandirādi tathā Sinhāsanādi C || 46 ||

.....

Bhāryādināmānukulye Taiḥ Sevāmeva Kārayet || 56 ||

Svayaṃ Kuryād Udāsintayā Teṣāṃ Punaḥ Sthitau |

Apakirtibhayāt Kriśṅasevā – Vaiyagra – Sambhavāt || 57 ||

Svakrut – Brahmsambandhaṃ Vibhāvya Hridi Sarvathā |

Tatpoṣaṇam Prakurvita Rugṇadehavadāturaḥ || 58 ||

(Svamārge Śaraṇ Samarpaṇ Sevā Nirupaṇam by Harirayji – 9 -58)

(b) Firstly, one who is primarily initiated into the sect only as a refuge (Śarṇāgat), his duties are defined : He who is initiated into the sect propagated by Shrimadvallabhacharya and considering him to be the teacher, the initiated should consider Hari as his Lord and himself as His servant. This, in brief, is the duty of a devotee who has taken refuge (Śarṇāgati Ni Dikśa).

Now, one who gets initiated by dedicating himself and everything belonging to him (Brahmsambandh Dikśa), his duties are being told. The process of such initiation is essentially a sacrament, the crux being to serve the Lord and hence is expected to be always in the service of Lord. Never is he expected to consume anything which is not offered to God. A thing should be offered to God in the manner it is possible to be offered.

It is incumbent that Krishna only is worshipped in the house in the manner prescribed, else there is every possibility of getting a sub-human birth. God is worshipped in the form of an idol with whatever resources that are available. Before worshipping God, it is necessary to worship and decorate the throne, the temple and the surrounding place. If the family members have the inclination and are cooperative, they should be involved in sevā. Otherwise, sevā be done by self only. If indifferent family members are forced into sevā, then they are likely to condemn the sevā itself, thereby adversely affecting its sanctity and cause anxiety. Nonetheless, an indifferent family is like a sick patient who needs to be looked after and nurtured. The family should likewise be looked after.

(supra).

IX EXPOUNDING SEVĀ

(SEVOPADEṢṬĀ)

(a) **Paramatra na Sarveṣāṃ phalamukhādhikāraḥ kintu yeṣu bhagwatkrupā krupāparijnānam c mārgarucyā niściyate. Tatra āditaḥ sādhanāni āhaḥ -**

Kriṣṇasevāparaṃ vikṣya Dambhādirahitaṃ Naraṃ |

Śribhāgvattatvajnaṃ Bhajet Jijyāsurādarāt ||

(TDN – 2/227)

“Kriṣṇasevāparaṃ’ iti. Yo hi Guruḥ sevām upadekṣyati sa svayaṃ cet tām uttamām jāniyāt tadā kathaṃ svayaṃ na kuryād iti sevāparaeva guruḥ. Tatrāpi nimittāni vārayati ‘Dambhādirahitaṃ’ iti.

Sevāca pramāṇamulaiva puruṣārthparayavasāyini. Anyathā manasi anyadvidhāya anyathā karaṇe na phalasiddhiḥ iti abhiprāyeṇa āha ‘Śribhagvattatvajam’ iti. ‘Jijnāsu’ na tu kautukādyāviṣṭaḥ. Bhajanam – sarvabhāvena, tadā taduktaprakāreṇa bhagwatsevā kartavyā.

‘Vikśya’ ityanena mārgāntarād atra vailakṣaṇyam jnāpitaṃ. ‘Ikśa’ darśanāṅkanayoḥ, ‘Vi’nā c samyaktvaṃ parikṣaṇe dyotyate. Tathāca Tandre – “Guruḥ Parikṣayet śiṣyaṃ” iti vākyāt śiṣyo yathā parikṣyate tathā atra guruḥ. Neced atādrśasya lokānugatapaśurupatvāt tādraśo anusaraṇe andhānugāndhavad ubhāvapi patetāṃ. Etadarthameva Jalabhedagranthakaraṇam jneyaṃ.....tena brahmasambandhopi phalamukhaḥ tasyaiva iti siddhyati. Evaṃ adhikārsucanena anadhikāryapi vyāvartitaḥ.

(TDN Prakāśa – Āvaraṇabhanga – 2/227).

(a) This path is not for everyone, but may be for anyone on whom God bestows His blessings. Whether a person is bestowed with such blessings or not can be determined by one’s interest in Bhaktimārg or the path refuge. Those who are thus blessed, the tools available to them are described –

A person should be accepted as teacher only after being sure of his willingness for Krishna Sevā, whether he is devoid of vices like hypocrisy, moreover, should have the knowledge of the essence of Shrimadbhāgwat Purāṇa

(TDN – 2/227).

A person who has to instruct the disciples about Bhagwatsevā, is obviously expected to be himself willing and active to do sevā. Further, except devotion, the sevā should not be guided by unnecessary pretensions, greediness, desires and so on. Sevā should be honest as per the teachings and preachings. If sevā is done with the mind wandering here and there, it loses its purpose. That is why the teacher should know the essence of Shrimadbhāgwat. Moreover, the to-be disciple has to have curiosity about the path and should not be merely indulging in experimentation. Thereafter the follower should do sevā with all emotions guided towards God. This is the only right way to do sevā.

(supra).

The use of the word 'Vikśya' signifies the distinguishing feature of this path. 'Ikś' means to see or to mark. When it is prefixed with 'Vi', Mahaprabhuji conveys that a person should be thoroughly examined before accepting him as a teacher. If the person does not possess the above qualities, then he is no more than a part of herd psychology. It is like one blind man following another blind man, where one falls and the other also falls. It is only to guide us as to how a teacher should be examined, Mahaprabhuji has published the 'Jalbhedā' treatise. Initiation into the path without due care has no utility. Thus, besides explaining as to who is eligible to get initiated, Mahaprabhuji has also explained who is not eligible to induct a person into the path.

(Āvaraṇbhang – 2/227)

(b) Mahātmyajñāpanāyaiva Śravaṇaṃ Guṇakarmanāṃ |
Śāstrāṇāmupayogo'tra Tatrākāṅkṣā Gurorbhavet ||
Kriṣṇasevāparaṃ vikṣya Dambhādirahitaṃ Naraṃ |
Śribhāgwattvajnaṃ Bhajet Jigyāsurādarād||
Dehadroṇyā Yiyāsunāṃ Paraṃ Pāraṃ Bhavāmbudheḥ |
Guruṇā Karṇadhāreṇa uttāryā Svopadeśataḥ ||

(Sādhandeepikā – 9-11).

(b) To grasp the glory of god, it is necessary to listen to His inimitable qualities and His sporting activities (Leelās) on a regular basis. This emphasises the significance of scriptures. It is therefore, expected of a fresh entrant to the path to select a proper teacher, a teacher who should not only be devoid of qualities like hypocrisy, arrogance etc. but should also have imbibed the essence of Shribhāgwat. He should be ever eager to do Krishnasevā. Only such person should be accepted as a teacher with due reverence. Such a teacher will navigate the follower to sail through smoothly on the ocean of life. (supra).

(c) Guruśca Bhakimārgiyaḥ Kriṣṇasevāparāyaṇaḥ |
Śribhāgwattatvajyo Dambhādirahito Naraḥ ||
Tadbhāve Tathābhutopadeśo'tra Niyāmakaḥ |
Athādhunikatirthānāṃ Atathābhutato'pi Hi |
Upadeśastathābhutguroriva Phaliṣyati |
Yadi Duḥsangadoṣeṇa Nānyathā Ced Bhavenmatih ||

(Svamārgē Śaraṇ Samarpaṇ sevā Nirupaṇam by Shriharirayji : 49-51)

(c) A teacher is supposed to be the follower of Bhaktimārg, engrossed in Krishnasevā, a scholar in the essence of Shribhāgwat and free from hypocrisy, arrogance etc. If such a teacher is not available, then treat the teachings of Mahaprabhuji as teacher and learn about one's duties as a Pushtimārgi. Despite conferment of blessings by Mahaprabhuji on his descendants, it may be difficult to find a Goswami with the above qualities. Yet, if he possesses good qualities, eager to have knowledge of Krishna and abides by the preachings of Mahaprabhuji, such a person will be equally rewarding, provided, he has not allowed his intellect and discretion to get derailed by bad company. Such a company may be an avaricious baniā, trustee etc.

(supra).

(d) **Adambhaḥ Sarvathāpekśarahitaḥ Karuṇāparaḥ |**

Vicārya Varaṇam Śrīmadācāryapadasanśrayaḥ ||

Svasevakāya Śuddhāya satataṃ Prayatātmane |

Prayachhet Tat Swaroopam tu Phalarupatayā Punaḥ ||

(Svamārgiyaswaroop Sthāpanaparakārah by Śrihariraiji : 16-17).

(d) The disciple is selected by God Himself to tread on the path of Pushti. Hence, it is incumbent upon the teacher to see that the disciple gets proper refuge at the feet of Shri Mahaprabhuji and should not expect anything in return. The teacher should compassionately take care of the disciple to see that the latter is not left out from the gains of Pushti. A consecrated idol be devolved on the disciple as reward and not as an

obligation, nor with the feeling that the disciple's deity is inferior to that of the teacher's.

(Supra).

(e) **Vancakastu Tato'pyeṣa Duṣṭa Ityeva Buddhayatāṃ || 16 ||**

Yataḥ Tadākrutiśceṣṭā Tathācāraśca Bhāṣaṇaṃ |

Vinayaḥ Śāntatā Veśaḥ Śankhacakrādicinhataḥ || 17 ||

Evamādyakhilaṃ Tulyaṃ Bhagwaddharmavartibhiḥ |

Tatojnānābhāva'topi Sarvathā Nāśanaṃ Mataṃ || 18 ||

Durghaṭam tasya Vijnānaṃ Sarvathā Bhaktasāmyataḥ |

Ataeva Na Kartavyo Viśwāso Hyavicāritaḥ ||19||

Tadiyatvabhramāttasmin Viśwāso Sangadoṣataḥ |

Asatyapi Ca Sadbhāvātpatanaṃ Bhaktimārgataḥ || 20 ||

Ataevoktamācāryaiḥ Gurorapi Ca Vikśaṇaṃ |

'Kriśṇasevāparaṃ Vikśye' tyādipadye Nibandhage || 21||

.....

Sato'pi Kincidādhikyaṃ Vancake Tu Pratiyate |

Pradarśanārthatvatastu Veṣāderiḥa Sarvathā || 25 ||

.....

Bhagwadbhaktasāmyepi tadsādhāraṇo Guṇaḥ |

Nirapekśatvametaṣmimstadbhāvāddhi Vancakaḥ || 32 ||

Anākārītaevāsau Sange Lagati Sarvathā |

Prārthitā Bhagwadbhaktaḥ Krupayanti Kathancana || 33 ||

Sa dravyameva Vijnāya sajjate svārthamohitaḥ |

Dineṣu Bhagwadbhaktāstadarthaikaprasādakāḥ ||34 ||

Cālyatyayamunmārge Māyācāṭukasuktibhiḥ |

Te Tu Marge Cālayanti Vacobhiḥ Kaṭukaśadhaiḥ || 35 ||

(Duḥsangavijnāna Nirupaṇam by Shri Harirayji : 16 - 35)

(e) An impostor is worse than a thief because his gestures, conduct, language, politeness, gentleness, dress and symbols of conch, discus, lotus, mace are identical to that of a true Pushtimargi. It is difficult to identify such pretenders and those who fail to do so, invite their own doom. Trusting such deceivers is equivalent to keeping bad company which may throw a true devotee out of the path of devotion. It is therefore, not for nothing that Mahaprabhuji has ordained for scrupulous examination before selecting a person as a teacher. The major point of distinction between an impostor and a real devotee is that the former has adorned all the outfits and symbols only to draw attention of others. He is overzealous in his demeanor. Unlike a true devotee, the pretender expects people to come and watch his devotion. He simply cannot resist long queues of people waiting for darśanas and fling money to the deity. He is always in pursuit of devotees, particularly the rich ones who are flattered and drawn into trickery. On the other hand, a true devotee's devotion is selfless, unconditional and guides people on the right path through principles declared by Mahaprabhuji and earlier period descendants.

(supra).

(f) **Yo Vadatyanthāvākyam Ācāryavacanāt Janeḥ |
Samsrutiprerako Vāpi tatsango Duṣṭasangamaḥ ||
Yaśca kriṣṇe Ratiṃ Nityam Bodhayatyaprayojanām |
Nirapekśaḥ Sāttvikaśca Tatsangaḥ Sādhusangamaḥ ||**

(Śikṣāpatra : 3/8-9).

(f) His company is not advisable who talks contrary to the principles of Mahāprabhuji and whose talks are mundane. Only his company is advisable who talks about enhancing love for Krishna, has no expectations, is indifferent and righteous in all respects.

(supra).

(g) **Tena gurutvameva vruttitvena phalati, yuktaṃ C etad
anupakrutya parasvagrahaṇe ṛṇitvena bandhasya prasanjanāt.
Kinca ṛtottaraṃ amrutākhyāyāḥ ayācitvṛtteḥ uktatvāt tasyāmapī
śiṣyasyaiva grāhyaṃ na itarasyatu evaṃ sankoce tasyāmapī
praśastatvasiddhiḥ .**

(Svavrutivāda by Śripuruṣottamji).

(g) It is proved that Gurudom is our livelihood. In other words, if we perform our duty as a Guru in real sense and the disciple compensates for it, it is not condemnable. It is known as 'Ṛt Vrutti', that is, something earned legitimately. But if money is received without doing anything, then it is not legitimate. It is unethical to merely hold the position of a Guru without performing the duties expected of a Guru. In fact, money earned illegitimately binds us as a debtor. Besides 'Ṛt Vrutti', if the earning comes

from a disciple without asking for it (Ayācit Vṛtti), such earning is named 'Amrut', that is, it is no less than nectar.

(supra).

(h) **Guruṇā veśādinā mārgruciṃ parikśya jijnāsāṃ ca avagatya praśnānantaraṃ sevādhikaṃ upadeśṭavyaṃ iti.**

(TDN – Āvaraṇ Bhang : 2/255-256).

(h) It is the duty of the teacher to preach about sevā and other nuances of Pushtimarg only after thoroughly examining the general tendency of the incumbent, like, language, dress, conduct, inclinations, inquisitiveness etc.

(supra).

X. BHĀGWATKATHĀ

(a) tato Bhāgwataṃ Krutaṃ |

Etadabhyasanāt Loko Mucyate' nupajivanāt || 57 ||

Sādhanam Parametaddhi Śribhāgwatamādarāt |

Paṭhaniyam Prayatnena Nirhetukaṃ Adambhataḥ || 243 ||

Paṭhaniyam Prayatnena Sarvahetuvivarjitaṃ ||

Vruttyarthaṃ Naiva Yujjita Prāṇaiḥ Kaṅṭhagatairapi ||

Tadbhāve Yathaiva Syāt Tathā Nirvāhamācaret || 253-4 ||

(TDN – 2/67,243,254).

(a) then Vyasji created Bhāgwat Purāṇa, the study of which through listening, reminiscing, singing, can liberate the people. However, the condition is that it is not being used to earn livelihood. Bhāgwat is the best tool and hence one needs to exert to read it, without any mundane craving or hypocrisy. It has to be given utmost respect and read reverentially. Even if it is a matter of life and death, Bhāgwat should never be used to earn livelihood. Any other means, which is not illegitimate, may be adopted to earn a living.

(supra).

(b) **Jalārthameva Gartāstu Nicā Ganopajeevinaḥ ||**

(Jalabheda – 5).

Pancamaṃ bhāvam āhuh ‘Jalārthameva’ iti. Prakśālanochhiṣṭajalaprakśepārthameva ye gartāḥ tattulyāḥ ‘nicā Gānopajivinaḥ’ iti arthaḥ _____ tena uchiṣṭa – garta – jalavat teṣāṃ na sadbhiḥ grahyaḥ iti arthaḥ _ _ _ paurāṇikanirupaṇānantaraṃ punaḥ yad gāyakanirupaṇaṃ tad etādruśānāṃ paurāṇikānāṃ etadgāyaka – tulyatva – Jnāpanārthaṃ.

(Jalabheda Vivrutti by Śri kalyāṇaraya – 5).

(b) Used water which is collected in a pit is not reusable. Mahaprabhuji compares those pseudo-singers who chant and sing the praises of the Lord merely to earn money, with such maligned water. He also draws

comparison between these types of singers and those narrators who narrate the stories of Bhāgwat to earn money. He says that just as the water in the pit is useless, so also the emotions of these singers and narrators are of no use to anyone.

(supra).

XI THE DEITY AND TAKING PRASĀD

(SVASEVYA – SWAROOP – PRASĀD – GRAHAṆ)

(a) Aparanca dāne hi na svaviniyogaḥ natu nivedane anyathā niveditānnādeḥ bhojanaṃ na syād aniveditasya niṣidhatvāt. Niveditānāṃ arthānāṃ bhagwadbhogārthaṃ viniyoge jāte taddattprasādatvena svopabhogakrutiḥ ucitatarā dāsdharmatvāt.

(Navratnavivrutti – 1).

‘Aparanca’ ityādi dānaṃ nām svatva-parityāga purvakaḥ parasvatvotpādanānukulaḥ “Tubhyaṃ Aham Sampradade Na Mama” ityādi Śabdābhivyāgyo manovāpāraḥ tasmin krute sati ‘Hi’ niścayena ‘Na Svaviniyogaḥ’ dattāpahāradoṣotpādakavāt. Nivedanaṃ tu tadiyahānusandhānapurvakaḥ svatvābhimānatyāgānukulaḥ “Tubhyaṃ samarpayāmi-nivedayami” ityadiśabdābhivyāgyaḥ tadvilakṣaṇo manovāpāraḥ tasmin krute tu naḥ svaviniyogo doṣāya dattāpahārdoṣānutpādakavāt.

(Navratnavivrutti by Shri purushottamji – 1).

(a) Whatever is gifted or donated to the deity, the same cannot be utilized by us for any purpose. However, this does not apply to a thing that is dedicated to the deity by way of declaration (Nivedana). If this had been the case, then even food offered to the deity could not have been taken by us. Moreover, consumption of undeclared articles is also barred. Thus, if food article is offered to the deity, it is consumable by us as prasād. In fact, it is our duty to consume it as a part of fulfillment of a servant's duty.

(supra).

When anything is gifted to someone, it is with the determination that 'I am giving this to you, it is no longer mine'. Such an intention clearly indicates that it is a gift or a donation by virtue of which I forego my ownership and control over it and thereby the right of enjoyment and disposal as well. Obviously, use of such donated article by the donor is prohibited. If at all we try to do so, it is equivalent to snatching it back from the donee. On the other hand, declaring a thing as dedicated to the deity tantamount to shedding the ownership related ego, but not the actual ownership. Hence, consumption of dedicated article is not barred, as by doing so, nothing is being given away and nothing is snatched back.

(supra).

XII PILGRIMAGE (TIRTHPARYAṬAN)

Varṇāśrama – yuktānāmapi varṇāśramadharmaiḥ tirthāni

vikalpante iti āha –

Yagnāstirthāni c Punaḥ Samāni Hariṇā Krutāḥ |

Atasteṣvapratigrāhi Tadinānnādhikasya Hi ||

Hatatrapaḥ Paṭhannityaṃ Nāmāni Ca Krutāni Ca |

Ekāki Nispruhaḥ Śāntaḥ Paryaṭet Kriśnatatparaḥ ||

– – – – Tatra atanaprakāraṃ āha ‘atasteṣvapratigrāhi’ iti. Tirthapraveśadivase tu upavāsaḥ agrimadivase yadi annamātramapi nāsti tadā tāvanmātraṃ grahyaṃ na tu tato adhikaṃ – – – – uccaiḥ nāmasangakirtanaṃ tatra angaṃ antarbhagwatsmaraṇanca. Ekāki paryaṭet. Na atra “Naika Prapadyetādhvānaṃ” iti smrutidoṣaḥ pathi bhogādyarthaṃ na kartavyā śāntaśca cite bhavet – – – –

(TDN Prakāśa : 2/248-9).

Pilgrimage has been accepted as a valid alternative for those who are unable to do sevā by following the varṇāśram dharma. Sacrifice (yajna) and places of pilgrimage have equal status in the eyes of God. It is ordained that those who are on pilgrimage, should store food only for a day and not more. The pilgrim should continuously chant and meditate on

God and His Leelās. One should travel with utmost serenity warding off the temptations coming on the way.

Other do's and don'ts of pilgrimage are being described. Fast should be observed on the day one enters the holy place. He may store food at the most for the following day but not more. God's praises should be chanted in a reasonably loud voice and keep meditating on God from within the heart. Pilgrimage should be conducted without a company. This is not violative of the preaching "one should not conduct pilgrimage alone" as mentioned in Smriti. As mentioned earlier, the pilgrim should maintain tranquility and remain away from temptations.

(supra).

XIII DETERMINATION THROUGH PURPOSIVE TRANSLATION OF ĀCĀRYA'S STATEMENTS

(ĀCĀRYAVACANĀŚAYANIRDHĀRAṆAPRAKĀROPASAṂHĀR)

(a) **Tasmāchhrivallabhākhyā Tvaduditavacanādanyathā Rupayanti |**

Bhrāntā Ye Te Nisargatridaśariputayā Kevalāndhantamogāḥ ||

(Vallabhāṣṭak by Śriprabhucaraṇ - 3)

(a) Oh Śrivallabh ! All those who state contrary to what you have stated, are of devilish character who have gone astray and are destined only for the darkest of the hells.

(supra).

(b) **Tadāśrayo Na Vacanaiḥ Kintu Tanmārganiṣṭhayā |
Mārgniṣṭhā Na Svabodhaiḥ Kintu Tādrugguruditaiḥ ||
Guruditāni Vākyāni Na Swato Hyanuvādataḥ |
Anuvādo Na Swabuddhayā Kintu Moolakrmāgataḥ ||
Athāpi tatra Cāpekśyo Draḍhaḥ Svācāryasamśrayaḥ |**

(Śikṣāpatra : 9/26-28).

(b) Allegiance to Shri Mahaprabhuji should not be merely by words but devotion should be expressed by practicing his doctrines. Moreover, the devotion should be with proper understanding of his doctrines. Principles enunciated by Shri Mahaprabhuji should not be interpreted as is convenient to us, but by grasping the purport of what he has said. It should be a purposive translation which corroborates with the practices adopted originally. For all intents and purposes, our loyalty to Shri Mahaprabhuji should be without demur.

(supra).

(c) **Yo Vadantyanyathā Vākyam Ācāryavacanājjanaḥ |
Samsruti Prerako vāpi tatsango Duṣṭasangamaḥ ||
Yaśca Kriśṇe Ratiḥ Nityam Bodhayatyaprayojanām |
Nirapekśaḥ Sātvikaśca Tatsangaḥ Sādhusangamaḥ ||
Evaḥ Niścitya Sarveṣu Sviyeṣu Anyeṣum Vā Punaḥ |
Mahatkulaprasuteṣu Kartavyaḥ Sanganirṇayaḥ |**

Śrīmadācāryacarāṇe Matīḥ Sthāpyā Sadā Svataḥ |

Tataeva Svakiyānāṃ Siddhi Kāryasya Sarvathā

(Śikṣapartra : 3/8-11)

It is disastrous to keep company with those who talk contrary to that stated by Shri Mahaprabhuji. On the other hand, it is benevolent to keep company with those who are ever inclined towards enhancement of love for Krishna and are righteous and are able to maintain equanimity. This test is for everyone who wishes to associate with a Pushtimargi, a non-Pushtimargi or a Vallabh descendant. If they stand this test, then only Pushtimargis will be able to accomplish their tasks.

(supra).

|| SAKALĀNTARĀTMĀ ŚRĪ HARIḤ PRASANNO BHAVATU ||

PARIŚIṢṬAM – 1

(ŚARAṆĀGATISAMBANDHIVACANĀVALI)

(1)

(ĀŚRAYASWAROOPALAKŚAṆAM)

.....Āśrayo'to nirupyate ||

Aihike pārloke ca sarvathā śaraṇam Hariḥ ||

ANNEXURE – 1

(REFUGE RELATED AXIOMS)

(1)

(Characteristics of the form of Refuge)

.....Now the narration relating to refuge is being given. In this world and the world beyond, in every way Hari is our refuge.

(Sarvāsvapyavasthāsu Bhagwādāśrayasya Anuṣṭheyatvam)

Dukhahānau tathā pāpe bhaye kāmādyapuraṇe |

Bhaktadrohe bhaktyabhāve bhaktaiścātikrame krute |

Aśakye vā suśakye vā sarvathā śaraṇam Hariḥ ||

Ahamkār - krute caiva poṣya - poṣaṇa – rakṣaṇe |

Poṣyātikramaṇe caiva tathāntevāsyatikrame ||

Alaukika – manaḥsiddhau sarvathā śaraṇam Hariḥ ||

(Accept God's refuge under all circumstances)

In removal of suffering, or in sin, in fear, or in non-fulfilment of desire and other goals; in an offence against devotees, in absence of devotion, and in a transgression committed against one by the devotees; whether in easy or uneasy situations, in every way Hari is our refuge. In action born of selfishness, in the protection and nourishment of one's dependents, or when one is attacked by one's dependents, or likewise, by one's disciples, and finally, for the attainment of transcendent mind – in every way Hari is our refuge and such should be our constant contemplation.

(Bhagwadāśrayasiddhayai Kramikopāya – Catuṣṭayam)

Evam citte sadā bhāvayam vācā ca parikirtayet ||

Anyasya bhajanam Tatra Svatogamanameva ca |

Prārthanā Kāryamātre'pi tathā'nyatra vivarjayet ||

Aviśvāso na kartavyaḥ sarvathā bādhakastu saḥ |

Brahmāstracātakau bhāvayam prāptaṃ seveta nirmamaḥ ||

Yathākathancit Kāryāṇi kuryāduccavacānyapi |

Kimvā proktena bahunā śaraṇam bhāvayed Hariṃ Hariṃ ||

(Four ways to attain refuge of God)

This must constantly be pondered in our minds and uttered by lips. One must avoid worship of any other God and avoid even approaching another God of one's own accord. Prayers to any other God for any object, even a small one, be avoided. One must never have lack of trust, for that will create an obstacle to everything. Two examples should be kept in mind : the Brahma – weapon, and the chātaka bird. One should enjoy unselfishly whatever has been given. One should do whatever tasks are required to be done, may be lofty or humble. No use of multiplying words, let him consciously make Hari his refuge.

(Bhagwadāśrayavaśyaktopapattyantareṇopasamhāraḥ)

Evamāsryaṇam proktam sarveṣām sarvadā hitaṃ |

Kalau bhaktādimārgāhi duḥsādhyā iti me matiḥ ||

Thus has refuge been proclaimed as helpful always to everyone. For in this Kali – age, the path of devotion and the other paths are hard to follow. This is my teaching.

(Vivekadhairyāśraya : 9-17).

(2)

(Prapattimārgē Uttamādhikaraṇaḥ Śrotuḥ Swaroopam)

Ananyamanaso Martyā Uttamā Śravaṇādiṣu |

Deśa – Kāla – Dravya – Kartru – Mantra – Karma – Prakārataḥ ||

(The Form of best listener in the path of Refuge)

Those mortals whose minds are concerned with nothing else, whether of place, time, material object, agent, sacred utterance, or action, they are the best on the Path of “Hearing, and so forth.”

(Pancapadyāni – 5)

(3)

(Puṣṭiprapatti mārge tyājyagrāhyavivekviṣayiṇyāḥ ṣaḍvidhāyāḥ itikartavyatāyāḥ upadeśaḥ)

Anukulasya sankalpaḥ pratikulavisarjanam |

Kariṣyatiti viśwāso bhartrutve varaṇaṃ tathā |

Ātmanaivedya – kārpaṇye ṣadvidyā śaraṇāgatiḥ ||

(Preaching about six things to be discreetly imbibed and repelled)

The six things to be imbibed/repelled are :

- 1) Resolve things convenient in sevā and our emotions towards God.
- 2) Shed situations inconvenient in sevā.
- 3) Firm belief that God will do everything in our interest.
- 4) Acceptance of God as our Lord.
- 5) Self-declaration.

6) Humbleness under all circumstances.

(Pancāśloki : 4-5)

(4)

Prapattimārgamāha :

Jagannāthe Viṭṭhale ca Śrirange Venkante tathā |

Yatra pujāpravāhḥ syāt tatra tiṣṭhet tatparaḥ ||

Be eager to remain present in Pujā performed at Jagannath temple (Puri), Vitthalnāth temple at Pandharpur, Shrirangnath temple at Shrirangam and Venkatesh Balaji temple at Tirupati.

(TDN – 2/255)

**Prapattimārgaṃ iti. Bhagwānaiva mama aihike parloke ca
gatirahaṃ Bhagwaddāsa iti niścayena Bhagwatparatayā
Bhagwanmahāsthāne sthitiḥ prapattimarga ityārthaḥ. Tatra tiṣṭheta
iti mule. Tvaddāsohaṃ sarvārthe tvāmeva āśrita ityādi abhiprāyaṃ
prakaṭyan tiṣṭheta ityārthaḥ.**

God is my only goal, whether in this world or beyond. “I am the servant of God” should be resolutely determined and with this emotion in heart, be in great places of God. He is the entire purpose of my life as is mentioned in the moola Kārikā. Always keep on contemplating that ‘I am Your servant and that for all intents and purposes I am Yours only’.

(Commentary by Kalyanrayji, TDN : 2/225)

Prapatti ityādi. Atrāpi anadhikāre upāyāntaraṃ tadanukalpabhutaṃ āha ityārthaḥ “Sarvadharmān.....” ityatra “Eka’ padād anyāśrayaḥ sarvathā bādhaka iti bodhayitaṃ tatparapadasya tatparyaṃ āhuḥ Prapattau ityādi. Tatparaḥ tiṣṭhed ityerthaḥ. Sthānāntarsyāpi sagrahārtham āhuḥ Pujā ityādi. Etasyaiva śeṣau Vivekdhairyāśrayau Jyeau. Prapattiśca śaraṇāgatiḥ, āśraya iti yāvat. Tat prathamato mānasam, paścāt kāyikaṃ vācanikaṃ iti Akrurastutau uktaṃ Subodhinyāṃ tad upapāditaṃ śarḥagatiprakaṛaṇe iti ca. Tadeva Vivekdhairyāśraye vivekdhairyayoḥ nirupaṇena kāyikaṃ, Āśrayanirupaṇena Mānasam, vācanikaṃ ca uktam. Atrāpi Kāraṇaṃ Bhagwadanugrahaeva iti “S’ham Tvānghri” tyatra Akrurastutau pratipāditam.

Refuge etc -----

Here also, another way is suggested in case of ineligibility. “Sarvadharmān Parityajya Māmekam....” is a śloka in Bhagwad Gita (18/66). The word ‘ekam’ in ‘māmekam’ signifies that refuge of any God other than Krishna is a hindrance. Hence, the purport of the word ‘tatparaḥ’ is with reference to refuge only. Mention of staying at other places and of puja etc. is to emphasize that whatever you are, your eagerness should be to serve Krishna only. Wisdom and patience are part of refuge only as mentioned in the treatise ‘Vivekdhairyāśraya’. ‘Prapatti’ means refuge. The refuge has to be in totality, that is, through mind, body and speech. In this context the praises sung by Akrurji are referred to as mentioned in Subhodhini. Same thing is said in ‘Vivekdhairyāśraya’. Through wisdom and patience, bodily refuge is described, and through

refuge, mental and vocal refuge are narrated. The expression “So’ham Tvānghri” in the praise sung by Akurji signifies that the cause of everything is God’s grace only.

(TDN – Āvaraṅbhang : 2/255).

(5)

Idameva viniścitya Kṛṣṇo hyarjunamabravīt |

“Māmeva ye prapadyante māyāṃ etāṃ taranti te” ||

Evakāreṇa sarveṣāṃ anupāyatvaṃ āha hi |

Jnānādināṃ hi sarveṣāṃ tadadhinatvataḥ sadā |

Viśvāsaṃ sarvatasyaktvā kṛṣṇameva bhajed budhaḥ ||

Na duṣṭaḥ śrutapurvo vā bhajan kṛṣṇamanāmayāṃ |

Na muktaḥ sarvathā yasmād gopyo gāvastathā’bhavan ||

Āpātatastu sarveṣāṃ upāyatvaṃ mayoditaṃ |

Viṣṇoḥ Kṛpāviśiṣṭānāṃ tatlamaṃ nānyathā bhavet ||

Yanna yogena sānkhyena dānavratatapodhvaraiḥ |

Vyākhyāsvādhyāyasaṃnyāsaiḥ prāpnuyād yatnavānapi ||

Tasmāt tvaṃ uddhavotsrujya codanāṃ pracodanāṃ |

Pravruttiṃ ca nivruttiṃ ca śrotavyaṃ śrutameva ca ||

Māmekameva śaraṇaṃ ātmānaṃ sarvadehināṃ |

Yāhi sarvātmabhāvena yāsyase hyakutobhayaṃ ||

Ityekādaśasarvasvaṃ bhagwān svayaṃ uktavān |

Ātmānaṃ hi svayaṃ veda tasmād anyavaco mruṣā ||

In the same way Krishna conclusively determined and told Arjun, “whosoever takes my refuge, crosses over this Māyā”. Therefore, rest of the means are useless. Even knowledge is also subject to God. Not only knowledge, but karma, renunciation everything is subject to God and hence taking this refuge is the best way. Therefore, instead of trusting others, knowledgeable persons should worship Krishna only. There is yet to see or hear about a person who has worshipped Krishna and is not liberated, just as Gopis and cows experienced liberation. Without any reason I have shown the means, because there is no other reward (phal) for the person on whom there is the grace of Vishnu. I have shown the easiest way to achieve which is otherwise achievable by yoga, sāṅkhya, gift, penance, sacrifice (yajna) etc. or through narration, study or becoming a hermit. Therefore, oh Uddhava, you leave aside all preachings, do’s and don’ts and take my refuge which will make you fearless. Summarising everything, this has been mentioned by God Himself in the eleventh canto of Shrimad Bhāgwat to Uddhava as God only knows about Himself and hence the statements made by the rest should be ignored.

(TDN : 2/304 – 311).

(6)

**(Prapattau Dikṣitānām Vaiṣṇavācāraparipālanaparāṇām Krute
Saptavidhabhakteḥ Upadeśaḥ)**

Labdhvānugrahaṃ ācāryāt śrikrṣṇaśaraṇam janaḥ |

Dhārayet tilakaṃ mālāṃ vaiṣṇavācāratatparaḥ ||
Sarvasvaṃ harisātkāryaṃ tyajet sarvaṃ avaiṣṇavaṃ |
Himsra – kāmyā – ‘nyadevārcāṃ yadi nityaṃ ca laukikaṃ ||
Purvabhāṇḍādikam sarvam parityajya viśuddhitaḥ |
Śravaṇādi paro nityaṃ Hareḥ premāspado bhavet ||
Harerguṇānāṃ śravaṇaṃ jyayobhyaḥ śruṇuyāt sadā |
Jātaśikṣaḥ yaviyobhyaḥ kirtayed anyathaikalaḥ ||
Atisundararupāṇi leelādhāmāni samsmaret |
Pādasevā Hareḥ kāryā sarvasampanniketanaiḥ ||
Arcanaṃ pratyahaṃ tasya vidhinā niyamena ca |
Vandanaṃ caraṇāmbhoje tasya bhāvanayākhile ||
Dāsyāṃ tadekaśaraṇaṃ tatprasādaikabhojanaṃ |
Evam saptavidhā bhaktiḥ prapannādhikrutā bhavet ||

(Sādhandeepikā : 24 – 30)

One who has the inclination in Pushtibhaktimarg, should obtain primary initiation of name-chanting with the grace of a Vallabh descendant, wear Tulsi necklace round the neck and bear Tilak on his forehead. || 24 ||

Having turned Vaishnava, everything be dedicated to God, relinquish all the non-vaishnava practices, shun violence and sensuous pleasures. Leave worship of all Gods except Shri Krishna and avoid all Vedic and mundane actions which do not confirm with the path of Vaishnavism.

|| 25 ||

Once initiated into this path, use of previously used vessels, utensils is prohibited. New utensils and equipments be obtained. Cleanliness in all respects – dress, food etc. be maintained as per own class (varṇa) and status (āśrama). One should always remain eager in hearing and singing the praises of the Lord. || 26 ||

Always hear the praises of the Lord from elders and practice them constantly. Sing the praises in the company of other devotees. Sing the praises alone if such company is not available, but never keep company of bad people. || 27 ||

Along with hearing and singing praises of the Lord and His leelās, also meditate on His beautiful divine form and the places of His Leelās. Also serve his lotus-feet at home with the help of everyone and everything at home. || 28 ||

Serve the Lord everyday not in a mundane manner, but devotedly remembering His glory. Have the attitude of all-pervasive Godliness and bow down in His lotus-feet humbly remembering constantly that you are a part of Him. || 29 ||

It is the true sign of servitorship to have refuge of only Shri Krishna and to consume only the food which is offered to Him first. The sense of taking His refuge can thus be achieved by devotedly serving Him and worshipping Him in seven steps from hearing to becoming His servant.

||30||

(7)

Tatrādaḥ śaraṇam yātaḥ kiṃ kuryāditi cocyate |

Śrīmadācāryamārgiyaguruṇā śaraṇam gataḥ || 9 ||

Swāmitvena Hariṃ svam tu sevakatvena bhāvayet |

Laukikaṃ vaidikaṃ vāpi vidadhyād bhaktisiddhaye || 10 ||

Nānyamārgāśrayo naiva deśāntarasamāśrayaḥ |

Naiva tirthāśrayo naivābhimateḥ kartrutāśrayaḥ || 11 ||

Naiva mantrasamādhāro na ca karmādikāśrayaḥ |

Sarvadoṣanivruttyarthaṃ dharmatvena Harau Dṛṣi || 12 ||

Vivekāderabhāvena Danyenārthatvabhāvanam |

Svakāmapuraṇārthāya purṇanandatvavedanam || 13 ||

Na sādhanairbhavenmokśo Harireva tadātmakaḥ |

Tadiyatāyāḥ sampattā (?) muktatvenaiva cintanam || 14 ||

Ataeva nirākāṅkśā mokśataḥ kṛṣṇasevakāḥ |

Deśādisādhanam kṛṣṇa puruṣārthaścaturvidhaḥ || 15 ||

Evaṃ manasi satatam cintaniyam prayatnataḥ |

Prāyaścittādiṣu martina kāryā śaraṇam vrajet || 16 ||

Upasthiteṣu doṣeṣu sarveṣvatha viśeṣataḥ ||

Suśakyeṣvapyāśakyeṣu Harergatimatha smaret || 17 ||

Anyāśrayo naiva kāryo naivānyatra swato vrajet |

Prārthanā naiva kutrāpi kartavyā Bhagwatyapi || 18 ||

Aviśwāso na kartavyo brahmāstrasya nidarśanāt |

Laukike vaidike vāpi kārye sangam vivarjayet || 19 ||

Yathākathancit kartavye bhāravattatra bhāvanam |

Sarvatra mamatām tyaktvā sarvaṃ kāryaṃ prasādhayet || 20 ||

Lobhaṃ ca hṛdaye naiva kuryāt prāptaṃ hi sevayet |

Śaraṇasyāpi ye dharmāstatsidhau śaraṇaṃ vrajet || 21 ||

Vivekadhairyapi sadā śrikr̥ṣṇāśrayapoṣake |

Tadgranthebhyo'vagatyāpi prayatnād hṛdi bhāvayet || 22 ||

Evaṃ āśritadharmo'yam sankṣepeṇa nirupitaḥ |

Āśritya Vallabhācāryan buddhavaivaṃ kṛṣṇamāśrayet || 23 ||

(Śaraṇ Samarpaṇa Sevā Nirupaṇaṃ by Shri Harirayji 9 – 23)

What a refugee is expected to do having taken refuge through a teacher following the path propounded by Shri Mahaprabhuji. || 9 ||

Bear the attitude that Shri Hari is your Lord and that you are his servant. Vedic rites and mundane activities be avoided to achieve devotion. || 10 ||

Never to take refuge of any other path, nor of any other place, nor of a pilgrim centre, nor of a liking doership. || 11 ||

Not to depend on Mantras or sacrifices. Visualise in Shri Hari, the righteousness in order to shed all vices. || 12 ||

Better to live with utmost humility when there is lack of wisdom. To satisfy one's desires have the attitude of absolute joy. || 13 ||

Liberation is not achieved through instruments because they are different forms of Shri Hari only. Therefore, always meditate on Him with belongingness and with the sense of liberation || 14 ||

Accordingly, the servants of Shri Krishna never aspire for liberation. Place, time, substance etc. are mere instruments and Shri Krishna Himself represents the four goals. || 15 ||

Such meditation should be constant and instead of engaging the intellect in acts of repentance, always feel the refuge of God. || 16 ||

Always seek refuge of Shri Krishna in all situations, whether impossible or easy, also when one encounters any sort of fault. || 17 ||

Avoid refuge of any God other than Shri Krishna and refrain from volunteering to go elsewhere. Even prayers to God are not recommended. || 18 ||

Never have any doubt or skepticism and bear in mind the illustration of Brahmāstra. Do not indulge in mundane or Vedic activities. || 19 ||

Obligatory tasks should be accomplished at any cost and complete them without being attached to them. || 20 ||

Do not have any greed and savour the things that are available. To fulfill the duties as a refugee remain in the refuge of God. || 21 ||

Wisdom and patience also provide nourishment to the sense of having taken refuge. Hence, it is necessary to understand these traits from the respective treatises and try to imbibe them. || 22 ||

In this manner, the characteristics of 'Refuge' are narrated in brief. Take the refuge of Shri Krishna through the refuge of Shri Vallabhacharya. || 23 ||

(Śaraṇ, Samarpaṇ, Sevā Nirupaṇam by Shri Harirayji : 9 – 23).

AMRUTVACANĀVALI

(1) The bowl which was mortgaged to obtain food items was yours and hence the food so obtained was yours only. One who consumes from the property belonging to Shri Thakorji is not my Sevak as my Sevak will never eat from things belonging to God (Deva Dravya). Since I had no right over that food, some I offered to the cows and some was immersed in Shri Yamunaji. The Vaishnavas present there were stunned listening to this.

(Mahaprabhu Shrivallabhacharya : Gharuvārtā – 3)

(2) if the methods of worship like singing, listening, ruminating employed to fulfil one's desires meet the approval of scriptures, then such consecration is Karma Margiya. But if these worship methods are employed to earn livelihood, then, like agriculture it is a mundane activity. It is as sinful as using holy Ganga water to wash the excreta after visiting the toilet.

(Shrivitthalnath Prabhucharan : Bhaktihans)

(3) Our deity should be worshipped by us only. Finance permitting, we should be eager to rejoice on festive occasions with the deity by decorating it with beautiful apparel and ornaments and offer various delicacies.

(4) Santdas Chopda was a sevak of Shri Mahaprabhuji and a rich person too. However, over a period of time, fortunes changed and he was hand to mouth. Only 24 per cent capital was left earmarked to the deity. He used to earn one paisa daily by selling cowries. From this one paisa

he used to buy chickpeas and offer it to God. Then Santdas used to have these chickpeas as prasad which was his meal for the day. Once he received a Hundi for one hundred Mohors which he redirected to Shri Gusainji. While sending the Hundi, Narandas's instruction was to give one paisa to the messenger who carried the hundi. Following this instruction, on that day he was left with no money and hence could not offer Rajbhog to the deity. Consequentially, Santdas too remained hungry. In this manner, Santdas exhibited Vivek, Dhairya and Āśraya (i.e. wisdom, patience and refuge). Wisdom was to send the hundi to Shri Gusainji, patience was that he refrained from consuming food out of money earmarked to the deity and refuge was that instead of getting agitated, he experienced complete bliss.

(Shri Harirayji Dwitiyesh in Bhavaprakash – story no. 76 from stories of
84 Vaishnavas)

(5) If we remunerate someone to do sevā on our behalf, it will inflate our ego and the mind will never be, forget with, even nearer to God. Conversely, if we take money from someone to do sevā on his behalf, the situation is like a priest presiding over a ritual. In a ritual, the reward of the ceremony does not accrue to the priest but to the host, that is, on whose behalf the ceremony is conducted. (As in present times Vaishnavas get their bhents and desires registered in Havelis for offerings or special purpose and pay for it). It is alright to do so in Karma Marg (i.e., rituals and ceremonies) as the same is sanctioned by the scriptures. But Bhaktimarg does not permit it. Bhakti by a person is his personal devotion towards God with myriad emotions. How can someone else transmit our emotions to God? Hence, in Bhaktimarg, it is incumbent to do sevā at home only

with our own effort and financial resources with the help of family members.

(Suratasth 3/2 Gruhādhipati Śripuruṣottamji : Siddh.Mukt.Vivrutti
Prakāśa – 2)

(6) **“Atra guruhasthāna – vidhānena, swagruhādhiṣṭhit – Swaroopa – Bhajan – parityāgena Anyatra Tatkarāṇe Bhaktiḥ na Bhavati, Iti Sucitaṃ Bhavati.”**

Here, only home is declared to be the proper place for sevā. Therefore, if we leave the deity co-dwelling with us and instead go for worship elsewhere, certainly it is not bhakti.

(Shri Vallabhātmaj – Shri Balkrishnaji : Bhaktivardhini Vya. 2)

(7) The affection of Vallabh dynasty towards its deity is such that if on one side there is a heap of money, and on the other side is the deity, they will not look at money but will affectionately opt for Śri Thakorji. However, in this Kali-age, people love money more than anything else. Hence, they will turn a blind eye towards Śri Thakorji and will be easily tempted towards artificial grandeur.

(32 Vacanāmruṭs of Śri Mattuji Maharaj : 5)

(8) It causes agitation in person who engages in worship to fulfil mundane desires, Hence, he is a hypocrite ad a sinner who does sevā only with the motive of obtaining gifts and donations (Bhent – Sāmagri).

(Shri Nrusinhlalji Maharaj : Siddh.Mukt.Tikā : 16-17)

(9) My blessings to Udaipur Darbar. It is hereby notified that I have appointed a committee to advise me on the financial and ownership aspects of movable and immovable properties. Sevā of the deity will be carried out as per traditional and present practice. If the committee is desirous of carrying out reforms, the same shall be accepted, provided it does not violate the traditional practice. No part of any property belonging to Shrishakurji shall be used for my personal consumption or enjoyment as is the present practice and such practice will always be continued. My ownership rights will continue as they have been devolving since generations and the entries to that effect will continue to be made in the books of account.

(Declaration by Goswamitilakayit Shrigovardhanlalji Maharaj dated
Bhādra – Shukla 5, Samvat 1989, that is dated 5-9-1932).

(10) Expenses of Thakorji are met by the Maharaj as his own household expenses out of the income received from Vaishnavas. No property, movable or immovable, is set apart to meet the expenses of Thakorji. All the expenses of Thakorji, namely, towards His splendor, bhog, apparel, ornaments etc. are incurred by Maharaj himself. These expenses are a charge on his income. No offering is made to Thakorji in front of Him, it goes directly to the temple treasury. Maharaj cannot make use of it.

(Testimony of the authorised representative of Late Shri Vāgishlalji of
Amreli).

(11) Our ancestors have devotedly preached the true form of our religion including the principles of pure non-dualism (Śuddhādwait) and relevant Vaishnavism. These preachings have been considerably diluted in

medieval times primarily due to excessive desire of acquisitions. As a result, sevā done by most people have turned dry and ritualistic.

(Late Shridevakinandanacharyaji – Panchamesh : ‘Ashray’ April 1987).

(12) Our main principle is to relinquish what is not dedicated to God. The best offering is the food cooked at home and then consume it as Mahāprasād.Intellect (buddhi) will not be conducive unless the non-dedicated is relinquished. Internal feelings become expressive only when intellect is pure. today we are unable to distinguish between a real diamond (the deity dwelling in our house and a fake one), (as in Havelis and temples?) and are running after the latter. The deity in our house is the real diamond bestowed upon us by Mahaprabhuji.

Krishna says in Gita ----

**“Divyam dadāmi te Cakśuḥ Paśya Me Yogamaiśwaram”
(B.G.11/8).**

That is - “I vouchsafe to you the divine eye. With this you behold My divine power of Yoga”. We need divinity to know God. Divinity alone is the strength of our conscience..... Hence, I exhort you to fix a daily routine to gather such strength. Chant Śoḍaśagranth daily.....

(Late Goswami Shrigiridharlalji Maharaj, Indore-Nathdwara (Second Peeth) : Śrimadvallabh and Śriharirayji Jeevandarśan, part-2, 7th Vacanāmṛut, page 124).

(13) Advocate : In a Pushtimargiya temple if Vaishnavas give money (bhent) for offering Bhog to Shritihakurji thereby doing Vittajā sevā (financial service) and if someone else does Tanujā sevā (physical

service) in that temple, then it is not a Pushtimargiya temple?
H.H.Maharjshri : In Pushtimargiya worship tradition, financial service and physical service are not independent of each other and if it is done so in any temple, then it is not a Pushtimargiya temple.

(Testimony in Nadiad Judicial matter by Late Goswami Shrivrajratnalalji Maharaj of Surat 3/2 Gruhādhiśa).

(14) Monetary gifts placed before the Lord, (Sanmukhbhent) belongs exclusively to the Lord (Devadravya) and the same is not used to make food items for the Lord. This rule is still being followed in the houses of Shrigokulnathji and Shrichandramaji. Whatever gift is offered there, it is taken away by the Kirtan singer. He is the priest for conducting rituals for Vallabhkul and Yamunaji. His is not an example to be followed. Whatever gift is placed before the Lord, it is placed at His feet. The same is utilised for His apparel ornaments etc. but not for making food for Him. Many unethical things are happening with regard to the gifts placed in front of the Lord. Nothing can be asked for nor given in the name of Shrithakorji. It is Devadravya (God's property) and his intellect is bound to get flawed who takes it.

(Late Shriranchhodlalji, Rajnagar, Vacanāmrut – 484-87).

(15) (a) Thanks to this auspicious day that the Vaishnavas have the supreme matter (in the form of the deity). In this age of dreadful times and disparate circumstances, the welfare of a Jeeva, whether in this world or beyond, lies in remaining steadfast on the principles of Śrīmatprabhucaraṇ. We have to remain firm on the principle that our refuge is only Krishna and no other God or Demigod. Due to the splendour

of Havelis, Vaishnavas had forgotten about sevā and worship at home. When the darśanas in Havelis close down today, the houses of Vaishnavas will cheer up with the service to the Lord. It is not a small gain, both for the sect as well as for the followers of the sect. Ways of Almighty are unfathomable. I have utmost faith that this crucial test will ultimately benefit us all.

(15) (b) I initiate my followers in two ways. Firstly, to tie a 'Kanṭhi' (sort of a string of beads worn around the neck as a symbol of having been initiated as disciple), and the second way through Brahmsambandh. Kanṭhi is provided to ordinary Vaishnavas only. Brahmsambandh is given to those followers who devotedly desire to pursue the sevā format of worship. The first type is known as Śaraṇ-dikśā (initiation only as a refuge) and the second is known as Ātma-Nivedan (self-dedication). In Śaraṇ-dikśā, Vaishnava is eligible only to recant the name of God. On the other hand, one who has taken Brahmsambandh, he acquires eligibility to do sevā at home. We serve the deity with the sensibility of Nandālaya. That is why the residences of all seven sons are known as 'house' (Ghar) only and ours is the 'third house' in which lies our macrocosm.

(15) (c) In the principles propounded by Mahaprabhuji, prime importance was given to our relationship with our Lord and how we serve Him. Later, it appears that we have moved away from the principle. It is evident that the followers of Shri Mahaprabhuji and Shri Gusainji have been of a variegated nature. It is not at all the principle that only some exceptional or distinctive person can do sevā, or that sevā can be done only in specific situations. There is no mention to that effect anywhere.

Varied characters were doing sevā, like one residing in crematorium, prostitute, learned Brāhmins and so on. It appears to me that today we have forgotten to test the attitudinal part of the devotee. Instead, we conveniently take shelter of 'Bhāva' to avoid personal discomforts. I believe that principles be followed in letter and spirit while judging the attitude of a devotee.

(Late Shrivrajbhushanlalji Maharaj Ṭṛṭiyeśa : (15) (a) : Sermon presented on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Śrīmatprabhucaraṇ in the meeting of the Vaishnavas of Mumbai on 24-12-1948 – 'vaiśvānar, vol. 31,1948. (15) (b) : Testimony of Murtiba Support Committee, Temple department, Udaipur and Kota Division before the Commission at Kānkroli. File no.1-4-64. Shridwarkadhish temple dt.7-11-1965. (15) (c) : Shrimadvallabh and Shriharirayji Jeevandarshan, part 2, 20th Vacanāmrut, pages 146,149).

(16) Today, let me pour out my heart. My heart bleeds on seeing that accumulation of wealth is the only activity carried out in temples and which is the root of all maladies. The existence of such temples is meaningless. Sevā and worship in our case is not a collective activity but individualistic in nature. Undoubtedly, it is not bound by spacio-temporal limitations but at the same time not exoteric also. **“Karata Kṛpā Nija Daivi Jeevanpar”** – that is, “shower Your blessings on the divinity within myself.” Here the use of word “Nija’ (self or own) qualifies “divinity”, meaning, a divine jeeva can be anywhere but not in public gaze. We have lost the right to utter the word “Pushti”. Our life today is not different from the Cārvāks. Do we really wish to continue with the same state of affairs as it exists in the sect today? If we faithfully desire that the sect should continue with all its original contents, then let a deity be consecrated in each household and be served

by the respective family. Emphasis should be on constant reminiscence of God's name. Bhakti is attainable only by sevā and worship at home. Temples of the day do not serve any purpose as they are driven by pecuniary gains only which in turn nurtures perversion.

(Late Goswami Shrikrishnajeewanji Maharaj – Mumbai – Madras :
Vallabh Vigyan, Sam.5-6,1965).

(17) (a) We hardly follow the commandments of Shrivallabhacharyaji. Sevā at home is conspicuous by its absence. There is no benefit from mere darśana in temples. Mahaprabhuji says, “**Krishnasevā Sadā Kāryā**”, that is “Sevā of Lord Krishna be done regularly”. If at all Mahaprabhuji had thought that temple is the mainstay, he would have established scores of temples during his three circumambulations around the country. Shri Gusainji had cautioned Shrigirdharji on this very aspect when the latter desired a festive celebration. Shri Gusainji dreaded the departure of Shrithakurji from home when temple was being established. I stand by what my father said earlier (sr.no.15 above). Consecrate a deity at home and serve Him.

(17) (b) Trust, as an entity, does not stand the test of Pushtimargiya system of worship. Shri Mahaprabhuji commands to every initiate that “Gruhe Sthitvā Swadharmataḥ”, that is, “remain a householder and follow one's rule of life” (Bhaktivardhini – 2). In other words, do sevā and worship at home only. Goswami descendants of Vallabh dynasty, being Ācāryas, are Vaishnavas also. Hence, it is obligatory for them also to obey the above command of Shri Mahaprabhuji. I am of the firm belief that as per the principles propounded by Shri Mahaprabhuji, Vaishnavas should

serve the Lord at home and read the scriptures. They should refrain from going to temples because Trust as an entity does not fit into our system of things, albeit, they violate the principles of our system.

(Late Goswami Shrivrajādhishji Maharaj, founder of Shrigovardhannath Haveli Trust, Dahisar : 17 (a) : 'Vallabhvignān' vol.5-6, year 1965, 17 (b) 'Navprakash', vol-8, year 8)

18 (a) When we convert our home temple into a public trust, Thakorji's relation with Goswami is severed, entire property is gifted to Thakorji and it becomes a religious endowment. In that case all offerings including that of food to Thakorji is met from that property which belongs to Him. If the same is consumed by a devotee, he is a grave sinner destined to be doomed. When Shri Mahaprabhuji offered food to the deity from money borrowed by pledging a gold bowl belonging to Thakorji, instead of consuming it himself as a prasād, it was given to the cows. This in essence, is the sectarian principle. It is in the interest of Vallabh descendants and Vaishnavas alike, the system which instigates the Ācāryas to commit this sin, is demolished at the earliest.

(18) (b) Service to the Lord is the soul of the sect. Regimen to be followed should be conducive to doing sevā. The substantive duty of doing sevā should not get diluted on the ground of obstinately following a regimen. Come what may, sevā has to be done. Do not transfer your deity to the house of your Guru. If we consume anything that belongs to Thakorji, it is a grave offence. We should inspire people to study the scriptures.

(Late Shri Dikshitji Maharaj, Mumbai-Kishangarh : 18 (a) : Page 7 of the article “Ācāryochhedak Trust Prathāse Pujāripanki Sthāpnā Ghor Siddhānthāni Evam Ghorswaroopacyuti; 18 (b): ‘Shrivallabhvignān, vol.5-6)

(19) (a) Shri Mahaprabhuji advises not to serve the deity with a sense of selfishness and treating it as a mundane activity. Similarly, in his treatise ‘Nibandh’, he also advises against doing Nāmsevā (remembering and chanting names of God) to earn money. Such activity is a sin equivalent to violating the scriptures. He equates it to washing the anus of its feces with the water of holy Ganga.

(19) (b) Our mind gets wholly occupied with God only if He is served with our own money and effort. That is why Shri Mahaprabhuji talks of “Tattsiddhayai Tanuvittajā”. To attain mental and intellectual oneness with God, “Tanuvittajā (money and effort) is a must. When money and effort both are employed on a single thing, then our mind remains all the time on that thing only. A broker makes only physical effort to carry on his brokerage business. His finance is not employed. Hence, he remains unconcerned with the fluctuations in market prices. Again, a child’s father pays tuition fees only and hopes the child to pass out. All the three persons in these instances will remain unrewarded (without Phal) as money and effort both are not employed together. Now let us consider an illustration where money and effort both are employed. A shopkeeper employs his capital in buying a shop and goods for sale. Whole day he toils in the shop selling goods and constantly thinking how to increase business, thereby being mentally awake and aware all the time for business. That is why

employment of money and effort has been shown as a psychological process in Pushtimarg to achieve total attachment to God.

(Late Shrigovindrayji Maharaj, Porbandar : (19) (a) : Sudhādhārā : 114-19; (19) (b) Sudhābindu : 73)

(20) As per the Vallabh doctrine, fundamentally it is wrong to consume prasād of those temples where the offering is made from the funds belonging to the deity. A trust should be constituted to hold the property only where it is absolutely necessary but with the rider that the above-mentioned principle is not violated. If this caution is not exercised, the sinner is surely destined to doom. This is the clear opinion of Shri Mahaprabhuji.

(Late Shriranchhodacharyaji Prathamesh : “Hamāri Dhārmik Sthitikā Vartamān Swaroop Evam Bhaviṣyaki Vyavasthāke Hetu Pratedan”).

(21) Śrinathji is the beneficiary of the offering made to Him out of the funds belonging to Him. Vaishnavas and Sevaks have no authority to take it as a mahāprasād. This is directly evident from the narratives of the past pertaining to Shri Mahaprabhuji. Only cows are eligible to consume it. Otherwise, one who consumes from the funds belonging to the deity, is bound to fall from grace. It is also contrary to the principles to collect donations and offerings. As per the system in our sect, only that money can be used in sevā which is offered by sevak symbolising teacher – disciple relationship. Any and every type of donation/offering cannot be utilised in sevā. Wherever it is so done, it should stop immediately being contrary to the doctrines of the sect.

(Goswami Shrishanshyamlalji – Saptamesh : Criticism dt.1-2-1956 on
the arrangements at Śrināthji).

(22) (a) Question : What is 'Devadravya' ?

Any material, substance, money or thing which is dedicated to God with the intention to be meant for Him is called 'Devadravya'. Similarly, anything meant for guru and dedicated to him is called 'Gurudravya'. Prasād received from God is called Mahāprasād. In temples, whatever is offered to the deity in front of Him, and whatever is received in Trust office is clearly 'Devadravya'. Food items prepared from such money and offered to God, does assume the character of Mahāprasād, but at the same time, it bears the character of 'Devadravya'. Accordingly, such Mahāprasād has to be treated as 'Devadravya' by the Vaishnavas. Indeed, it is baneful to consume such Mahāprasād which is also 'Devadravya'.

(22) (b) With regard to change in temple's location, it is said by Goswami Pujya 108 Shribalkrishnalalji that in Pushtimarg, the tradition of public temples does not exist. The form of the deity (swaroop) is confined to an individual and hence service to It is not similar to that in a public temple. The construction of temple is also like a house without a temple-like dome. Vaishnavas worship at home and it is known as a temple.

(Late Shri Balkrishnalalji Mahodaya, Surat co-author of the Treatise 'Sevā-Devadravya – Vimarśa – (22) (a) : Vaishanava Vārtā, year 3, March,1983. (22) (b) : Gujarat Samachar dt.25-5-93).

(23) Serving the Lord after obtaining Brahmsambandh involves engaging all the senses in the worship. A temple or Guru-ghar (the house of a teacher) is meant only to acquire learnings and preachings. Sevā has to be done at home only.

(Goswami Shrimathureshji, Founder, Shrigovardhannathji temple, Houston, Texas, U.S.A.: Vallabh Vijnān, vol.5-6, year 1965)

(24) Question : In our sect, why a temple is referred to as Haveli and not as a temple?

Answer : Normally, in other sects of Hindu religion, the word 'temple' is used to refer to a place of worship (Devālaya). But such a temple has no place in Pushtimarg. This is so because the deity which is bestowed on us is to be served as per our personal attitude and emotion. To serve the Lord is the prime duty of a Pushtimargi follower. In Pushtimarg, service to the Lord is not Public in nature but it is individualistic. In the mundane world just as a husband bears a duty towards his wife or a parent towards child, so is the duty of a Vaishnava towards the deity conferred on him. Service to the Lord is not a public activity. It is directly connected with an individual's life and hence it is carried out in individual houses privately. The Śrināthji temple is referred to as a temple merely because of its acceptance as such over a period of time. As a matter of fact, it does not bear the character of a temple where public worship is carried out.

(Shrivallabhrayji, Surat, co-author of the Treatise 'Sevā-Dravya-Vimarśa'
– Pushti, Śita.Chhānya – P.157-158)

(25) Shri Mahaprabhuji never envisaged setting up of temples. It was the foresightedness of Jagadguru Shrivallabhacharyaji that each home becomes a Nandālaya (the residence of Nand). A lady used to reside beside a temple from where the ringing bells could be heard distinctly. Once, when she was in service of her Thakorji giving Him bath, suddenly she heard the adjoining temple bell ringing. She left her Thakorji midway through the bath and rushed to the temple only to return after some time. Can one really relish such a service to one's Lord? Each Vaishanava house is Nandālaya.

(Shri Indirabetiji : Vaishnava Parivar. June,1990).

(26) “It is complimentary that you took so much effort to explain the principles of the sect in the court” - “Our utmost cooperation will be there and all my sons also will cooperate with all their might.”

(Highly principled Late Shrivrajbhushanlalji Maharaj, father of Chi.Harirayji, Jamnagar : Excerpts from letters dated 26-10-86 and 7-11-86 sent to Goswami Shrishyam Manohar).

(27) Go.Shriharirayji : Listen carefully, **”Tatra Ayaṃ Arthaḥ Lābhapujārthayatnasya Upadharmatva – Devalakatvādi”**, **“sampādakatvāt”**. One who serves the Lord for pecuniary gains, it amounts to dereliction of duty and a sin committed towards God. Go.Shrishyammanoharji : So keep in mind, the deity which is consecrated, is served for gains or considered for Pujā, a person doing such act is a sinner of God.

Go. Shriharirayji :And it is dereliction of duty which is prohibited.

Go. Shrishyammanoharji : In such a situation, if a teacher demands anything for his Thakorji from his disciple, it cannot be used in sevā, as it is prohibited by scriptures and because it is “Devadravya”.

Go. Shriharirayji : Yes, this is absolutely clear, clear from ‘**Svavrutivād**’ also.

(Go. Shriharirayji, Jamnagar : Conference on Pushti Principles. Detailed discussion – pages 164,193).

(28) By organising this programme, your sole aim is to remove confusions and there is no other purpose. Finally, I would like to state that principles are followed more in breach rather than in compliance thereof. I travel a lot. Once I had been to a town in Gujarat. The town has two Pushtimargiya temples having common wall. One temple is of Balkrishnaji and the other of Chandramaji. Yesterday, you rightly mentioned “**Lokārthiced Bhajet Kṛṣṇam Kliṣṭo Bhavati**” – “Agitation is caused where Krishna is worshipped in a mundane manner.” As a result, it so happens that at the time of Mangla Darshana, the Vaishnavas of one temple will bring the prasād to the other temple and vice versa. There is an atmosphere of envy, competition, vulgar exhibitionism – what else can be more ignoble than this! Hence, it is apt to have organised such a conference to overcome such situations. Principles are violated more in Gujarat. In Bhāgwatji also it is mentioned, “Gurjare Jirṇatam Gataḥ”, that is, “Bhakti is ruined more in Gujarat.” It is a herd psychology. I am willing to cooperate in all efforts to create an awakening about the principles of Shri Mahaprabhuji.

(Goswami Shridrumilkumarji Mahodaya : In the conference on Pushti Principles dt.10-13 January,1992,Vile Parle, Mumbai. Detailed discussion on pages 317-318).

(29) In Pushtimarg, worship is kept to oneself only. It is not meant for showing off. It is a path to build resolute intimate relationship between the devotee and God. This relationship should not be known to a third person, and after all, what is the need also to make it known? is it to gain fame or to show one's greatness? All these are distractions from true devotion.

(Goswami Shridwarkeshlaji Mahodaya – Shrivallabhacharya Prākāṭya Peeth, Amreli – Kandivali – Campāraṇ - Surat : 'Pushtinavneet p.12).

(30) (a) Question : Several principles are being discussed in the ongoing disputes. Some of them are like, new temples not to be opened, no trust to be created to run the temples, no money to be taken in the name of Thakurji, darshana of Thakurji not to be open to all and Brahmsambandh to be given only after due consideration. What is your opinion in all these matters?

Answer : So far as temples are concerned, it is a fact that Pushtimargiya temple is only one. Rest all the deities are at home only. Whatever temples are there today, or other places of worship which we consider as temples, we can call them Maryādāmārgi temples (the path of limitation) but not pushtimargi. Pushti worship is synonymous to 'worship at home only'.

(30) (b) Right from the time of Shri Mahaprabhuji, till 150 years ago, the concept of temples was never there. It was vehemently insisted that each Vaishanava should worship at home only. A Vaishnava was expected to consecrate a deity in his house and worship as per the guru's tradition.

(Goswami Shrivrajeshkumarji Trutiyesh – (30) (a) 'Ācāryaśrivallabh' August 1994, no.5, Pushtimarg vartmān, Q & A, 4, pg.7; 30 (b) : 'Braj Mohe Bisrat Nāhin, pg.140-41).

(31) it is the command of Shri Mahaprabhuji that our rambling mind should be concentrated in the service of the Lord with our own efforts and resources. 'Tanuvittajā' sevā means service by spending money earned by self and with own bodily effort.

(Goswami Shrivagishkumarji – 'vallabhiya Chetna', October 15,2003, Pg.4).

(32) Devotion reaches its pinnacle when consciously and conscientiously we become one with God. It is called 'Mānasi Sevā'. Our own corpus should be employed in service of the Lord. It cleanses the body of all its impurities, guilt, noxiousness and whatever is unseemly. It destroys the 'I' – ness in us. Sevā done through money is Vittajā sevā. It destroys the 'mine' – ness within us. The 'I' – ness and 'mine' – ness are connected with each other and hence Tanujā sevā and Vittajā sevā have to be done together. Important aspect is the involvement of our own body, mere giving away money is no sevā and serves no purpose. It generates 'Rājasi' tendencies (attraction).

(Goswami Shri Dwarkeshlalji Mahodaya, Shashthesh, Vadodara – ‘Shrimad Bhagwadgita Pushti Darshan, Pg.125).

(33) That time has come again. In fact, the time that has come now is worse than the earlier one. Earlier, people belonging to other sects used to create doubt and confusion. But today, the ‘gentlemen’ of our own sect are twisting the meanings and purport of the principles propounded by Shri Mahaprabhuji. They are misguiding others away from the path thereby causing grave injustice to Divine Souls (Daivi Jeevas). Therefore, recently the young descendants of Shri Mahaprabhuji established a ‘Dialogue Forum’ and organised a four-day conference in Mumbai to discuss Pushti principles. Thirty-five Ācāryas attended the conference. Twenty-eight of them accorded their approval to the free translation of Siddhāntavacanāvali done by Goswami Shri Shyam Manoharji without causing violence to the letter and spirit of the principles. Some of the Ācāryas disagreed to the translation and some preferred to remain silent. Goswami Shri Harirayji Vrajbhushanlalji Maharajshri, Jamnagar, was one of the dissenters. Discussion between him and Goswami Shri Shyam Manoharji did take place but remained inconclusive due to paucity of time. Nonetheless, later, clarifications regarding some vexatious issues have been received which is no mean achievement. Not only that, but by agreeing with Goswami Shri Shyam Manoharji on following issues, Goswami Shri Harirayji has rendered invaluable service to the sect :

(1) The deity throned in the house is Purnapurushottam only, irrespective of the fact whether it is of the Guru or of the disciple (Vaishnava). Neither is lesser than the other in any manner.

(2) As per Pushtimargiya principles, the place of Krishnasevā is one's house only and not a public place.

(3) The worship-tradition in Pushtimarg should not become the means to earn money.

(4) Since sevā done to earn money is strictly prohibited, person doing such sevā is disqualified to do sevā.

(5) It is against scriptural sanctions to ask for gift-donations for Thakorji. Not only that, such an act creates indebtedness for future births.

(6) As per Pushti principles, things, which are declared as dedicated to Thakorji can be offered and only those things can be taken as prasād. Gifts or donations received for Thakorji cannot be taken as prasād as it amounts to taking back the gift and is a grave sin.

(7) Sevā is a subject-matter of scriptures. Hence, anything concerning sevā can be determined only through scriptures - works of Shri Mahaprabhuji, and not by any other means.

(Joint Declaration, Ahmedabad, Falgun Sud 7, Vallabhābda 514, dated 11th March, 1992).

Signed:

Late Go.Shrivrajayji Maharaj

Go. Shri Vrajendrakumarji Maharaj (Ahmedabad)

Go. Shri Devakinandanācāryaji, Caturtheśa (Gokul-Ahmedabad)

Go. Shri Vrajeshkumarji Maharaj (Kadi- Ahmedabad)

Go. Shri Rajeshkumarji Maharaj (Kadi- Ahmedabad)

Go. Shri Vallabhlalji Maharaj (Kadi-Ahmedabad)

Go. Shri Jayadevlalji Maharaj

Go. Shri Mathureshji Maharaj

Go. Shri Kanhaiyalalji Maharaj

Go. Shri Harirayji Maharaj (Kāmā – Viramgām – Ahmedabad)

(34) If sevā is done physically and financially by one person only, then only Mānasi Sevā (that is, when mind is totally engaged in remembering God) will be achieved. Ego and attachment will not be removed when Tanujā sevā and Vittajā sevā are done separately by two different persons. How? For those who do sevā at home, question does not arise. But when someone gets cash gift registered in a temple, he is said to have done Vittajā sevā for which he will take the receipt. The gift is given for a specific part of sevā (Manorath) and he will say “I have got the sevā registered”. He cannot claim to have “done” sevā. In that case, how can ego disappear? Then, to the accountant he will say ‘this is my receipt, please give me my prasād’. This will further bind the person in his ego and attachment. Such a sevā cannot take you out from the mundane world (samsār), but will drag you more into it. Ego will be inflated if only

Vittajā sevā is done. How can Mānasi Sevā be achieved when you are still bound by ego and attachment? Because the root cause of all bondage is ego and attachment.

(Goswami Shridwarkeshlalji, Kāmvan-Surat, lecture on Siddhāntamuktāvali, Bharuch, January, 2005).

(35) “Ame ṭo rājnā Khāsā khavās mukti man na āve” – “We are the servants of the ruler, never thinking of liberation”. We who serve the ruler of Vraj, never hanker for liberation. However, Vaishnavas organise Bhāgwat discourse to put their ancestors on the path of liberation. It is indeed astonishing ! Our ancestors traverse to Goloka, then wither liberation ! On completion of Bhāgwat discourse, Goswamis are felicitated with cash gifts yearning to send the ancestors to Golokdhām. How weird? Do we want to make our ancestors run from pillar to post? We do not have a fix goal. We have never cared to read, study and imbibe the scholastic writings of Shri Mahaprabhuji and hence these consequences which even our ancestors have to face.

(Goswami Shripuroshottamlalji, Junagadh – lecture on Yamunashtakam, Rajkot, 2006).

(36) So far as the true spirit and purport of principles are concerned, we, the religious leaders (Dharmācāryas) jointly promulgate this declaration. The declaration is based on the scholastic and unquestionable teachings, preachings and statements of Shri Mahaprabhuji and subsequent scholars. It is hereby stated in clear terms that as per our religious precepts and practices, (a) sevā and worship of God, (b) place of sevā and worship, (c) properties, movable and

immovable, for the use in sevā, (d) the doer of sevā (whether Guru or Vaishnava) and (e) the deity, all are confined to the family only and is not subject to public gaze or scrutiny. It is an inviolable religious necessity. It is a grave religious offence to make any of the above public.

It is absolutely necessary that as per the principles of Vallabh sect, true and faithful worship is to be done at home only using own money and involving family members.

Therefore, sevā done at home without own money or without the cooperation of family members is no worship at all as per the doctrines of Vallabh sect. it is not a valid practice to permit darshan to our visitors or accept gifts on behalf of the deity from them.

If sevā and worship are not done at home, then as per the principles of Pushtimarg, it is not a religious service in any manner.

As mentioned above, receiving cash gifts on behalf of deity is strictly prohibited. So also, no offering can be made from out of such gifts and still worse is to consume such offering as prasād. There is neither any scope nor is it a welcome feature that in public temples worship is done in a representative capacity on behalf of the public coming to the temple for darshan. Worship of the Lord cannot be a pursuit to earn money in any manner and by whatever name it is called. Accepting money in token of Bhagwatsevā or in the capacity as Pujāri is not only prohibited but it is 'Adharma', that is, it is iniquitous, irreligious, impiety and immoral.

May Shri Mahaprabhuji bestow on all Pushtimargis strength to devotedly follow one's own duty (Swadharma) towards the Lord and may also grant mutual gentleness. May the deity dwelling in the house of each Pushtimargi remain private and personal. May the lotus feet of Krishna inspire our intellect.

Signed :

Go. Sharad Aniruddhaji (Mandvi – Halol)

Go. Kishorechandra (Mandvi – Junagadh)

Go. Ajaykumar Shyamsundarji (Madras)

Go. Manmohan (Mumbai)

Go. Shyamsundar Murlidharji (Borivali)

Go. Hariray Krishnajivanji (Mumbai)

Late Go. Shrikrishnachandraji Shrikrishnajivanji (Mumbai)

Go. Vallabh Lal Shrigovindlalji (Kadi – Ahmedabad)

Go. Hariray Shrigovindrayji (Porbandar)

Late Go. Shrivrajadhishji Shrikrishnajivanji (Dahisar)

Go. Vrajeshkumar Shrigovindlalji (Kadi – Ahmedabad)

Late Go. Shrikrishnakumar Shriramanlalji (Kandivali – Kamvan)

Go. Rajeshkumarji Shrigovindlalji (Kadi – Ahmedabad)

Go. Vijaykumarji Shrigovindlalji (Kadi – Ahmedabad)

Go. Yogeshwar Mathureshwarji (Baroda – Surat)

Go. Raghunathlal Shriramanlalji (Kamvan – Gokul – Parla)

Go. Devakinandanacharya (Gokul – Ahmedabad)
Go. Navnitlal Shrigovindlalji (Kamvan – Bhavnagar)
Go. Murlimanohar Shrivrajadhishji (Dahisar)
Late Go. Shrimadhavrayji Shrigokulnathji (Mumbai – Nasik)
Go. Rameshkumar Shrigopinathji (Mulund – Nasik)
Go. Kalyanray Kanhaiya Bawa (Viramgam – Ahmedabad)
Go. Yogeshkumar Raghunathlalji (Kamvan – Gokul – Parla)
Go. Vrajpriya Muralidharji (Borivali)
Go. Nirajkumar Shrimadhavrayji (Mumbai – Nasik)
Go. Sharadkumar (shilubawa) Shrimuralidharji (Porbandar)
Go. Chandragopal (Chandubawa) Shrimuralidharji (Porbandar)
Late Go. Shrinrityagopalji Shrikrishnajivanji (Mumbai)

Approval through letters :

Late Go. Shribalkrishnalalji Shrigovindrayji (Surat)
Late Go. Shrivrajbhushanlalji Maharaj (Jamnagar)
Panchampeethādhiśwar Late Go. Shrigirdharlalji (Kamvan –
Vallabhvidyanagar)
Late Go. Shrigovindlalji (Kota)

“JOINT DECLARATION OF DECENDANT GOSWAMIS OF
MAHAPRABHU SHRIMADVALLABHACHARYA” 1986. Brief Account of
Conference of Pushti Principles on Pages 49-78).

PUSHTI ASMITA

Ame Evā Re Ame Evā Re Vaḷi : Tame Je Kāin

Kaho Tevā Re

Niṣṭhāthi Vallabhni Vāṇi Anusartā

Amne Bahirmukha Kaho Chho To Tevā Re,

Ame Evā Re Ame Evā Re

Vaḷi Biju Je Kain Kaho Tevā Re. (1)

Mevā Meḷavavā Prabhune Nathi Sevatā

Mevāthi Karvi Prabhusevā Re

Ame Evā Re Ame Evā Re

Vaḷi Tame Je Kāin Kaho Tevā Re (2)

Vādiyomān Bhaktinān Bhavādā Goṭhavine

Kṛṣṇavikrayanān Dhan Nathi levā Re

Nathi Levā Re Nathi Levā Re

Vaḷi tame Je Kāin Kaho Tevā Re (3)

Lakśminā Nāthnā Nāme Bhikh Māngi

Nathi Karvā Manoratho Evā Re,

Ame Evā Re Ame Evā Re

Vaḷi tame Je Kain Kaho Tevā Re. (4)

Devanun Chhe Dravya Te Prasād Nathi Letā

Jeo Letā Hoya Te Vaiṣṇavo Kevā Re !

Teo Kevā Re Ame Evā Re

Vaḷi Tame Je Kāin Kaho Tevā Re. (5)

Bhāgwatathi Bhando! Bhegun Karvā

Vadilo To Nathi Dhundhukāri Jevā Re

Teo Kevā Re Tame Kevā Re

Vaḷi Tame Je Kāin Kaho Tevā Re (6)

Nāṇākiya Bhāvo Bāndhyā Sevā Sāmagrinā

Puṣṭiprabhune Nathi Tyān Levā Devā Re

Levā Devā Re Ame Evā Re

Vaḷi Tame Je Kāin Kaho Teva Re (7)

Guḍha Rasabhāvaroopā Gharmānja Sevya (Prabhu)

Nathi Jāher Karvān Jevā Re

Te To Evā Re Te To Evā Re

Vaḷi Tame Je Kāin Karo Tevā re (8)

Potānā Tanathi Ne Potānā Dhanathi

Gharmān Karavi Chhe Kṛṣṇasevā Re,

Kṛṣṇasevā Re Ame Evā Re

Vaḷi Tame Je Kāin Kaho Tevā Re.

(9)

Vallabhni Vāṇi Puṣṭijeevo Kema Visare,

Amane Paḍya Nathi Eva Kāin Hevā Re,

Jevā Tevā Re Ame Evā Re

Vaḷi Tame Je Kāin Kaho Teva Re.

(10)

- “A Pushtimargi”

PUṢṬI ASMITĀ – A BRIEF EXPOSITION

The Gujarati word ‘Asmitā’ is a combination of ‘Asmi’ and ‘Tā’. ‘Asmi’ in Sanskrit means ‘I am’ and ‘Tā’ is a Gujarati suffix to convert a verb into noun. Thus, taken together, ‘Asmita’ would literally mean ‘the fact of my being’. However, the meaning does not stop here. It has myriad hues capable of splashing a variety of colours on a broader canvas. It may mean self-awareness or self-awakening. It also signifies the oneness of mind and intellect or soul and intellect. At a different level it also means egoism. Per se, egoism is not a vice till it gets reflected within a reasonable threshold. But when it is projected beyond the threshold to take the form of arrogance and conceit, the conduct would be considered as egoistic.

When one can hold his head high with a sense of dignity, in common understanding, the conduct would not be termed as egoistic. A person may say, 'I am proud to be an Indian', or 'I am proud of my children' without sounding egoistic. The usage of the word 'Asmita' comes into play with this latter meaning. As it was 'rotten in the state of Denmark' (Hamlet), today, painfully we have to admit that something is rotten in Pushtimarg. Only a handful of Goswami Ācāryas and a hopeless minority of Vaishnavas faithfully and devotedly try to follow the teachings of Shri Mahaprabhuji to the extent possible. This song by a Pushtimargi is the song of this minority where few ills are mentioned and where they refuse to fall prey to the temptations of making devotion a money-spinning wheel.

In the first two stanzas, the devoted followers, though mocked at for following the teachings of Shri Mahaprabhuji, are showing their indifference to the criticism and say that they serve the Lord not for any material gain.

In stanzas 3 to 8, some of the ills that have inflicted the sect are mentioned. They are, (a) hypocrisy and exhibitionism of sevā and worship, (b) begging for money in the name of God, (c) consuming as prasād the offerings made to God from out of the funds belonging to Him, (d) fund raising by organising Bhāgwat discourses despite strict forbiddance by Shri Mahaprabhuji, (e) fixing tariff for different types of sevā and displaying them on the walls of the temples, (f) Bhakti done for publicity and show-off.

In the last two stanzas the devoted followers reiterate their faith in the teachings of Shri Mahaprabhuji and in particular the clear instruction to do sevā at home only with own exertion and own finance involving family members.

It is obligatory on the part of every follower of the sect to scrupulously follow the teachings of the founding fathers without demur. It is one's duty (Svadharmā) to serve the Lord at home without any pomp and show and publicity. Shakespeare says in 'Midsummer Night's Dream' – "Never anything can be amiss when simpleness and duty tender it."

|| ŚRIHARIḤ ||

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE CONFERENCE ON PUSHTI PRINCIPLES

Organising Committee

1. Go. Shrivrajpriyaji Muralidharji (Mumbai)
2. Go. Shrinirajkumarji Madhavrayji (Mumbai)
3. Go. Chi. Shrimanojkumarji Nrityagopalji (Mumbai)
4. Go. Chi. Shriyogesh Raghunathlalji (Mumbai)
5. Go. Chi. Shrisharad Aniruddhalalji (Mandvi-Halol-Mumbai)
6. Go. Chi. Shripankaj Chimanlalji (Mandvi-Gokul)
7. Go. Chi. Shripiyush Kishorchandraji (Mandvi-Junagadh-Mumbai)
8. Go. Chi. Shrigopeshkumarji Muralimanoharji (Mumbai)
9. Go. Chi. Shribhushan Chimanlalji (Mandvi-Gokul)
10. Go. Chi. Shrivitthal Devakinandanacharyaji (Gokul-Ahmedabad)
11. Go. Chi. Shrimilankumarji Lalmaniji (Jatipura-Kota-Mumbai)
12. Go. Chi. Shrisharadkumarji Lalmaniji (Jatipura-Kota-Mumbai)

The sect was embroiled in certain issues which are the very breath of the sect. To discuss these issues, the above committee organised a conference of Goswamis from 10th to 12th January, 1992 at Vishwakarma Baug, Bajaj Road, Vile Parle (West), Mumbai – 400 057. Following is the list of Goswamis and Shastrijis who attended the conference for a candid

and fearless discussion which reflected their diligence and devotion towards their own religion and duty in and towards the religion.

1. Go. Shriuttamshlokji Dikshitji (Kishangadh-Mumbai)
2. Go. Shrikalyanrayji Govindrayji (Pune-Surat)
3. Go. Chi. Shrikanhaiyalalji Chandragopalji (Viramgam-Ahmedabad)
4. Go. Shrikishorechandraji Purushottamlalji (Junagadh-Mumbai)
5. Go. Shrikrishnachandraji Krishnajivanji (Mumbai)
6. Go. Chi. Shrikrishnakantji Krishnachandraji (Mumbai-Udaipur)
7. Go. Shrikrishnakumarji Ramanlalji (Mumbai)
8. Go. Shri. Chi. Shrigopikalankarji Vallabhlalji (Rajkot)
9. Go. Shrigovindrayji Ranchhodlalji (Porbandar)
10. Go. Chi. Shrichandragopalji Madhusudanlalji (Vadodara)
11. Go. Shritrilokibhushanlalji Trikamrayji (Kolkata)
12. Go. Chi. Shridevakinandanacharyaji Gokulnathji (Gokul-Ahmedabad)
13. Go. Chi. Shridrumilkumarji Mathureshwarji (Vadodara)
14. Go. Chi. Shridwarikeshji Vrajjivanji (Amreli-Mumbai)
15. Go. Chi. Shripurushottamji Vrajjivanji (Amreli-Mumbai)
16. Go. Chi. Shriprashantkumarji Rajkumarji (Mumbai)
17. Go. Shribalkrishnaji Govindrayji (Surat)
18. Go. Chi. Shrimathureshwarji Madhusudanji (Vadodara)
19. Go. Chi. Shrimadhusudanji Krishnachandraji (Madras)

20. Go. Shriraghunathlalji Ramanlalji (Mumbai-Gokul)
 21. Go. Chi. Shriraghunathji Rameshchandraji (Mumbai)
 22. Go. Shrirasikrayji Dwarkeshlalji (Mathura-Porbandar)
 23. Go. Shrirajeshkumar Gonvindravji (Kadi-Ahmedabad)
 24. Go. Shrivallabhrajji Govindravji (Surat)
 25. Go. Chi. Shrivallabhlalji Giridharlalji (Kamvan-Vidyanagar)
 26. Go. Chi. Shrivallabhlalji Devakinandanacharyaji (Gokul-Ahmedabad)
 27. Go. Shrivijaykumarji Govindravji (Gondal-Kadi)
 28. Go. Shrivitthalnath Lalmaniji Ranchhodlalji (Jatipura-Kota-Mumbai)
 29. Go. Shrivrajivanji Purushottamlalji (Amreli-Mumbai)
 30. Go. Chi. Shrivrajeshkumarji Ghanshyamlalji (Rajkot-Kamvan)
 31. Go. Chi. Vrajeshkumarji Chandragopalji (Viramgam-Ahmedabad)
 32. Go. Shrisharadkumar – Shrishilubawaji Muralidharji (Veraval-Porbandar)
 33. Go. Shrishyam Manohar Dikshitji (Kishangadh-Mumbai)
 34. Go. Shrishyamsundarji Muralidharji (Mumbai)
 35. Go. Shrihariravji Vrajbhushanlalji (Jamnagar)
-
1. Shrivallabhshastriji (Mumbai)
 2. Shriniranjanshastriji (Umreth-Mumbai)
 3. Shrivasantshastriji (Mathura)

4. Shrivrajeshshastriji (Mehsana-Visnagar)

**LIST OF GENTLEMEN WHO AGREED WITH THE FREE
TRANSLATION OF SIDDHĀNTVACANĀVALI PRESENTED BY
GOSWAMI SHYAMMANOHARJI FOR THEIR CONSIDERATION**

1. Go. Shrianiruddhalalji Dwarkeshlalji * (Mandvi-Halol)
2. Go. Chi. Shrikanhaiyalalji Chandragopalji (Viramgam-Ahmedabad)
3. Go. Shrikishorechandraji Purushottamlalji (Junagadh-Ahmedabad)
4. Go. Chi. Shrikrishnakantji Krishnachandraji (Mumbai-Udaipur)
5. Go. Shrikrishnakumarji Ramanlalji (Mumbai-Kamvan)
6. Go. Shrigiridharlalji Govindrayji ** (Kamvan-Vidyanagar)
7. Go. Chi. Shrigopikalankarji Vallabhlalji (Rajkot)
8. Go. Chi. Shridevakinandanacharyaji Gokulnathji (Gokul-
Ahmedabad)
9. Go. Chi. Shridrumilkumarji Mathureshwarji (Vadodara)
10. Go. Shridwarkeshlalji Govindrayji ** (Kamvan-Surat)
11. Go. Shrinavnitlalji Govindrayji ** (Kamvan-Bhavnagar)
12. Go. Shrimathureshwarji Chandragopalji * (Viramgam-Ahmedabad)
13. Go. Shrimadhavrayji Muralidharji * (Veraval)
14. Go. Shriraghunathlalji Ramanlaji (Mumbai-Gokul)
15. Go. Chi. Shriraghunathji Rameshchandraji (Mumbai)

16. Go. Chi. Shriravindrakumarji Damodarlalji (Mandvi-Rajkot)
17. Go. Shrirasikrayji Dwarkeshlalji (Mathura-Porbandar)
18. Go. Shrirajeshkumarji Govindrayji (Kadi-Ahmedabad)
19. Go. Chi. Shrivallabhlalji Giridharlalji (Kamvan-Vidyanagar)
20. Go. Shrivallabhlalji Govindrayji (Kadi-Ahmedabad)
21. Go. Shrivallabhlalji Devakinandanacharyaji (Gokul-Ahmedabad)
22. Go. Shrivijaykumarji Govindrayji (Gondal-Kadi)
23. Go. Shrivitthalnath-Lalmaniji Ranchhodlalji (Jatipura-Kota-Mumbai)
24. Go. Shrivrajrayji Ranchhodlalji * (Ahmedabad)
25. Go. Shrivrajeshkumarji Govindrayji * (Ahmedabad-Kadi)
26. Go. Shrivrajeshkumarji Chandragopalji (Viramgam-Ahmedabad)
27. Go. Shrisharadkumar-Shilubawaji Muralidharji (Veraval-Porbandar)
28. Go. Shrishyamsundarji Muralidharji (Mumbai)

1. Shrinavnitpriyashastriji * (Nadiad)
2. Shrivasantshastriji (Mathura)
3. Shrivrajeshshastriji (Mehsana-Visnagar)

LIST OF GENTLEMEN WHO DISAGREED WITH THE FREE TRANSLATION OF SIDDHĀNTVACANĀVALI PRESENTED BY GOSWAMI SHYAMMANOHARJI (KISHANGADH-MUMBAI) FOR THEIR CONSIDERATION

1. Go. Shrigopallalji Purushottamlalji * (Kota)
2. Go. Chi. Shrimathureshkumarji Madhusudanji (Vadodara)
3. Go. Shrivallabhhlalji Govindrayji (Surat)
4. Go. Shrivinaykumarji Gopallalji * (Kota)
5. Go. Shrivrajratnalalji Venkateshji * (Surat)
6. Go. Shrivrajramanlalji Damodaralalji * (Mathura)
7. Go. Shrisharadkumarji Gopallalji * (Kota)
8. Go. Shriharirayji Vrajbhushanlalji (Jamnagar)

LIST OF PERSONS WHO REMAINED SILENT IN THE CONFERENCE IN WHICH THE FREE TRANSLATION OF SIDDHĀNTVACANĀVALI BY GOSWAMI SHYAMMANOHARJI (KISHANGADH-MUMBAI) WAS PRESENTED

1. Go. Shriuttamshlokji Dikshitji (Kishangadh-Mumbai)
2. Go. Shrikalyanrayji Govindrayji (Pune-Surat)
3. Go. Shrikrishnachandraji Krishnajivanji (Mumbai)

4. Go. Shrigovindrayji Ranchhodlalji (Porbandar)
5. Go. Chi. Shrichandragopalji Madhusudanlalji (Vadodara)
6. Go. Shritrilokibhushanji Trikamrayji (Kota-Kolkata)
7. Go. Chi. Shridwarkeshlalji Vrajjivanji (Amreli-Mumbai)
8. Go. Shripurushottamji Vrajjivanji (Amreli-Mumbai)
9. Go. Chi. Shriprashantkumarji Rajkumarji (Mumbai)
10. Go. Shribalkrishnaji Govindrayji (Surat)
11. Go. Shrivrajjivanji Purushottamlalji (Amreli-Mumbai)
12. Go. Shrivrajeshkumarji Ghanshyamlalji (Rajkot-Kamvan)

1. Shrijayvallabhshastriji (Mumbai)
 2. Shriniranjanshastriji (Umreth-Mumbai)
- (Courtesy : Organising Committee).

* Received through letter

** In our opinion, the translation of Siddhāntavacanāvali done by Shrishyammanoharji is proper and are in agreement with it except for personal references wherever they are made.

SIGNATURES