

Saints and Non-Saints

Their Distinguishing Characters and Qualities

[Roman Transliteration of Verses, English Exposition and Explanatory Notes]

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English Exposition by:--

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DEDICATION

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO MY BELOVED LORD RAM

I dedicate this Book to Lord Sri Ram who is my dearest of dear, most beloved, the essence of my life and being, and for whom, and for whose pleasure, and on whose behest, and on whose divine mission, this book is dedicated.

Nothing that I write is of my own creation. It is the Lord who is getting it done. So I deserve no credit. However, being an ordinary man like the rest of us, I may have committed errors, and for those I beg forgiveness. I hope this book will help to continue the great tradition of singing the glories of the different aspects of same indivisible one Divinity in order to meet diverse needs of the Soul, the Spirit, one such being to find peace and happiness amidst the surrounding turmoil of the world by being able to spend some time in the thoughts of the Divine Being, the same 'Parmatma', the same Lord known by different names in different tongues.

I submit this effort at the holy feet of my beloved Lord Ram, and surely also to Lord Hanuman who was very dear to the Lord, with this humble little prayer that comes to my lips: 'Lord God; Glorious and Blessed be Thy Name. I yield Thee my most hearty thanks and reverential gratitude that Thou hast given me the honour and the privilege and the opportunity to serve Thee and fulfil Thy desire to spread Thine Good Word for the good and welfare of the human kind through the Books Thou hast got written through these humble hands of mine. And for that mercy and graciousness of Thee, I shall ever and for ever remain Thine grateful and thankful and obliged.'

"He leadeth me! O blessed tho't!
O words with heav'nly comfort fraught!
What-e'er I do, wher-e'er I be,
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me!"

Ajai Kumar Chhawchharia
Author

Saints and Non-Saints

Their Distinguishing Characters and Qualities

Preface

In the world, in our day-to-day lives, we come across countless people. Some are good, some simply ordinary and mediocre, while some are not only bad but often times go beyond the limits of being evil, wicked and obnoxious so much so that we regret that we had to interact with them at all.

Those people who are good and noble make those around them happy and grateful for their company; they are remembered over time with great affection and love. Those who are mediocre fade into oblivion over time; one forgets about them as time passes by. But those who are bad and wicked leave a permanent scar on our psyche; they are scourge for the society, and give only pain and misery in their wake. While a saint is like a refreshing flower, a non-saint is like a prickly thorn.

The presence of saintly persons in our midst is refreshing for the spirit and a sign of good luck, while those who are non-saints are harbingers of misery, ill omen and decadence.

It's almost like the case of three types of flowers—one flower is very charming and exceedingly pleasing to the senses, and it leaves a pleasant and sweet aroma lingering for a long time in one's hand even after it one has put it away; the other flower looks beautiful but only as long as one has one's sight upon it, leaving no reminder of its presence once one moves the sight away from it; and the third flower is one which is an eyesore and makes us recoil by its unpleasant odour, and in some cases by the mere touch of it because it secretes some chemical that causes irritation to the skin that results in bad sores.

In a similar way we come across all types of persons during the journey of life. The question is: how do we distinguish between them and recognize who is a good person and who is not? While it is always advisable and a wise saying that one should have 'good company' and avoid 'bad company', but the question arises how do we know which person is worthy of keeping company with and who is to be avoided at all costs. How do we distinguish between two individuals to decide who is good and who is bad?

Indian spiritual texts and ancient scriptures have precisely answered this universal moral question. They have called good people as a 'Sant' or a 'Saint', and those who are bad as 'A-Sant' or 'Non-saints'.

Broadly speaking, a ‘Sant’ is a person who has positive virtues, divine qualities, immaculate character, and holds spiritual values in great esteem. He is a highly commendable person with a noble soul, a person who is pious, holy, wise, enlightened and free from worldly corruptions and temptations; he is one who possesses qualities that are auspicious, righteous, noble and full worthy of emulation. They are like the sunlight that lights up the otherwise gloomy and dismal landscape of this mundane world full of sins and vices.

The ‘A-Sants’ or the ‘Non-Saints’ are obviously just the opposite of ‘Sants’. Their company brings sorrow, misery, grief and pain in its wake.

Just like drinking clean and boiled water fosters good health while polluted water would ruin one’s health, a saint comes as messenger of happiness and peace and joy, while the non-saint is like a thorn on the back of the society, causing pain and grief and dismay.

In this book we will read about them—both the ‘Saints’ as well as the ‘Non-saints’, about their unique character traits and distinguishing features. We will discover who a true Saint or a holy person is, and who a Non-saint or an evil person is. This knowledge helps one to decide whom to keep company with, and whom to keep a distance with.

The question now that arises is: Why should one follow the examples of Saints, and what rewards are due by doing so. The answer is clear and simple: These Saints show the path of light, a path that leads from darkness to light. By listening to their sane advice, by following the path advised by them and led by them, one is able to overcome the unrest of the soul and all turmoil associated with sins of this world; it is a path that leads one to liberation and deliverance from the spiritual miseries of this life; it is the path that shows the soul how to attain emancipation and salvation. The path of Saints is the path of holiness and piety, of righteousness and auspiciousness, of divine values, probity and propriety, and a path that leads to eternal joy and happiness; it is a path to God and Godliness. Saints help as much and as best as they can to stop the tide of moral turpitude, social degradation and spiritual decline that has come to roost in the world today. In all sooth, if one follows their example one surely becomes a worthy person, a person who is a true human being and a gentleman instead of being one of the members of the Lord’s vast kingdom of creatures, the so-called ‘zoological world’.

Forsooth, if we follow the path of Saints as shewn in the scriptures, which translates in practical terms to our willingness to first understand and then follow the instructions laid down in the scriptures that define the virtues of true Saints by endeavouring to cultivate these qualities ourselves in our own lives, then surely and certainly we walk on the illustrious path of Saintliness and Godliness, the good path that would bring the happiness, the joy, the peace and the bliss of heaven right here on earth.

Saints spread their holy fragrance of spirituality far and wide for they are goodness and godliness personified, whilst Non-Saints are nothing but like ugly warts and cankerous sores that fester and scourge not only the immediate environment where they live but by

and by destroy the very moral and spiritual fibre of the society by their evil and crooked manners.

What is the importance of Saints, who are they really, and why should we heed them? Well, here is the answer from the Holy Bible: 'For I (in the form of Saints) came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me (for the good and welfare of the human race)' [St. John, 6/38]; 'We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth us not' [1John, 4/ 6]; 'To give light to them that sit in the darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace' [St. Luke, 1/79]; 'To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me' [Acts, 26/18].

Saints are our best well-wishers, for it is said: 'Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in (spiritual) health even as thy soul prospereth, for I rejoiced greatly when the bretheren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth, I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth' [3John, 2-4]; and 'Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints' [Jude, 3].

The reward that accrues by following the path shewn by Saints is: 'The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance' [Galatians, 5/22-23]; 'For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God' [Ephesians, 2/8].

We read more in the Holy Bible about the value of Saints. Thus: 'Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven' [St. Matthew, 5/16]; 'But now being made free from sins and become servants to God, ye have fruit unto holiness, and the end of everlasting life' [Romans, 6/22]; 'For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present nor things to come; nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God' [Romans, 8/38-39].

Indeed and without gainsay, true Saints help us to be 'Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers' in this world [Philippians, 3/2]. They would 'For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men (in the guise of saints); Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should be soberly, righteously and godly in this present world' [Titus, 2/11-12]; and they help us so by 'being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life' [Titus, 3/7]

If we pay heed to the words of Saints, this is what is promised to us: 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come to condemnation, but is passed from death unto life' [St. John, 5/24]; because 'For I (in the form of Saints) came down from heaven not to do mine own

will, but the will of him that sent me (for the good and welfare of the human race)' [St. John, 6/38].

For the purpose of describing the characteristics of Saints and Non-saints, the following scriptural texts of Hinduism have been cited as they present a comprehensive picture on the subject: Goswami Tulsidas' classics 'Ram Charit Manas', 'Vairagya Sandipani', 'Dohawali' and 'Vinai Patrika', Sage Veda Vyas' epic 'Adhyatma Ramayan', and the famed 'Upanishads'.

Similarly, we read in the Holy Bible a lot about Saints and Non-Saints. In order to learn comprehensively about them, we shall read extensively verses from the Bible, a Book that I hold dear to my heart; these verses form Chapter no. 4 of our present book.

I hope this Book will be useful to everyone as it serves to help one to become aware of an individual's hidden values and usefulness in life, whom one should follow as an example and whom one should be wary of. Knowledge of the characters and traits of Saints and Non-saints helps one to determine who is worthy to be related to and is good to interact with in one's day-to-day life in this world, and who, on the other hand, should be treated with exceptional caution as any sustained contact with such unworthy persons would be detrimental for one's own well-being.

To spread this good Word about Saints and Holy People who are apostles of the Lord God before I close, I say most earnestly and humbly: 'I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy bretheren' [1Thessalonians, 5/27]; 'And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly and from house to house' [Acts, 20/20].

I express my thanks and gratitude unbound to all my dear readers: 'Finally my bretheren, rejoice in the Lord' [Philippians, 3/1]; and 'Finally, bretheren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace shall be with you (even as) all the saints salute you' [Holy Bible, 2 Corinthians, 13/11, 13]; and 'I thank my God, making mention of thee always in my prayer' [Philemon, 4].

Amen !!

Author: Ajai Kumar Chhawchharia.

Date: 7th September, 2018

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Chapter 1

Character Traits of SAINTS

In this Chapter we shall be reading about the unique virtues and characters of ‘Saints’. For this purpose the following Texts have been quoted:

- 1.1 Ram Charit Manas of Goswami Tulsidas.
- 1.2 Vairagya Sandipani of Goswami Tulsidas.
- 1.3 Dohawali of Goswami Tulsidas.
- 1.4 Vinai Patrika of Goswami Tulsidas.
- 1.5 Adhyatma Ramayan of Veda Vyas.
- 1.6 The Upanishads.

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1.1 Ram Charit Manas of Goswami Tulsidas:-

In the epic story of Lord Ram known as the ‘Ram Charit Manas’ written by the legendary poet-saint of India named Goswami Tulsidas, the question ‘who is a saintly person and who is not’ has been clearly answered. In this sub-chapter no. 1.1 we shall read the following verses from Ram Charit Manas to get a comprehensive knowledge about the unique characters and distinguishing qualities of Saints and Saintly Persons:-

- (1.1) (i) Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 2—to Doha no. 3: Page 8-20;
- (1.1) (ii) Baal Kand, Doha no. 6: Page 20;
- (1.1) (iii) Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 7: Page 20
- (1.1) (iv) Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 84: Page 21;
- (1.1) (v) Aranya Kand, Chaupai line no. 9 that precedes Doha no. 31: Page 21;
- (1.1) (vi) Uttar Kand, Chanda line nos. 13-16 that precedes Doha no. 14: Page 22;
- (1.1) (vii) Uttar Kand, Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 37—to Doha no. 38: Page 23-37;
- (1.1) (viii) Uttar Kand, Doha no. 46 and its preceding Chaupai line nos. 2-8: Page 37-40;
- (1.1) (ix) Uttar Kand, Chaupai line nos. 5, 13-16, 21 that precede Doha no. 121: Page 40-42;
- (1.1) (x) Uttar Kand, Chaupai line nos. 6-8 that precede Doha no. 125: Page 42-43.

Now, let us proceed with our reading of these excellent verses.

(1.1) (i) Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 2—to Doha no. 3:-

सुजन समाज सकल गुन खानी । करउँ प्रनाम सप्रेम सुबानी ॥ ४ ॥

sujana samāja sakala guna khānī. kara'um' pranāma saprēma subānī. 4.

I (Tulsidas) now bow my head reverentially, with affection and a sweet voice (i.e. by using polite and respectful words of honour), to the holy community of saints and pious people who are a treasury of all good and auspicious virtues and characters¹. (4)

[Note—¹The excellent virtues and exemplary characters of saints have been enumerated in Vairagya Sandipani, verse nos. 8—61.]

साधु चरित सुभ चरित कपासू । निरस बिसद गुनमय फल जासू ॥ ५ ॥

जो सहि दुख परछिद्र दुरावा । बंदनीय जेहिं जग जस पावा ॥ ६ ॥

sādhū carita subha carita kapāsū. nirasa bisada gunamaya phala jāśū. 5.
jō sahi dukha parachidra durāvā. bandanīya jēhīm jaga jasa pāvā. 6.

The auspicious and glorious lives, deeds and conduct (*subha carita*) of (true) holy saints and pious people (*sādhū*) are pure and untainted (*subha carita*) like the life of the cotton plant (*kapāsū*). The reward of such a life, howbeit tasteless, insipid and un-attractive (*nirasa*), is nevertheless huge and full of virtues (*bisada gunamaya*)¹. (5)

This cotton plant allows itself to undergo immense hardship so that the faults, shortcomings and infirmities of others can be hidden. [To wit, when a cloth is made with this cotton, it is used by others to cover themselves, their bodies, and make many others things of daily usage such as bed-sheets, towels, napkins, cotton sheets used as shrouds or to wrap other things, and so on. So the cotton plant does not mind its own sufferings because it gives comfort and protection to others.]²

Verily, this is the reason why such saintly souls (whose lives are compared to the cotton plant) are praised, honoured and revered in this world³. (6)

[¹The cotton plant produces fruits that are tasteless, white in colour, fibrous and dry; no one enjoys such fruits. Likewise, saints and truly holy men are not attached to this world of illusionary charm; they have renounced all worldly pretensions and do not wish to waste their time and energy in worthless talking, thinking or pursuing matters of the mundane world. As such, ordinary people do not find them as a good company; they do not look charming to people who wish to delve in matters related to the world and its numerous material objects.

But albeit such saints seem charmless, they are nevertheless full of virtues and excellent qualities that have great spiritual value and are worthy of praise. Like the colour 'white' of the cotton, they are pure at heart and their deeds are holy as well. Their detachment from the material charms of the world and seemingly dry and emotionless nature resembles the fruit of the cotton plant.

²The cotton suffers a lot when it is passed through the ginning machine which separates the cotton from its seed, then it is pulled and stretched into a thread, spun into a yarn, and weaved into cloth of various textures. All this puts the cotton through a lot of toils, pains and sufferings, but it never complains. It is rather happy that its sufferings would help others to cover themselves with clothes that would be made from this cotton.

³Likewise, truly holy men find happiness in serving others and providing for their welfare even if it means they have to suffer hardships themselves.]

मुद मंगलमय संत समाजू । जो जग जंगम तीरथराजू ॥ ७ ॥
राम भक्ति जहँ सुरसरि धारा । सरसइ ब्रह्म बिचार प्रचारा ॥ ८ ॥

muda maṅgalamaya santa samājū. jō jaga jaṅgama tīratharājū. 7.
rāma bhakti jaham³ surasari dhārā. sarasa'i brahma bicāra pracārā. 8.

An assembly or gathering of saints and holy people specially, and the community in a general way¹, is a provider of auspiciousness, blessedness, joy and happiness to all. In all sooth, this community is like a living embodiment of 'Triveni', which is regarded as the 'King amongst pilgrim sites' (tīratharājū)², in this mortal and mundane world. [To wit, the spiritual benefits that one gets by visiting so many religious places can be got by the company of saints. People visit pilgrim places to clean their inner selves, do penance for sins, and derive some spiritual peace and happiness. This same benefit is availed in the company of saints.] (7)

In this assembly of saints and pious people (which is like a walking 'tīratharāj' in this mundane world), the holy river Ganges symbolized by 'Bhakti' (devotion; surrender; submission; faith) for Lord Ram, and the holy river Saraswati symbolized by thoughts and discourses of Brahm, the Supreme Being, the Supreme Atma, the Supreme Self, flows³. [One gets a spiritual environment in the company of saints. This is marked by the devotion and enlightenment.] (8)

[¹In an assembly, a large number of saints and holy people collect at a single place. This helps to bring together at one place a good collection of great virtues, excellent qualities and noble characters that these saints possess. On the other hand, they live scattered as a community, and it becomes very tedious and impossible for a person to visit every saint and pious man worth his name, for it may not be possible for him to have knowledge of each individual saint of great quality.

Besides this benefit of an assembly of saints vis-à-vis their general community, the other benefit is that one can easily compare the different virtues and characters that the gathered saints possess, which makes it all the more easy to assess them individually

and see how they learn from one another, how they strive to overcome their shortcomings without any sign of inferiority or superiority.

While a visit to an individual saint is surely rewarding, but this reward has its limitations because that particular saint may be exalted on one or two counts of virtues but may be lacking to some degree in another virtue. It is also time consuming for a spiritual aspirant if he goes hunting for virtuous saints, wandering from one place to another, for in all probability he may miss to meet them. These shortcomings are done away with when all great saints collect at one place. It helps the spiritual learner because he has the best teachers and guides at one place.

Now, this assembly of saints and holy souls is compared to 'Prayag' because just like the latter is a 'confluence of three great holy rivers', bringing with them their religious benefits and spiritual rewards at one single place, the assembly or gathering of saints 'showcases at one place, in a concentrated form, all the finest of virtues and characters that they possess'. If one of these saints is deficient in one virtue, then this deficiency is compensated by another saint. The beneficiary of such a show of the best of spiritual talents at one place is the seeker himself, because he is able to make a wise and considered choice, and decide for himself which of the virtues best suits him and his temperament. It also helps these individual saints as well, because it helps them to identify their own shortcomings and take necessary steps to overcome them.

²The pilgrim site by the name of 'Triveni' is known as the 'King of pilgrim sites' (tīratharājū) because three holy rivers have their confluence there. These are (i) river Ganges, (ii) river Saraswati, and (iii) river Yamuna.

Briefly, river Ganges is an embodiment of the virtues of Bhakti (devotion) as it emerged from the toes of Lord Vishnu and was held on the head of Lord Shiva before it descended to earth to provide liberation and deliverance to those who had no other means of salvation. River Saraswati is named after a goddess of the same name who stands for 'Gyan' or knowledge, wisdom and enlightenment. Hence, river Saraswati embodies these virtues.

River Yamuna (cited in Chaupai line no. 9 herein below) is the daughter of the Sun God who sustains life in this world, and he inspires the creature to do deeds during the time the sun shines in the sky. The sun also is a symbol of 'light' that removes darkness, the darkness of ignorance and delusions. So therefore, Yamuna symbolizes those saints who do their duty in this world like other ordinary creatures, but with a thought on what is good and what is bad, which deed is righteous and which is to be avoided. Such saints may look engrossed in the affairs of the world, but internally they are pure and holy and tranquil. Their company helps a person to learn how to go about one's life normally, while still gaining spiritual blessedness.

The first river 'Ganges' is called the river of Gods, and it is highly praised in the scriptures as very spiritually purifying, and is considered as the holiest amongst the three. It is said that by bathing in its waters a sinful person can literally wash off his sins, i.e. easily atone for them.

In this verse, 'devotion for Lord Ram' is likened to this holy river, and its significance is clear: one can easily find liberation and deliverance from sins and troubles of the soul that one encounters while living in this gross world by having devotion for Lord Ram who was a personified form of Brahm, the Supreme Being, just as it is easy to

clean one's body by taking a dip and rubbing off the dirt from one's body in the crystal clear waters of a great river.

This eclectic spiritual virtue of 'devotion for Lord Ram' is invariably practiced in the community of saints. So when a person comes in contact with saints, he feels the positive energy flowing freely; he lives in this spiritually clean and positive environment. He sees how these saintly people are happy and carefree; he observes their lifestyle and conduct. This sets and acts as an example for him, and true to the adage that 'one becomes like the company one keeps', a person who is fortunate to come in contact with saints undergoes transformation for good.

³The second river is Saraswati. This river represents knowledge and wisdom about the Truth of existence, and about one's own 'self' which is not the gross body but the 'pure conscious Atma'. 'Saraswati' is the patron goddess of knowledge, wisdom, awakening and intellect; this river is named after her as a symbolic representation of the virtues that are the hallmarks of Saraswati.

This virtue of having true knowledge, enlightenment, self-realisation and so forth, is an added bonus and a complimentary virtue to the first virtue of devotion. True saints and holy people are wise enough to take the help of both these two tools for their spiritual good and elevation.

They never waste their time talking about the affairs of the gross, perishable and deluding world of material sense objects and their transient charms and comforts and pleasures. On the contrary, they discuss means to purify their inner self and attain self-realisation. Both 'devotion' and 'contemplation on the Truth of existence, of the self and the Atma' go hand in hand, as two complimentary tools for one's spiritual welfare, liberation and deliverance from this gross world and its delusions, attainment of a state of bliss and beatitude, and the final salvation and emancipation of the 'self'.

Since both these virtues—(i) devotion for Lord God, and (ii) self-realisation and enlightenment about the Atma, the 'true self' of a creature which is not his gross and perishable body, but pure, sublime and subtle Consciousness—are needed for one's spiritual welfare, and the community of saints practices them in a wholesome manner, and therefore for a spiritual seeker the community of saints is the best place to learn about these eclectic and glorious virtues, and to see them being practiced first hand.

The idea in this verse is that when saints gather at a place, one sees two types amongst them—(i) one who is like river Ganges, and (ii) the other who is like river Saraswati. The first sorts of saints have pure devotion for Lord Ram, and by their communion one is able to learn this virtue, its benefits and practice. The second sorts have self-realisation and knowledge of the Truth, and their company helps one to be enlightened about these virtues, their spiritual benefits, and how to practice this path towards fulfilment of spiritual goals.]

बिधि निषेधमय कलि मल हरनी । करम कथा रबिनंदनि बरनी ॥ ९ ॥

हरि हर कथा बिराजति बेनी । सुनत सकल मुद मंगल देनी ॥ १० ॥

bidhi niṣēdhamaya kali mala haranī. karama kathā rabinandani baranī. 9.
hari hara kathā birājati bēnī. sunata sakala muda maṅgala dēnī. 10.

The revered river, who is the daughter of the Sun God (i.e. river Yamuna, which is the third river of the trinity of holy rivers), symbolises the virtue (wisdom) that enlightens a saint about which of the different deeds he should do and which he should avoid. This virtue helps the saint to eliminate the sins that are associated with the era called ‘Kaliyug’, the present period of evil and sinful life¹. (9)

At such a congregation of saints and pious people, there is a confluence of noble virtues, and freely flowing discourses about divine stories of Lord Hari (Lord Vishnu) and Lord Har (Lord Shiva) which are like the rivers (Ganges, Saraswati and Yamuna) that converge at Triveni (the *tīratharāj*) with their swift currents². (10)

[¹A wise and enlightened saint can differentiate between righteous and unrighteous deeds. He will endeavour to do the good deeds, while avoiding those which his sub-conscious tells him are bad for his spiritual welfare. River Yamuna is given a special name here—as being the ‘daughter of the Sun God’. The hidden implication is that this river represents the inherent quality of the sun that it lights up the world and removes its darkness. It is a metaphoric way of saying that the wisdom that river Yamuna stands for enables the saint to see things in the light of knowledge and wisdom. In the bright light of the sun a person is able to see all things distinctly, so likewise by the blessings of river Yamuna a person is able to distinguish between the good and the bad.

The ‘sun’ represents life with all its dynamic activities—because it is during the daytime that every individual gets up and does whatever he is supposed to do in this world. On the other hand, night is dark, and it represents the darkness of delusions and ignorance that makes a creature virtually stunned into inactivity, and this is evident when he shuns all activities and goes to bed, lying motionless as if knocked unconscious, stupified and numbed. The light of the sun removes all lethargy and delusions, and the same creature regains vitality and energy to do all his pending work as soon as he sees the sun rise and show its light to him.

As we have observed, true saints therefore have three eclectic virtues: (i) devotion, (ii) truthful knowledge, (iii) and the ability to use this knowledge in practice by using the light of wisdom and prudence.

There are four eras according to Hindu scriptures. The fourth era is known as ‘Kali-yug’. It has the word “Kali”, meaning ‘dark; black’, as a part of its name. This implies that this era is especially marked by dark deeds that are collectively called sinful. This is why this river also looks dark in colour because it represents the deeds done by a creature during Kaliyug. But this is the external feature of this ‘holy’ river, for albeit it is dark in colour yet it provides holiness and purity internally. How come? It is because it represents that light of wisdom and discrimination that enables the creature to distinguish between deeds that are righteous, good and noble, and deeds that are not.

So a saint who embodies the virtues of river Yamuna goes about his daily life like ordinary men, but he carefully selects what deeds he does and what he avoids. Therefore, by observing their lives and conduct, the learner spiritual seeker gets to know and see in practice how to live in this world and do one’s duties diligently, while still reaping spiritual rewards by remaining aloof from the world and free from its entanglements.

These saints who embody the virtues symbolised by river Yamuna show how one can skip all spiritual and moral faults, taints, shortcomings, smears and scars that will degrade his Atma, his soul, and drag him into the quagmire of worldly affairs that would rob him of his peace and happiness even while remaining involved in one's worldly duties.

²At 'Triveni', the rivers come from different directions, but converge into a single body of water. Metaphorically it means that different saints tell the divine stories of the Lord God in different ways and style, highlighting their different aspects and glorious messages, but when the hearer hears them, he is able to stir them into one homogenous story about the divine Lord and his glories in his inner-self, in his mind and subconscious, thereby helping him to extract the best of rewards from all of them by mingling them into one.]

बटु बिस्वास अचल निज धरमा । तीरथराज समाज सुकरमा ॥ ११ ॥

सबहि सुलभ सब दिन सब देसा । सेवत सादर समन कलेसा ॥ १२ ॥

baṭu bisvāsa acala nija dharamā. tīratharāja samāja sukaramā. 11.

sabahi sulabha saba dina saba dēsā. sēvata sādara samana kalēsā. 12.

In the community of saints (here meaning in all individual saints), the faith and trust that each one of them has in the spiritual path that he has chosen to follow, and his steadfastness in that spiritual path (which is the sacrosanct principle of life for him, his "dharamā") are like the 'Vat tree' (the banyan tree) that is strong, has deep roots and a long life.

The noble and virtuous actions and deeds of saints are like the working of the royal court of 'Tīratharāja', the King of holy places. [To wit, just as only noble people are admitted in the court of a great King, so only those saints who possess noble qualities are allowed to remain in the community of saints. It is not a place for imposters and mevericks. Therefore, their actions and life are reliable.] (11)

This communion of saints, pious souls and noble people is a blessing that can be accessed by all, in all the countries, at all times. By respectfully serving such saints and begetting their blessings, by following their examples and advice, all the internal torments and sorrows that one suffers from can be easily eliminated. [This is because one would learn to lead a noble life and inculcate spiritual virtues, consequentially gaining internal peace, happiness, calmness, solace and comfort.] (12)

अकथ अलौकिक तीरथराऊ । देइ सद्य फल प्रगट प्रभाऊ ॥ १३ ॥

akatha alaukika tīratharā'ū. dē'i sadya phala pragata prabhā'ū. 13.

This confluence of holy virtues at the symbolic holy place called 'Triveni', the King of pilgrim places (tīratharā'ū) has so great an importance that it cannot be described in

words, and neither is it visible in physical terms. [To wit, the ‘Triveni’ that is described in the foregoing verses only has an symbolic form. It is used as a metaphor to highlight the importance of the combined virtues of saints and holy people.]

The assembly or congregation of saints grants quick spiritual rewards, and albeit it is only a symbolic form of Triveni (confluence of holy rivers that symbolise flow of abundant good virtues), but these rewards are tangible. (13)

[It is only for the purpose of emphasizing the importance of a community of noble saints and the immensity of spiritual rewards one gets in their company that the holiest of pilgrim places known as Triveni has been cited in these verses. It is merely a metaphor and example.

So, just like the case that a visit to Triveni bears fruits that are manifold times more than visiting many individual holy places during one’s pilgrimage, attending a congregation of saints has far greater benefits than searching them out individually.]

दो०. सुनि समुझहिं जन मुदित मन मज्जहिं अति अनुराग ।
लहहिं चारि फल अछत तनु साधु समाज प्रयाग ॥ २ ॥

dōhā.

suni samujhahim̐ jana mudita mana majjahim̐ ati anurāga.
lahahim̐ cāri phala achata tanu sādhu samāja prayāga. 2.

Those wise people who cheerfully hear about and understand the symbolism and significance of this holy place known as ‘Prayāga’ (whose other names are Triveni and Tirtha-raj) that represents an assembly of great saints and holy people, take a dip in the waters of this holy place¹ with great faith, affection and reverence, and such people are able to get the four rewards of life as a human being¹ during their lifetime. (Doha no. 2)

[¹This refers to the practice of taking a ritualistic dip or a bath at the confluence of the three holy rivers at the pilgrim site known as ‘Prayag’ or ‘Triveni’ as a religious duty that is said to help the pilgrim to wash off the negative effects of his sins, and atone for them. The implied meaning here is that a spiritual aspirant should join a community of saints and live with them for some time to observe their lifestyles and learn from their virtues, seeking guidance whenever needed, and endeavouring to gradually transmew oneself from what one is at present into a noble person who walks on the same path as shewn by these saints to him.

The analogy of the confluence of three great holy rivers and taking a dip into them as a means of obtaining spiritual merit with the communion of saints is very significant. One gets actual benefit and merit by taking a dip or a bath in any holy place, not only at Triveni, only if he mends his old evil and sinful way of life. Otherwise this is a completely futile exercise, and a waste of money and time going on a pilgrim, if one does not become determined to change himself.

Remember: Taking a bath at a pilgrim place merely as a ritual without sincerely following its subtle requirements for purification of the inner self is equivalent to taking a

bath in an ordinary pond, or better still in one's home, because the waters of these rivers at pilgrim places are dirty and full of microbes if one thinks that its physical touch will do some magic. It will make him sick instead.

This bath is a symbolic way of washing one's past and cleaning one's self. So the real cleaning comes when no new dirt is allowed to stick to the inner-self. Similarly, merely meeting saints and sages won't help. The real benefit comes if one follows in their footsteps.

²The four rewards of leading a meritorious life as a human being are the following: (i) 'Artha' = material well-being; (ii) 'Dharma' = a life of virtues and nobility that begets respect; (iii) 'Kaam' = fulfilment of desires; and (iv) 'Moksha' = liberation and deliverance of the soul from this body and the world.]

चौ०. मज्जन फल पेखिअ ततकाला । काक होहिं पिक बकउ मराला ॥ १ ॥
सुनि आचरज करै जनि कोई । सतसंगति महिमा नहिं गोई ॥ २ ॥

caupāī.

majjana phala pēkhi'a tatakālā. kāka hōhim pika baka'u marālā. 1.
suni ācaraja karai jani kōī. sataśaṅgati mahimā nahim gōī. 2.

The rewards or benefits of taking a bath in this symbolic holy place (Prayag; Triveni that represents an assembly of saints) is seen soon, and is so astounding and wonderous as if crows mysteriously get transformed into cuckoos, and cranes into swans¹. (1)

Let no one be astonished with such transformations, for the glory and mystical powers of saints are tremendous and are not hidden from anyone. (2)

[¹These two instances of a crow getting converted into a cuckoo and a crane into a swan are used in a metaphoric way to emphasise the ability of saints to transform even the most sinful and vile person into one who is honourable and like themselves.

Both the crow and the cuckoo are black in colour, but while the former (the crow) is a hated bird not only for its harsh crowing voice but also because it feeds on flesh of cadavers, the latter (the cuckoo) is a loved bird that sings sweetly and eats plant products like other ordinary birds. The cuckoo is a pet bird of poets.

Similarly, both the crane and the swan have white colour, but their habits and characters are diametrically opposite. The crane is a flesh eating bird, catching fish by standing on one leg in water like a hermit, a posture that cheats the onlooker who may think that the bird is meditating by standing mid-stream; the swan also lives in water but is regarded as a symbol of purity. The swan is a vehicle of goddess Saraswati because it is a symbol of purity though it may live in a surrounding of polluted water of the lake. The swan is a favourite bird with teachers who teach on metaphysics and spiritual philosophy.

Further, the colour of the two sets of birds chosen by Tulsidas also is significant. One set of birds is 'black' skinned and the other is 'white'. It implies that all the people of this world, no matter to which continent or country they belong and which tone of colour their skin has, would universally benefit by their association with saints.

Another reason for selecting a crow and a crane to represent bad and evil people is this: the crow has no pretensions of piety or holiness like the crane which stands mid-stream on one leg like a meditating hermit, only to dive at an innocent and unaware fish and pick it up for food in its beak. To with, this means that there are two sorts of people in this world: one sort that is overtly evil and does not hide its wickedness like the crow, and the other sort is like the crane who are deceitful and cunning, fooling the world by their pretentious exterior of holiness. But both are radically changed when they come in contact with true saints.

Just as this transformation seems magical and astonishing, the change that is brought about in a person with his association of saints is also great and unbelievable.]

बालमीक नारद घटजोनी । निज निज मुखनि कही निज होनी ॥ ३ ॥

bālamīka nārada ghaṭajōnī. nija nija mukhani kahī nija hōnī. 3.

Great sages like Valmiki¹, Narad² and Agastya³ (known as “ghaṭajōnī” because he was born in a pitcher) have narrated with their own mouths about their lives, and how they were transmuted into exalted sages due to contact with great saints¹. (3)

[¹Valmiki was a highway robber and hunter in his early life. Once he met the seven celestial sages called the ‘Spata-rishis’ who prevailed upon him to change his lifestyle. So, when Valmiki paid heed to their advice, he was transformed into a great sage and poet.

²Narad was the son of a maid-servant in his previous birth. By his good fortune he came in contact with holy men who imparted spiritual wisdom to him and their advice and example made Narad into a great devotee of the Lord. In his next birth, he was born as mind-born son of the creator Brahma.

³Agastya was the son of Varun, the Water God. He was conceived in and took birth from a pitcher. Another great and renowned sage Vasistha (who later became the teacher and court priest of Lord Ram and his father king Dasrath of Ayodhya) was also born from the same pitcher. This embryonic association of Agastya with another great sage Vasistha made him an exalted sage himself because now both were like brothers as they shared the same incubator, the pitcher.]

जलचर थलचर नभचर नाना । जे जड़ चेतन जीव जहाना ॥ ४ ॥
मति कीरति गति भूति भलाई । जब जेहिं जतन जहाँ जेहिं पाई ॥ ५ ॥
सो जानब सतसंग प्रभाऊ । लोकहुँ बेद न आन उपाऊ ॥ ६ ॥

jalacara thalacara nabhacara nānā. jē jaṛa cētana jīva jahānā. 4.

mati kīrati gati bhūti bhalā'ī. jaba jēhim jatana jahām' jēhim pā'ī. 5.
sō jānaba satasaṅga prabhā'ū. lōkahum' bēda na āna upā'ū. 6.

Any creature, whether it is an inhabitant of the water (all sorts of aquatic animals), of the land (terrestrial animals of all species and families), or of the air (birds etc.), whether it is animate or inanimate (such as animals that show dynamic movement, or plants as well as those animals that do not show any apparent movement), anywhere in the world [4]-----

-----whosoever amongst them who has ever got or acquired at any time (jaba jēhim pā'ī) in their lives, any sort of wisdom (mati), glory, fame and acclaim (kīrati), spiritual liberation, deliverance, salvation and emancipation (gati), material prosperity, welfare, or any other good for themselves (bhūti bhalā'ī), by any method or means in this world (jēhim jatana jahām') [5]-----

-----all of these great and laudable achievements ought to be deemed as the eclectic fruit or reward of good company with saints and holy people.

Verily and forsooth, there is no other means prescribed either by the Vedas or by traditional wisdom in the world by the virtue of which these glories can be achieved. [6] (4—6)

[To wit, if a person wishes to acquire good set of virtues and characters that would make him praise worthy in this world, the best and the easiest way for him or her is the company of pious and holy saints. But one should be committed and sincere in his pursuit of good virtues, for it is only then that he would closely observe the life, conduct, characters and behaviour of saintly people, try to learn from them and inculcate these noble virtues in his own life to actually benefit from the company of such great souls. Otherwise it becomes an exercise of mere scrutiny to find faults with these men and prick holes in them. For remember, no matter how excellent a person may be, after all he is a human being and can't therefore be cent percent perfect. The trick is to pick up and learn the good things, and discard the things that seem not too good.]

बिनु सतसंग बिबेक न होई । राम कृपा बिनु सुलभ न सोई ॥ ७ ॥
सतसंगत मुद मंगल मूला । सोइ फल सिधि सब साधन फूला ॥ ८ ॥

binu satasaṅga bibēka na hō'ī. rāma kṛpā binu sulabha na sō'ī. 7.
satasaṅgata muda maṅgala mūlā. sō'i phala sidhi saba sādhana phūlā. 8.

Indeed, true wisdom and the ability to discriminate between the good and the bad cannot be learnt without the company of and association with good and virtuous people (because such company or association is a practical method to learn these virtues and see them in action). And such a fortunate opportunity of having contact, company or association with good, saintly and holy men (known as “satasaṅga”) is not possible without the grace of Lord Ram (i.e. without the blessing of Lord God). (7)

Verily, ‘satasaṅga’ is the root of all happiness and joy, of all welfare and well-being, both spiritually and temporally.

Such contact with virtuous people is akin to having fruits for all endeavours because it culminates in spiritual successes (by way of attaining bliss, peace, liberation and deliverance) as well as temporal gains (by way of general improvement in one's character, actions, behaviour, thinking and lifestyle that brings in fame and reputation).

All other methods are merely like flowers (as they may look very attractive and colourful, and may also give temporary fame and signs of happiness, but they do not provide any solid nourishment to the soul, and neither are they permanent). (8)

सठ सुधरहिं सतसंगति पाई । पारस परस कुधात सुहाई ॥ ९ ॥

बिधि बस सुजन कुसंगत परहीं । फनि मनि सम निज गुन अनुसरहीं ॥ १० ॥

sāṭha sudharahim̄ satasaṅgati pāī. pārasa parasa kudhāta suhāī. 9.
bidhi basa sujana kusaṅgata parahim̄. phani mani sama nija guna anusarahim̄.
10.

Even the wicked, evil, mischievous and unscrupulous creatures are modified and transmuted for good under the positive and auspicious effects of contact with and company of saints and virtuous people just like iron that is converted into gold by the mere contact with the 'pārasa', or the 'philosopher's stone'. (9)

On the other hand, if virtuous and saintly people come in contact with evil and wicked people by ill fate or unfortunate circumstance, they still are able to maintain their noble virtues and characters instead of being tainted by the evilness of their unfortunate company just as the 'Mani' (gem) present on the hood of a special class of serpents is not affected by the poison of the host snake¹. (10)

[¹A special species of snake secretes a thick sap from the cells of the skin on its hood. This viscous secretion solidifies and glows in darkness. It is believed that these snakes see their path in its light when they move out from their holes in search of food. The idea is that albeit the snake is very poisonous, the gem manages to retain its glow and shine; it is not darkened by the thick dark poison present in the mouth of the snake which surely spills over when the snake bites its victim.

In like manner, virtuous saints are able to maintain their virtuousness in spite of the evil company that surrounds them. But howbeit, the wicked company that surrounds them gains by its association with these saintly people just as the snake gains its sight in the presence of the Mani.]

बिधि हरि हर कबि कोबिद बानी । कहत साधु महिमा सकुचानी ॥ ११ ॥

सो मो सन कहि जात न कैसें । साक बनिक मनि गुन गन जैसें ॥ १२ ॥

bidhi hari hara kabi kōbida bānī. kahata sādhu mahimā sakucānī. 11.
sō mō sana kahi jāta na kaisēm. sāka banika mani guna gana jaisēm. 12.

Even the Creator (Bidhi; Lord Brahma), Hari (Lord Vishnu), Har (Lord Shiva), expert poets and scholars who are wise and well-versed in the knowledge of qualities that are deemed to be excellent and exemplary, feel hesitant to speak of the immensity of glories and the profound effects of wonderful characters and noble virtues of such saints and pious people [11],-----

-----then say how can I (Tulsidas) ever enumerate them or tell about them fully just like the case of a vegetable merchant or hawker who can never be expected, by any count or imagination, to ever be able to tell the value of a priceless gem. (11)

[In other words, Tulsidas just gives a hint of the greatness of saints and holy men, and the rewards one can get by being associated with them, by keeping their company and contact. For in all sooth and without gainsay their greatness and goodness is so huge and unmeasurable that even the most learned and wise are unable to describe them.]

दो०. बंदउँ संत समान चित हित अनहित नहिं कोइ ।
अंजलि गत सुभ सुमन जिमि सम सुगंध कर दोइ ॥ ३ (क) ॥

dōhā.

banda'um̐ santa samāna cita hita anahita nahim̐ kō'i.
an̐jali gata subha sumana jimi sama sugandha kara dō'i. 3 (a).

I (Tulsidas) bow my head most reverentially before saints and holy men of immaculate virtues and noble characters, who have equanimity and maintain evenness of mind and sub-conscious under all circumstances (*samāna cita*), who have no friend who will favour them or any enemy who would harm their interests (“*hita anahita nahim̐ kō'i*”; because they treat everyone alike and see the same Atma or pure consciousness in all of them)—just like the case of the flower that lends its fragrance equally to the hand that had torn it away from its tree which was its habitat (i.e. harmed the flower by shearing it from its home and depriving it of further nutrition and chance to live) and the hand that kindly, lovingly and caringly holds it in its palm. [To wit, just like this flower, a saintly person wishes good of all—both of those who harbour ill-will against him as well as of those who like and serve him.] (Doha no. 3 a)

संत सरल चित जगत हित जानि सुभाउ सनेहु ।
बालबिनय सुनि करि कृपा रामचरन रति देहु ॥ ३ (ख) ॥

santa sarala cita jagata hita jāni subhā'u sanēhu.
bālabinaya suni kari kṛpā rāmacarana rati dēhu. 3 (b).

True saints are of a pure and simple heart, without any kind of deceit, conceit or pretensions whatsoever. They are universally a well-wisher of the world at large, and never think of any harm to it.

Recalling their kind and gracious nature and their natural affection for all the creatures, wishing the good of all without exception, Tulsidas says that he is inspired and encouraged to pray to them so that they can hear his earnest child-like plea and grant him the boon of having steady and robust devotion and affection for the holy feet of Lord Ram (who is the revered deity of Tulsidas). (Doha no. 3-b)

(1.1) (ii) Baal Kand, Doha no. 6:-

दो०. जड़ चेतन गुन दोषमय बिस्व कीन्ह करतार ।
संत हंस गुन गहहिं पय परिहरि बारि बिकार ॥ ६ ॥

dōhā.

jaṛa cētana guna dōṣamaya bisva kīnha karatāra.
santa hansa guna gahahiṁ paya parihari bāri bikāra. 6.

The Creator has made this mortal world consisting of animate and inanimate creatures in such a way that it has both the good and the bad qualities in varying proportions. But true saints are those who, like the legendary Swan, accept only the good virtues and goodness of the world symbolized by pure and un-adulterated milk, while discarding aught and everything that is gross and mundane (i.e. is un-virtuous, unholy and unrighteous) symbolized by water¹. (Doha no. 6)

[¹The ‘Swan’ has a unique quality—it drinks only pure milk and leaves aside its pollutants or adulterations such as additional water that is used to dilute it to increase its volume, as done by milk merchants to get more money from the same quantity of pure milk. Saints accept all that is pure and holy, and simply neglect aught that is naught.]

(1.1) (iii) Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 7:-

खलउ करहिं भल पाइ सुसंगू । मिटइ न मलिन सुभाउ अभंगू ॥ ४ ॥

khala'u karahiṁ bhala pā'i susaṅgū. miṭa'i na malina subhā'u abhaṅgū. 4.

‘It is to the credit of saints and noble persons that when wicked and evil persons come in contact with such righteous and holy people, the latter are influenced by the former’s

positive energy and eclectic qualities so much so that they too begin to do good and act nobly. But unholy and unrighteous people have bad qualities so deeply engrained in them, so deeply embedded in their mind and psyche that after some initial good acts and signs of rehabilitation they have a natural tendency and an inherent propensity to revert back to their bad old ways.’

(1.1) (iv) Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 84:-

पर हित लागि तजइ जो देही । संतत संत प्रसंसहिं तेही ॥ २ ॥

para hita lāgi taja'i jō dēhī. santata santa prasansahim tēhī. 2.

Saints always praise those people who lay their lives for the good and welfare of others. [To wit, those who are selfless and helpful to the extent that they would not mind suffering and offering their lives for the good of others, are truly saintly persons. They are lauded and praised by other saints because such persons uphold the tradition of saintly persons.] (2)

(1.1) (v) Aranya Kand, Chaupai line no. 9 that precedes Doha no. 31:-

परहित बस जिन्ह के मन माहीं । तिन्ह कहूँ जग दुर्लभ कछु नाहीं ॥ ९ ॥

jala bhari nayana kahahim raghurā'ī. tāta karma nija tēm gati pā'ī. 8.
parahita basa jinha kē mana māhīm. tinha kahum' jaga durlabha kachu nāhīm.9.

It is an established principle that those creatures who have the well-being and welfare of others in their heart, nothing is impossible for them in this world. (9)

[It is an established principle of Dharma that ‘those who are selfless and have the interest of others in their mind and heart, there is nothing that is not possible or inaccessible for them.’ In other words, salvation and emancipation, liberation and deliverance, is yours now without doubt. The message here is plain and simple—a person who has the interest of others in heart, who works selflessly for the good and welfare of other creatures, there is nothing that is difficult for them. The whole world becomes their friend. All people are ever eager to see that his needs are met, and he does not have to suffer in any way. Anything desired by him is fulfilled on a priority basis by those who have benefited from him, and since all have been his beneficiary in one way or the other, people regard as an honour to serve him as a gesture of their gratitude towards him.]

(1.1) (vi) Uttar Kand, Chanda line nos. 13-16 that precedes Doha no. 14:-

नहिं राग न लोभ न मान मदा । तिन्ह केँ सम बैभव वा बिपदा ॥ १३ ॥
एहि ते तव सेवक होत मुदा । मुनि त्यागत जोग भरोस सदा ॥ १४ ॥

nahim rāga na lōbha na māna madā. tinha kēṁ sama baibhava vā bipadā. 13.
ēhi tē tava sēvaka hōta mudā. muni tyāgata jōga bharōsa sadā. 14.

Such people (who keep good company and have devotion for you, those who have surrendered themselves at your holy feet and adore you) have no negativities as ‘Raag’ (attachments, infatuations), ‘Lobha’ (greed, avarice, rapacity), ‘Maan’ (false pride, ego, vanity), and ‘Mada’ (arrogance, haughtiness) in them. They treat good fortunes and misfortunes equally (i.e. they have developed, nurtured and inculcated the grand virtue of equanimity, neutrality and dispassion in them). (13)

Wise sages prefer to have devotion and affection for you instead of pursuing Yoga (meditation) to attain their spiritual goals (because the path of ‘Bhakti’ or devotion is far easier and convenient as compared to the path of Yoga)¹. (14)

[¹Even the Vedas has affirmed this fact in their prayer in Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, Chanda line nos. 9-12 that precede Doha no. 13.]

करि प्रेम निरंतर नेम लिएँ । पद पंकज सेवत सुद्ध हिएँ ॥ १५ ॥
सम मानि निरादर आदरही । सब संत सुखी बिचरंति मही ॥ १६ ॥

kari prēma nirantara nēma li'ēm̃. pada paṅkaja sēvata sud'dha hi'ēm̃. 15.
sama māni nirādara ādarahī. saba santa sukhī bicaranti mahī. 16.

Such saintly people develop deep devotion and intense affection for you, and serve your holy feet and remember you constantly, always repeating you holy name with a pure and clean heart (which is uncorrupt, unpretentious, are free of delusions, free from all conceit and deceit). (15)

They treat insult and praise equally, with stoic indifference, and thereby roam on this earth peacefully and cheerfully (without feeling hurt and emotionally upset by such insults and harsh words uttered against them—for they leave it upon you to punish their tormentors, and also because they know that such people are fools of the highest order who are best neglected and left aside). (15-16)

(1.1) (vii) Uttar Kand, Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 37—to Doha no. 38:-

[In these verses, Lord Ram explains the glorious virtues of Saints and Saintly Persons to Bharat, his younger brother when the latter wished to learn about them.]

चौ०. करउँ कृपानिधि एक ढिठाई । मैं सेवक तुम्ह जन सुखदाई ॥ १ ॥

caupāī.

kara'um̃ kṛpānidhi ēka ḍhiṭhā'ī. mair̃m sēvaka tumha jana sukhadā'ī. 1.

Bharat said—‘Oh an ocean of grace, kindness, mercy and compassion (i.e. Lord Ram)! I excuse myself for being bold and audacious enough to speak in front of you. I gather this courage and temerity because I am your humble follower, and you are the Lord who grants happiness and joy to all your subjects and the living beings in general (‘Jana Sukha-dai’).

[This is the reason why I have gathered enough courage to ask you something about which I surely have no doubt, but I wish that others who do not have this knowledge should benefit from my query. Since you are so gracious that you always ensure that all the creatures of your creation remain happy and contented, you will surely understand my idea and give me an answer that will benefit all the subjects of your creation in general—as you are their supreme Creator, and therefore it is their right to ask you, learn from you and seek guidance from you.] (1)

[Note—Bharat is himself a saintly person, so he hesitates in asking to know about something that he practices himself. It would naturally annoy an ordinary master, but our Lord Ram does not get angry because he is ‘an ocean of grace, kindness, mercy and compassion’—or ‘Kripaa-nidhaan’. The fact that Bharat is a saintly person is endorsed in Ram Charit Manas, 2/205/6-8 and 2/205, the presiding deity of Triveni has praised Bharat and called him a ‘Sadhu’ or a saintly and pious person.

In Ram Charit Manas, 2/205, and 2/30/1, the gods have showered flowers upon him.

In Ram Charit Manas, 2/207 to 2/210/8, sage Bharadwaj has praised Bharat in no uncertain terms. Refer especially to Ram Charit Manas, 2/208/1, 3, 8; 2/210/3-6.

So, this is the reason of Bharat’s reluctance in asking Lord Ram about the virtues of saints and saintly persons. But at the same time Bharat gathered enough courage because he knew that Lord Ram never brought in to his heart any faults or demeanours of his followers and subordinates. On an earlier occasion at Chitrakoot, the same situation arose where he had to stand up and request the Lord to abandon his rigid stance of remaining in the forest and instead return to Ayodhya to be crowned its king-emperor. Refer: Ram Charit Manas, 2/299/4.

Bharat knew for certain that Lord Ram never becomes angry at anyone, even against culprits and offenders—refer: In Ram Charit Manas, 2/260/5 which clearly states

this fact “I (Bharat) know for certain the nature of the Lord (Ram), that he never gets angry even at offenders, culprits and sinners”.

Sage Vashistha was so impressed by the devotion and high level of spiritualism that Bharat had that he declared in open court at Chitrakoot “In my view, whatever is done keeping in mind the wishes of Bharat, such action or deed will always be auspicious and holy—I say verily that Lord Shiva is witness to the truth of what I am saying”. Refer—Ram Charit Manas, 2/258/7-8; and 2/258.

Well now, if this is the case, how could Lord Ram not keep the wish of Bharat inspite of knowing that Bharat was very wise and there was no need to teach him on any metaphysical, spiritual, devotional, ethical, moral or any other subject of Dharma.

Lord Ram had great confidence in Bharat—refer: Ram Charit Manas, 2/264/7-8 and 2/164 in which the Lord expressly tells Bharat that he has great hesitation in even thinking twice about not keeping Bharat’s wishes, i.e. he is eager to uphold all that Bharat says, especially when their Guru, sage Vashistha has himself endorsed Bharat’s integrity and wisdom.

On his part, Bharat has acknowledged this fact that Lord Ram loves him so much that the latter is ready to go back on his vows and break his words if Bharat so wishes and tells him to do so—refer: Ram Charit Manas, 2/266/8.]

संतन्ह कै महिमा रघुराई । बहु बिधि बेद पुरानन्ह गाई ॥ २ ॥

santanha kai mahimā raghurāī. bahu bidhi bēda purānanha gāī. 2.

Bharat said to Lord Ram, ‘Oh merciful Lord! The numerous great and eclectic virtues and divine qualities of ‘Sants’—i.e. saints and saintly people, those persons who are virtuous, noble, pious and holy, those whose hearts and mind are pure, those who have risen above the grossness of this mundane world and realized the truth of existence, those who have good virtues as their dominant character, those who are the torch-bearers of the principles laid down in the scriptures, those whose lives are exemplary and worthy of emulation—have been described, enumerated and expounded in a variety of ways in the scriptures such as the Vedas and the Purans. (2)

[Note—Lord Ram is addressed as ‘Raghu-raai’, meaning ‘a king of the Raghu dynasty’. The address of a ‘king’ implies that since you are a king, it is ordained upon you to teach the virtues of goodness to your all your subjects and citizens. That is why the words ‘Jana Sukha-dai’ have been used to address Lord Ram in Chaupai line no. 1 above. These two words literally mean ‘the Lord who gives happiness to his subjects’.]

श्रीमुख तुम्ह पुनि कीन्हि बड़ाई । तिन्ह पर प्रभुहि प्रीति अधिकाई ॥ ३ ॥

śrīmukha tumha puni kīnhi baṛāī. tinha para prabhuhi prīti adhikāī. 3.

Even you have often praised them, and their auspicious nature and honourable qualities with your own holy mouth¹. You have great affection for them, are favourably inclined towards them, and are especially pleased with them. (3)

[Note—¹The word ‘Sri-Mukha’ has two parts: ‘Sri’ meaning one who is honourable and revered, and ‘Mukha’ meaning the mouth. Hence, this word literally means the mouth of someone who is honourable and revered. The word spoken by such a person is said to be holy and well-respected. Lord Ram is an incarnate Supreme Being, and hence whatever he says is indeed holy and well-respected.

The word ‘Sri’ is usually employed as a mark of great respect for those who are wise and respected. It is also a metaphor for wealth as it is one of the many names of goddess Laxmi, the patron deity of material prosperity and wealth. Anyone who teaches is deemed to be a treasury of knowledge, wisdom, erudition and sagacity—noble virtues which are equivalent to worldly treasures. Since Lord Ram is poised to elucidate about the grand virtues of saints, and since these words of wisdom are no less spiritually important than pearls and gems of priceless value, the Lord’s mouth from which such words would emerge is compared to ‘Sri’—a treasure trove of spiritual wealth!

When Lord Ram begins to teach the glorious virtues and divine characters of saints and those who are pious and spiritually evolved, it will be equivalent to opening of the door of spiritual treasury for everyone to grab by the fistful, ‘by the mindful’ so to say—because good advice and wisdom is accepted by the mind and not by the physical body, and this treasure is stored in the mind so that it can be retrieved whenever needed by one during the course of his life as a source for guidance and advice.]

सुना चहउँ प्रभु तिन्ह कर लच्छन । कृपासिंधु गुन ग्यान बिचच्छन ॥ ४ ॥

sunā caha'um' prabhu tinha kara lacchana. kṛpāsindhu guna gyāna bicacchana. 4.

I want to hear about them. Oh kind Lord! You are an ocean of all good virtues and a treasure trove of right knowledge and wisdom. [In other words, you will be able to properly enumerate them for me, and what you say will bear a stamp of authority.] (4)

संत असंत भेद बिलगाई । प्रनतपाल मोहि कहहु बुझाई ॥ ५ ॥

santa asanta bhēda bilagāī. pranatapāla mōhi kahahu bujhāī. 5.

Oh Lord who cares for those who have taken shelter with thee! Tell me the different virtues, attributes, qualities and nature of saints and non-saints in such a comprehensive way that a clear distinction can be made between the two of them (i.e. between the saints and non-saints), and I can properly understand them without any ambiguity.’ (5)

[Note—The last word ‘Bujhaai’ means to explain things in such a way that the listener fully understands them, and has no ambiguity about them.]

संतन्ह के लच्छन सुनु भ्राता । अगनित श्रुति पुरान बिख्याता ॥ ६ ॥

santanha kē lacchana sunu bhrātā. aganita śruti purāna bikhyātā. 6.

[Then Lord Ram enumerated the grand positive virtues of saints so that not only is the query of Bharat satisfied but such knowledge can also help others to be enlightened about them. The Lord then goes on to describe the negative qualities of non-saints. This helps to bring into focus the difference between the two types of persons: the saints and the non-saints. The contrast between the characters of the two becomes very evident. It helps a person to determine with whom to have relations in life and whom to avoid; or whom to follow as an ideal and whom to neglect in life.]

The Lord said—‘Listen brother. The auspicious and divine virtues of saints are countless (i.e. it is not possible to list them all here, but still I’ll tell you the main ones), and they are famed in the scriptures such as the Vedas and the Purans. (6)

[Note—Bharat asked the Lord to tell him the virtues and characteristic qualities of saints and non-saints in a comprehensive manner. The Lord therefore stresses that it will take an independent tome to enumerate all the virtues and glorious characters of them if one were to list all of them and explain all of them exhaustibly. So it will be better to outline only the salient features at present. Bharat must realise this therefore, and should not think that the salient features or important virtues that the Lord was about to narrate to him are all there is to it. There are countless more of them, but if one becomes aware of the important ones he can automatically get an idea of what the rest would be based on common sense. The auspicious virtues enumerated herein now act as the basis or foundation for the rest of the virtues which are not expressly mentioned here as they are more like off-shoots of the primary ones which are enumerated now.]

संत असंतन्हि कै असि करनी । जिमि कुठार चंदन आचरनी ॥ ७ ॥

काटइ परसु मलय सुनु भाई । निज गुन देइ सुगंध बसाई ॥ ८ ॥

santa asantanhi kai asi karanī. jimi kuṭhāra candana ācaranī. 7.
kāṭa'i parasu malaya sunu bhā'ī. nija guna dē'i sugandha basā'ī. 8.

The difference between a saint and a non-saint is like the relationship between an axe and sandalwood. The axe tries to cut and harm the sandalwood tree, but the latter is so kind and gracious that it lends its sweet fragrance to its cutter, the axe. (7-8)

[Note—The axe has the natural habit of cutting trees; to ‘cut’ is the axe’s job; it’s natural to it. It can’t act otherwise. On the other hand, the sandalwood has the natural habit of lending its sweet fragrance to anything that comes in contact with it—it’s its natural habit.

Both of them, the axe and the sandalwood, act according to their natural and inborn temperament and instincts. The merciless axe always harms the sandalwood tree by cruelly cutting it into pieces, while the sandalwood is so forgiving, tolerant and graceful that instead of cursing the axe and vowing vengeance against it, it lends its sweet fragrance to the latter as a token of a welcome gift.

Likewise, true saints are always forgiving, tolerant, calm, understanding, merciful and gracious, spreading their goodness all around them like the sandalwood that spreads its fragrance wherever it is present. On the other hand, the non-saint is a cause of torments and miseries wherever he is, irrespective of whether or not he has anything to gain by harming or causing pain to others. This fundamental difference in attitude sums up the difference between a saint and a non-saint.]

दो०. ताते सुर सीसन्ह चढ़त जग बल्लभ श्रीखंड ।
अनल दाहि पीटत घनहिं परसु बदन यह दंड ॥ ३७ ॥

dōhā.

tātē sura sīsanha caṛhata jaga ballabha śrīkhaṇḍa.
anala dāhi pīṭata ghanahim̐ parasu badana yaha daṇḍa. 37.

[Though the sandalwood does not curse the axe, but Mother Nature does not spare the axe from being punished. How? This is explained now.]

The sandalwood retains its fragrance and is used as an offering to the fire sacrifice and for other auspicious needs, but the face (cutting edge) of the axe is put in the fire and beaten by a heavy hammer to sharpen its edge. (Doha no. 37).

[Note—In spite of being deformed and dismembered, the cut pieces of the sandalwood tree are regarded fit and holy to be used in fire sacrifices. This is an exception—because normally anything that is cut and injured is deemed unholy and unfit for this purpose as it is regarded as polluted. Even when animal sacrifices were done in ancient times, a sacrificial animal was closely examined for any physical deformities, as only a healthy and perfect sample was deemed fit for offering as sacrifice during the rituals. These virtually ‘injured (cut) pieces’ of the sandalwood which should have been deemed unfit for offering to the sacrificial fire are instead used willingly. This is tantamount to Mother Nature praising it for its goodness and virtuous character of forgiveness and tolerance.

As opposed to the sandalwood, the axe is put in blazing fire and hammered hard to sharpen its edges each day after the daily grind of cutting trees. It is a metaphoric way of severely punishing it.

There is another interpretation of this example of the sandalwood and the axe. The sandalwood tree gives out more intense fragrance when it is cut. This is due to effusing of

sweet fragrant sap when the tree and its branches are cut. The tree is located at a single place, but the pieces that are cut from it are taken to different places where they spread their fragrance. This is a metaphoric way of saying that saints are able to influence a large section of society in spite of their remaining at one place.

But the irony is that the axe, which comes directly in the contact of the sandalwood and is fortunate to get its fragrance and sap smeared on its surface, gets put in the fire and beaten mercilessly. It never benefits from this holy contact. Thus, non-saints are so unfortunate that even if they have the good fortune of being in direct touch of great saints, they are unable to benefit from this luck, and continue to suffer in this world and heaped with ignominy.

Tulsidas' another classical work known as the 'Dohawali' has a verse that uses a metaphor to describe the difference between a saint and a non-saint by using the metaphor of the birds known as Chakor and Chakva as follows—
Goswami Tulsidas' Dohawali, Doha no. 194—

रघुबर कीरति सज्जननि सीतल खलनि सुताति ।
ज्यौं चकोर चय चक्कवनि तुलसी चाँदनि राति ॥

raghubara kīrati sajjanani sītala khalani sutāti.
jyōm cakōra caya cakkavani tulasī cāmdani rāti..

“The full moon night is a provider of comfort, solace, peace and joy to the bird called Chakor, while it is tormenting for the bird called Chakava¹.

Similarly, Tulsidas says that the glories, the fame and the divine stories of Lord Sri Ram provide peace, tranquility, happiness and joy to good people (gentlemen; those who are pure and gentle at heart, those who are pious, holy, noble and spiritually inclined), but the holy name of the Lord and his divine stories (or any talk about him and even the mention of him) creates torments, annoyance, irritation and heart-burn among miscreants and evil people.”

The Chakva is the ruddy goose or an ostrich. The Chakor is the Indian red-legged partridge. The same light of the full moon appears to torment the Chakva while it pleases the Chakor. The Chakor feels happy at the sight of the moon, while the Chakva shuns it.

These two birds are used as metaphors to describe how the divine stories of Lord Ram—and for that matter any thing related to spiritualism—is liked by saintly and noble people, but abhorred by non-saintly and wicked people. It also emphasizes how the same story is interpreted differently by these people.

Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 16 says—“Lord Sri Ram manifested in this world like the full moon coming up in the eastern horizon to give happiness to saintly people and act like the frost or snow for the lotus flower symbolizing those who are wicked and evil.” The same lotus blooms when it sees the full moon in an ordinary night, but it shrivels and dies when the same moon rises in a night that is biting cold, when there is frost and it begins to snow.

In the present context it means that the same story of Lord Ram gives immense pleasure and spiritual comfort to those who are noble and saintly, while tormenting and annoying those who are evil and wicked.

Evil, sinful, pervert and wicked people have a natural tendency to see the wrong side of everything. They are compared to the bird Chakva which is angry when the full moon rises on the horizon because it torments this bird. While this moon is welcomed by the rest of the creatures, this is the only bird which abhors it, hates it, and treats the full moon with utter disdain and contempt.

Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 64 says “cool (good, pleasant) advice that should have been soothing and comforting (for Sita) appeared to torment her like the fire of hell just as the case of the Chakva which feels extremely unhappy and agitated during the night of the full moon of the Sharad Purnima (though this moon provides comfort, peace, solace and happiness to the rest of the world)”.

In Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, Doha no. 1, Lord Shiva tells his divine consort Uma that—“Lord Ram’s divine glories and eclectic qualities are extremely sublime, and are very mysterious and enigmatic—i.e. they are not easily understandable by all. While saints and wise people who hear them and do understand them develop spiritual wisdom and the virtue of renunciation, those who are of low and corrupt intellect, those who are opposed to the Lord and have no spiritual inclination or desire to follow the righteous path of Dharma (proper thought and noble intentions in life) prick holes in it and twist the story to suit their vested interests. They therefore get sucked in the endless vortex of delusions and confusions, while the saintly people find liberation and deliverance from the same story.”

For instance, saintly persons find in the story the nectar-like message of the importance of having devotion and submission for the Lord as an easy means of attaining spiritual emancipation and salvation; they analyse the different aspects of the story and pick up gems of spiritual wisdom and countless advices for leading a life that is auspicious, righteous, noble and holy; they read the story and hear it being told as a tool for obtaining peace, solace, succour and comfort for their mind and heart.

The wicked people and those with pervert mind find countless faults in it and point out so many taints in the character of Lord Ram. They treat it as some fictional writing which is meant to entertain.]

चौ०. बिषय अलंपट सील गुनाकर । पर दुख दुख सुख सुख देखे पर ॥ १ ॥

caupāī.

biṣaya alampaṭa sīla gunākara. para dukha dukha sukha sukha dēkhē para. 1.

Saints and pious people do not get indulgent, engrossed and entangled in the material objects of the senses in the world and their temptations of pleasure and comfort. They are a treasury of politeness and good virtues. They feel sorrowful and miserable at the sorrows and miseries of others, and delighted at seeing others happy. (1)

[Note—The word ‘Vishaya’ refer to the charms and temptations of the objects of the senses in the material world. This concept is closely related to another spiritual fault—known as ‘Vasana’ which refers to the desire of the sense organs for self gratification and yearning to derive pleasure and comfort from their respective objects in the external world. Thus, not to be entangled in these things is one of the main signs of saints.

Does it mean that one should run away from the world, when it is said in the scriptures that this world is governed by the law of Karma—i.e. as long as one lives in this world he must do something to survive as well as to chalk out a path for his future. The trick is to continue doing deeds and maintain one’s stable position in the world that has come to a person’s share, but to remain neutral and dispassionate towards everything in this mundane and mortal world, not to get emotionally and sentimentally involved in or attached with anything, to do everything to the best of one’s ability without worrying for the result and then offering both the deed as well as its consequences as an offering to the Lord God, and so on and so forth. If one is able to successfully lead a life in this exalted way then it is as good as actually and physically renouncing it and becoming a hermit. There is no need to make the body suffer by the hardships of the forest if one can remain in the household in the physical terms but remain detached from all temptations of the world and the sense organs internally at the mental and emotional plane.

To have sympathy and empathy are another two virtues a saint possesses. Since he is merciful, compassionate and loving, since he sees his Lord in each living being, since he is enlightened and realised enough to see the same Atma (soul) in all the creatures, these virtues come to him naturally. This fact is endorsed in the next line.]

सम अभूतरिपु बिमद बिरागी । लोभामरष हरष भय त्यागी ॥ २ ॥

sama abhūtaripu bimada birāgī. lōbhāmarāṣa harāṣa bhaya tyāgī. 2.

They maintain poise and equilibrium of mind and thoughts so much so that they have practice exemplary level of equanimity, neutrality, dispassion, a sense of evenness and detachment along with the grand virtues of forbearance and tolerance. They treat all the creatures and things equally, with stoic indifference. They do not treat anyone as a friend nor someone else as an enemy. [Since they treat everyone alike, naturally such a person has no enemy, as all are his friend.]

They are free from the negative quality of Mada (ego, pride, arrogance, haughtiness, hypocrisy and vanity). They, on the other hand, have an abundance of the positive virtue of Vairagya (renunciation). They abandon Lobha (greed), Krodha (anger), Harsha (feeling of joy from worldly gains) and Bhaya (fear from anything related to this mundane gross existence). (2)

[Note—Obviously, when a person practices exemplary equanimity, neutrality and detachment on the one hand, and treats everyone, everything and every situation alike, there is no occasion for such negative traits as listed in this verse to ever find a foothold in his mind, sub-conscious and heart.

When a man has no 'Mada' he will be humble, polite, simple, readily approachable and affable. Since he treats everyone alike, he has no enemy or friend. Since he has no enemy, he has no 'Bhaya'. Since he practices 'Vairagya' (i.e. has renounced everything and all sorts of attachments and infatuations), he has no 'Lobha'. Since he has no 'Lobha', he is eternally contented. All these go together to make him free from 'Krodha' and 'Harsha' because the former (Krodha) arises when a person's desires are not fulfilled or when his ego is hurt, and the latter (Harsha) arises in the opposite situation. Practice of equanimity takes care of them both.]

कोमलचित दीनह पर दाया । मन बच क्रम मम भगति अमाया ॥ ३ ॥

kōmalacita dīnanha para dāyā. mana baca krama mama bhagati amāyā. 3.

Their mind and sub-conscious as well as their nature are extremely supple, mild, tender, affable and calm. They have mercy, sympathy, empathy and compassion for the lowly and the humble, for those who suffer and are miserable.

They have the purest form of Bhakti (devotion, dedication, submission) for me, and their mind and heart, their words and their deeds are all dedicated in this direction. They are free from the influences of Maya (delusions pertaining to this world and its temptations that are entangling for the soul). (3)

[Note—Those who feel the pain of others, and empathize with other creatures and their sufferings, naturally have a compassionate, merciful and tender mind. It is a character of saints—refer also Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, Chaupai line no. 9 that precedes Doha no. 2 where it is said that sage Narad was filled with pity and mercy for Jayant when he saw his miserable condition. The incident is narrated in Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, from Chaupai line no. 3 that precedes Doha no. 1, till Doha no. 2. It so happened that Jayant, the son of Indra, ran from one god to another god seeking protection against an arrow shot at him by Lord Ram for a grave mischief he had committed. Jayant had bitten Sita and made her bleed. No one gave him any protection against the wrath of the Supreme Lord, but when sage Narad saw his pitiful condition he felt mercy for him. This is because Narad was a 'saint'. He advised Jayant to go and ask Lord Ram for forgiveness, which is the only method for his safety now.

The concept of 'Bhakti' (devotion, dedication, submission and love for the Lord God) has been elaborately described in Ram Charit Manas at countless places. Some of them are the following—

(i) Ayodhya Kand: 2/93/6; 2/131/5-6; 2/137/1; 2/204; 2/219/4-5; 2/265/3; 2/291/1-3; 2/299/203; 2/301/3.

(ii) Aranya Kand: 3/16/2-9; 3/35/7—3/36/7.

(iii) Kishkindha Kand: 4/12/1-2; 4/15/10.

(iv) Sundar Kand: 5/46/1-4, 6—5/46; 5/48/1-7—5/48.

(v) Uttar Kand: 7/14/5-16; 7/46/3; 7/86/1—7/87 Ka; 7/115/11-16; 7/116/1-8—7/120; 7/122/15-19.

In Tulsidas' collection of verses known as Dohawali, a number of verses are dedicated to the the theme of Bhakti—for instance, refer to verse nos. 53-54, 87-88, 126-127, 134-140, 145, 147.

The renowned version of Veda Vyas' Ramayan, known as 'Adhyatma Ramayan', describes Bhakti in its Aranya Kand, Canto 3, verse nos. 37-39, and in Uttar Kand, Canto 7, verse nos. 60-72.

The Tripadvibhut Maha Narayan Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 8, paragraph nos. 12-14 describes Bhakti in a metaphysical perspective.]

सबहि मानप्रद आपु अमानी । भरत प्रान सम मम ते प्रानी ॥ ४ ॥

sabahi mānaprada āpu amānī. bharata prāna sama mama tē prānī. 4.

They honour everyone else and show respect to them, but do not like being honoured and shown undue importance for themselves. Oh Bharat, they are extremely dear to me as if they are my life. (4)

बिगत काम मम नाम परायन । सांति बिरति बिनती मुदितायन ॥ ५ ॥

सीतलता सरलता मयत्री । द्विज पद प्रीति धर्म जनयत्री ॥ ६ ॥

bigata kāma mama nāma parāyana. sānti birati binatī muditāyana. 5.
sītalatā saralatā mayatrī. dvija pada prīti dharma janayatrī. 6.

They have no desires, wishes, yearnings, passions and lust whatsoever, and therefore no need to fulfill them. They are devoted to my (Lord Ram's) holy name.

[That is, they remember the Lord at all times in their lives, and silently repeat is divine name constantly. It helps them to ward off evil thoughts from entering their minds. They have eliminated all worldly desires and wants, because only when this is brought into practice can one turn himself to the thoughts of the Lord God. The mind and the heart can't do these two things simultaneously; it's either the world or the Lord.]

They are an abode of the eclectic virtues of Shanti (peace, tranquility, serenity), Virati (Vairagya=renunciation, detachment and dispassion), Binati (humility and simplicity), Mudit (cheerfulness, happiness and blissfulness under all circumstances), Sital (calm, self-controlled), and Saral (simple, without pretensions and deceit), Mayatri (friendly).

[Turning away from the world and its temptations automatically makes the mind calm and tranquil. The perceptions of the world have a buffeting affect on the mind and the sub-conscious, and as long as the creature continues to remain indulgent in the world of material sense objects, the mind is constantly pulled in that direction. Then there is the associate problem of the constant nagging of the sense organs of the gross body which is directly related to the equally gross world; they are coparceners in the joint family setup.

The Atma of the creature, i.e. the creature's 'true self', is an independent entity, and as long as this Atma allows its self to be under bondage of either of them—the body consisting of the sense organs, and the world of material objects—the creature cannot ever hope to find peace, bliss and happiness. As long as the Atma remains attached to the body and the world, it is affected by their grossness; and when it frees its self from both of them, i.e. when it gains 'Virati', it regains its primary form which is ethereal, subtle and sublime, a form that is characterized by the grand and eclectic virtues of Binati, Mudit, Sital and Saral.]

They have affection for the feet of Brahmins¹—i.e. they respect those who are elderly, learned and wise in the society.

They are the ones who support, enhance, protect, propagate, and in general act as the crucible that fosters and encourages the grand and glorious virtues of Dharma (righteous and auspicious laws of Nature and God; the tenets of propriety, probity, ethics, morality and nobility in thoughts and conduct). (5-6)

[Note--¹This word *Brahmin* is too often misunderstood and misinterpreted to mean a particular member of the society who is supposed to be given respect, no matter what his moral and educational standard is. The real intention is not that even a corrupt, unwise, morally depraved and foolish person should be honoured just because he is born a 'Brahmin'. The intention of the scriptures is never this. In ancient times this was the class of people who were designated to study the scriptures and act as moral and practical guide to the rest of the society. This was envisioned by our ancestors to help regulate the functioning of the society in an orderly manner by dividing the entire working into four clear segments and delineating each segment with a list of duties its members were supposed to do. This prevented clash and duplicity of work, as each of the four classes knew what it is supposed to do. This in effect created a hierarchy in the society, with the learned ones who were known as the 'Brahmins' occupying the upper rung just like a patriarch of a large extended family who oversees the working and welfare of the entire family. A patriarch is an old man, and has the backing of years of experience behind him. Obviously he is the most competent man to give sane and rationale advice to the younger generation. This exactly was the role of the Brahmin.

Even in the modern world, a child is taught to give respect to his elders; its part of his moral education. Hence, 'paying respects to Brahmins' should be understood in the correct perspective.

The salient features of Brahmins are the following—they should possess these noble qualities—(1) 'Riju'-be expert in the Rig and the Yajur Vedas, (2) 'Tapa'-should be involved in doing penances, observing austerities and enduring sufferings for the welfare of the soul and the society, (3) 'Santosh'-be contented and satisfied, (4) 'Kshamaa'-to be forgiving and tolerant, (5) 'Sheel'-to have such virtues as good character, dignity, decorum and virtuousness, (6) 'Jitendriya'-to have self control over the sense organs, (7) 'Data'-to be a giver, one who sacrifices his own interests for the benefit of others, (8) 'Gyani'-one who is well learned, wise, enlightened and erudite, (9) 'Dayaalu'-to be merciful and compassionate. [Shatpath Brahman.]

An entire Upanishad called Vajra-shuchiko-panishad, belonging to the Sam Veda tradition is devoted to the subject. The eclectic virtues of Brahmins have been expounded in Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, Canto 3, Brahman 5 as well as in Canto 3, Brahman 8, verse no. 10.

The Param Hans Parivrajak Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition, paragraph no. 7 describes in a holistic way the virtues of a true Brahm as the one who is highly wise, self-realised, erudite and enlightened about the Atma and the principles governing the true meaning of Brahm and such religious signs as doing fire sacrifices, wearing the sacred thread and the tuft of hair on the head, observing sacraments etc.

To quote this Upanishad—‘A true Brahmin is a wise and enlightened person who treats the Atma, the pure consciousness, as the non-dual Principal of creation (i.e. who regards the Atma as a personification of the supreme Brahm that is non-dual or Advaita and the only supreme Authority of creation), and for whom being steady in his meditation and contemplation as well as spiritual pursuit is the symbolic tuft of hair—such a person is deemed to be cleansed and made holy by whatever he does. This is because all his deeds are deemed to be auspicious and holy. [That is, he need not do special deeds such as fire sacrifices or observing of sacraments in order to wash off his sins or any kind of spiritual taints that might be adhering to him.]

He is deemed to have completed doing all religious and auspicious deeds required to be done by a man.

It must be understood that such an enlightened man is indeed a Brahmin for he is dedicated and devoted to Brahm (the Supreme Being), he is no less than a God, he is indeed a ‘Rishi’ (or a great sage), he is a ‘Tapasvi’ (or someone who is well endowed with the glorious virtues of Tapa, i.e. austerity and penance, and is steadfast in observing its tenets), he is the best follower of the tenets of the scriptures and an excellent spiritual aspirant, he is therefore the Guru (guide, teacher and preceptor) for the whole world.

A truly wise, enlightened and self-realised aspirant who understands the implications and import of what has been said above realises the truth of the statement that the pure conscious Atma standing for Brahm is the true identity of his. And therefore such an enlightened man declares ‘It (Brahm; Atma; Truth; Consciousness) is me’.

The Pashupat Brahm Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 1, verse no. 19 describes who a true Brahmin is as follows—“A true Brahmin is one who wears the Yagya Sutra (the sacred thread worn during the performance of fire sacrifices, especially the symbolic one as narrated in verse no. 16), who employs the Pranav Mantra (i.e. the OM Mantra) for his religious needs (such as when doing Japa or repetition, Yoga or meditation, Dhyana or contemplation, etc.), and who is well-versed in the principles of Brahm Yagya (spiritual practices which are equivalent to a formal fire sacrifice but done in a subtle and symbolic manner which lead directly to the realisation of the supreme cosmic Consciousness and the absolute Truth known as Brahm).

The Gods (the term is a metaphor for the virtues of auspiciousness, righteousness, holiness, divinity, nobility etc.) are to be found in the diligent observance of the principles that define a man as a Brahmin. [That is, if a man is a true Brahmin as outlined above, he is deemed to be living God in the sense that he would possess all the eclectic virtues that collectively defined as being ‘godly’.]

The Hans (the enlightened Atma, the self-realised and Brahm-realised person) who adheres to the principles of Sutra (i.e. who follows the tenets that lead to Brahm-realisation, who offers his obeisance to the Supreme Being in the manner outlined in this Upanishad, who leads a life like a true Brahmin as described above) is deemed to be doing the Yagya (the fire sacrifice).

There is no difference between the Hans and Pranav. That is, there is no difference between the immaculate Atma, the pure conscious 'self' known as the Hans, and the supreme transcendental Brahm known as Pranav. [Brahm is the cosmic Consciousness that produces vibrations of life in the ether that are heard in the form of Naad. These dynamic vibrations in the cosmic ether produce sound that is encapsulated in the monosyllabic word OM. Hence, the OM is a sound form or the cosmic Naad known as Pranav which stands for Brahm because it is the latter which has generated this sound. If the Atma is personified as a divine Swan known as Hans, the supreme cosmic Atma known as Brahm is personified in the form of Pranav which is a cosmic sound called Pranav, and which is represented by the word OM. Refer verse no. 17 and 20 of this Canto 1 of the Pashupat Brahm Upanishad in this context.] (19).”

The Par Brahm Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition, verse nos. 8-13 describe who *is* a true Brahmin, and verse no. 14 describes who *is not*. Now, let us examine what these verses say.

First let us see *who is not a true Brahmin*:--“Verse no. 14 = Those Brahmins who are engrossed merely in performing rituals and observing sacraments, or who are engaged in the mundane affairs of the world are Brahmins only for name's sake (and not true Brahmins), because they live only to fill their stomachs and enjoy the fame, comforts and pleasures that come with worldly respect. Such people go to hell at the end of their lives.

[That is, they continue to take birth and die again, and during each life they undergo sufferings and miseries that are part and parcel of gross mundane existence. They do not find Mukti or spiritual liberation and deliverance, nor do they find peace and bliss that comes with self and Brahm realisation. They do not have true Gyan, and are only pretending to have it to fulfill their worldly desires. In short, they are not true Brahmins, they are imposters, and they do not do justice to the institution of Brahm-hood. They give the holy stature of being a Brahmin a bad name.

The question arises, who then is a true Brahmin? The answer is self-evident in the foregoing as well as the following verses. That is, only those who have true knowledge of Brahm, and the depth of wisdom and enlightenment to understand what the term 'Brahm' is all about, who do not hanker after external purity and formalities but lay stress on inner cleansing and sincerity of purpose are true Brahmins. Such people would not be much bothered about sporting a tuft on the head or wearing the sacred thread to prove that they are Brahmins, but would instead strive to inculcate the glorious virtues that are so typical of those who have become self-and-Brahm-realised, who have really understood the truth and reality of things.] (14).”]

ए सब लच्छन बसहिं जासु उर । जानेहु तात संत संतत फुर ॥ ७ ॥

ē saba lacchana basahim jāsu ura. jānēhu tāta santa santata phura. 7.

All people who have these positive virtues firmly established in their hearts must surely be regarded as saints. (7)

सम दम नियम नीति नहिं डोलहिं । परुष बचन कबहूँ नहिं बोलहिं ॥ ८ ॥

sama dama niyama nīti nahim ḍōlahim. paruṣa bacana kabahūṁ nahim bōlahim.

8.

They have, and practice, the auspicious virtues of Sham and Dam¹ (self control of the senses, and suppression of desires for self gratification as well as for the material world with its temptations, comforts and pleasures).

They never violate the laws of Dharma (probity, propriety, righteousness, ethics, morality, nobility and auspiciousness), and diligently follow them. They never say an angry word to others indicating haughtiness and insult. (8)

[Note—¹*Sham* is control of the Mana (the wayward mind and the heart), Buddhi (intellect), Chitta (sub-conscious mind and the subtler aspects of the mind and intellect), and Ahankar (sense of pride in the subtle as well as the grosser aspect of the body of the creature), and concentrating their efforts towards the Lord God represented by the Supreme Consciousness and the Absolute Truth of creation at the macro level of creation, and the Atma or the soul of the individual at the micro level.

Dam is its associated control of the various sense organs of the body—viz. the five organs of perception (eyes, ears, tongue, nose and skin) and the five organs of action (hand, leg, mouth, excretory and genitals).

It is therefore obvious that ‘Dam’ is control of the grosser aspects of the body of the creature, while ‘Sham’ is the control of his subtle body.

The *Niyam* means regularity and diligence in observance of certain laws and rules that help the spiritual aspirant reach his goal. There are said to be ten Niyams. They have been already explained in this book in a note appended to the Chaupai line no. 9 that precedes Doha no. 80 appearing in Section 1, sub-section no. (8) above that describes the Chariot of God/Dharma Rath as it was narrated by Lord Ram for the benefit of Vibhishan.]

दो०. निंदा अस्तुति उभय सम ममता मम पद कंज ।

ते सज्जन मम प्रानप्रिय गुन मंदिर सुख पुंज ॥ ३८ ॥

dōhā.

nindā astuti ubhaya sama mamatā mama pada kaṅja.

tē sajjana mama prānapriya guna mandira sukha puṅja. 38.

They remain unruffled and calm even under the greatest of provocations; they treat praises and insults equally with stoic indifference. They have no attachment and affection for anything or anyone in this world, but for my holy feet. Verily I say that such pious gentlemen are very dear to me (Lord Ram) like one loves one’s own self, and are deemed to be a temple of all that is good, virtuous and holy; they become a treasury of peace, happiness and bliss.’ (Doha no. 38)

[Note—A true saint is one who treats all alike, and is completely detached from the world; he remains eternally calm and poised; he has no trace of ego and pride in him. He is humility and piety personified. Naturally therefore, he is neither offended when anyone speaks ill of him, nor elated at praises.

His only interest is the Lord; he has only one sort of affection—and that is in the holy feet of the Lord God, who in this case is Lord Ram, a personified form of the Supreme Being. The Lord says that such persons are extremely close and dear to him, and therefore they become a virtual temple of auspicious virtues and a fountainhead of happiness and bliss.]

(1.1) (viii) Uttar Kand, Doha no. 46 and its preceding Chaupai line nos. 2-8:-

[Lord Ram further describes the virtues and glories of Saints while emphasizing that saintly persons follow the spiritual path of Bhakti, the path of devotion and surrender before Lord God, for fulfillment of their spiritual quest and attainment of liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation.]

सरल सुभाव न मन कुटिलाई । जथा लाभ संतोष सदाई ॥ २ ॥

sarala subhāva na mana kuṭilā'ī. jathā lābha santōṣa sadā'ī. 2.

[Now, Lord Ram outlines the basic qualities that one must have to develop Bhakti in his heart, and be successful in its implementation. These are general good qualities a person must have in his life, whether he wishes to have Bhakti or not, as even a cursory reading of these virtues would show that they help the person become a good human being instead of some pervert and evil creature who is no better than an animal.]

Such persons who have Bhakti must have a simple and unpretentious nature which is free from cunning, wickedness, perversions, falsehood, deceit and conceit. They are always contented with whatever they have, not greed or yearning for more. Hence, they are always satisfied and happy. (2)

मोर दास कहाइ नर आसा । करइ तौ कहहु कहा बिस्वासा ॥ ३ ॥

mōra dāsa kahā'i nara āsā. kara'i tau kahahu kahā bisvāsā. 3.

Say, if one claims to be, on the one hand, my (Lord Ram's) devotee and says that he is dedicated to me, depends upon me, and has no one else as his Lord, but on the other hand

expects something from others, or depends upon others—then how can he so claim that he is my true follower, is truly dedicated to me, has true devotion and faith in me and has submitted himself to me in the true sense?

[In other words, a true devotee of the Lord is one who does not speak lies, and is completely trustworthy in all actions and words. He must be fully dedicated to the Supreme Lord, and depend upon the Lord as his sole protector and benefactor.] (3)

बहुत कहँ का कथा बढ़ाई । एहि आचरन बस्य मैं भाई ॥ ४ ॥

bahuta kaha'um' kā kathā barhā'ī. ēhi ācarana basya mair̥ bhā'ī. 4.

What more can I (Lord Ram, the incarnate Supreme Being) say; I am committed to love and protect those who have the grand eclectic virtues enumerated above. (4)

बैर न बिग्रह आस न त्रासा । सुखमय ताहि सदा सब आसा ॥ ५ ॥

baira na bigraha āsa na trāsā. sukhamaya tāhi sadā saba āsā. 5.

Such a person must not be inimical to anyone or harbour ill-will and malice towards any person in this world. He should not fight or quarrel with anyone, nor create animosity and hatred. He should not expect anything from anyone, nor should he fear them.

[Since he expects nothing from anyone, hates no one, and has no enemy in this world, it is obvious that he has nothing to fear from anybody. Since he wants nothing, there is no sense of frustration at not having been able to acquire anything, or that someone is preventing him from acquiring it, a situation that leads to jealousy and ill-will.]

For such a dispassionate, detached, enlightened and wise saint, all the directions (i.e. all the corners of the world) are equal and comfortable; they all provide him happiness and joy as he has neither any fear from any quarter nor is he jealous of the prosperity and wealth of others that may cause some degree of inferiority complex or a sense of dearth and want in him. (5)

अनारंभ अनिकेत अमानी । अनघ अरोष दच्छ बिग्यानी ॥ ६ ॥

anārambha anikēta amānī. anagha arōṣa daccha bigyānī. 6.

He does not start doing any deed with an expectation of a reward or favourable result, and hence does it with total detachment with the idea that it is his destiny that has presented itself before him in the form of the situation requiring him to do what he is doing. [And wise and enlightened as he is, he submits all the consequences of his deeds,

good or bad, to the Lord God, becoming free from any mental involvement and attendant worries.]

He has no home of his own.

[Here, the reference is to the gross body which all living beings regard as their own truthful self, as well as the gross world which all living beings regard as their habitat. The secret idea is that a true saint and holy person is he who has become enlightened of the great spiritual fact that the true 'self' is the Atma, the pure cosmic Consciousness that is an ethereal, subtle and sublime entity which has no fixed abode because it is all-pervading and omnipresent in this world as the Holy Spirit. This Atma or Soul is distinct from the gross body, and since the Atma is the person's 'truthful self', he does not regard the body as his identity. Again, such a self-realised person understands that the outside world is transient and delusory, it is a creation of the mind, and it is entrapping and shackling by nature like quicksand or quagmire which sucks anyone in if one puts a leg into it even inadvertently. How can the cosmic Atma for which the whole creation is a habitat, which is all-pervading, all-encompassing, omnipresent, immanent and ethereal by nature limit itself to a gross body or the gross brick-and-mortar house that ignorant people call a 'home'?)

He has no attachment or attractions for anything or anyone; he is not infatuated with them. He is immaculate and sinless. He has no anger and wrathfulness in him. He is an expert in the laws of proper conduct and well-versed in the knowledge of the Truth. He is wise, realised and enlightened. (6)

प्रीति सदा सज्जन संसर्गा । तृन सम बिषय स्वर्ग अपबर्गा ॥ ७ ॥

prīti sadā sajjana sansargā. tṛna sama biṣaya svarga apabargā. 7.

He finds pleasure and happiness in the company of saints, of holy and pious people. He treats all things of the material world of sense objects as being worthless as a reed or grass. For him, the heaven and the world are equal.

[This is primarily because he has realised that the ultimate spiritual truth in this creation is known as the Atma. This Atma is a cosmic ethereal entity known as Consciousness that resides in his own bosom and no where else, that it is this Atma residing in his own self which is also called the Holy Spirit, the Parmatma, the Supreme Being, whom the world calls the Lord God, and that there is no such thing as a separate heaven somewhere in the sky where he will go after death to enjoy some great privileges and physical comfort, or a distinct place called the world where he has to suffer while he lives in it. He realises that all suffering is his own creation; it is his mind that feels that this is causing pain and that is causing happiness. The heaven above is as illusory as the world under it. The reality is that when the Atma wants to find freedom from all fetters, it can do so instantly by becoming detached from everything. When the body is shed, the Atma is physically liberated from its four walls. Freedom from bondages of spiritual ignorance and delusions is the actual symbolic form of Mukti, or liberation and deliverance, which gives immense happiness, joy, bliss and tranquility to the creature—a

situation that is equated to being in heaven. The opposite situation would then obviously create unhappiness and misery. This is equivalent to suffering in this world.] (7)

भगति पच्छ हठ नहिं सठताई । दुष्ट तर्क सब दूरि बहाई ॥ ८ ॥

bhagati paccha haṭha nahim saṭhatā'ī. duṣṭa tarka saba dūri bahā'ī. 8.

Saints prefer to follow the path of Bhakti—having love, devotion, dedication, faith and trust for the Lord God. He keeps a great distance from those who are wicked, evil and pervert, as well as from aimless debates and useless logics that make no sense and are a waste of time and energy. (8)

दो०. मम गुन ग्राम नाम रत गत ममता मद मोह ।
ता कर सुख सोइ जानइ परानंद संदोह ॥ ४६ ॥

dōhā.

mama guna grāma nāma rata gata mamatā mada mōha.
tā kara sukha sō'i jāna'i parānanda sandōha. 46.

Only those who remain submerged in the nectar representing my countless virtues and the spiritual ambrosia of my holy name (i.e. always remember them and repeats my divine name), and are free from the entanglements of Mamta (worldly attachments and affections), the tainting effects of Mada (arrogance, haughtiness, hypocrisy, pride of being superior to others, ego), and the fetters of Moha (worldly attractions and infatuations)—verily, such saints know and are able to taste the divine nectar of bliss and happiness of the highest order (that comes naturally with practicing of the above eclectic virtues).” (Doha no. 46).

(1.1) (ix) Uttar Kand, Chaupai line nos. 5, 13-16, 21 that precede Doha no. 121:-

[There was a saintly Crow named Kaagbhusund. He was approached by Garud, the mount of Lord Vishnu, to remove certain doubts in his mind that had perplexed him no end. During the discourse that ensued, Garud asked Kaagbhusund to briefly tell him the qualities of Saints and Non-Saints. Kaagbhusund outlined the virtues of Saints as follows:

संत असंत मरम तुम्ह जानहु । तिन्ह कर सहज सुभाव बखानहु ॥ ५ ॥

santa asanta marama tumha jānahu. tinha kara sahaja subhāva bakhānahu. 5.

You are well acquainted with the inherent qualities, mentality and characters of both the saints and the non-saints. Please describe these natural qualities and innate dispositions for me. (5)

नहिं दरिद्र सम दुख जग माहीं । संत मिलन सम सुख जग नाहीं ॥ १३ ॥

पर उपकार बचन मन काया । संत सहज सुभाउ खगराया ॥ १४ ॥

nahim daridra sama dukha jaga māhīm. santa milana sama sukha jaga nāhīm.

13.

para upakāra bacana mana kāyā. santa sahaja subhā'u khagarāyā. 14.

There is no misery in this world that can be greater than poverty and wants; and there is no happiness, no joy and no blessing greater in this world than having contact or association or communion with a saint. (13)

‘Benefit and good of others’ is always in the speech, thought and deeds of a saint; this is their natural disposition and habit. (14)

संत सहहिं दुख परहित लागी । परदुख हेतु असंत अभागी ॥ १५ ॥

भूर्ज तरू सम संत कृपाला । परहित निति सह बिपति बिसाला ॥ १६ ॥

santa sahaīm dukha parahita lāgī. paradukha hētu asanta abhāgī. 15.

bhūrja tarū sama santa kṛpālā. parahita niti saha bipati bisālā. 16.

Saints undergo sufferings for the benefit of others (so that the latter get solace and comfort), while non-saints are so unfortunate that they are the cause of pain and grief of others (even if they do not gain from it).

[To wit, true saints take great care that they are not the cause of any sort of discomfort to others. Instead, they strive to provide solace and happiness to others even if it meant they have to endure sufferance themselves. On the other hand, it is the natural habit of non-saints that they enjoy the suffering of others even if it does not lead to any gain for themselves.] (15)

The merciful and tender-hearted saints and holy people are like the Birch tree, their principal nature being to serve others even if it means great suffering for themselves.

[Saints are compared to the Birch tree because the outer layer of this tree is torn off and beaten to a pulp to make paper, as well as clothes that were worn by sages and hermits in ancient times. In other words, saintly persons would prefer to subject themselves to the greatest of pains if their pain and suffering help others. The most stellar

example of one such saint is king Dadhichi who had given his own bones to the Gods so that they can devise weapons from these bones so as to defeat the demons.] (16)

संत उदय संतत सुखकारी । बिस्व सुखद जिमि इंदु तमारी ॥ २१ ॥

santa udaya santata sukhakārī. bisva sukhada jimi indu tamārī. 21.

On the other hand, the rise or advancement of a saint is always the cause of universal joy, happiness and comfort in the world just like the rising of the moon and the sun (indu tamārī)¹ invariably brings joy and delight for the whole world. (21)

[¹The sun is called “tamārī” because it destroys darkness, or “Tama”.]

(1.1) (x) Uttar Kand, Chaupai line nos. 6-8 that precede Doha no. 125:-

संत बिटप सरिता गिरि धरनी । पर हित हेतु सबन्ह कै करनी ॥ ६ ॥

santa biṭapa saritā giri dharanī. para hita hētu sabanha kai karanī. 6.

Truly indeed, the deeds and actions of saints, trees, rivers, mountains and the earth are always for the good of others. (6)

[To wit, saints always think of others’ good and welfare so much so that they would rather prefer to suffer if it helps others. Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, Chaupai line no. 15 that precedes Doha no. 121.

The trees offer shade, flowers, fruits and seeds to serve other creatures. Even their own bodies are offered to others by way of firewood and construction material. The skin of the Birch tree is used to make paper and clothes that were worn by hermits in ancient times. A host of birds and insects find their dwelling place in them.

Rivers are the lifelines of human civilisation. They are homes to a complete ecosystem consisting of aquatic plants and animals. Some of them are regarded as very holy: for instance river Ganges and river Yamuna.

Quite like the rivers, the mountains give shelter to huge trees and forests, which in turn are habitats of wildlife. They cause rainfall, are abodes for hermits and ascetics, and offer cooler climes to those who can’t bear the heat of the plains. Some of the most important pilgrim centers in India are located there. All the mighty rivers have their origin in the glaciers of the mountains.

The importance of earth is so tremendous that it need not be enumerated. The earth is called ‘Mother Earth’ simply because it always serves its off-springs, all the creatures who live on or beneath its surface, providing them with all their needs and

being a host to them during their life—in spite of the fact that the same off-spring exploits the earth and never even thanks it.

Like all these entities, your life has been spent in providing spiritual guidance to creatures like me who find themselves lost in the thick maze of delusions.

The excellent qualities of true saints have been outlined by Lord Ram himself in Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, (i) Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 37—to Doha no. 38; and (ii) Chaupai line nos. 1-2 that precede Doha no. 41.]

संत हृदय नवनीत समाना । कहा कबिन्ह परि कहै न जाना ॥ ७ ॥
निज परिताप द्रवइ नवनीता । पर दुख द्रवहिं संत सुपुनीता ॥ ८ ॥

santa hr̥daya navanīta samānā. kahā kabinha pari kahai na jānā. 7.
nija paritāpa drava'i navanītā. para dukha dravahim̐ santa supunītā. 8.

Expert and learned poets have asserted that the heart of a saint is like pure and freshly produced butter (navanīta). But unfortunately these poets overlooked their uniqueness, and did not highlight the real quality and outstanding virtue of such exalted saints. [What is it? It is narrated in the next line.] (7)

The butter melts when it is heated on fire, but the heart of exalted saints is so tender and merciful that it melts at the suffering and torments of others. [To wit, even if a saint is not personally subjected to any trouble but he observes others in trouble, his heart begins to wail as if the trouble was being suffered by the saint himself. Their heart has a lot of empathy and sympathy for others.] (8)

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(1.2) Goswami Tulsidas' Vairagya Sandipani—verse no. 8-35, 41-42:-

The book 'Vairagya Sandipani' was penned by the renowned saint-philosopher-poet of India, Goswami Tulsidas (birth: Samvat 1589, corresponding to 1532 A.D; death: Samvat 1680, corresponding to A.D. 1623) roughly between Samvat 1626 and 1627 (A.D. 1569-70).

The name of this book has two words—viz. 'Vairagya (Vairāgya)' and 'Sandipani'. The first word 'Vairagya' literally means renunciation of the material charms and temptations of the gross mortal world, to develop natural detachment and dispassion for all the sense objects of material world, and distance oneself from the natural inclinations of the gross organs of perception of the body that tend to draw the Jiva (the living being; the creature) away from the natural peace and bliss that is inherent to his or her Atma (the soul; the inner and the true 'conscious self'), and instead getting him or her entangled in the world of grossness that never give abiding peace and happiness.

The second word 'Sandipani' means something that kindles or arouses or ignites or motivates.

Therefore, the main idea expressed in this book 'Vairagya Sandipani' is how one can easily kindle a sense of renunciation from the false charms of the materialistic world that never allows rest and peace to the living being, and keeps him or her perpetually unhappy and unfulfilled. The reward of such wisdom and enlightenment is attainment of eternal sense of spiritual bliss, peace, happiness, beatitude and felicity.

To achieve this noble objective, the great poet-saint Tulsidas has advised the Jiva (the living being) first to have deep devotion and faith in Lord God (who for Tulsidas is "Lord Ram", a personified form of the Supreme Being), and then to closely observe the noble and auspicious qualities, characters, deeds and lifestyles of true saints (and not imposters), the way they live and handle different circumstances of life, observe their thinking processes and the calmness of their demeanours, and see how they are so happy and blissful in spite of living in the same world of problems and miseries in which the observer himself lives and seeks succour for his own problems and sorrows.

To wit, when the observer sees truly saintly persons living a happy life of contentedness and bliss in spite of lacking material comforts and external things of the material world that a man thinks give pleasure and happiness, he is motivated to investigate its reason. He deduces that true and abiding happiness, joy, bliss and peace, which is the object of all human endeavours, is not to be found in the outside world, but somewhere else. This observation inspires a wise and intelligent observer to follow the example of these saintly men so that he too can derive the same happiness, joy, bliss and peace. He slowly begins to realise the futility of worldly pursuit, and sees the wisdom in renouncing all pretensions of being happy by worldly indulgences because internally he isn't happy a bit. That is to say, he develops 'Vairagya'; he develops detachment for the external world of false happiness and charm, and instead determines for himself that he would do favour to himself if he now onwards follows the path that would give him lasting peace and happiness; peace and happiness that is not illusionary, but one that is real and rewarding.

And how is this Vairagya kindled in his heart and innerself? It is done by the company of saints who practice and demonstrate this eclectic virtue in their own lives. It is in this company of saints and truly holy people that the seeker learns about this path, both by personal observation and also by listening the the talks and discourses of these wise and self-realised saints, asking them for clarifications and removal of doubts and confusions, and following in their footsteps to gain the same spiritual reward that they have accessed.

Obviously, with a living example of a true saint to guide a person on his spiritual quest, the path becomes easy for him or her. This is the main thrust of the book ‘Vairagya Sandipani’, and this is its main objective.

So, let’s now start reading the verses of ‘Vairagya Sandipani’ to learn about the grand characters and excellent qualities of Saints and Saintly Persons.

8. दोहा- सरल बरन भाषा सरल, सरल अर्थमय मानी।
तुलसी सरलै संतजन, ताहि परी पहिचानि।

8. dōhā- sarala barana bhāṣā sarala, sarala arthamaya māni.
tulasī saralai santajana, tāhi parī pahicāni..

It (Vairagya Sandipani) has simple words and language, and its meaning is simple and straight forward.

Tulsidas says that saints of a pure and simple heart can easily understand it. [To wit, it is easily comprehensible by true saints and pious people as they not only practice its teachings in their lives but also experience the spiritual rewards it says one gets by inculcating the glorious virtues that saints possess.] [8]

9. चौ०- अति सीतल अति ही सुखदाई । सम दम राम भजन अधिकाई।
जड़ जीवन कौं करै सचेता। जग महँ बिचरत है एहि हेता।

9. caupāī- ati sītala ati hī sukhadāī. sama dama rāma bhajana adhikāī..
jaṛa jīvana kauṁ karai sacētā. jaga maham̃ bicarata hai ēhi hētā..

Saints (those who are of a pious heart, and possess exemplary virtues and excellent characters) are of a calm temperament and full of bliss and tranquillity so much so that their calmness and blissful nature effuses from them to provide peace and bliss to all others who are in their company. [It is like the case of the sun or the moon whose light illuminates everyone in the world, uniformly and without distinction.]

They have not only conquered the vagrant mind and heart (the Mana) but have also controlled their sense organs of perception and action¹ in an exemplary manner. Not only this, their chief attribute is that they have developed natural sense of devotion for Lord Ram, and have surrendered themselves before the Lord completely. They are

engaged in enlightening the ignorant people about the reality and truth of life and about one's spiritual well-being, and it is for this purpose that they continue to live and roam in this world so that they can spread the light of spiritual wisdom and to remove the darkness of utter ignorance and delusions which have engulfed the world at large. [9]

[¹There are five organs of perception such as the ears, nose, tongue, eyes and skin; and five organs of action such as the hands, legs, mouth, genitals and excretory.]

10. दोहा- तुलसी ऐसे कहूँ कहूँ, धन्य धरनि वह संत।
परकाजे परमारथी, प्रीति लिये निबहंत।।

10. dōhā- tulasī aisē kahūṁ kahūṁ, dhan'ya dharani vaha santa.
parakājē paramārathī, prīti liyē nibahanta..

Tulsidas says that such saints (as described above in verse no. 9) are rare in this world, and that land where such saints are present is indeed very fortunate and blessed.

Such saints are ever engrossed in serving others selflessly and helping them in their spiritual quest, and at the same time they themselves relentlessly pursue the path of spiritualism, the path of self-realisation and of self-improvement. [10]

11. की मुख पट दीन्हे रहैं, जथा अर्थ भाषंत।
तुलसी या संसारमें, सो बिचारजुत संत।।

11. kī mukha paṭa dīnhē rahaim, jathā artha bhāṣanta.
tulasī yā sansāramēm, sō bicārajuta santa..

Tulsidas says that those saints who prefer to keep quiet (do not speak unnecessarily and unwarranted words), and if they have to they speak only the truth, are really wise and honest saints in the true sense of the word. [11]

[In other words, true saints are those who do not say things that the world wants to hear though such things are untrue and detrimental to the spiritual well-being of the creatures. They would prefer to keep quiet rather than trying to please the world by saying pleasing things which are falsehoods. If they speak, they speak only the 'truth', and nothing but the truth.]

12. बोलै बचन बिचारि कै, लीन्हें संत सुभावा।
तुलसी दुख दुर्बचन के, पंथ देत नहिं पाँवा।।

12. bōlai bacana bicāri kai, līnhēm santa subhāva.
tulasī dukha durbacana kē, pantha dēta nahim pāmva..

Such saints think wisely before speaking, and have acquired the temperament (mental bearing) of a truly pious soul.

Tulsidas says that they neither hurt anyone's feelings or sentiments, nor speak ill-will of others. [12]

13. सत्रु न काहू करि गनै, मित्र गनै नहिं काहि।
तुलसी यह मत संतको, बोलै समता माहि॥

13. satru na kāhū kari ganai, mitra ganai nahim kāhi.
tulasī yaha mata santakō, bōlai samatā māhi..

He (such great saints) neither treats anyone as an enemy nor as a friend—i.e. all the Jivas, the living beings, are equal in his eyes.

Tulsidas says that it is the basic principle of a saint that he treats everyone equally and with equanimity. [13]

[That is, he treats all with parity; he practices the eclectic principles of equanimity, equality, dispassion and fortitude in his life; he treats everyone equally and with the same affection in his heart; he does not distinguish between two or more persons based on caste, colour, creed, religion, etc. And what is the reason for this? It is because he sees the same 'Atma' or soul in each living being; he does know that the external body is not the creature's true identity, but only a vehicle that carries the Atma. And this 'Atma' is nothing but 'pure consciousness' which in itself is a holy, divine, sublime and subtle entity that is pure and un-corrupt.]

14. चौ०-अति अनन्यगति इंद्रि जीता। जाको हरि बिनु कतहुँ न चीता॥
मृग तृष्णा सम जग जिय जानी। तुलसी ताहि संत पहिचानी॥

14. caupāṭi- ati anan'yagati indrī jītā. jākō hari binu katahum' na cītā..
mrga trṣṇā sama jaga jiya jānī. tulasī tāhi santa pahicānī..

He who has become one with the Supreme Being (i.e. who is totally devoted and surrendered to God, who remains constantly submerged in the thoughts of the Lord; who has attained a state of transcendental existence when his 'self' identifies itself with the supreme Self that is eternal and infinite—"anan'yagati"), he who has conquered his sense organs (i.e. who practices self-control over his organs of perception and action, and does not fall in their temptations—"indrī jītā"), he whose mind-intellect complex is concentrated on Lord Hari (the Supreme Being; Lord God symbolised by Lord Vishnu and his incarnation of Lord Ram) and finds no charm anywhere else (i.e. he whose mind is devoted to the Lord and finds no substance in the gross mundane world—"jākō hari binu katahum' na cītā"), and he who knows that this world is simply a mirage (i.e. illusory and transient—"mrga trṣṇā sama jaga jiya jānī")—verily, Tulsidas says that such a man should be recognised as a true and pious saint. [14]

15. एक भरोसो एक बल, एक आस बिस्वास ।
रामरूप स्वाती जलद, चातक तुलसीदास ॥

15. *ēka bharōsō ēka bala, ēka āsa bisvāsa.*
rāmarūpa svātī jalada, cātaka tulasīdāsa.

Tulsidas says that the real saints are those who (i) rely and depend only upon Lord Ram and no one else whomsoever (*ēka bharōsō*), (ii) have only one strength, authority, power and support (in the form of Lord Ram—“*ēka bala*”), (iii) have only one source (of Lord Ram) from whom to expect anything whatsoever (*ēka āsa*), (iv) are firm in their faith, belief and conviction (*bisvāsa*), and (v) for whom the Lord God's incarnation in the divine physical form of Lord Sri Ram is like a dark rain-bearing cloud of the ‘Swati Nakshatra’ (*rāmarūpa svātī jalada*) while they regard themselves as the famed bird known as ‘*Cātaka*’ (which keeps its gaze fixed on this cloud because it loves the cloud very much and seeks a drop of rain-water directly from the cloud to quench its thirst)¹. [15]

[Note—¹The bird Chatak (sparrow hawk; a cuckoo) has a legendary reputation that it drinks rain-drops that fall directly into its beak from the cloud, and would prefer to die due to thirst if the rain-drops fail to fall in its mouth rather than drink water from any other source to survive. The Chatak is so enamoured of the cloud that it keeps its gaze fixed on the latter in the hope that the cloud will oblige it. And the cloud reciprocates the bird's love for it because it is believed that the first drops of rain that fall from the cloud reach the bird's beak before it touches the earth.

This metaphor means that true saints are those who do not seek anything from this world, and rely solely upon their beloved Lord Ram for all their needs—temporal as well as spiritual. Such saints are like Chakor who would prefer to die of thirst rather than compromise its love and devotion for the cloud.

The metaphysical meaning of this verse is that this bird Chatak does not wish to pollute its inner-self by drinking polluted water from the surrounding world, but is determined to drink rain drops falling directly in its beak from the cloud as it is the purest form of water falling from the heavens. Similarly, a true saint and holy person would not pollute the purity of his Atma or soul or his inner-self by allowing himself to get attracted to this mundane gross world and its delusory charms, but rather focuses his attention on his ‘true self’ which is an image of the ‘supreme Self’ represented by Lord Ram. He would therefore not seek anything from others who are themselves polluted, but prefer to ask the Lord because he is purity personified as well as the ‘parent of the individual's Atma’, being the ‘Supreme Atma’ or Parmatma. It is like a child asking its own parent for whatever it needs, instead of asking from a neighbour or even any other member of the family.]

16. सो जन जगत जहाज है, जाके राग न दोष ।
तुलसी तृष्णा त्यागि कै, गहै सील संतोष ॥

16. *sō jana jagata jahāja hai, jākē rāga na dōṣa.*
tulasī tr̥ṣṇā tyāgi kai, gahai sīla santōṣa..

Tulsidas says that those who have no attachment or infatuation with anything related to this world (*rāga*), who do not harbour any kind of ill-will, malice and jealousy towards anyone nor see faults in others (*na dōṣa*), and who have renounced desires, greed and rapacity for the material things of the world and overcome the natural tendency of the sense organs to seek gratification (*tr̥ṣṇā tyāgi kai*), and have instead inculcated the noble virtues of modesty, politeness, courteousness, and decorum in their behaviour and conduct (*sīla*) as well as an exemplary degree of contentedness with whatever is available to them instead of perpetually remaining unsatisfied and hankering for more (*santōṣa*)—verily, such noble persons are like a ship that can take other ordinary people across the world which is like a vast ocean that would be otherwise difficult to cross.

[That is, those who follow the example of saints with the above characters are easily able to cross over this mundane existence of grossness in this world that is marked by an interminable chain of sorrows and grief and frustrations that come in the wake of endless desires and quest for more, and instead reach a state of existence that is characterised by perpetual sense of peace, happiness and bliss.] [16]

17. सील गहनि सब की सहनि, कहनि हीय मुख राम।
 तुलसी रहिए एहि रहनि, संत जनन को काम॥

17. *sīla gahani saba kī sahani, kahani hīya mukha rāma.*
tulasī rahi'ē ēhi rahani, santa janana kō kāma..

According to Tulsidas, true saints practice the principles of courteous and polite behaviour in their day-to-day life, and strive to inculcate or develop good qualities in themselves whenever they come to see such qualities in others (*sīla gahani*). They practice tolerance and fortitude by politely accepting whatever treatment is given to them by others, without feeling hurt themselves or seeking revenge or retribution for bad behaviour of others towards them (*saba kī sahani*).

At all times in their lives, they remember Lord Ram in their hearts and speak of the Lord's glories and divine stories through their mouths (*kahani hīya mukha rāma*).

For in all sooth Tulsidas asserts that this is the true way a saint should live his life.

[In other words, true saints are those who are always submerged in the thoughts of the Lord and never allow either their heart or their mind to harbour any other thoughts. At the same time, they use their tongue and mouth to praise the Lord and sing his divine glories as a means to purify their inner-self as well as the world outside. Even if others say nasty things about them, they do not pay heed to them, and instead of polluting their tongue by cursing their opponents and detractors they say the holy name of Lord Ram—as this has a positive effect on them as well as their opponents in the long run, for the latter regret their impertinence and feel sorry while the former is able to maintain his peace and calm.] [17]

18. निज संगी निज सम करत, दुरजन मन दुख दून।
मलयाचल है संतजन, तुलसी दोष बिहून ॥

18. nija saṅgī nija sama karata, durajana mana dukha dūna.
malayācala hai santajana, tulasī dōṣa bihūna..

Saints convert those who accompany them in their own likeness (i.e. those who stay in contact with pious souls acquire eclectic spiritual virtues themselves by the virtue of constant contact with the former), but they double (i.e. increase as much as twice) the anger and jealousy of their adversaries and opponents (because these evil people do not like the respect and honour saints get from the world, and also because these saints' good advices to others hinder and create obstacles to the nefarious designs of evil people who wish to mislead the world and cheat it for their own vested interests).

[In other words, those who are of a noble and righteous temperament find joy and happiness in the company of saints because their souls find compatibility with each other. On the other hands, those who are wicked and evil at heart, find saints like thorns in their back, because the latter act as barriers against evil designs of the former. It is like the simple case of an ordinary citizen finding comfort when a policeman is round the corner, while a thief will begin to squirm at the sight of the guardian of law.]

Tulsidas says that despite all the provocations from non-saints, true saints remain calm and poised, without being affected by any of the faults that are incumbent on contact with non-saints (evil persons) even as the Malayachal (Chandan/sandal-wood) always remains cool no matter how hard it is rubbed.

[To produce a paste from sandal-wood, its two pieces are rubbed against each other vigorously with water being sprinkled occasionally to dissolve the powder produced by such rubbing. But inspite of this vigorous rubbing, the sandal-wood always feels cool when touched. This metaphor, when applied to saints, means that no matter how much insult is inflicted upon them by their adversaries, no matter how harsh they are treated by others, they still remain calm, smiling and forgiving.] [18]

19. कोमल बानी संत की, स्रवत अमृतमय आइ।
तुलसी ताहि कठोर मन, सुनत मैन होइ जाइ ॥

19. kōmala bānī santa kī, sraṇata amṛtamaya ā'i.
tulasī tāhi kaṭhōra mana, sunata maina hō'i jā'i..

The word of a saint is so sweet, pleasant and affable that it appears to be like a drop of sweet nectar. [Saints are soft-spoken by nature; they speak sweetly and in a pleasant tone; they never use harsh and angry words.]

Tulsidas says that even a hardened heart becomes malleable and soft (like wax) on hearing such words (said by a saint). [19]

[Compare this observation with verse no. 18 wherein it is said that wicked people are inclined to use harsh words against saints. In spite of all the provocations, saints speak sweetly, and their words never offend anyone.]

20. अनुभव सुख उत्पत्ति करत, भय-भ्रम धरै उठाइ ।
ऐसी बानी संत की, जो उर भेदै आइ ॥

20. anubhava sukha utapati karata, bhaya-bhrama dharai uṭhā'i.
aisī bānī santa kī, jō ura bhēdai ā'i..

The words of a saint are such that they produce a feeling that comes with self-realisation and experiencing of the truth on the one hand (anubhava sukha utapati karata), and remove or eliminate the fear caused by ignorance and delusions on the other hand (bhaya-bhrama dharai uṭhā'i).

The words of a saint have such powerful effect and force that they can penetrate deep into the heart of the listener and rupture all sorts of hardened knots that cling to his heart (jō ura bhēdai ā'i), knots that symbolise well-entrenched confusions, delusions and ignorance that the person has been harbouring since ages.

[In other words, whatever a true saint says helps a person who hears them to overcome his ignorance and fears that are inherent in worldly delusions. The result is attainment of peace, happiness, contentedness and spiritual bliss. Words of a saint help a person to obtain knowledge of the Truth, which in turn helps him to overcome all sorts of problems created by falsehoods.] [20]

21. सीतल बानी संत की, ससिहू ते अनुमान ।
तुलसी कोटि तपन हरै, जो कोउ धरै कान ॥

21. sītala bānī santa kī, sasihū tē anumāna.
tulasī kōṭi tapana harai, jō kō'u dhārai kāna..

The cool and soothing words of a saint are far superior to these virtues inherent in the light of the moon.

[The moonlight is traditionally believed to be very cool and soothing for the nerves. But this soothing effect of the moon's light is limited only to the physical gross body of the creature. On the other hand, the sweet words of a true saint have a spiritual dimension to them and they go deep down to have a soothing effect on his agitated heart. Whereas the moon's light has only a transient benefit, the words of a saint have a lasting effect on the person, affecting his inner-self in a subtle way that helps to heal him from within.]

Tulsidas says that those who hear these rejuvenating words of saints and keep them stored in their ears (i.e. go on hearing them repeatedly), are sure to get rid of immense sufferings that they suffer from.

[The ear is the medium by which the creature hears anything in this world. All the things that he hears are related to this deluding world which is selfish and exploitative. No one speaks about the welfare and self-interest of the creature. A time comes when the creature feels fed-up of hearing selfish things and advices that tend to exploit him to serve the world. So he begins to long for someone who will think of him and tell him something that would be of benefit for him.

The words of saints meet the creature's spiritual as well as temporal needs as they speak the truth and show him the path that would give him real peace and happiness instead of artificial ones that are short-lived, and which would help him to serve his own needs instead of the selfish needs of the world.] [21]

22. चौ०- पाप ताप सब सूल नसावै। मोह अंध रबि बचन बहावै ॥
तुलसी ऐसे सदगुन साधू। बेद मध्य गुन बिदित अगाधू ॥

22. caupā'ī-pāpa tāpa saba sūla nasāvai. mōha andha rabi bacana bahāvai..
tulasī aisē sadaguna sādḥū. bēda madhya guna bidita agādhū..

Saints destroys all types of sins, sufferings and agonies (of others who come in contact with them).

Their words spread like the rays of the sun removing the darkness of ignorance.

Tulsidas says that saints have abundance of good qualities in them, and these virtues have been lauded and described as well as made famous by the Vedas (the holy primary scriptures). [22]

23. दोहा— तन करि मन करि बचन करि, काहू दूखत नाहिं।
तुलसी ऐसे संतजन, रामरूप जग माहि ॥

23. dōhā-tana kari mana kari bacana kari, kāhū dūkhata nāhim.
tulasī aisē santajana, rāmarūpa jaga māhi..

Tulsidas says that he who never hurts anyone in anyway whatsoever, either by his body (i.e. by his deeds and actions), by his mind (evil thoughts and use of the mind to plan harm of others) or by his words (i.e. spoken as well as written word)—such persons are said to be living embodiments of Lord Ram in this world.

[That is, such a person who does not allow himself to hurt or harm others in anyway is a personified form of the Lord who is forgiving, loving, caring, friendly and warm towards all the living beings of this creation. No one ever fears the Lord; he loves the entire creation equally and is the supreme Father of all. Just like a child never fears his parent, the creature never fears the Lord. If a person inculcates this virtue of love and compassion for all then naturally he acquires the virtues of the Lord himself, and therefore represents the Lord in this physical world that is otherwise torn asunder by strife, jealousy, hatred, selfishness, ego and greed. The emphasis in this verse is on the eclectic principle of 'non-violence'.

Indirectly, this verse lauds the glory of Lord Ram as one who loves all living beings equally, and the Lord takes care that he does not become a source of pain and grief to others. On the contrary, being the Supreme Lord of creation, it becomes obligatory for Lord Ram to take care of all the creatures of this creation like a parent takes care of his or her off spring, and ensure that if any one of them finds himself alone and forsaken then he must be assured that there is someone who actually loves him so much so that this dejected person should never feel lonely and abandoned.] [23]

24. मुख दीखत पातक हरै, परसत कर्म बिलाहिं ।
बचन सुनत मन मोहगत, पूरब भाग मिलाहिं ॥

24. mukha dīkhata pātaka harai, parasata karma bilāhim.
bacana sunata mana mōhagata, pūraba bhāga milāhim..

It is rare and very fortunate for a person to find a true saint, for in all sooth, by seeing and meeting such a saint, a number of benefits are got: (i) a person's sins and their horrible consequences are automatically neutralised by this interaction (*mukha dīkhata pātaka harai*); (ii) the mere touch of such saints (i.e. by their communion and company) all the Karmas of the person (i.e. the aggregated affects of a person's past deeds and actions) are dissipated (*parasata karma bilāhim*); and (iii) by hearing the enlightening and wise words of such saints, all the Moha (ignorance, confusions, distractions and delusions) that were so far present in a person's heart are removed for good (*bacana sunata mana mōhagata*).

Verily, it is the result of extremely good luck that a person comes in contact with such saints (whose virtues, characters and qualities are being enumerated in this Book 'Vairagya Sandipani'). [24]

25. अति कोमल अरु बिमल रुचि, मानस में मल नाहिं ।
तुलसी रत मन होइ रहै, अपने साहिब माहिं ॥

25. ati kōmala aru bimala ruci, mānasa mēm mala nāhim.
tulasī rata mana hō'i rahai, apanē sāhiba māhim..

Saints are characterised by having wishes or desires—if they have any wish or desire at all in the first place—that are tender by nature and spotless (i.e. free from any sort of worldly taints and vested interests—“*ati kōmala aru bimala ruci*”).

Their heart and mind are absolutely pure and free from any sort of corruptions, deceit, pretensions, polluting thoughts and ideas (*mānasa mēm mala nāhim*).

Tulsidas says that they are always engrossed in the thoughts of their Lord (“*rata mana hō'i rahai, apanē sāhiba māhim*”; i.e. they remain submerged in the bliss obtained in their heart by meditating upon Lord Ram, the Lord God of creation, the Lord whom such saints regard as their revered deity). [25]

26. जाके मन ते उठि गई, तिल-तिल तृष्णा चाहि।
मनसा बाचा कर्मना, तुलसी बंदत ताहि।।

26. jākē mana tē uṭhi ga'ī, tīla-tīla tr̥ṣṇā cāhi.
manasā bācā karmanā, tulasī bandata tāhi..

Tulsidas says that he offers great homage from the depth of his heart (*manasā*) as well as with his words (*bācā*) and actions (*karmanā*) to those (saints) from whose hearts even the smallest speck of worldly desires and attachments (*tīla-tīla tr̥ṣṇā cāhi*) have been completely eliminated (*mana tē uṭhi ga'ī*)¹. [26]

[¹This verse can be read and interpreted in another way as follows: “Tulsidas bows before and gives his deep respects to such persons (i.e. saints) who have completely eliminated all desires and attachments for this material world of sense objects, and have developed total detachment and dispassion from them, never greeding for them or get tempted by them, and this eclectic state of renunciation sprouts from their inner-self, their ‘Mana’ (*manasā*’; i.e. their mind and heart), and is exhibited in what they speak (*bācā*) and in all their actions (*karmanā*).”

It is but natural for all living beings to harbour some desire for enjoyment of the material things of the world that tend to appease one’s sense organs, and to find some sort of attachment with such things which give joy to the senses. To be a totally dispassionate and neutral towards them is very difficult thing to practice. Here Tulsidas stresses the importance of the virtue of renunciation and detachment from the gross world of sense objects and its various temptations.]

27. कंचन काँचहि सम गनै, कामिनि काष्ठ पषान।
तुलसी ऐसे संतजन, पृथ्वी ब्रह्म समान।।

27. kañcana kām̐cahi sama ganai, kām̐ni kāṣṭha paṣāna.
tulasī aisē santajana, pṛṭhvī brahma samāna..

Those saints who (i) see no difference between gold and glass (i.e. who practice exemplary renunciation and detachment from the material world so much so that a valuable piece of gold has no greater value for them than a worthless piece of glass because they have overcome all worldly desires and greed for material things), and (ii) those who regard vivacious women as statues made of wood or stone (i.e. those who have overcome their natural sexual instincts and lustfulness that drives an ordinary person insane at times and forces him to fall in a vicious snare of attachments and infatuations with a female for satisfying his lust for sexual pleasures)—Tulsidas says that such saints are no less than an image of the Supreme Being known as Brahm himself on this earth. [27]

[That is to say, such saints are venerable for all, and one can freely approach them with female members of their families, something that is constant a source of apprehension in the minds of men. Even individual females can be freely approach and serve such exalted saints without any fear or apprehension.

Tulsidas stresses the importance of two eclectic spiritual qualities here—(i) complete renunciation from the material world and its artificial attractions that lead to greed, lust and rapacity—symbolised by treating ‘gold’ and ‘glass’ equally; and (ii) practice of celibacy and abstinence from sexual indulgences which in effect means an overall control of one’s sense organs and their natural instincts—symbolised by them not being sexually attracted to a female.

Remember: There is no insult or insinuation meant for females here. The intention is that sexual urges are more often than not the cause of one’s ruin, and moral degradation and fall from grace. Once one falls in this ‘honey trap’, it is well nigh impossible for him to extricate himself from it.

Refer verse nos. 28 and 31 below also in this context.]

28. चौ०— कंचन को मृत्तिका करि मानत। कामिनि काष्ठ सिला पहिचानत॥
तुलसी भूलि गयो रस एहा। ते जन प्रगट राम की देहा॥

28. caupāṭ-kañcana kō mṛṭikā kari mānata. kāmīni kāṣṭha silā pahicānata..
tulasī bhūli gayō rasa ēhā. tē jana pragaṭa rāma kī dēhā..

Those (saints) who regard gold of being as worthless as mud (dust), and who recognise (treat) vivacious women as nothing more than a statue of wood—Tulsidas says that they, who have forgotten this charm (of greed and lust), are indeed like an image (visual embodiment) of Lord Ram. [28]

[Note— In this context, refer verse no. 27 above, and verse no. 31 below.

In other words, a person who has overcome his greed and lust on the one hand, and practices renunciation, dispassion and detachment on the other hand becomes as noble and worthy of respect as the Lord himself.]

29. आकिंचन इंद्रिदमन, रमन राम इक तार।
तुलसी ऐसे संत जन, बिरले या संसार॥

29. ākin̄cana indrīdamana, ramana rāma ika tāra.
tulasī aisē santa jana, biralē yā sansāra..

Tulsidas says that such saints who have no worldly materialistic possessions (ākin̄cana), who have fully controlled their sense organs and exercise self restraint on them (indrīdamana), and whose mind is singularly concentrated on Lord Ram without suffering from any distractions as if it was the ‘only thread of their lives’ (ramana rāma ika tāra)—in all sooth and forsooth, such saints are very rare (to find) in this world. [29]

[The virtues lauded in this verse are: (i) total renunciation and dispossession; (ii) practicing self-control over one's sense organs and their natural tendencies for self-gratification; and (iii) meditating upon Lord Ram, the Supreme Being.]

30. अहंवाद 'मैं' 'तैं' नहीं, दुष्ट संग नहीं कोइ।
दुख ते दुख नहीं ऊपजै, सुख तैं सुख नहीं होइ॥
31. सम कंचन काँचै गिनत, सत्रु मित्र सम दोइ।
तुलसी या संसार में, कहत संत जन सोइ॥

30. ahambāda 'mair̥m' 'tair̥m' nahīm, duṣṭa saṅga nahīm kō'i.
dukha tē dukha nahīm ūpajai, sukha tair̥m sukha nahīm hō'i..

31. sama kañcana kām̐cai ginata, satru mitra sama dō'i.
tulasī yā sansāra mēm, kahata santa jana sō'i..

[Outlining the grand virtues of true saints, Tulsidas further says—]

(i) Those who do not have any trace of ego and pride (ahambāda), (ii) those who do not distinguish between any two entities, calling one as 'mine' and the other as 'yours' (i.e. those who practice total equanimity and treat everything and everyone alike without any distinction—'mair̥m' 'tair̥m' nahīm)¹, (iii) those who have no evil company nor allow such company near them (duṣṭa saṅga nahīm kō'i), (iv) those who are neutral and detached from this world to such an extent that they are not at all affected by either a favourable circumstance or an adverse situation (dukha tē dukha nahīm ūpajai, sukha tair̥m sukha nahīm hō'i) [30], -----

----- (v) those who regard both gold and glass as equally worthless (because none of them would give them spiritual peace and happiness, and since both of them pertain to the gross material world they are equally useless and disposable for them—"sama kañcana kām̐cai ginata")², and (vi) those for whom both foe and friend are equal (i.e. those who treat everyone alike and therefore don't give a person a favourable treatment because he is a friend, or hate someone because he is an enemy—because they regard their Atma, their pure conscious soul, as their true identity, and not their gross body: "satru mitra sama dō'i")—verily and in all sooth, Tulsidas says such people are called 'true saints' in this world [31]. (30-31)

[In these two verses, Tulsidas has listed six qualities of a true saint and pious soul.

¹Such saints treat everyone alike because they know that a person's true identity is his or her Atma, the 'pure consciousness' that is holy and pure entity. The gross body is not the true identity and is tainted by worldly interactions. This body is selfish and is under the control of the sense organs, while the Atma is the fraction of the Supreme Atma known as the 'Parmatma' or the Supreme Consciousness. The gross body of the person is perishable as opposed to the Atma which is imperishable.

The material things of this world are all perishable like the body of the creature. So there is no distinction between the two. And since the Atma is the same in all living beings, there is no distinction between them too.

Refer: verse no. 33 also herein below.

²Refer: verse nos. 27 and 28 herein above.]

32. बिरले बिरले पाइए, माया त्यागी संत ।
तुलसी कामी कुटिल कलि, केकी केक अनंत ॥

32. biralē biralē pā'i'ē, māyā tyāgī santa.
tulasī kāmī kuṭila kali, kēkī kēka ananta..

Tulsidas says that in Kaliyug (the present era of time), true saints who have completely overcome Maya (delusions, ignorance, and all other types of worldly faults) are extremely rare to find. But there is no dearth of those people (non-saints) who are sweet-talking, selfish and back-stabbers much like the peacock and peahen (who gobble up snakes at the first opportunity despite their sweet voice and attractive external features). [32]

[In other words, it is very easy to find false and pretentious saints who are full of cunning and conceit, albeit they behave in such a polished manner that the world is cheated by their tricks and deceitful mannerisms. On the other hand, it is extremely difficult to find a true saint whose glories and virtues are sung and lauded in the scriptures; saints who are true, trust-worthy, realized, illustrious and honourable.

False god-men and con-men masquerading and passing off themselves as 'saints' and 'holy men' are available at dime a dozen in the present world overridden by immoral attitudes, a world that is full of corruptions and lack of scruples. But true saints whose company provides solace and succour to the soul of the creature are howbeit rare to come across.]

33. मैं तैं मेट्यो मोह तम, उग्यो आतमा भानु ।
संत राज सो जानिये, तुलसी या सहिदानु ॥

33. mair̥m tair̥m mēṭyō mōha tama, ugyō ātamā bhānu.
santa rāja sō jāniyē, tulasī yā sahidānu..

Those saints who have overcome such gross worldly views as distinguishing between themselves and all other living beings, symbolised by the use of words as 'me' and 'you', or treating someone as being 'mine' and others as 'they' (mair̥m tair̥m mōṭyō)¹, from whom the darkness of ignorance that gives rise to the 'mine-your' factor has been eliminated (mēṭyō mōha tama)², and in whose heart the 'Sun of Knowledge of Self-Realisation' has risen (which tells them that the true 'self' of all living beings is the pure consciousness known as the Atma which is self-illuminated like the 'sun'; "ugyō ātamā bhānu")—Tulsidas says that such saints should be recognised as King among saints. [33]

[¹Refer: verse no. 30 herein above.

²See note appended to verse nos. 30-31 herein above.

The best virtues one should seek in a true saint, therefore, are the following: (i) lack of ego and pride, i.e. they should be humble, sincere and unpretentious; (ii) equanimity, neutrality and equality towards all living beings, having no distinction between a friend and foe; and (iii) being self-realised, wise and enlightened.]

संत-महिमा-वर्णन

santa-mahimā-varṇana

(Hymns in Praise of Saints)

34. सो०— को बरनै मुख एक, तुलसी महिमा संत की ।
जिन्ह के बिमल बिबेक, सेस महेस न कहि सकत ॥

34. sōraṭhā- kō baranai mukha ēka, tulasī mahimā santa kī.
jinha kē bimala bibēka, sēsa mahēsa na kahi sakata..

Tulsidas wonders which human being can ever describe, with a single mouth, the multitude of divine virtues, the immensity of glories, the profoundness of spiritual importance, and the great significance of true saints—because even the thousand-hooded mythological Serpent known as ‘Sesh-Nath’ (who has thousand tongues), as well as Lord Maheshwar (the ‘Great Lord God’, i.e. Lord Shiva), who both are steeped in pure wisdom and are all-knowledgeable, are unable to do so. [34]

[In other words, the Sesh-nath who has literally a thousand mouths, and Lord Shiva who has five mouths, both of them find themselves unable to sufficiently describe the glories of saints. Therefore, how can a human being with a single mouth and a limited knowledge ever describe them?

Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 11 that precedes Doha no. 3.]

35. दोहा- महि पत्री करि सिंधु मसि, तरु लेखनी बनाइ।
तुलसी गनपत सों तदपि, महिमा लिखी न जाइ।

35. dōhā- mahi patrī kari sindhu masi, taru lēkhanī banā'i.
tulasī ganapata sōm tadapi, mahimā likhī na jā'i..

Tulsidas says that the importance and significance of true saints are so profound, so measureless and so huge in dimension that their praises cannot be written (described or narrated) even by Lord Ganesh himself on paper as large as the earth, using water of

oceans as ink, and the mythological Kalpa Tree (the evergreen tree of Gods) as the pen. [35]

[In other words, the glories of saints are beyond description. No human being can ever successfully describe them in satisfactory manner when even Lord Ganesh, who had written the huge epic Mahabharat and is regarded as the patron deity of writers, is unable to do so with an interminable supply of ink in the form of water of the oceans, and a pen as large and blessed as the huge and evergreen legendary tree of gods that grows in the heaven.]

41. चौ०— जदपि साधु सबही बिधि हीना। तद्यपि समता के न कुलीना॥
यह दिन रैन नाम उच्चरै। वह नित मान अग्नि महँ जरै॥

41. caupāṛ- jadapi sādhu sabahī bidhi hīnā. tadyapi samatā kē na kulīnā..
yaha dina raina nāma uccarai. vaha nita māna agini maham̃ jarai..

A pure-hearted and saintly person known as a “sādhu” (even of a lower caste), though he possesses nothing in terms of material wealth and other worldly possessions, and is utterly humble, is superior in comparison to those born in the upper caste (and are fortunate to have access to material things of the gross world)— because the former chants the Lord's holy and purifying name day and night, while the latter gradually dissipates himself by burning daily in the fire of false-pride and ego (of being superior to others by the virtue of his taking birth in the so-called ‘upper caste’, and having power, wealth and pomp). [41]

[This verse clearly means that merely taking birth in the so-called upper caste of a Brahmin or Kshatriya etc. has no relevance as far as the person’s real worth is concerned. If he thinks that he is superior to his brethren born in some other lower classes such as a Shudra or any other class in the hierarchy of society, then he is sadly mistaken and making a fool of himself.

The real worth of a person depends on what qualities he possesses himself as an individual, and not on his family or race. If he has abundance of good qualities even though he is born in a underprivileged family or the so-called ‘low caste’, then he is eligible for great respect and honour as compared to a man who prides himself of a high birth but has negative traits in him.

Say after all, what is the use of having a mountain if it harbours a barren rocky landscape that is inhabited by poisonous snakes? As compared to it, the lowly plain is far better that welcomes life and acts as a crucible for its growth.]

42. दोहा— दास रता एक नाम सों, उभय लोक सुख त्यागि।
तुलसी न्यारो ह्वै रहै, दहै न दुख की आगि॥

42. dōhā- dāsa ratā ēka nāma sōm, ubhaya lōka sukha tyāgi.
tulasī n'yārō hvai rahai, dahai na dukha kī āgi..

The Lord's servant (one who has surrendered himself before the Lord) loves only the name of the Lord, leaving aside any desire for the pleasures of this gross mundane world (as long as he is alive) as well as for the pleasures of heaven (that he hopes to enjoy after death).

[To wit, a true devotee of the Lord God finds great peace and comfort in the service of the Lord and in remembering him. For such a person, all other things of this world, all limited attractions of this gross world as well as the seemingly infinite charms of the heaven have no value and meaning. All of them are worthless for him when they are compared to the peace and happiness that he derives from serving his Lord God and singing the Lord's divine glories. He would rather bask in the warm sunshine of the Lord's divine glories than enjoying the romantic environment of the full moon's light.]

Tulsidas says that such a person lives a unique life of detachment, dispassion and renunciation. Hence, he does not have to suffer (or 'burn') from the fire of sorrow and miseries that is inherent and natural with any sort of interaction with the material objects of this entrapping world of delusions and ignorance. [42]

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(1.3) Dohawali of Goswami Tulsidas: 111, 140, 340-343, 353, 356-357, 363, 366, 376-379, 381, 383-386, 438:-

‘Dohawali’ is an excellent book of 2-line verses called ‘Doha’. These verses cover a wide range of topics, from the spiritual to the mundane and temporal. They present the thoughts and advice of the illustrious Tulsidas in a succinct and prudent way, and act as a guide for all who wish to seek advice in their day-to-day life on a wide range of subjects.

In this section, we shall select those Dohas that deal with Saints and how they can influence our lives.

111. तुलसी रामहु तें अधिक राम भगत जियँ जान ।
रिनिया राजा राम भे धनिक भए हनुमान ॥

111. tulasī rāmahu tēm adhika rāma bhagata jiyam̐ jāna.
riniyā rājā rāma bhē dhanika bha'e hanumāna..

Tulsidas advises that a devotee of Lord Ram should be regarded in higher esteem than the Lord himself. The Emperor Sri Ram said himself that he would be unable to repay the debts he owed to Hanuman (who was the Lord’s greatest devotee and follower). (111)

140. सेइ साधु गुरु समुझि सिखि राम भगति थिरताइ ।
लरिकाई को पैरिबो तुलसी बिसरि न जाइ ॥

140. sē'i sādhu guru samujhi sikhi rāma bhagati thiratā'i.
larikā'ī kō pairibō tulasī bisari na jā'i..

Tulsidas gives this wise advice: Understand and learn the essence (i.e. become enlightened about the fundamental truth of the divine form and nature) of Lord Ram from true saints and wise teachers. Observe how they have developed devotion for the Lord and how they lead their lives. Listen to them attentively and learn from what they teach. It is only then that one can expect to have stable and unwavering faith for and devotion towards the Lord, because one who learns how to swim during his childhood days never forgets it in life later on. (140)

340. संत संग अपबर्ग कर कामी भव कर पंथ ।
कहहिँ संत कबि कोबिद श्रुति पुरान सदग्रंथ ॥

340. santa saṅga apabarga kara kāmī bhava kara pantha.

kahahim̐ santa kabi kōbida śruti purāna sadagrantha..

Communion with saints is the way for liberation (emancipation) of soul, while company of indulgent people leads the way to entrapment in this illusionary world. This fact is pronounced by all the saints, poets and the wise-ones, and it endorsed in all the scriptures such as the Vedas and the Purans. (340)

341. सुकृत न सुकृती परिहरइ कपट न कपटी नीच ।
मरत सिखावन देइ चले गीधराज मारीच ॥

341. sukr̥ta na sukr̥tī parihara'i kapaṭa na kapaṭī nīca.
marata sikhāvana dē'i calē gīdharāja mārica..

Persons who have a noble soul do not shirk from their nobility and piousness, whereas crooked rascals do not shy from wickedness and being evil in their entire lifetime. In the epic story of the Ramayana, the vulture Jatau and the demon Marich have shown the truth of this statement by the way they died.

[The vulture king Jatau died in an attempt to rescue Sita from the clutches of the evil demon Ravana as the latter was forcibly taking her away to his city of Lanka after stealing her from the hermitage of Lord Ram—thereby showing that he (Jatau) had sacrificed his life for a noble cause. On the other hand, the demon Marich had courted death willingly so that Ravana could abduct Sita. The story goes that he had disguised himself as a golden deer to provoke Sita to ask Lord Ram to go and bring it to her so that she could tame it, and when the Lord went to capture the illusionary deer, the demon Ravana stealthily approached Sita and abducted her. Not contented with his evil deeds, Marich had shouted the name of Laxman at the time of dying when Lord Ram shot it down with an arrow, to give the impression that he was being called upon to help the Lord. And as soon as Laxman left the hermitage Ravana went ahead with his evil gameplan to abduct Sita.

The idea is that a person who is good and noble in his heart will always remain so, and he who is wicked, pervert and evil will always be such.] (341)

[Note—One the one hand there was Jatau who had laid down his life trying to help the distraught Sita in her time of misfortune, proving that a soul who is noble at heart will be ever willing to sacrifice his own self for the good and welfare of others. And on the other hand there was Marich who died just for the opposite reasons—to help Sita be abducted by another equally pervert demon, Ravana. Both died—but for opposite causes. Jatau died an honourable and pious death, and Marich died a most disgraceful and dishonourable death. Even in his death Jatau proved the nobility and holiness of his soul, while Marich proved that he was inherently wicked and evil in his inner-self.

According to the story of the Ramayana, Marich was spared his life by Lord Ram when this demon had gone to defile the fire sacrifice of sage Vishwamitra, but the wicked demon felt no sense of obligation or gratitude for the Lord and chose to be instrumental in getting his honourable wife Sita abducted. This story is narrated in Ram Charit Manas,

Baal Kand, Chaupai line nos. 3-4 that precedes Doha no. 210 (sparing the life of Marich); and Aranya Kand, Doha nos. 24-27 (death of Marich).

On the other hand, Jatau had met Lord Ram while the Lord was meandering his way through the dense forest during his exile, and the vulture had promised to afford them protection because of some old ties he had with Ram's father, king Dasrath. Jatau lived up to his words and preferred death to living when he saw the wailing Sita begging him for protection as the pervert Ravana was flying through the sky with her in his chariot. Jatau intervened, and there ensued a fierce battle between the two—Ravana and Jatau. But ultimately the poor vulture's wings were chopped off by Ravana, resulting in Jatau being mortally wounded and falling to the ground where Lord Ram later found him, washed his wounds and then did his last rites himself as if Jatau was his own father. This story is narrated in Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, Doha no. 13 (Lord Ram meeting and befriending Jatau), and Aranya Kand, from Chaupai line no. 7 that precedes Doha no. 29, to Doha no. 32 (Jatau's death to save Sita, and the former's liberation and deliverance).]

342. सुजन सुतरु बन ऊख सम खल टंकिका रुखान ।
परहित अनहित लागि सब साँसति सहत समान ॥

342. sujana sutaru bana ūkha sama khala ṭāṅkikā rukhāna.
parahita anahita lāgi saba sāṁśati sahata samāna..

Gentlemen are helpful like the beneficial cotton and sugarcane plants, while rascals and evil persons are akin to a heavy axe or a hammer or chisel that are used to cut through stones and wood. Both of them, i.e. the gentleman and the rascal, suffer, but one (the gentleman) does so for the benefit of others while the other (the rascal) suffers so as to harm others and cause them pain.

[The beneficial plants are cut and thrashed, but in spite of this suffering they produce benefits for their tormentors. The cotton plant ultimately produces yarn, and the sugarcane is ground and pulped to produce sugar. On the other hand, a heavy hammer hits the axe or the chisel which in turn bites into the stone or the wood to cut them to pieces or at least to chip away their surfaces and deform their original shape if they are not able to completely break the stone or the wood altogether.

Similarly, good people will gladly suffer if their sufferings can help others, while evil people derive sadistic pleasure if their sufferings can cause pain to others and make them suffer too.] (342)

343. पिअहिं सुमन रस अलि बिटप काटि कोल फल खात ।
तुलसी तरुजीवी जुगल सुमति कुमति की बात ॥

343. pi'ahim sumana rasa ali biṭapa kāṭi kōla phala khāta.
tulasī tarujīvī jugala sumati kumati kī bāta..

[Giving another example of the difference between the attitude of a gentleman and an evil person, Tulsidas says—]

The black-bee only takes nectar from the flowers but do not harm them or their habitats, the trees (i.e. they don't cause any damage to the flower or the tree), while the forest dwelling tribals known as the Kols and the Bhils (who are hunters and cruel people) cut down the same trees, which provide them with fruits and flowers as well as the natural environ of the forest where these tribals live, to use them as firewood (i.e. they don't show any compunction at mercilessly cutting down the trees that provide them with their basic requirements of food and habitat).

[Both the black-bee and the Kols and Bhils survive on trees or their products, but by their actions the former shows its nobility and gracious nature, while the other its wickedness, cruelty and shortsightedness. The black-bee is wise as it knows that if the flower survives it will produce more nectar, and the bee will have an endless supply of nourishment. The Kol and the Bhil are stupid; they cut down the tree and do not realise that they are axing the very source of their sustenance by way of fruits, flowers and firewood, and a day will come when the entire forest would be afforested and they will be robbed of their natural habitat.] (343)

353. पुन्य प्रीति पति प्रापतिउ परमारथ पथ पाँच ।
लहहिं सुजन परिहरहिं खल सुनहु सिखावन साँच ॥

353. pun'ya prīti pati prāpati'u paramāratha patha pām̃ca.
lahahim̃ sujana pariharahim̃ khala sunahu sikhāvana sām̃ca..

Those who are gentlemanly, wise, intelligent and discriminating strive to have merit and good virtues in them—they prefer doing good deeds, having enduring and pure form of love and affection, having a good name, honour and respect, and while acquiring worldly successes they also strive to attain spiritual gains by way of enlightenment, liberation and deliverance.

The reverse is true for those who are evil and sinful by nature. They do just the opposite and abhor the things accepted or pursued by gentlemen and good people. [In other words, such persons will never do good deeds and would prefer sinful acts. They will be selfish in all their relationships; if they pretend to have love then it is with the aim of some selfish needs. They are least concerned by what sort of fame they get, as long as they are famous; if the world remembers as cruel rascals, or as scoundrels and scamsters, so far so good for them! And similarly, they aren't bothered about spiritual welfare—because for them making merry is the only reward of taking birth.]

Tulsidas warns us to pay heed to what he says—and distinguish between the good and the evil men. [In other words, Tulsidas advises us to be careful in our dealings with these two types of people.] (353)

356. बुध सो बिबेकी बिमलमति जिन्ह कें रोष न राग ।

सुहृद् सराहत साधु जेहि तुलसी ताको भाग ।।

356. budha sō bibēkī bimalamati jinha kēm rōṣa na rāga.
suhṛḍa sarāhata sādhu jēhi tulasī tākō bhāga..

Only those people who have a pure mind and harbour auspicious thoughts, those who do not have either any sort of attachment or infatuation with anyone or anything, or a sense of enmity, jealousy, ill-will, repugnance, repulsion or hatred towards them—are praised by wise ones and saints as being noble persons and gentlemen.

Tulsidas praises them too, and says that such people are indeed very lucky (because they are lauded by saints and honoured by the rest of the world). (356)

357. आपु आपु कहँ सब भलो अपने कहँ कोइ कोइ ।
तुलसी सब कहँ जो भलो सुजन सराहिअ सोइ ।।

357. āpu āpu kaham̃ saba bhalō apanē kaham̃ kō'i kō'i.
tulasī saba kaham̃ jō bhalō sujana sarāhi'a sō'i..

Everyone is selfish enough to serve one's own interest; a few think of doing good to others (such as their friends and relatives). Tulsidas says saints praise only those who think of the good and welfare of all the creatures of this world in general.

[In other words, a true noble-hearted and thorough gentleman is one who serves and helps others selflessly and without any ulterior motives. To serve one's own self or those from whom one has certain expectations does not come under the correct definition of 'service'.] (357)

363. राम कृपाँ तुलसी सुलभ गंग सुसंग समान ।
जो जल परै जो जन मिलै कीजै आपु समान ।।

363. rāma kṛpām̃ tulasī sulabha gaṅga susaṅga samāna.
jō jala parai jō jana milai kījai āpu samāna..

Tulsidas says that the holy river Ganges and communion with good people are equally good for a person in the sense that both of them have a positive effect on the person who comes in contact with them.

This is because any type of water, whether polluted or unsanctified, that falls in the Ganges is deemed to have become pure and sanctified. Similarly, any wicked or evil person who meets saints and keeps their company is bound to inculcate good virtues so characteristic of saints. Community of saints will have a positive effect on the sinful and pervert man, and result in his transformation.

But this contact is possible only by the grace of Lord Sri Ram. (363)

366. आखर जोरि बिचार करु सुमति अंक लिखि लेखु ।
जोग कुजोग सुजोग मय जग मति समुझि बिसेषु ॥

366. ākhara jōri bicāra karu sumati aṅka likhi lēkhu.
jōga kujōga sujōga maya jaga mati samujhi bisēṣu..

Oh wise ones! Think. By adding (as a prefix or suffix) letters or words, and adding or subtracting digits and numerals, one would easily realise the immense possibilities of new words and figures, with different and often diametrically opposite meanings, being actually possible.

[For instance, 'un' prefixed to the word 'holy' becomes 'unholy'—obviously these two words have diametrically opposite meaning. Similarly, the numeral 0 (zero) when added after 1 (one) becomes the number 10, but when the same 0 is added before 1 it would mean either decimal 1 (i.e. 0.1) or only the earlier 1 because 01 has no special meaning.]

Likewise, a man becomes good or bad depending upon good or bad company he keeps. Similarly, the same thing becomes good or bad depending how one uses it.

[If a wise man keeps constant company of stupid people who surround him on all sides, then sooner or later the former is bound to be affected by his negative environment and his wisdom is eroded in due course of time. Just the opposite would happen if a foolish man keeps constant company of wise men; sooner or later the foolish man will show signs of wisdom and intelligent thinking.

If a wise and noble man allows himself to be followed by wicked people then they act as a drag upon him, giving him a bad name and decimating all his achievements by stabbing him in his back. And if he allows wicked people to advise him on any matter, i.e. he follows wicked people who decide the way he thinks and sees the world then too he is sure to fall from his exalted position. This simple example is applicable to all situations in this world.] (366)

376. प्रभु समीप गत सुजन जन होत सुखद सुबिचार ।
लवन जलधि जीवन जलद बरषत सुधा सुबारि ॥

376. prabhu samīpa gata sujana jana hōta sukhada subicāra.
lavana jaladhi jīvana jalada baraṣata sudhā subāri..

[Now, the nature of a noble person is outlined so that the comparison between him and a wicked person becomes evident.]

A noble and good-hearted man becomes a provider of welfare and happiness to all others when he stays close to the master and is favourably looked upon by him. Tulsidas says that he makes this assertion after thinking properly, and we must also understand this difference (between a wicked man and a noble-hearted man).

[When a wise and noble-hearted man finds that he has the privilege of being in the good books of his lord, master, chief or senior, the ‘Authority’, he will never become haughty and arrogant like his wicked counterpart. Instead, he will use his privileged position to help his colleagues and other persons who may not have the privilege of direct contact with the chief or the senior Authority like him but nevertheless need his help so that their pleas are heard by that Authority. Such men are respected in society.]

[Tulsidas gives the following example—] For instance, the source of the cloud is the salty ocean, but while the ocean is of no use to the world, the cloud sustains life on earth by pouring its nectar-like water in the form of rain over the entire stretch of the land for the benefit of all.

[The ocean is a rich and endless source of water, but what good is it to us? Its water cannot be drunk, and though it covers almost two-thirds of the earth the rest of the land would remain parched and dried had it not been for the rain falling from the cloud. The greenery of the earth is due to the rain and its source, the cloud, and not due to the ocean.

The cloud is formed by water evaporating from the ocean; the ocean seeds the cloud. But the irony is that while the ocean is worthless, the cloud is worth its weight in gold. In this instance, the ‘ocean’ is like the main Authority from where all powers and resources come, and the ‘cloud’ is like the benevolent and magnanimous person who acts as a benefactor for the world at large, and that too in a selfless manner.

The cloud owes its existence and its ability to give water to the earth from the ocean; but it never shows off. The cloud gives liberally, not keeping any water miserly for its own use, knowing fully well that it can draw more of it from its main patron, the ocean. The cloud generously gives its resource to others for their welfare. People look up to the cloud for their supply of fresh water, and they never go to the ocean, though technically the ocean can be used to meet all the fresh water needs of the human race after filtering and desalinating its vast resources of water.

But the roar of the ocean is fierce, and it can scare the wits out of the faint-hearted when it begins to rise with huge wall-like waves. On the other hand, no one fears the rain; it is most welcome after a scorching summer. The water of the ocean can never irrigate the fields of the farmer, but the rain from the cloud actually waters his fields; the crops directly depend upon a good monsoon rain.

Similarly, a kind and generous man uses all his additional abilities that he gets by being in the proximity of some senior Authority for the welfare of others, and does not exploit this privilege or proximity to fill his own coffers. For, if he does so then there would be no difference between him and a wicked man.] (376)

378. बरषि बिस्व हरषित करत हरत ताप अघ प्यास ।
तुलसी दोष न जलद को जो जल जरै जवास ।।

378. baraṣi bisva haraṣita karata harata tāpa agha pyāsa.
tulasī dōṣa na jalada kō jō jala jarai javāsa..

The cloud pleases the whole world by pouring its rain upon it in a uniform manner, without prejudice and distinction. It strives to eliminate the heat and troubles caused by it; it quenches the thirst of the world.

In spite of this benevolence of the cloud some people accuse it of being cruel to the 'Jawas' (a prickly plant used in herbal medicines; the plant *Alhagi comelorum*) because this plant gets burnt (scalded) on being sprinkled by cold drops of the rain. Tulsidas wonders what fault is there of the cloud if one plant suffers because of it while the rest of the world is immensely benefitted by its rain.

[Tulsidas means that it is impossible to please each single entity in this world. Even the Gods are not spared by humans who accuse them of not being sufficiently merciful if the things do not turn out the way a man wants. The man will not realise that there was some fault in his own efforts; or that the Gods have to be neutral, and if his actions or deeds harm others or exploit them then the Gods cannot oblige him. Will the God like to punish his neighbour just because he wants them to suffer for no fault of theirs, except that he is jealous of them?

A wise man is one who keeps the broader good of the world in sight in all his decisions and actions. If this means that a few insignificant numbers have to suffer while the rest of the people are made happy, then it is okay with him. He must weigh the pros and the cons; he must ponder if any of his actions serve the larger interest of the society, and if the answer is 'yes' then he must go ahead irrespective of opposition from some vested quarters.] (378)

379. अमर दानि जाचक मरहिं मरि मरि फिरि फिरि लेहिं ।
तुलसी जाचक पातकी दातहि दूषन देहिं ॥

379. amara dāni jācaka marahim̐ mari mari phiri phiri lēhim̐.
tulasī jācaka pātakī dātahi dūṣana dēhim̐..

Donors who are kind-hearted, noble, generous and benevolent become immortal (in the sense that their name and fame last for a very long time, and they are remembered with respect for many generations).

On the other hand, alms seekers and beggars continue to take birth and die endlessly. [That is, new beggars and alms seekers collect at the door of the kind donor daily. They are not recognized and remain anonymous; they are treated with contempt by the society; they are forgotten once they go away. They come in faceless droves, collect greedily whatever they can grab, go away clamouring and criticizing each others of getting more than them, and come back again the next day without invitation. Their needs are never fulfilled; they are never contented. They push, shove and shout at each others without showing any sense of dignity and respect to their fellow human beings.]

These alms seekers and beggars are of so low mentality that if the magnanimous donor of alms and charities falls short of meeting their ever-increasing demands and expectations, they do not hesitate in cursing him and accusing him of being miserly and stingy.

[These alms seekers and beggars are like the sinful creatures of the world, while the kind donor is like the saints and holy men. The former spend their entire life in indulgences and squirming like sardines in this world, never feeling contented, and always willingly to take countless births so that they can grab more of the world and enjoy more of its material sense objects. No matter how privileged their upbringing may be, no matter if they are made the king of the world, they will remain unsatisfied. Even if they have more of something than what is necessary for their entire lifetime, they will still hoarde it and let it decay in their coffers instead of allowing the less-fortunate bretherens benefit from their mounting treasures and accumulations which are useless for them and which far exceeds their needs.

On the other hand of the spectrum are saints and noble-hearted men. They willingly and cheerfully share their wealth, both the temporal and the spiritual. They share their knowledge with the rest of the world so that the society as a whole can benefit from it. They give away not only material things for the use of the rest of the society but shares their love and care with it.

So, while the former type of people are looked down with contempt and treated as scum of the world, the latter type are honoured and respected. The world will like to forget about the former, but it garlands the latter for generations to come.] (379)

381. कै निदरहुँ कै आदरहुँ सिंघहि स्वान सिआर ।
हरष बिषाद न केसरिहि कुंजर गंजनिहार ॥

381. kai nidarahum' kai ādarahum' siṅghahi svāna si'āra.
haraṣa biṣāda na kēsarihi kuṅjara gaṅjanihāra..

A lion, who is so majestic, strong and powerful king of the jungle that he can easily kill the mighty elephant (by jumping on the latter's back with great agility), is unbothered or unruffled if a dog or a jackal insults it or praises it. Their insinuations or honours make no difference to the mighty lion. The lion feels neither angry nor happy by their behaviour; he simply neglects them and pays no heed to them. (381)

[Note—A noble-hearted great man is unconcerned by lowly people criticizing him. He goes on his chosen path because he is sure that he has chosen the path after due diligence, that he is unbiased and unprejudiced, and that he has no self-interest in whatever he does. He also knows that it is impossible to please each and everyone in this world, and it is wise to neglect lowly people who can't do any good themselves and would not tolerate others doing good either.]

383. ईस सीस बिलसत बिमल तुलसी तरल तरंग ।
स्वान सरावग के कहें लघुता लहै न गंग ॥

383. īsa sīsa bilasata bimala tulasī tarala taraṅga.
svāna sarāvaga kē kahēm laghutā lahai na gaṅga..

Citing the example of the holy river Ganges, Tulsidas says that the purity and the holiness of river Ganges is not affected or reduced or compromised by adverse comments made by non-believers such as the Saravagi clan (the Jains) or people of low mentality who are no better than dogs.

One must not forget that this river is so holy and pure that the most exalted of the Gods, Lord Shiva who has been honoured by the title of a 'Mahadeva' the Great God, keeps it on his head. Had this river been as unholy and impure as the unbelievers and rascals make it out to be, then obviously Lord Shiva would not have given it this respect of keeping it permanently on his head. [To keep something on one's head is the highest mark of respect that one can show it.] (383)

[Note—Tulsidas' meaning is clear—a noble-hearted and righteous man remains unmoved and unfazed by criticism by lowly people of this world. Wagging tongues and jealous sneers in no way undermine his greatness and exalted stature. In fact, these adverse remarks only create heart-burn in the persons who make them.

The sun, for instance, is not affected by the dark cloud which tries to obstruct its light, for the cloud is not able to create night in the presence of the sun no matter how hard it tries.]

384. तुलसी देवल देव को लागे लाख करोरि ।
काक अभागें हगि भर्यो महिमा भई कि थोरि ॥

384. tulasī dēvala dēva kō lāgē lākha karōri.
kāka abhāgēm hagi bharyō mahimā bha'ī ki thōri..

Tulsidas says that an enormous amount of money and energy are spent in constructing a temple of God. If a crow casts its droppings (dung) on it, does it at all affect the sanctity of the temple?

[That is, the holiness, purity and sanctity of the shrine are not at all affected if a crow, the lowliest amongst the birds, drops its dung somewhere in it. Similarly, the greatness of a noble person is not compromised by jealous remarks made by pervert people.] (384)

385. निज गुन घटत न नाग नग परखि परिहरत कोल ।
तुलसी प्रभु भूषन किए गुंजा बढे न मोल ॥

385. nija guna ghaṭata na nāga naga parakhi pariharata kōla.
tulasī prabhu bhūṣana ki'ē guñjā baṛhē na mōla..

Tulsidas says that the forest dwelling tribals called 'Kol' pick up, examine and then throw away 'Gajmukta' (a special type of secretion from the head of elephants that condense to

form rare pearl-sized globules said to be very valuable) because they do not know its intrinsic value, but does this reduce the importance and value of the 'Gajmukta' as a rare item of beauty that rivals real pearl that is obtained from the oyster living in the ocean?

On the other hand, Lord Krishna had worn ornaments made of 'Gunja' (a creeper called Ghungchi)—but that does not increase its insignificant value. [Just because this plant was worn by Krishna did not add any special value to it because it has no intrinsic value of its own.]

[The idea expressed in this Doha is simple—everything in this world derives its value and importance by the qualities that are basic and inherent to it. It means that the value or honour of anything lies in its intrinsic or inherent qualities and virtues and not on false honours or praises heaped on it by someone who begins to fancy them.] (385)

[Note—Even if a good person and his good deeds are criticized by those who are jealous of him and opposed to him, noting actually effects the former. Similarly, if false praises are heaped on someone or something not actually worthy of such praise, then it is useless and waste of time and energy.

A person's or a thing's inherent qualities and nature decide what value and importance they have in this world. Pretensions and conceit can create a false smoke-screen of greatness and grandeur or of lowliness and mean nature, but the truth cannot be hidden in the long run.]

386. राकापति षोडश उअहिं तारा गन समुदाइ ।
सकल गिरिन्ह दव लाइअ बिनु रबि राति न जाइ ॥

386. rākāpati ṣoṛasa u'ahim tārā gana samudā'i.
sakala girinha dava lā'i'a binu rabi rāti na jā'i..

Even if the Moon rises in its full splendour (i.e. a full Moon with all its sixteen Kalaas or phases of brightness) and it is accompanied by all the glittering stars shining in their full brightness, and even if to this is added the light of all the mountains put to fire, still the darkness of the night can't be eliminated without the (light of) the Sun.

[It is the sun's inherent quality to light up the world with its rays that makes it so important and sought-after in this world. It is the sun's basic function and duty. No life in this world will be possible for a long time if the sun does not rise. This function and duty assigned to the sun by the creator cannot be performed by the full moon, the entire galaxy of stars, or even by the illumination provided by the brilliantly burning fire of the mountain forests. To illuminate the entire world is the basic quality and privilege of the sun which no other entity has.

In other words, one must not be jealous of other people because they have certain virtues that they lack. They must think that there are certain good qualities in themselves which the other person lacks. For instance, though the moon, the stars and the fire fail to remove the darkness of the night by their light, but they have certain good qualities which the sun lacks. The moon has a soothing and cooling effect on the world; the moon-light soothes the nerves and acts as a balm for the world heated by the rays of the burning sun.

The stars control a person's destiny according to astrology, something the sun cannot do. The stars make the otherwise bland sky so beautiful to look at as if it was studded by small twinkling gems. The fire is needed to keep the world warm, to produce and cook food, and sustain life in a general way. The sun cannot replace the functions that the fire carries out though it is a cauldron of celestial fire that is thousands of times hotter than then the terrestrial fire.] (386)

438. छिद्यो न तरुनि कटाच्छ सर करेउ न कठिन सनेहु ।
तुलसी तिन की देह को जगत कवच करि लेहु ॥

438. chidyō na taruni kaṭāccha sara karē'u na kaṭhina sanēhu.
tulasī tina kī dēha kō jagata kavaca kari lēhu..

Those (noble people) whose hearts are not affected (swayed) by passionate and lustful glances of young women, and who are not enamoured of or have anykind of attachment with any material objects of this world—Tulsidas advises that one must make such noble people as his moral and spiritual shield (i.e. a protector, teacher and guide).

[Tulsidas means that these two qualities are essential as a moral and spiritual shield if one wants to protect oneself from the attack of the various vices and negativities that accompany worldly temptations. These invariably trap the person in their vice-like grip and lead to his downfall. When one keeps company of wise and enlightened spiritual people who practice exemplary self-control over their sense organs and their natural tendencies, he is bound to be emotionally, psychologically and spiritually affected by their lives and examples keeping in tune with the adage that one becomes like the company one keeps.

If on the other hand he keeps company of those people who indulge in self gratification, who have become serf of their natural instincts and desires, who have no bother about their spiritual well-being but rather find comfort and pleasure in wallowing in the muck of the gross world, then it is but natural and obvious that sooner or later one would develop in himself their habits and tastes. This will lead to their ruin and degradation.

So Tulsidas warns us to be careful while choosing the company we would like to keep. If one wants to free one's self from the snare of the deluding world then it is always advisable to keep company of wise and enlightened people who lead an austere life of renunciation and detachment, keeping a safe distance from all temptations arising from this material world because they know that these are like the mirage seen in a hot desert. To run before them is done at one's own peril.] (438)

[Note—A normal person's life in the world is like a continuous battle between the good and the bad, between falling an easy prey to temptations and getting trapped, and shunning all tempting overtures of the material world and treating them with disdain to remain spiritually free. Keeping company of those people who practice renunciation, detachment and self-control, those who are wise, enlightened and self-realised, helps even a novice to learn the tricks so as to easily avoid spiritual pitfalls during the course of his journey through life. He leads a normal life but without getting deluded and hooked to

any of the negative things associated with this material. He not only achieves freedom from all spiritual bondages but manages to lead a contented, happy and fulfilled life.

How difficult it is to overcome the temptations of yearning, lust and passion is highlighted in Ram Charit Manas, Kishkindha Kand, Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 21 that says “a person who is not affected by lust-full glances of a woman that are no less than poison-tipped arrows is indeed as exalted as Lord Ram himself!”

Then again, in Kavitawali, Uttar Kand, line no. 1 of verse no. 118 reiterates the same idea when it says “a person who has escaped being hit by the arrow (symbolizing desire, lust and passion) shot from the bow represented by the eyebrows above a lustful woman’s eyes, is deemed to be a true devotee and follower of Lord Ram”.]

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(1.4) Vinai Patrika of Goswami Tulsidas, verse nos. 57, 136/10-12, 141, 172, 203:

The book 'Vinai Patrika' is a fabulous Book of Prayers by Goswami Tulsidas. It is one of the most revered books in the realm of spiritual literature ever written in any Indian language. In this section we shall be reading some of its selected verses that deal exclusively with the glories of Saints and Saintly Persons:-

(57)

देव—

देहि सतसंग निजअंग श्रीरंग! भवभंग—कारण शरण—शोकहारी ।
 ये तु भवदंघ्रिपल्लव—समाश्रित सदा, भक्तिरत, विगतसंशय, मुरारी ॥1॥
 असुर—सुर, नाग—नर, यक्ष—गंधर्व—खग, रजनिचर, सिद्ध, ये चापि अन्ने ।
 संत—संसर्ग त्रैवर्गपर परमपद, प्राप्य निःप्राप्यगति त्वयि प्रसन्ने ॥2॥
 वृत्र, बलि, बाण, प्रह्लाद, मय, व्याध, गज, गृध्र, द्विजबन्धु निजधर्मत्यागी ।
 साधुपद—सलिल निर्धूत—कल्मष सकल, श्वपच—यवनादि कैवल्य—भागी ॥3॥
 शांत, निरपेक्ष, निर्मम, निरामय, अगुण, शब्दब्रह्मैकपर, ब्रह्मज्ञानी ।
 दक्ष, समदक, स्वदक, विगत अति स्वपरमति, परमरति विरति तव चक्रपानी ॥4॥
 विश्व—उपकारहित व्यग्रचित सर्वदा, त्यक्तमदमन्यु, कृत पुण्यरासी ।
 यत्र विष्टन्ति तत्रैव अज शर्व हरि सहित गच्छन्ति क्षीराब्धिवासी ॥5॥
 वेद—पयसिंधु, सुविचार मंदरमहा, अखिल—मुनिवृंद निर्मथनकर्ता ।
 सार सतसंगमुद्घृत्य इति निश्चितं वदति श्रीकृष्ण वैदर्भिभर्ता ॥6॥
 शोक—संदेह, भय—हर्ष, तम—तर्षगण साधु—सद्युक्ति विच्छेदकारी ।
 यथा रघुनाथ—सायक निशाचर—चमू—निचय—निर्दलन—पटु वेग भारी ॥7॥
 यत्र कुत्रापि मम जन्म निजकर्मवश भ्रमत जगजोनि संकट अनेकं ।
 तत्र त्वद्भक्ति—सज्जन, समागम, सदा भवतु मे राम विश्राममेकं ॥8॥
 प्रबल भव—जनित त्रैव्याधि—भैषज भगति, भक्त भैषज्यमद्वैतदरसी ।
 संत—भगवंत अंतर निरंतर नहीं, किमपि मति मलिन कह दासतुलसी ॥9॥

(57)

dēva-

dēhi satasaṅga nija'aṅga śrīraṅga! bhavabhaṅga-kāraṇa śaraṇa-śōkahārī.
 yē tu bhavadaṅghripallava-samāśrita sadā, bhaktirata, vigatasansāya, murārī. 1.
 asura-sura, nāga-nara, yakṣa-gandharva-khaga, rajanicara, sid'dha, yē cāpi
 annē.
 santa-sansarga traivargapara paramapada, prāpya niḥprāpyagati tvayi prasannē.
 2.
 vṛtra, bali, bāṇa, prahalāda, maya, vyādha, gaja, gṛdhra, dvijabandhu

nijadharmatyāgī.

sādhupada-salila nirdhūta-kalmaṣa sakala, śvapaca-yavanādi kaivalya-bhāgī. 3.
śānta, nirapēkṣa, nirmama, nirāmaya, aguṇa, śabdabrahmaikapara, brahmajñānī.
dakṣa, samaddaka, svaddaka, vigata ati svaparamati, paramarati virati tava
cakrapānī. 4.

viśva-upakārahita vyagracita sarvadā, tyaktamadaman'yu, kṛta puṇyarāsī.

yatra viṣṭhanti tatraiva aja śarva hari sahita gacchanti kṣīrābdhivāsī. 5.

vēda-payasindhu, suvicāra mandaramahā, akhila-munivṛnda nirmathanakartā.

sāra satasaṅgamudghṛtya iti niścitaṁ vadati śrīkrṣṇa vaidarbhighbhartā. 6.

śōka-sandēha, bhaya-harṣa, tama-tarṣagaṇa sādhu-sadyukti vicchēdakārī.

yathā raghunātha-sāyakaniśācara-camū-nicaya-nirdalana-paṭu vēga bhārī. 7.

yatra kutrāpi mama janma nijakarmavaśa bhramata jagajōni saṅkaṭa anēkaṁ.

tatra tvaōkti-sajjana, samāgama, sadā bhavatu mē rāma viśrāmamēkaṁ. 8.

prabala bhava-janita traivyādhi-bhaiṣaja bhagati, bhakta

bhaiṣajyamadvaitadarasī.

santa-bhagavanta antara nirantara nahīm, kimapi mati malina kaha dāsatusasī. 9.

Verse no. 57—Oh Sri-Ranga (Lord Ram)¹! Give me the privilege of having communion with saints and motivate me to attend gatherings where saints and holy people discuss topics related to spiritualism and the Lord God² because it is one of the main paths (means) to attain (reach, realise) you, the Divine Being and the Lord of creation, because it is the destroyer of the cycle of transmigration (birth and re-birth), and because it is the remover of the sorrows of those who take refuge in this path to seek solace and succour for themselves in this world of sorrows and miseries.

Oh Murari³! [“Murari” is an address for Lord Krishna.] Those who are always involved in your devotion and service, and are dependent on the grace of your holy feet which are like the petals or leaves of lotus flower (i.e. they rely solely upon you as their protector because they have taken refuge at your feet)—such persons have their ignorance-induced doubts destroyed or eliminated for good. (1).

The demons, gods, serpents, men, Yakshas (a form of demi-god in a Spirit form believed to be generally residing on the banayan tree), Gandharvas (celestial musicians), birds, Siddhas (those with mystical powers) and all other living beings (i.e. everyone) can attain that eternal and most exalted spiritual stature (of emancipation and salvation) by the simple method of having communion with saints who (i.e. whose mind and heart) remain ever engrossed in your thoughts and who are always devoted to you. This exalted stature is very high, great and rare to achieve, and it is superior to the three rewards of ‘Artha’, ‘Dharma’ and ‘Kaam’ that one gets for all his meritorious deeds in this world. [“Artha” = financial well-being; “Dharma” = fame for diligently following the correct and auspicious path of righteousness; and “Kaam” = fulfilment of all desires.] (2).

Vrittasur⁴, Bali⁵, Vanasur⁶, Prahalad⁷, the demon Mai⁸, the hunter (Valmiki)⁹, the elephant king Gajendra¹⁰, the vulture Jatayu¹¹, the Brahmin Ajamil¹² (who had fallen from his high status in society due to his misdeeds), Chandals (those who live near cremation grounds and perform last rites of dead persons; considered out-castes), Yavans (non-believers, savages, uncivilised people) etc.—all of them were able to wash their sins by

the symbolic water used to wash the feet of saints (i.e. by serving saints and obeying their advice). As a reward, all of them had become eligible for attainment of the exalted status of auspiciousness and spiritual well-being as a blessing of their having taken refuge with the saints. [That is, even highly sinful persons who had no hope of ever attaining spiritual peace, or of attaining liberation and deliverance from the negative affects their sins, had actually obtained emancipation by serving the holy feet of saints and obtaining their grace and blessings.] (3).

[In the following stanza no. 4, and in the subsequent stanza no. 5, Tulsidas describes the glories of enlightened saints, and their unique characters and virtues.] {Stanza no. 4:--}

(i) They (saints) are peaceful, placid and tranquil because all desires have left their mind (i.e. they have conquered desires).

(ii) They are neutral (i.e. are detached and dispassionate towards the world; they practice equanimity and evenness of attitude) because they do not have any need or desire for any substance or material thing of this world, and neither do they expect any favour or favourable circumstance that would give them pleasure and comfort. [Therefore, they need not pamper or favour anyone. They treat everything alike, and since they have no needs or desires for worldly things and comforts, they accept whatever comes their way. This helps them to be even in mind and remain calm under varying circumstances. They face adversities and favourable circumstances with stoicity. They treat their enemies and friends alike; they therefore have no enemies or friends. Bodily sufferings or comforts are the same for them.]

(iii) They are free from 'Mamta'. [That is, they are without worldly attachments. They have no longing or infatuation for anything in this world.]

(iv) They have no titles or honours, and neither do they expect them. [This is because they have no 'desires' and prefer to practice detachment, neutrality, equanimity and renunciation.]

(v) They are without any trace of having any bias for and against anything. They are therefore neutral and beyond the effect of the three Gunas¹³. [That is, the three basic qualities of Satvic, Rajsic, Tamsic Gunas have no affect on them. They remain calm and neutral under all circumstances.]

(vi) They are well-versed and enlightened about the supreme Consciousness known as 'Shabda Brahm' represented by the cosmic word 'OM'¹⁴. [This is known as OMKAR or Pranav Brahm as envisioned in the Vedas and other ancient scriptures. This refers to the sound generated by the cosmic Consciousness that pervades throughout the creation, and from which this visible creation is said to have emerged.]

Therefore, they are said to be 'Brahm-Gyaani' or 'Brahm-realised'. That is, they are enlightened about the truth of existence in the form of the cosmic Consciousness that produces vibrations of life in this creation. Ancient scriptures have visualised this vibration of Consciousness in the form of a 'Cosmic Sound' that is equivalent to the sound made when one utters the word OM or AUM. There are umpteen numbers of Upanishads that deal with this topic.¹⁴

(vii) They are fully aware of the ultimate spiritual goal that one is expected to reach when the soul has had the privilege of assuming a human body. [And this goal is to attain final liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation for one's own self, and at

the same time show the correct path to others not so enlightened. A saint is supposed to act as a moral guide and a beacon of hope for the rest of the world. He is expected to teach others the correct way to live by example rather than by precept. They are skilled in carrying out the deeds/duties for which the soul gets a human body]

(viii) They are equitable in their thoughts, views and demeanours, treating everything evenly with an attitude of equanimity.

(ix) Being Brahm-realised and enlightened, they are aware of the nature of their True-self. [That is, they are ‘self-realised’ and understand that their true self is the pure conscious Atma, the soul, and not the physical body consisting of gross organs. They also know that this Atma is eternal as compared to the body which is mortal.]

(x) They do not distinguish between any two persons, nor as they being different from their own selves. [This is a proof of their being neutral, detached, dispassionate, equitable, self-realised and enlightened about the Truth of existence. They know that the ‘Atma’ or the soul is the true identity of any living being. The physical body is only a habitat of the Atma. This Atma is pure consciousness and a universal, constant entity. It is the same in all living beings. Therefore, there is no reason why one must distinguish between two creatures with different external bodies. Hence, a true saint treats everyone as he would treat himself.]

(xi) Oh Lord Chakrapaani (**cakrapānī**)! [This refers to Lord Vishnu who holds a “Chakra”, a discus, in his hand. Hence, Tulsidas once again reiterates that he is addressing Lord Ram as an incarnation of Lord Vishnu.] Such an exalted saint treats everything as belonging to his Lord Ram. He has distanced himself from either enjoying any of the worldly pleasures and comforts, or being affected by the sorrows and pains of the world. [This is obvious because he treats everything in this material world as belonging to Lord Ram, and therefore he has no right to enjoy them. And secondly, having inculcated all the virtues mentioned herein above, he has developed an exemplary sense of neutrality and renunciation from the world.]

(xii) Oh Lord, such a saint is a great devotee of yours; he is an ardent follower of you, and he has immense affection for you who are the Supreme Being (in a human form). (4)

{Elaborating further on the grand virtues of saints, Tulsidas continues as follows in this stanza no. 5—}

(i) The exalted saints are always concerned about the welfare of the world. [They harbour no grudges against anyone, and hope that all living beings live happily and peacefully.]

(ii) On the one hand they have abandoned (or have conquered) such negative things as ‘Mada’ and ‘Krodha’ (pride, vanity and anger), and on the other hand they have earned for themselves a great treasury in the form of ‘Punya’ (meritorious deeds and their spiritual rewards that are obtained by the virtue of following the auspicious path of righteousness, probity, nobility, morality, scrupulousness, goodness and proper conduct—or the path of ‘Dharma’).

Verily, wherever such exalted saints reside, the most exalted gods of the Trinity, such as the creator Brahma, the concluder Shiva, and the sustainer Hari (Vishnu) who lives on the surface of the celestial ocean known as the ‘Ksir-Sagar’, come rushing to that place. [It means that such saints have become so holy and divine that whereas the rest of the world, including the gods, seek the blessing of the Trinity Gods and consider it very

auspicious to go the abode where these three Gods live, the latter on the other hand regard saints more holy and divine than themselves. When the three Gods of the Trinity wish to seek blessings, they go to where the saints reside. This statement also means that saints are higher in the hierarchy of exalted Beings so much so that even the greatest of gods such as Brahma, Shiva and Vishnu have no hesitation in coming down from heaven to meet them. It also implies that all the gods in creation are at the beck-and-call of saints; they attend upon the saints; they pay their respects to saints. Therefore, if the great gods pay their respects to saints then obviously the latter are more honourable and reverential than the gods themselves. Hence, if one gets the blessings of saints, the gods are bound to bless such a person.] (5).

[In the following stanza nos. 6-7, Tulsidas highlights the importance of saints and their company with the help of similes. In stanza no. 6, the metaphor of the churning of the ocean is used, and in stanza no. 7 the destruction of the demon army by the arrows shot by Lord Ram is employed.]

The Vedas are like the celestial ocean (i.e. they are immense, vast, fathomless and auspicious like the abode of the Lord Vishnu himself); understanding them and their proper and correct interpretation is the Mandrachal mountain (i.e. understanding the Vedas properly and correctly is a huge and difficult task); all the community of hermits, sages, saints etc. are the ones who churn this ocean (i.e. they study and interpret the Vedas); and as a result of this exercise the Amrit (the elixir or ambrosia of eternal spiritual peace) in the form of Satsang (communion of saints where the glories of the Lord are sung) was produced. This has been declared by Sri Krishna who is the husband of Rukmani. [This story of the churning of the ocean to produce Amrit is described in the Purans. Here it has been invoked to emphasise that company of saints provides the same spiritual benefits very conveniently that one would get by studying hard and correctly understanding the huge tomes of scriptural texts which is a very cumbersome and tedious job. This is because saints distill the knowledge of the scriptures and make this knowledge easily understandable for the common man. They not only explain the principles and concepts with examples, but they show how to live a life of spirituality in practice by living it themselves.] (6).

The methods, skills, reasonings and tacts adopted or employed by the saints are so truthful, simple and straightforward that are able to eliminate all sorts of doubts and spiritual fears that haunt a seeker. Their advice and preaching helps one to overcome all fear, sorrows and ignorance. They help one to maintain poise in the ups and downs of emotions such as moments of (false) joy and moments of (imaginary) sorrows. In fact, the company of saints help one to eliminate all spiritual hurdles in the same way as the powerful arrows of Lord Ram had destroyed all the demons (in the battle-field of Lanka). (7).

Oh Sri Ram! I request you to please bless me that wherever and in whatever form I might take birth due to my deeds and their effects, I pray to you that I should be blessed with having devotion for you, and also of having contact with saints (for that would ensure my well-being). Oh Lord Sri Ram! This is my only hope, my only refuge, my only shelter and my only succour. [That is, I am a most humble person who has not done any 'Punya'

or meritorious deed. Neither am I a learned man, or a Brahm-realised and enlightenend man. The only way I can ensure my good and well-being is to have company of saints, and of course having devotion for you, Lord Ram. I pray to you, oh Lord, to grant me these two things at least.] (8).

Your devotion and veneration is the only remedy that can cure and help one to tide over the horrors of the three types of tormenting diseases¹⁵ created by this mortal world. And the doctor who can prescribe this medicine is a devotee of yours (i.e. a saint) who sees ‘non-duality’ in this creation.

[The ‘three types of horrors associated with this world’ are Adhi-daivic, Adhi-bhautic, and Adhyatmic. Every creature suffers from them. The only way to overcome this fear and override these horrors themselves is to have company of saints where one comes to learn many spiritual truths that help him to ally his fears. Ghosts are seen in darkness, and not in light. Likewise, a person suffers from these imaginary horrors because he is unaware of the reality and truth. Once he comes to know them, all fears vanish. And what is this ‘truth’? Put simply it is that the body of the creature which suffers from all ailments is destined to perish as it is mortal from the very beginning. The body is not the ‘true self’. The Atma which is pure consciousness is this ‘true self’, and this Atma is a universal, non-dual and eternal entity. This Atma is a personified form of ‘Consciousness’ known as Brahm that lives as an individual creature. A saint knows this, and his company enlightens a person about these facts. This knowledge is like the light that helps one to get over his spiritual fears like one feels free from fear of ghosts once one opens the window and lets the sunlight come inside the room.

Refer to a note appended at the end of this verse, marked with the sign #]

In fact I, Tulsidas, though most humble and ill-witted { *mati malina* }, have always asserted this fact of ‘non-duality’ in the sense that there is no difference or distinction between saints and Lord God { *santa-bhagavanta antara nirantara nahīm* }. [Here, Tulsidas has likened saints to Lord God. Refer stanza no. 5 herein above where it is said that the Gods of the Trinity come rushing to the place where saints reside.] (9).

[Note—¹Sri Ranga (*śrīraṅga*): This term is used to indicate Lord Vishnu who is the divine husband of goddess Laxmi, or ‘Sri’, the goddess of wealth and prosperity. Lord Ram is an incarnation of Lord Vishnu, hence this term is applied to him to clearly indicate that Tulsidas refers to the Lord of the world while he offers his prayers in Vinai Patrika, and not to the ‘son of kind Dasrath of Ayodhya’.

²The glory, virtues and importance of saints and pious souls have been narrated by Tulsidas elsewhere also. Refer: (i) Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, from Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 37—to Doha no. 41; (ii) Dohawali, verse nos. 375—378, 381; and (iii) Vairagya Sandipani, verse nos. 8-42.

³Murari (*murārī*): This shows that Tulsidas saw no distinction between the two forms of Lord Vishnu, Lord Ram, his beloved Lord who was the king of Ayodhya and who killed the demon Ravana of Lanka in the epic war, and Lord Krishna who lived in

Vrindavan, killed the demonic king Kansha, and had played a pivotal role in the war of Mahabharata.

⁴Demon Vrittasur: Demon Vrittasur though having an evil body of a demon, was at heart a great devotee of the Lord and an enlightened soul. During the battle with Indra, his enunciations on devotion and wisdom are worth their weight in gold. (This episode appears in Bhagwat Mahapuran). To kill him, the God asked sage Dadhichi to give his bones which were used to mould the Bajra (thunderbolt; the weapon of Indra), and it was used to kill him.

⁵Bali: The story of king Bali appears in Srimad Bhagwat, 8/15-23. It relates to the Vaaman (dwarf mendicant) incarnation of Lord Vishnu. This is the fifth incarnation of Vishnu. Bali was a grandson of Prahalad for whom Vishnu had incarnated as Nrsingh (half man and half lion) earlier.

King Bali was very righteous and powerful; he chased away Indra, the promiscuous and lustful king of Gods, from the throne of heaven, and conquered it. He performed a thousand Ashwamedha Yagya (horse sacrifice) during the course of which he had conquered the entire world and deprived Indra, the king of Gods who ruled over the heavens, of his heavenly powers. Aditi, the mother of Gods, was peeved, and she requested her husband, sage Kashyap, to find a way out. Kashyap advised her to pray to Lord Vishnu. Aditi did severe penance for twelve days at the end of which Vishnu appeared before her and asked how he could help her. When Aditi told him the problem, Vishnu promised that he will take birth as her son in the form of a 'Vaaman' (a dwarf Brahmin) and retrieve the earth and the kingdom of heaven from Bali's dominion.

Once he heard that king Bali was performing a great fire sacrifice, something Bali used to do routinely, and during which he had declared that he will give anything asked for, again something for which he was renowned. This religious sacrifice was being conducted on the banks of river Narmada. Seizing this opportunity, Vishnu in the form of a Vaaman approached Bali who welcomed him and paid his due respects. Then Bali asked Vaaman to ask for some gift or donation as this was the traditional practice during such great religious sacrifices. Vaaman was waiting for this chance. First he made Bali repeat his vows in public, and then asked for land measuring his three steps.

Bali was dumbfounded—he wondered at the inconsequential dimension of the land covered by three tiny steps of this dwarf! Bali requested Vishnu to ask for something more, but Vishnu was adamant. Bali's priest, sage Shukracharya, knew that this dwarf was no one else but Vishnu, and so he tried to persuade Bali to abstain from making such commitment off-hand, because he will lose his entire kingdom. But Bali refused, saying that being the grandson of Prahalad, he cannot rescind on his words that he will give this Brahmin dwarf whatever he asks, even if it means sufferance.

Shukracharya was annoyed at this disobedience, but Vishnu was extremely pleased, and the Lord decided that after fulfilling the promise made to the Gods he will instantly reward Bali in ample terms, and will himself serve him! What a wonderful grace Vishnu shows.

So it happened that Vishnu, in the form of Vaaman, assumed a colossal form of cosmic proportions. The Lord measured the entire earth that Bali ruled in his first step. In the second step Vishnu measured the whole heaven. Nothing was left for the third step—so Bali offered his head! Vishnu was extremely pleased, and being the Lord of the world, he decided that since Bali has offered his own self to him like a faithful devotee, he will fully reward him. Hence, Vishnu blessed Bali that he will go down in history as the greatest donor and righteous of all times, that he will become Indra, the king of Gods, and rule over the heavens during the celestial era known as Saawarni Manvantar, that till that time he shall become the king of the nether world where demons would live, and to add icing to the cake the Lord declared that he himself will become his gatekeeper, and anybody who dared oppose him would be punished by the Lord himself!

⁶Demon Vanasur: Vanasur was the son of king Bali (for whom Lord Vishnu manifested as the dwarf mendicant Vaaman). He had 1000 arms and was an ardent devotee of Shiva. His daughter named Usha had a dream in which she saw Sri Krishna's grandson Anirudha, who was very handsome. Enamoured by him, Usha took the help of her favourite maid and companion Chitrlekha to smuggle Anirudha into her private palace. When her father Vanasur came to know of this adultery and trickery, he threw the boy in the prison. This led to a ferocious battle between Krishna and Vanasur, in which Lord Shiva fought on the side of his devotee Vanasur. When all but four of his hands were cut by Krishna, the demon relented, and asked for forgiveness. At the intercession of Shiva on his behalf, Krishna made him fearless. Thereafter, Usha was married to Anirudh. This episode also appears in Bhagwat Puran.

⁷Prahalad: He was an ardent devotee of Lord Vishnu. He was the eldest son of the king of demons, named Hiranyakashipu. His mother was Kayaadhu, the daughter of the demon king named Jambhaasur. Both the mother and the son were initiated by sage Narad who had inspired them to become devotees of Lord Vishnu.

The story of Prahalad is narrated in detail in (i) Vishnu Puran, 1/17-20, and (ii) Bhagvata Puran, 7/3-10.

The father, being a demon, was an inveterate opponent of Lord Vishnu, and so naturally he couldn't tolerate his own son worshipping his enemy Lord Vishnu. He tried his best to dissuade Prahalad from being devoted to the Lord, but the son had immense faith in the Lord and would not be deterred by his father's threats and scolding. Hiranyakashipu tried even cruel means to change Prahalad, including an attempt to burn in a raging fire, but the child devotee escaped unscathed. So, finally the demon father decided to kill him personally. Prahalad was tied to a pillar and asked 'Where is your Lord Vishnu? Is he in this pillar also?' The child replied in the affirmative. Then his father swung the sword to kill him, and it was at this instant that Lord Vishnu revealed himself as the famous incarnation known as 'Nrsingh'—the upper half of his body was like a lion and the lower half was like a man. An Upanishad titled 'Nrsingh Tapini Upanishad' of the Atharva Veda is dedicated to this Lord.

Lord Nrisingh snatched the sword and laid the demon father across his laps. He then tore through his abdomen, and yanked out his intestines, thereby killing the demon. He then picked up the child Prahalad on to his laps and lovingly licked and caressed him like a lion does to its cub. But Prahalad prayed to the Lord to provide deliverance to the soul of his father, at which the Lord liberated the demon from all his sins.

Prahalad is credited with enumerating the nine-fold path of Bhakti, the path of devotion for the Lord, in the epic Bhaagvata, 7/5/23.

Lord Dattatreya, one of the manifestations of Lord Vishnu, had preached Prahalad about the eclectic state of Avadhut Sanyasi in the form of a huge python, known as Ajgara. Prahalad had spiritual discussions also with other sages such as Hansa (the divine Swan, an incarnation of Vishnu), and with Indra (the king of Gods).

Prahalad had four brothers, three sons and a daughter. The king of demons known as Bali, who was famous for his charities and donations, was a grandson of Prahalad. The incarnations of Vishnu as Vaaman, the dwarf mendicant, is related to this legendary king.

Refer also to: verse no. 93.

⁸Demon Mai: Demon Mai was not a warrior or cruel demon. He was a great architect and town planner. He was the chief architect, planner and developer of Lanka of Ravana and Indraprastha of Kauravs. He was devotee of the Lord God. The fact that Mai had constructed Lanka for the demon king Ravana has been expressly mentioned by Tulsidas in Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupi line nos. 5-8 that precede Doha no. 178.

⁹Valmiki: Sage Valmiki is well known for his classical work known as the famous epic 'Ramayana', which is his magnum opus. He is also credited with penning Advhut Ramayan in which Sita had assumed the form of Maha Kali to kill the Ravana with a thousand heads.

Valmiki is said to be the son of sage Pracheta who is said to be the son of Varun, the Water God. He is also said to be one of the Prajaapatis—the ancient patriarchs of this world.

According to Adhyatma Ramayan, Ayodhya Kand, Canto 6, verse nos. 57-58 he was a Brahmin by birth but became a robber and adopted their means of livelihood because he was brought up by robbers. Once the seven celestial sages known as the Sapta-Rishis went through the forest where he lived, and Valmiki accosted them. When asked by the sages why he robbed others, Valmiki replied that he did it to feed his family and other dependants. The sages advised him that they would not share the consequences of sins that he is committing for them. To test the correctness of this advice, Valmiki tied them to a tree and went to his house to ask his kith and kin if they would share any misfortune that might befall upon him. When they replied that they are only concerned with what loot he brings home, Valmiki's eyes of wisdom opened instantaneously. He rushed back to the sages, untied them and fell at their feet seeking forgiveness. He asked them to show him the path by which he can seek redemption and salvation for himself. The sages then advised him to do Japa (repetition) with Lord Ram's holy Name 'RAM'. Valmiki said that he was so sinful that it is not possible for him to utter the Lord's holy Name. At this, the sages thought

over the matter and told him to repeat the name in the reverse order—as ‘MARA’. When this word MARA is repeated it becomes RAM. This trick worked fine for Valmiki, and he immediately sat down to do Tapa (severe form of penance) and meditated on the name of the Lord in the reverse order. He became so immobile and lost in contemplation that a mound of anthill formed around his body. It so happened that when the sages returned to the same place during their return journey, they saw him in this condition. They poured consecrated water on him and revived him. It was then that they gave him a new name ‘Valmiki’, which means ‘one who has emerged from an anthill’. This story is narrated in Adhyatma Ramayan, Ayodhya Kand, 6/57-58.

He established a hermitage on the banks of river Tamsa and lived there. Lord Ram went to meet him during his outward journey to the forest, and it was in the sage’s hermitage that Sita lived and her two sons Lav and Kush were born when she was sent to exile by Ram during the final days of the Lord’s days on earth as a prelude to his winding up his worldly ‘Leela’ or deeds and ascending to the heaven as Lord Vishnu.

One day Valmiki saw a hunter shoot down a male bird and heard the wailings of his companion, the female bird. He cursed the hunter in a verse that came out of his mouth in a poetic style called the Anushtup Chand (metre). Never before had Valmiki ever composed any verse, so he was astonished at this development. Then Brahma the creator appeared before him and ordered him to compose the epic Ramayan for which the basic story was provided to him by sage Narad.

The genesis of the story of Ramayan is this—Once the celestial sage Narad came to his hermitage (called an Ashram) on the behest of Brahma. Valmiki asked him if there was anyone living in this creation who embodied all the 16 Kalaas (qualities) that the Supreme Being is known to possess. Then Narad told him about Lord Ram. This is how the grand and magnificent story of the Ramayan was revealed.

Refer also to: verse nos. 94, 112, 151 and others in this book Vinai Patrika in respect of sage Valmiki being cited as an instance of how Lord Ram’s divine name and his glory is able to provide liberation for those who had been sinful in their lives and had no hope of deliverance from this bondage.

¹⁰Gajendra: In the ancient country of Dravid (the present day South India), there was a kingdom called Pandyaraaj whose king was named Indradumna. He was a great devotee of Lord Vishnu and used to offer regular worship to the Lord with great diligence. Once, sage Agastya passed that way with his retinue of disciples. The king was so engrossed in the worship of the Lord that he did not notice the sage and neither did he get up to welcome him or pay his obeisance to him. This annoyed the sage and he cursed—‘You are like a haughty and wild elephant who pays no heed to those standing in the front. Therefore, you deserve to become an elephant—so you would take a birth as an elephant.’ When the king died he became an elephant in a pleasant island in the middle of the Kshirsagar, the celestial ocean of milk.

He had a majestic body and was very strong in his herd. Once he was playing with his she-elephants and companions in a large and beautiful pond. In this pond lived an crocodile who was actually a Gandharva (a semi-god) named Huhu in his previous life and had become an alligator due to a curse of sage Deval. The alligator /crocodile caught hold of the leg of the elephant and started pulling him inside the

deep lake. The Gaja himself and all his companions tried their best but failed to free him from the mouth of the alligator. A long tussle followed and the elephant became completely exhausted. When the situation became so bad that the Gaja, the elephant, was about to sink fully inside the water, he broke a lotus flower and offered it to Lord Vishnu as his last worship and offering before dying. The merciful Lord rushed instantly astride his mount, called the Garud, to save him. Reaching the spot within a moment, the Lord pulled the Gaja out of the water with one hand, and with the other he opened the mouth of the alligator to yank the leg of the elephant free from its clutches. Then the Lord cut off the alligator's head with his circular weapon known as the Chakra.

Both the crocodile and the elephant found liberation—the alligator/crocodile reverted to his earlier form of a Gandharva, and Gaja the elephant assumed a divine form similar to that of the Lord and went to his abode in the heaven.

Refer also to: verse nos. 93, 94 and countless other verses of this book *Vinai Patrika* where Gaja has been cited as an instance when Lord Ram had shown his grace and extended his protection to the humblest and the meekest of creatures when they had called out to the Lord in distress.

¹¹Jataau/Jatau: Jatau was a vulture by birth but a great devotee of Lord Ram. When Ravana was rushing towards Lanka on his chariot with Sita as captive, it was Jatau who had fought fiercely with him in an attempt to rescue Sita from the demon's clutches. But ultimately Ravana had cut off his wings, and so the unfortunate Jatau fell down on the ground, mortally wounded. He kept repeating the holy Name of Lord Ram and managed to hold on to his life till the time the Lord came there in his search of Sita. Jatau told the Lord about Ravana stealing Sita and proceeding towards Lanka in the south direction. Then Jatau left his mortal coil while Lord Ram held him in his arms, caressing him and wiping his wounds with his own hands and using the plaits of his long hairs. When Jatau died, the Lord did his last rites himself—a privilege that no one else except one other character, i.e. Sabari, had got in the whole story of the Ramayana. Even Dasrath, who was the worldly father of the Lord, was denied this honour when he died at Ayodhya after the Lord was sent to exile in the forest because at that time only Bharat and Shatrughan were present in the city, and so his last rites were performed by Bharat. This episode is narrated in all the versions of the Ramayana, e.g. in the *Ram Charit Manas* of Tulsidas, in its *Aranya Kand*, from *Chaupai* line no. 7 that precedes *Doha* no. 29 right upto *Chaupai* line no. 4 that precedes *Doha* no. 33.

It ought to be noted here that prior to this, Lord Ram has met Jatau earlier in the forest and befriended him. Jatau was a friend of Dasrath, and he had assured the Lord that he will stay in close proximity with them (Ram, Sita and Laxman) in the forest to keep a vigilant eye and give them protection to the best of his might—this is narrated in the *Adhyatma Ramayan* of sage Veda Vyas, *Aranya Kand*, *Canto 4*, verse nos. 1-7. This fact is also endorsed by Tulsidas in *Geetawali*, *Aranya Kand*, verse no. 12, stanza no. 2.

The glorious way that Jatau died has been lauded and applauded by Tulsidas in *Dohawali* verse nos. 222-227. Refer also to *Geetawali*, *Aranya Kand*, verse nos. 12-16.

“Lord Ram lifted Jatau onto his lap and washed his wounds with the tears streaming from his (Ram’s) eyes”—this is said in Geetawali, Aranya Kand, verse no. 13, stanza no. 1, while Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, Doha no. 30 says that “the Lord moved his loving hand carrassingly on his head”.

Jatau’s special death which made him a subject of jealousy and envy for all other exalted persons as narrated in the Doha above has one unique aspect—in spite of him being a vulture by birth and body, he was given an honour befitting a father by none else than the Supreme Being (Lord Ram) himself when the Lord performed his last rites himself—refer: (i) Geetawali, Aranya Kand, verse no. 16, stanza no. 4; verse no. 14, stanza no. 1; (ii) Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, Doha no. 32; (iii) Kavitawali, Uttar Kand, verse no. 16, line no. 3; (iv) Doha no. 227 of Dohawali; (v) Vinai Patrika, verse no. 164, stanza no. 2; verse no. 138, stanza no. 3, line no. 1.

Vinai Patrika, verse no. 138, stanza no. 3, line no. 1 says that Lord Ram offered a ‘Pinda’, a ball of cereals that is offered to the soul of one’s departed parent, to Jatau after the bird left its physical body.

Doha no. 227 of Dohawali clearly says “Lord Sri Ram, who is an ocean of graciousness and mercy, performed the last rites of Jatau with a devotion and fervour which was ten times more than what he had for his own father Dasrath, and having done so, he, along with his brother Laxman, gravely mourned his (Jatau's) death.”

The remarkable thing is that Lord Ram has called Jatau ‘his father’ in clear terms in Geetawali, Aranya Kand, verse no. 15, stanza no. 1 when the Lord requests Jatau to live a little longer for some more days so that he (Ram) can enjoy his company as a father and becomes privileged to receive his blessings as a son gets from his father.

Dohawali’s Doha no. 233 says—“Upon hearing the news of how Jatau, the king of vultures, had died, the great ascetics, the Karmayogis (those who do their duties in a righteous manner), the devotees, the wise-men, the sages, the mystics, the hermits, the higher and lower borns, et al—in short, all living beings became jealous of him on the one hand, and praised him and applauded him for the auspicious death he got.”

When people came to know how Jatau had died while being caressed by Lord Ram as he lay cradled in the Lord’s arms, and how the Lord had himself performed his last rites, they all praised Jatau and wished that they too could die the same way. They all became convinced that of all the living beings on earth, no one was as fortunate and lucky as Jatau—because all those who have taken a birth must die, but it’s rarer than the rarest occasion when the Supreme Being himself comes down walking upto a dying man to move his divine hands on his head, to cradle the dying man in his arms, and to do his last rites with his own hands. Their becoming ‘jealous’ is a figure of speech to emphasise how much they envied Jatau because envy is a sort of praise and honour. One becomes envious of another person only when the latter has something that is highly praiseworthy and valuable, and which the other person who is jealous does not have nor expects to have any time in the future.

Jealousy and envy is an indirect way of immense praise. One is not jealous of an evil character in a person, because such character is denounced by the society. One is jealous and envious of a person only if he possesses some noble virtue or skill or asset for which the world lauds him and applauds him.

Geetawali, Aranya Kand, verse no. 13, stanza no. 4 explicitly says that when Lord Ram asked Jatau that if he wished to live then the Lord can grant him a longer life,

Jatau had replied—“Lord, well, tell me one thing—to be in the presence of the Supreme Lord at the time of death is most difficult even for great ascetics and sages to achieve, and this magnificent opportunity has come to me out of its own free will. Where will I get it again? I will not be cheated of this golden chance by bargaining it for a life that is nonetheless transient, mortal, false, deluding and decayable. Therefore, I do not wish to live any longer!”

Then again, in Geetawali, Aranya Kand, verse no. 15, stanza no. 4, Jatau says—“Oh Lord, believe me. My death is so honourable and desirable that not even the four commendable noble fruits that the scriptures say one gets by living a life of full auspiciousness and righteousness (i.e. the rewards of Artha—worldly prosperity and well-being, Dharma—honour that comes with being rightful and righteous), Kaam—fulfilment of all desires, and Moksha—spiritual liberation and deliverance) can ever compare with it. Tell me, is there any such other honourable and divine reward more desirable than the way I am dying?” Lord Ram was left speechless, for he had no answer to this question!

What other factor, besides the fact that Jatau died in the arms of the Supreme Being, made his death so desirable and laudable? He had died in a selfless manner serving the Lord in trying to protect Sita, Lord Ram’s honourable wife, from the clutches of the demon Ravana who had abducted her and was taking her away to his city of Lanka. ‘Selfless service’ is one of the greatest deeds for a person to do, and this single action of Jatau made him perfectly eligible for immediate deliverance upon death. In other words, if one dies doing selfless service, and offers his services to the Lord God while actually undertaking the exercise, then his emancipation and salvation is a surety. Such a creature is praised by all the saints and sages—refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 84.

In Ram Charit Manas, Kishkindha Kand, Chaupai line nos. 7-8 that precede Doha no. 27, Angad praised Jatau when he said—“There is no one more praiseworthy and honourable than Jatau in this world. He is most adorable because he had left his mortal body in the selfless service of Lord Ram, and had gone to the divine abode of Lord Hari (Vishnu) after death.”

Nothing is in-accessible or un-attainable for a creature who has the good of others in his heart, who thinks for the welfare of others, and who is not selfish—refer: Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, Chaupai line no. 9 that precedes Doha no. 31.

Geetawali, Aranya Kand, verse no. 16, stanza no. 3 says that “the king of vultures assumed a divine form and went to heaven after bowing at the holy feet of Lord Ram and enshrining the Lord’s beautiful and holy image in his heart even as he heard his own glories and those of the Lord’s being sung all around in the world”.

Doha no. 224 of Dohawali says “So many have died till now; so many are dying at present; and so many will die in the future with the passage of time—but till today, and not ever in the future, will anyone get the privilege of dying the way Jatau had died. (224)”

Refer also to: Vinai Patrika’s verse no. 95.

¹²Ajamil or Dwij Bandhu: Dwij Bandhu is another name of Ajamil because he was a Brahmin by birth. But unfortunately he became enamoured with a prostitute and married her. Bad company made him turn into a hunter. One day a group of saged passed by the village. When they asked the villagers if there was a Brahmin’s house

where they could spend the night, the villagers told them of Ajaamil. So these sages decided to spend the night there. When Ajaamil returned from his hunting trip with a catch of a bird and saw the sages, he felt very ashamed. He confided with them that he is a fallen man and that they should not eat in his house. The saints had a merciful heart and they thought amongst themselves that it is their moral obligation to show this man some way by which he can find liberation and deliverance.

They cooked their own meals with whatever they had. The next day, they summoned Ajaamil and told him, 'Look, your wife is pregnant. She will soon deliver a son. Give that son the name 'Narayan' (one of the many names of Lord Vishnu). This would lead to your emancipation.' And then the group of sages went on their journey.

When the son was born, Ajaamil named him as advised by them—he called the son 'Narayan'. He was very fond of the son, and called out his name 'Narayan, Narayan' umpteen numbers of times during the course of the day. He was unwittingly taking the name of Lord Vishnu. This continued till the time came for his death.

When he was tormented by the messengers of Yam, the God of hell and death, he became terrified and called out in fear—'Narayan, Narayan. Save me'. Though he was calling his son, but the Lord heard his name being called out by someone in distress. So he sent his own messengers to protect the caller. The messengers of Lord chased away the messengers of Yam and took Ajaamil to heaven. When Yam complained to Vishnu, the Lord told him that if anyone calls out his name at the time of death he is duty-bound to liberate and protect him. This story tells us the power of the name of the Lord.

This story is narrated in Srimad Bhagwat, 6/1-2.

¹³The three Gunas: The character of all the living beings in the entire creation is dependent upon three celebrated primary qualities called the Gunas. They are Sata, Raja and Tama.

(a) The *Sata Guna* is the best of the three qualities present in any creature. It is a positive quality and is marked by a propensity for following the path of nobility, auspiciousness, probity, propriety, virtuousness, holiness and righteousness. Creatures that have a predominance of Sata Guna are inclined to do selfless service, be benevolent, merciful, kind and gracious, have coolness of head and a rationale and balanced mind, be contented, have humility and piety etc. Such creatures are devoted to good values in life and have a desire to acquire knowledge that would help them reach higher spiritual goals in life.

This Sata Guna is marked by high standards of ethical and moral existence that makes the bearer of such qualities highly respected in society. Such people have a spiritual dimension to their personality. This quality is spiritually uplifting and gives a divine halo to those who possess it and practice it.

The Vasanas that have the Sata Guna or quality dominant in them are like a veil covering the lamp or like a smoke covering the fire. A slight breeze will remove this smoke. Similarly a little bit of prayer and meditation will remove the Satwic desires; its removal requires the least effort.

(b) The second quality is the *Raja Guna* and it makes a man more attracted to this material world and its charms, and less spiritually inclined. The Raja Guna is the medium quality marked by a greater percentage of worldly passions, desires and

attachments and their natural offshoots in a creature. It makes a creature inclined towards the material things of the gross world and their enjoyments, towards creation of wealth, its enhancement and protection, and generally having a desire for growth, development and expansion etc. It covers such qualities as worldly yearnings, passions, a stormy nature, agitated behaviour, ambitions, selfishness, expansionist tendencies, a desire to acquire, retain and develop such acquisitions even to the detriment of one's long term spiritual welfare and even if such actions cause pain to others. All these pertain to this materialistic world. Such qualities give worldly fame and prosperity. If these qualities are judiciously mixed with the Satwic qualities, then they provide the person the better of the two worlds, both in terms of worldly fame as well as spiritual well being.

The Vasanas that have the Rajsic Guna or quality dominant in them can be compared to dust on a mirror. In this case some dusting and rubbing is needed to clean the mirror; a greater effort is needed as compared to the case with Satwic quality.

(c) The third quality is called the *Tama Guna* and is the meanest and the basest of the three Gunas. It is a demeaning quality in a creature that leads to his downfall and perpetual entanglement with things that are considered improper and unethical. It creates an inclination for committing all sorts of sins, misdeeds and demeanours. It leads the creature towards negativity and inspires him to acquire negative qualities such as various vices, evils, sins, perversions etc. It makes him inclined to be greedy, rapacious, haughty, arrogant, lustful, intoxicated, vile and wild to the extreme. Such a creature with a predominance of Tama Guna has utter disregard for propriety, noble virtues and ethics, for righteousness and morality.

In brief, it is the most degrading, denigrating and contemptible of the three characteristics in a person, and leads to such behaviour which is utterly immoral, denigrating and depraved, marked by grossness, crassness and recklessness. It therefore leads to his downfall, ignominy and ruin as well as ignorance, delusions, gloom, inertia, anger, frustration etc.

The Tamsic Guna or quality is like the embryonic membrane that covers the foetus in the womb. They cannot be removed easily and require great diligence, effort, persistence, dedication and careful handling requiring time and patience. It is the basest and the lowliest of the three characteristics, and the worst type to possess.

The Vasanas that have the Tama Guna in dominance are regarded as the 'bad Vasanas' or better still the 'worst type of Vasana' that any individual can have.

These Gunas, in varying ratios and mixtures, decide the character and personality of any given unit of creation. In modern world we recognize them as the 'gene' special to that individual, the 'gene' which makes each individual so unique in this creation. These Gunas can also be compared to the various shades and hues of colours that a painter uses to paint a picture or a portrait and inject life and uniqueness to it. Even the same painter cannot duplicate exactly a picture again—there is bound to be a difference between any two pictures or portraits no matter how invisible, imperceptible, microscopic and subtle it might be.

The effect of the Gunas and how they affect this creation have been explained in a number of Upanishads. some of the references are these: *Ram Purva Tapini Upanishad*, Canto 2, verse no. 2 of the Atharva Veda; *Tripadvibhut Maha Narayan*

Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 6, paragraph no. 7; *Shaarirak Upanishad* of Krishna Yajur Veda, verse no. 13; *Pashupat Brahm Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda, Kanda 1, verse no. 9; *Naradparivrajak Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda, in its Canto 3, verse no. 77; *Brihajjabal Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition, Brahman 3, verse no. 1; *Yogshikha Upanishad* of Krishna Yajur Veda, Canto 1, verse no. 116.

¹⁴OM and Brahm: There are umpteen numbers of Upanishads that deal with this esoteric subject which is beyond the purview of the present book to be described in detail here. Refer to the following Upanishads—

The eclectic concept of the ethereal sound known as Naad and its conceptualisation as the word Mantra OM has been explained in a number of Upanishads. Some of these Upanishads are the following—

(a) Rig Veda—Naad Bindu Upanishad.

(b) Krishna Yajur Veda—Taittiriya Upanishad, Valli (Canto) 1, Anuvak (sub-canto) 8; Amrit Naad Upanishad, verse no. 2, 4, 24-25, 31-32; Dhyani Bindu Upanishad, verse no. 2, 9-18 (which narrates how each letter of OM stands for different aspects of creation), 37, 102; Tejobindu Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 1, 6; Yogtattva Upanishad, verse nos. 136-139; Brahm Vidya Upanishad, verse nos. 2-12, 69-71 ½ (which narrates how each letter of OM stands for different aspects of creation); Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 4, verse nos. 1.11—1.34, and Canto 5, verse nos. 69-72; Shuk-Rahasya Upanishad, verse no. 20 (describes how OM is used for the purpose of ritualistic worship according to the Tantra philosophy involving Anga Nyas, Shadanga Nyas etc.); Akchu Upanishad, Canto 2, verse nos. 42-43 ½ (describe how the three states of existence, i.e. waking, dreaming and deep sleep, and the three types of bodies, i.e. gross, subtle and causal, came into existence as manifestations of the three letters A, U and M of the word OM); Rudra Hridaya Upanishad, verse no. 38.

(b) Shukla Yajur Veda—Taarsar Upanishad, Canto 2, and Canto 3, verse nos. 1-7; Hans Upanishad, verse nos. 6-17.

(c) Sam Veda—Yogchudamani Upanishad verse no. 74-81, 85-88; Pranavo Panishad which has only 13 verses dedicated to OM.

(d) Atharva Veda—Sita Upanishad, verse no. 9; Ram Rahasya Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 7; Ram Tapiniopanishad, canto 3, verse no.5-9; Prashna Upanishad, full Canto 5; Mundak Upanishad, Canto 2, section 2, verse no. 4,6; Mandukya Upanishad, verse no. 1, 8-12; Atharvashikha Upanishad; Nrisingh Purvatapini Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 8; Canto 2, verse nos. 2, 5; Canto 4, verse no. 3; Naradparivrajak Upanishad, Canto 8, verse nos. 1-7; Shandilya Upanishad, Canto 1, section 6, verse nos. 1-5; Param Hans Parivrajak Upanishad, verse no. 6; Pashupat Brahm Upanishad, Kanda/Canto 1, verse no. 4, 17 (which equates OM with the ‘Hans’ Mantra), 20 (which says that OM is used a Mantra to offer worship or reverence to the Atma); Kanda/Canto 2, verse no. 3-5; Par Brahm Upanishad, verse no. 2, 5.

The supreme transcendental Being known as ‘Brahm’ is also known as *Pranav Brahm* or *Shaba Brahm* because the term ‘Brahm’ refers to the cosmic Consciousness that is at the core of this creation, and this ‘Consciousness’ generates ‘vibrations of life’ in the deep bowls of the cosmos, and these vibrations in turn produce a ‘sound’. ‘Sound’ is a characteristic of ‘conscious life’ as only a living entity can ‘speak and

utter something', or produce a sound. In the cosmic context, this sound that was heard is best represented by the sound made by the monosyllabic word OM.

The cosmos is like a colossus bowl, and the sound generated by the Consciousness produced a deep and dense reverberating sound that was called 'Naad'. The word 'Naad' itself means a reverberating sound that is deep and dense and pulsating like the one made by a huge and heavy bell or drum.

The cosmic 'Consciousness' vibrated with life, and this created pulses that spread in waves in the cosmic ether much like ripples that spread on the surface of a pond when one throws a stone in it. Since there was nothing to obstruct these vibrations, they spread uniformly throughout this creation, permeating every inch of it.

Now, ancient sages and seers tried to explain this esoteric concept by coining the words 'Brahm' and 'OM' to represent respectively the 'cosmic Consciousness' and the 'signs of life it produces in the form of vibrations in the cosmic ether that in turn created sound in the cosmos'. Again, since Consciousness and Sound go hand-in-hand, these sages and seers called Brahm as 'Pranav Brahm' or 'Shabda Brahm'. The word 'Shabda' means a letter or word. Here, the word 'Shabda' refers to the monosyllabic word OM that was deemed to be the nearest analogue to the cosmic sound that was produced by the supreme Consciousness in the cosmic ether. This is because when one says the word OM or AUM slowly, the sound that is produced is equivalent to the sound that is heard in the deep corners of the universe even now.

OM was therefore treated as the nearest analogue and a synonym of Brahm, the supreme Consciousness. Later on the Purans made this abstract idea very easy to comprehend by giving it the name of the Supreme Being: the Brahm, the Parmatma, the Supreme Lord of creation, the Viraat Purush (which literally means the immense dimension of the all-encompassing and all-inclusive form of Brahm).

To access the secret of Brahm, this word OM was given the status of a formula, known as a 'Mantra'. OM therefore became a 'name of Brahm', a synonym of Brahm. OM helped an aspirant seeking to know the truth of Brahm and of existence an easy method to access the latter. In other words, OM was not only a word and a name assigned to Brahm but was also a path that can lead a seeker of truth to the cosmic Consciousness. OM is a Mantra that provides direct access to Brahm and to the cosmic Consciousness that is at the core of creation.

By corollary, the word OM began to represent the cosmic 'Naad' as well. And by extension it began to represent Brahm and Consciousness too.

[#]The three great torments in the world are known as 'Traitaap': Refer: (i) Rig Veda's Mudgal Upanishad, Canto 4, verse no. 2; (ii) Atharva Veda's Sharva Upanishad, verse no. 17.

(a) 'Adhyatmic' problems are those that the creature faces in his spiritual pursuits, (b) 'Adhibhautic' problems are created by terrestrial creatures like enemies, wild animals, cruel kings, thieves, bodily afflictions such as old age and diseases etc., (c) 'Adhidaivic' are the problems created by unfavourable Gods and malignant stars.]

रघुपति-भगति सुलभ, सुखकारी । सो त्रयताप-सोक-भय-हारी ॥
 बिनु सतसंग भगति नहिं होई । ते तब मिलैं द्रवै जब सोई ॥
 जब द्रवै दीनदयालु राघव, साधु-संगति पाइये ।
 जेहि दरस-परस-समागमादिक पापरासि नसाइये ॥
 जिनके मिले दुख-सुख समान, अमानतादिक गुन भये ।
 मद-मोह लोभ-बिषाद-क्रोध सुबोधतें सहजहिं गये ॥136/10 ॥

(136/10)

raghupati-bhagati sulabha, sukhakārī. sō trayatāpa-sōka-bhaya-hārī.
 binu satasaṅga bhagati nahim hō'ī. tē taba milaim dravai jaba sō'ī.
 jaba dravai dīnadayālu rāghava, sādhu-saṅgati pā'iyē.
 jēhi darasa-parasa-samāgamādika pāparāsi nasā'iyē.
 jīnakē milē dukha-sukha samāna, amānatādika guna bhayē.
 mada-mōha lōbha-biṣāda-krōdha subōdhatēm sahajahim gayē. 136/10.

Verse no. 136/10—Devotion and affection (**bhagati**) for Lord Raghupati (Sri Ram) is easy and simple to have, and it gives immense bliss, joy and happiness to the creature (**raghupati-bhagati sulabha, sukhakārī**). They eliminate the fear of the three types of sorrows that torment a creature¹; they are an eliminator of all sorts of worries, miseries and fears that make the creature suffer (**sō trayatāpa-sōka-bhaya-hārī**).

[¹The three types of sorrows that cause problems for a creature are called the “Traitaps”. They are described in verse no. 17, stanza no. 2, and verse no. 81, stanza no. 1 of this Book ‘Vinai Patrika’.]

But that devotion and affection for the Lord that is known as ‘Bhakti’ cannot be had without a communion with and the company of saints and pious souls (**binu satasaṅga bhagati nahim hō'ī**), and these saints and pious souls are met only by the grace and blessings of Lord Sri Ram, only when the Lord wishes it to be so by being gracious upon the selected devotee (**tē taba milaim dravai jaba sō'ī**).

Indeed it is true that company of saintly people is possible only when Lord Ram feels merciful for the creature and blesses him with this boon (**jaba dravai dīnadayālu rāghava, sādhu-saṅgati pā'iyē**)².

[²To wit, when Lord Sri Ram shows grace and mercy upon the creature then only is communion and contacts with saints possible for him. The glory, importance and virtue of saints and pious people has been elucidated and enumerated in other books of Tulsidas also, viz. (i) Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, from Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 37—to Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 41; (ii) Dohawali, verse nos. 375—378, 381; and (iii) Vairagya Sandipani, verse nos. 8—42.]

By the touch, the sight, the company and the communion of those saintly souls, all the accumulated sins, evils, vices and faults of the creature (jēhi darasa-parasa-samāgamādika) are completely uprooted and destroyed (pāparāsi nasā'iyē).

By this contact with saints, one learns the values and importance of the virtues of dispassion and detachment, and to treat alike both the sorrows and the joys of life (jinakē milē dukha-sukha samāna). One also learns the virtues of practicing equanimity and renunciation in one's life, and is motivated to develop these qualities in himself by seeing the example of these saints and holy souls (amānatādika guna bhayē).

Forsooth, the company of saints helps one to become wise and enlightened so much so that he inculcates many good and saintly virtues and noble qualities in himself (subōdhatēm). The positive effect of this is that many negativities that are inherently present in a person, such as ego, arrogance and haughtiness ("Mada"), delusions, attractions and attachments ("Moha"), greed and yearings ("Lobha"), feeling perplexed, grieved and sorrowful ("Vishad"), and anger ("Krodha"), all gradually go away on their own without making much effort to eliminate them (mada-mōha lōbha-biṣāda-krōdha sahajahim gayē). (136/10).

(136 / 11)

सेवत साधु द्वैत-भय भागै । श्रीरघुबीर-चरन लय लागै ॥
 देह-जनित बिकार सब त्यागै । तब फिरि निज स्वरूप अनुरागै ॥
 अनुराग सो निज रूप जो जगतेँ बिलच्छन देखिये ।
 संतोष, सम, सीतल सदा दम, देहवंत न लेखिये ॥
 निरमल, निरामय, एकरस, तेहि हरष-सोक न ब्यापई ।
 त्रैलोक-पावन सो सदा जाकी दसा ऐसी भई ॥136 / 11 ॥

(136/11)

sēvata sādhu dvaita-bhaya bhāgai. śrīraghubīra-carana laya lāgai.
 dēha-janita bikāra saba tyāgai. taba phiri nija svarūpa anurāgai.
 anurāga sō nija rūpa jō jagatēm bilacchana dēkhiyē.
 santōṣa, sama, sītala sadā dama, dēhavanta na lēkhiyē.
 niramala, nirāmaya, ēkarasa, tēhi haraṣa-sōka na byāpā'ī.
 trailōka-pāvana sō sadā jākī dasā aisī bha'ī. 136/11.

Verse no. 136/11—By serving such wise saints, one gets freedom from the fears (and the doubts) arising from the philosophy of 'Dwaitya' (the dual nature of existence; whether what one experiences in this world is true or false; the sense of mine and yours; this life and the life hereafter; the mortality of life vis-à-vis the eternity of the soul; etc) (sēvata sādhu dvaita-bhaya bhāgai)¹.

[¹When the creature becomes wise, enlightened and self-realised as a reward of his contact with learned saints, he begins to understand that the essence of life is not what is seen and observed by the sense organs of perception of the body in the form of the gross mundane external world of material sense objects, but it is something very subtle and sublime in the form of the ‘Atma’ which is pure consciousness. This Atma is the ‘true self’ of the creature, and it is an universal entity. This Atma lives in all living beings as their individual self at the microcosmic level of existence, and as the Supreme Atma or the Parmatma at the macrocosmic level of existence.

Further, this Atma of the individual is a manifestation of the cosmic Atma represented by Lord Ram. This being the case, the wise aspirant sees his Lord all around him. With the omnipresence of his Lord who is ready to give him protection, where is the cause of fear from any quarter?

The Atma is not a gross visible thing like the body for it is subtle and invisible by its nature; it is eternal and imperishable unlike the body which is subject to decay and death. This realisation eliminates the sense of duality in creation and brings about uniformity.

The thus-realised creature begins to see the same Lord in the form of the ‘consciousness’ or the ‘Atma’ everywhere, in all the creatures, in the animate as well as the inanimate, in the cosmic form of Nature and its vast canvas of beauty, in the outside as well as the inside of all that is visible or invisible. This universal view of existence and the sense of uniformity in its true essence removes fears of death and life, fears of the future vis-à-vis the present. One has no enemies or friends, for all the creatures are one and the same for him. Obviously, this view removes all cause of malice and ill-will, and this paves the way for spread of the virtues of love and brotherhood all around. In this scenario, there is no fear from any quarter.

Again, when a wise creature realises that the ‘Atma’ is his true identity and it is pure consciousness that is universal, immortal and transcendental, then all fears of death are erased.

These ideas are elaborated below in the following stanzas.]

The benefit of this development is that one begins to focus his attention on the holy feet of Lord Ram, the Lord God (*śrīraghubīra-carana laya lāgai*).

All the faults and problems associated with the gross body and the equally gross world are easily done away with (*dēha-janita bikāra saba tyāgai*), and the aspirant begins to learn to experience the bliss associated with one’s Atma that is one’s true self and pure consciousness (*taba phiri nija svarūpa anurāgai*).

Indeed, when the wise and enlightened person realises the greatness, the majesty and the divinity of his true form (*bilacchana dēkhiyē*) as being the ‘pure consciousness’ that is distinct and separate from his gross body, he begins to love and adore it and develop affection for it (*anurāga sō nija rūpa jō jagatēm*). [As soon as this reality dawns upon him, he begins to remain indifferent to the gross body but pays special attention to his Atma.]

The condition of a person who attains this wonderful state of existence wherein he has acquainted himself with the pure conscious Atma residing within his own self, i.e. when

he has become 'self realised', is unique, fantastically wonderful, most eclectic and worthy of laurels to say the least (**bilacchana dēkhiyē**). Having contentedness, equanimity, evenness, fortitude, forbearance, calmness, serenity, self-control of the sense organs, peace of mind, heart and demeanours—all become a part of his character, his nature and his life (**santōṣa, sama, sītala sadā dama**).

He lives in a transcendental state of existence so much so that he begins to see that his physical body that is perishable and gross as well as subject to so many pains and miseries is not his 'true self', and that 'his true identity' is an entity known as the Atma that is pure consciousness which is eternal, blissful, subtle and sublime (**dēhavanta na lēkhiyē**).

The result of this realisation is that the person automatically becomes pure and holy, and is freed from all worldly taints which are like a moral disease for him (**niramala, nirāmaya**).

He becomes steady in his belief of oneness of his soul with the cosmic Soul, as well as the fact that the truth and reality in this world is always the same inspite of the external diversity that is visible, and this attitude makes him calm, uniform and unruffled; he develops the virtues of equanimity and fortitude (**ēkarasa**).

Inculcation of these grand virtues ensures that joys and sorrows do not move him or affect him at all; he remains unruffled, still and calm under both (**tēhi haraṣa-sōka na byāpaṭ**).

[To wit, he is neither excited nor depressed; he treats all circumstances with exceptional poise and dispassion. Nothing is too good for him to excite him, nor too bad to depress him. He is now free from all the imaginary pains and miseries that had been tormenting him till now as these were all related to his gross physical body, and not to the Atma. Thereafter, such a self-realised person never suffers from any misery and sorrow that are so common in this world, but rather lives in a perpetual state of blissfulness, happiness and joy.]

A person who attains this eclectic and transcendental state of existence marked by eternal blissfulness, tranquillity and equanimity and other such majestic virtues as enumerated herein above (**jākī dasā aisī bhaṭ**), is the one who can purify the whole world by showing it the correct path that leads to contentedness and happiness (**trailōka-pāvana sō sadā**) (because he knows the path and how to walk on it to reach one's goal in life; he is the proper guide for others) (136/11).

(136 / 12)

जो तेहि पंथ चलै मन लाई । तौ हरि काहे न होहिं सहाई ॥
 जो मारग श्रुति-साधु दिखावै । तेहि पथ चलत सबै सुख पावै ॥
 पावै सदा सुख हरि-कृपा, संसार-आसा तजि रहै ।
 सपनेहुँ नहीं सुख द्वैत-दरसन, बात कोटिक को कहै ॥
 द्विज, देव, गुरु, हरि, संत बिनु संसार-पार न पाइये ।
 यह जानि तुलसीदास त्रासहरन रमापति गाइये ॥136 / 12 ॥

(136/12)

jō tēhi pantha calai mana lā'ī. tau hari kāhē na hōhim sahā'ī.
 jō māraga śruti-sādhu dikhāvai. tēhi patha calata sabai sukha pāvai.
 pāvai sadā sukha hari-krpā, sansāra-āsā taji rahai.
 sapanēhum' nahīm sukha dvaita-darasana, bāta kōṭika kō kahai.
 dvija, dēva, guru, hari, santa binu sansāra-pāra na pā'iyē.
 yaha jāni tulasīdāsa trāsaharana ramāpati gā'iyē. 136/12.

Verse no. 136/12—Say, why will the Lord God not help those who walk on this noble path (jō tēhi pantha calai mana lā'ī; tau hari kāhē na hōhim sahā'ī), the path which has been shown by the Vedas (scriptures) and endorsed by holy saints (jō māraga śruti-sādhu dikhāvai), for it leads one and all to obtain all types of happiness, peace, joy and contentedness (tēhi patha calata sabai sukha pāvai).

The 'Sadhak' (aspirant; seeker) who walks on this path always feels happy and cheerful because he is blessed by the Lord God himself (pāvai sadā sukha hari-krpā), and therefore he does not have to depend upon the world for anything he wants. So he stops expecting anything from the mundane world, for all his needs are now taken care of by the Lord (sansāra-āsā taji rahai)¹.

[¹By the grace of God, such a seeker attains eternal and abiding bliss, and he realises that the bliss and happiness that he obtains by this method are sustainable and true in nature as compared to their false, transient and impermanent nature as obtained from the world. Thus, he stops pursuing the sense objects of the world in his quest for peace, happiness, joy and pleasures, but turns inwards to his 'pure conscious self' to seek them.

A wise man becomes 'self-realised' and experiences the ultimate bliss and joy that comes with the understanding that his 'true self' is not the gross body but the pure consciousness that is within his own inner-self in the form of his blissful Atma, that the world is perishable while his self is eternal, and that all the pleasures and comforts that this perishable world seems to offer to him are not only limited to the gross body which is also perishable like the world but are impermanent and transient as well as the root of grief and pain in the long run.]

There are countless things to say and equally countless arguments for and against a proposition, but why bother about them (bāta kōṭika kō kahai). One thing is for sure—if one sees 'Dwaitya' (a sense of duality) in this world, then no matter what anyone says or preaches, true happiness and peace will always elude the creature; one can never expect to have abiding peace, bliss, happiness and contentedness even in one's dreams if one is misled by this idea (sapanēhum' nahīm sukha dvaita-darasana)².

[²If a person sees his true self, which is pure consciousness, as being distinct from the Supreme Self which is known as cosmic Consciousness that is all-pervading and

universal in nature, if he sees distinction between mine and yours, me and he etc., then he can never ever find peace in this world.

To wit, real happiness, true peace and bliss that is eternal and abiding lies in becoming self-realised in the oneness of the ‘individual’s self’ and the ‘supreme Self’ known as the Lord God or Brahm. And what is this ‘self’? It is ‘pure consciousness’ both at the individual level and the universal level of existence. This realisation immediately creates a bond of kinship between the creature and the Lord God for the truth of both is the same ‘consciousness’.

All living beings have their own independent bodies, but their true self, the essence of their being, the factor that defines them as a ‘living entity’ as opposed to a non-living thing is not their bodies but the pure consciousness that resides in these bodies. Though the physical bodies may be different but the basic factor that defines all living beings, i.e. the pure consciousness, is the one and the same in all. Hence, there is no cause and locus-standi for the concept of ‘duality’ to ever disturb the peace of mind of an enlightened person in this world.

In the context of the devotee and the Lord God, therefore, a self-realised and enlightened devotee understands that the Lord God whom he worships and adores does not live away from him, but that the Lord resides in his own inner-self as his ‘Atma’ or ‘pure consciousness’. The essence and the truth of the devotee and the Lord God is the same non-dual entity known as ‘Consciousness’. This immediately removes the distance and the distinction between the devotee and his Lord God—and the former begins to feel one with the Lord himself. He has nowhere to go to seek his Lord, for the Lord resides in his own self! This realisation is the pinnacle of enlightenment and spiritual wisdom; it is the source of abiding bliss and eternal joy because this consciousness is eternal and imperishable as opposed to the gross physical body.

To wit and in all sooth, this understanding, this wisdom and realisation is equivalent to crossing this seemingly endless ocean symbolised by this mundane, gross and perishable world that is actually like an ocean of endless miseries, pain, grief and torments for the creature.

The world no longer instills any kind of fear in the heart of the creature; the world no longer tempts the creature with its false charms and allurements of comfort, happiness and joy; the world does not bother the creature. The creature becomes neutral to it—both to its charms as well as to its sorrows. He now realises that the happiness and joy that he gets from the gross world are of no consequence as they are temporary and shallow, and they are dimmed by the intensity and depth of the happiness and joy that is got by realising the presence of the pure consciousness inside one’s own self because it stands for the presence of the Supreme Lord God, who is a fount of eternal peace and bliss, within one’s own self.

Similarly, the wisened creature also realises that all the sorrows and pains of the gross world, as well as its joys and comforts, are all not only transient but also limited to the gross organs of the equally gross body. Since the ‘true self’ is not this gross body, rather it is the pure conscious Atma that resides within this body, therefore nothing of the external gross world really matters to a wise creature anymore. He has literally side-

stepped and skipped the puddle of the world, preventing himself from getting dirty and any slush and filth getting stuck to him!]

It is important to understand that one cannot cross this ocean represented by this world without the help of one's elders, the gods, teacher, the deity one reveres and adores, saints and holy men etc. (because they are one's true and selfless trusted friend, and they know the path one ought to follow to reach this goal) (*dvija, dēva, guru, hari, santa binu sansāra-pāra na pā'iyē*).

Tulsidas says that after understanding all these things, one should sing the divine glories of Lord Ramapati (i.e. Sri Ram) (*yaha jāni tulasīdāsa -- ramāpati gā'iyē*), the Lord who removes all sufferings, miseries and torments of his devotees (*trāsaharana*)³.

[³The devotee worships and adores Lord Ram, the cosmic Lord who is also the Lord of Rama, the goddess of prosperity and well-being, with the hope that he too would find eternal peace and rest for himself like those saints and wise people, that he too would be able to overcome the miseries associated with this world like them, and that he too would be able to attain liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation for his soul in due course of time like done by pious souls.

The word 'Ramāpati' refers to Lord Vishnu, the Lord God and the divine husband of goddess Laxmi who is also known as Rama. Lord Vishnu had manifested himself as Lord Sri Ram whom Tulsidas adores as his Lord God.] (136/12).

(141)

रामचंद्र! रघुनायक! तुमसों हों बिनती केहि भँति करौं ।
 अघ अनेक अवलोकि आपने, अनघ नाम अनुमानि डरौं ॥1॥
 पर-दुख दुखी सुखी पर-सुख ते, संत-सील नहिं हृदय धरौं ।
 देखि आनकी बिपति परम सुख, सुनि संपति बिनु आगि जरौं ॥2॥
 भगति-बिराग-ग्यान साधन कहि बहु बिधि उहकत लोग फिरौं ।
 सिव-सरबस सुखधाम नाम तव, बेंचि नरकप्रद उदर भरौं ॥3॥
 जानत हौं निज पाप जलधि जिय, जल-सीकर सम सुनत लरौं ।
 रज-सम पर-अवगुन सुमेरु करि, गुन गिरि-सम रजतें निदरौं ॥4॥
 नाना बेष बनाय दिवस-निसि, पर-बित जेहि तेहि जुगुति हरौं ।
 एकौ पल न कबहुँ अलोल चित हित दै पद-सरोज सुमिरौं ॥5॥
 जो आचरन बिचारहु मेरो, कलप कोटि लागि औटि मरौं ।
 तुलसिदास प्रभु कृपा-बिलोकनि, गोपद-ज्यो भवसिंधु तरौं ॥6॥

(141)

rāmacandra! raghunāyaka! tumaśōm haur̄m binatī kēhi bhām̄ti karaum̄.
 agha anēka avalōki āpanē, anagha nāma anumāni ḍaraum̄. 1.
 para-dukha dukhī sukhī para-sukha tē, santa-sīla nahim̄ hr̄daya dharaum̄.

dēkhi ānakī bipati parama sukha, suni sampati binu āgi jaraum̃. 2.
 bhagati-birāga-gyāna sādhana kahi bahu bidhi ḍahakata lōga phiraur̃m. 3.
 siva-sarabasa sukhadhāma nāma tava, bēñci narakaprada udara bharaum̃. 3.
 jānata haur̃m nija pāpa jaladhi jiya, jala-sīkara sama sunata laraum̃.
 raja-sama para-avaguna sumēru kari, guna giri-sama rajatēm̃ nidaraum̃. 4.
 nānā bēṣa banāya divasa-nisi, para-bitā jēhi tēhi juguti haraum̃.
 ēkau pala na kabahum̃ alōla cita hita dai pada-sarōja sumiraur̃m. 5.
 jō ācarana bicārahu mērō, kalapa kōṭi lagi auṭi maraum̃.
 tulasidāsa prabhu kṛpā-bilōkani, gōpada-jyōm̃ bhavasindhu taraum̃. 6.

Verse no. 141—# Oh Lord Sri Ram who is as soothing, cool and beautiful as the full Moon (rāmacandra), and who is the most exalted member in the race descending from king Raghu of Ayodhya (raghunāyaka)! How can I pray to you (tumasōm̃ haur̃m binatī kēhi bhām̃ti karaum̃)?

Looking at my numerous sins, vices, evils and faults (agha anēka avalōki āpanē), and thinking of your sinless, faultless, flawless and pure and holy name (anagha nāma), I am too hesitant and feel shy and affright to do so (i.e. to pray to you) (anumāni ḍaraum̃).

[To wit, I am so sinful and fallen that I feel too guilty and ashamed to raise my head and face you so that I can pray to you. I feel I am not worthy to pray to you.

Refer also to stanza no. 1 of verse nos. 142 and 148.] (1).

The saints have a natural disposition and habit of feeling sad at the sorrows of others, and feeling happy at their joys (para-dukha dukhī sukhī para-sukha tē)—I have never had this saintly sentiment in my heart; I have never inculcated this grand virtue so characteristic of saints in myself (santa-sīla nahim̃ hṛdaya dharaum̃).

On the contrary, I feel extremely glad on seeing the troubles, tribulations, sufferings and miseries of others (dēkhi ānakī bipati parama sukha), and burn myself without an actual fire by having jealousy when I hear about their wealth, prosperity and general well-being (suni sampati binu āgi jaraum̃).

[This also makes me guilty before you. Had I been a saintly man, I would have boldly come to you to plead my case. But I am so un-saintly and full of evil traits that I somehow feel affright to stand before your majesty for fear of being caught and punished, or at least being publicly admonished and censured.] (2).

Boastfully preaching and explaining in different ways the many virtues of renunciation, detachment, devotion, wisdom and enlightenment to others (bhagati-birāga-gyāna sādhana kahi bahu bidhi), I roam about actually deceiving them (because I neither know the meaning of these virtues myself nor practise them) (ḍahakata lōga phiraur̃m).

I fill my hell-pit like stomach by selling or encasing your holy name (bēñci narakaprada udara bharaum̃)¹ which is all-in-all and the best possession (i.e. every conceivable thing of any worth in this creation) for Lord Shiva (siva-sarabasa)², for this holy name of yours is an abode or treasury of all bliss and beatitude in this world (sukhadhāma nāma tava).

This surely is such an abhorable act on my part which is surely leading me to hell (narakaprada)!

¹In this context, refer to verse nos. 41, 76, 109, 171 of this book Vinai Patrika.

²Lord Shiva is the most enlightened amongst the Gods and an ardent devotee of Lord Ram, not only repeating the Lord's holy name day and night but also using this spiritual panacea for granting liberation and deliverance to a dying man by uttering Lord Ram's holy name in the dying person's ears.

Tulsidas here alludes to professional preachers and pseudo saints who go around in saintly garb uttering the holy name of Lord Ram just to make the world believe that they are saints and holy men, whereas their real intention is to collect wealth, followership and fame.] (3).

I know in my heart that my sins and vices, my shortcomings and faults are so countless that they are like a fathomless and measureless ocean (jānata hauṁ nija pāpa jaladhi jiya), but when I hear from the mouth of others that I have even a drop of sin, I fly in to a rage, pretending that they are making false allegations against me out of jealousy and with the intention of maligning my reputation (though internally I realise they are speaking the truth) (jala-sīkara sama sunata laraum).

On the other hand, I treat the smallest of vices, the minutest of shortcomings and faults that others might have as being huge and prominent as a mountain known as Sumeru (the heavenly mountain where the gods have their abode) (raja-sama para-avaguna sumēru kari), while treating their greatest and grandest of virtues and qualities that might be as huge as a mountain itself as being small and inconsequential as a particle of dust (guna giri-sama rajatēm nidarauṁ)².

²To wit, when I hear someone pointing out my own shortcomings and faults to me even if it is done with a good intention to help me know about them and make efforts to remove them, I fly into a rage because I think that the person is criticising me to deride, demean and humiliate me in public. My ego is hurt, so I retort by treating that person's immensely good qualities as being a worthless particle of dust, and express my indignation by saying so boisterously so that the other well-meaning person keeps his mouth shut and does not expose my own shortcomings.

Tulsidas means that it is natural for a man to hear others call him a highly righteous and noble person, while he fishes out the minutest faults in them and blows them out of proportion, making the small faults of others into a mountain.

It is to be noted here that instead of being straight-forward about the deceptive means adopted by false saints and inviting their scorn and wrath, Tulsidas has said everything in a round about way as if he was both the culprit and the guilty as well as an upright and judicious judge. His main aim is to warn and alert the world against sinful persons who may lead others astray.

This indirect method of accusing himself of all the vices and evils that Tulsidas tries to bring out in the open in others helps him to prevent the real culprits and pervert persons from accusing him of exposing their sinister character and raising a finger at them to warn the innocent world not to fall prey to their game-plan. Such sinful persons now cannot accuse him of being pretentious and self-righteous, acting like a holy cow and pretending to be holier than thou while pricking holes in the character of others, and

telling him to shut up and mind his own business instead of speaking the truth about them. See note # at the end of this verse also.] (4).

Adopting various deceptive tactics, donning many colourful attires, exhibiting many forms and sporting external paraphernalia (*nānā bēṣa banāya divasa-nisi*), I steal the wealth of others by hook or by crook day and night (*para-bitā jēhi tēhi juguti haraurṁ*). [To wit, I pretend to be a saintly and holy man and adopt all possible means to defraud others, rob them of their money, but I have no regrets about it.]

I never remember your (Lord Ram's) lotus-like holy feet even for a moment with a stable mind and with consistency (though I loudly preach others to have devotion in the feet of the Lord) (*ēkau pala na kabahum' alōla cita hita dai pada-sarōja sumiraurṁ*). [To wit, I don't practice what I preach!] (5).

Oh Lord, if you pay attention to my (corrupt, sinful, perverse, decadent and evil) deeds and ways (*jō ācarana bicārahu mērō*), then I will have to suffer death-by-boiling in this world-like cauldron for millions of Kalpas (i.e. for all times to come and for countless generations) (*kalapa kōṭi lagi auṭi maraurṁ*)! [To wit, I shall never be liberated from the vicious cycle of birth and death, and I will continue to suffer interminably.]

But oh Lord, if you show mercy, grace, benevolence and kindness upon this Tulsidas (*tulasidāsa prabhu kṛpā-bilōkani*), then I shall cross this ocean-like mundane world as if it was a body of water as tiny as a cow's hooves (*gōpada-jyōm bhavasindhu taraurṁ*). [To wit, if the Lord is kind upon the creature who prays to the Lord with a sincere heart for forgiveness, then it is easy for the creature to find liberation and deliverance from the sufferings of this mundane world of transmigration as easily as one steps across a small puddle of dirty water.] (6).

[#Note—In this verse, Tulsidas has indirectly chided those people who pretend to be saintly and holy men but they only cheat others for their vested self interest, for they neither are saintly nor have anything to do with the Lord God of whom they preach so vociferously. They are using the Lord's holy name to fill their stomachs and meet their desire for obtaining material wealth, without understanding that they are opening the gate of hell for themselves.]

(172)

कबहुँक हौँ यहि रहनि रहौँगो ।
 श्रीरघुनाथ—कृपालु—कृपा तें संत—सुभाव गहौँगो ।।1।।
 जथालाभ संतोष सदा, काहू सों कछु न चहौँगो ।
 पर—हित—निरत निरंतर, मन क्रम बचन नेम निबहौँगो ।।2।।
 परुष बचन अति दुसह श्रवन सुनि तेहि पावक न दहौँगो ।
 बिगत मान, सम सीतल मन, पर—गुन नहिं दोष कहौँगो ।।3।।
 परिहरि देह—जनित चिंता, दुख—सुख समबुद्धि सहौँगो ।
 तुलसिदास प्रभु यहि पथ रहि, अबिचल हरि—भगति लहौँगो ।।4।।

(172)

kabhumka hauri yahi rahani rahauᅅgō.
 śrīraghunātha-kᅅpālu-kᅅpā tēm̄ santa-subhāva gahauᅅgō. 1.
 jathālābha santōᅅa sadā, kāhū sōm̄ kachu na cahauᅅgō.
 para-hita-nirata nirantara, mana krama bacana nēma nibahauᅅgō. 2.
 paruᅅa bacana ati dusaha śravana suni tēhi pāvaka na dahauᅅgō.
 bigata māna, sama sītala mana, para-guna nahim̄ dōᅅa kahauᅅgō. 3.
 parihari dēha-janita cintā, dukha-sukha samabud'dhi sahouᅅgō.
 tulasidāsa prabhu yahi patha rahi, abicala hari-bhagati lahouᅅgō. 4.

Verse no. 172—[This verse essentially describes the glorious virtues of true saints and pious people.]

Will I ever live a righteous, noble, exemplary and worthwhile life (kabhumka hauri yahi rahani rahauᅅgō)? Will I ever adopt, by the grace and mercy of Sri Ram (Raghunath) (śrīraghunātha-kᅅpālu-kᅅpā tēm̄), the auspicious temperament and excellent characteristics of true and pious saints (santa-subhāva gahauᅅgō)? (1).

Would I be always contented with whatever I get (jathālābha santōᅅa sadā), and would not expect or desire anything from anyone (Gods or humans) ever (kāhū sōm̄ kachu na cahauᅅgō).

I shall always spend my time (i.e. involve myself) in the welfare of others and doing good to them (para-hita-nirata nirantara).

I shall follow the various 'Yam-Niyam' with my mind, speech and deeds (mana krama bacana nēma nibahauᅅgō)¹.

[¹The 10 Yam-Niyam are the codes of conduct as prescribed in the scriptures for personal behaviour. These are the laws, regulations, restraints and various controls that a person is expected to practice in his or life. They are the following :- Ahinsa (non-violence, abstinence from killing), Satya (truthfulness), Asteya (non-stealing), Brahmacharya (celibacy; restraint of the sense organs, specially the genitals, but by extension all the sense organs such as speech, thought, eyes, touch, ears can be also involved in lasciviousness and lust), Aparigraha (non-accumulation or hoarding), Saucha (cleanliness), Santosh (contentedness, satisfaction), Tap (penance, austerities), Swadhaya (self-study of scriptures) and Ishwar-Pranidhan (deep devotion or concentration of mind on the Lord God).

See also verse no. 58, stanza no. 6.] (2).

I shall not burn in the fire of anger and revenge inspite of hearing provocative words which are offending, insulting and intolerably harsh (paruᅅa bacana ati dusaha śravana suni tēhi pāvaka na dahauᅅgō). [To wit, I shall be calm and forgiving in the

face of grave provocations. I shall not harbour any ill-will against my tormentors and adversaries. I shall not let their harsh words disturb my inner peace of mind and heart.]

I shall abandon pride, vanity, ego, haughtiness and hypocrisy (*bigata māna*), and instead remain modest, poised and calm in my mind and heart (*sama sītala mana*). [To wit, I shall treat all those who praise me as well as those who criticise me with exemplary equanimity and equality. I shall not let my ego come in the way and unnecessarily stoke the fire of anger and ill-will against my adversaries, or be puffed-up by praise so much that I bend over backwards to favour the wicked and the rascals just because they falsely heap honours on me.]

Indeed, I shall practice exemplary equanimity and evenness of mind so much so that I shall neither criticise anyone nor praise them (*para-guna nahim dōṣa kahauṅō*)².

[²This statement can be read as follows also—“I shall accept and acknowledge the good virtues in others, and not see their faults and shortcomings.”

To wit, I shall always be concentrating my thoughts and mind on Lord Sri Ram, and therefore I will have no time for such evil, wayward and futile activities as pricking holes in other people’s characters and finding fault with all and sundry.] (3).

I shall keep aside (i.e. remain unperturbed and unmoved by) all the worries regarding my physical body and its comfort (*parihari dēha-janita cintā*), and treat sorrows and miseries, pleasures and joys alike (*dukha-sukha samabud'dhi sahaṅō*). [To wit, I shall not be unduly concerned about trying to gratify the urges of my gross body as I know it is perishable and naturally habituated to complaining and demanding endlessly. I know that the more I try to appease it, the more demanding it would become. On the other hand, if I stop pampering it, by and by it would learn to tolerate hardships, and it would stop being a cause of constant nuisance for my peace of mind.]

Oh Lord! This fellow Tulsidas hopes that he would be able to remain steady and faithful on this most auspicious path as outlined above (*tulasidāsa prabhu yahi patha rahi*), and as a result would be able to receive as a blessing an eternal devotion for the Lord (Sri Ram) (*abicala hari-bhagati lahaṅō*) (4).

(203)

श्रीहरि—गुरु—पद—कमल भजहु मन तजि अभिमान ।
 जेहि सेवत पाइय हरि सुख—निधान भगवान ॥1॥
 परिवा प्रथम प्रेम बिनु राम—मिलन अति दूरि ।
 जद्यपि निकट हृदय निज रहे सकल भरिपूरि ॥2॥
 दुइज द्वैत—मति छाडि चरहि महि—मंडल धीर ।
 बिगत मोह—माया—मद हृदय बसत रघुबीर ॥3॥
 तीज त्रिगुन—पर परम पुरुष श्रीरमन मुकुंद ।
 गुन सुभाव त्यागे बिनु दुरलभ परमानंद ॥4॥
 चौथि चारि परिहरहु बुद्धि—मन—चित—अहंकार ।

बिमल बिचार परमपद निज सुख सहज उदार॥5॥
 पाँचइ पाँच परस, रस, सब्द, गंध अरु रूप।
 इन्ह कर कहा न कीजिये, बहुरि परब भव-कूप॥6॥
 छठ पटबरग करिय जय जनकसुता-पति लागि।
 रघुपति-कृपा-बारि बिनु नहिं बुताइ लोभागि॥7॥
 सातैं सप्तधातु-निरमित तनु करिय बिचार।
 तेहि तनु केर एक फल, कीजै पर-उपकार॥8॥
 आठइँ आठ प्रकृति-पर निरबिकार श्रीराम।
 केहि प्रकार पाइय हरि, हृदय बसहिं बहु काम॥9॥
 नवमी नवद्वार-पुर बसि जेहि न आपु भल कीन्ह।
 ते नर जोनि अनेक भ्रमत दारुन दुख लीन्ह॥10॥
 दसहूँ दसहु कर संजम जो न करिय जिय जानि।
 साधन बुथा होइ सब मिलहिं न सारँगपानि॥11॥
 एकादसी एक मन बस कै सेवहु जाइ।
 सोइ ब्रत कर फल पावै आवागमन नसाइ॥12॥
 द्वादसि दान देहु अस, अभय होइ त्रैलोक।
 परहित-निरत सो पारन बहुरि न ब्यापत सोक॥13॥
 तेरसि तीन अवस्था तजहु, भजहु भगवंत।
 मन-क्रम-बचन-अगोचर, व्यापक, व्याप्य, अनंत॥14॥
 चौदसि चौदह भुवन अचर-चर-रूप गोपाल।
 भेद गये बिनु रघुपति अति न हरहिं जग-जाल॥15॥
 पूनों प्रेम-भगति-रस हरि-रस जानहिं दास।
 सम, सीतल, गत-मान, ग्यानरत, विषय-उदास॥16॥
 त्रिबिध सूल होलिय जरै, खेलिय अब फागु।
 जो जिय चहसि परमसुख तौ यहि मारग लागु॥17॥
 श्रुति-पुरान-बुध-संमत चौचरि चरित मुरारि।
 करि बिचार भव तरिय, परिय न कबहुँ जमधारि॥18॥
 संसय-समन, दमन दुख, सुखनिधान हरि एक।
 साधु-कृपा बिनु मिलहिं न, करिय उपाय अनेक॥19॥
 भवसागर कहँ नाब सुद्ध संतनके चरन।
 तुलसिदास प्रयास बिनु मिलहिं राम दुखहरन॥20॥

(203)

śrīhari-guru-pada-kamala bhajahu mana taji abhimāna.
 jēhi sēvata pā'iya hari sukha-nidhāna bhagavāna. 1.
 parivā prathama prēma binu rāma-milana ati dūri.
 jadyapi nikaṭa hṛdaya nija rahē sakala bharipūri. 2.
 du'ija dvaita-mati chāḍi carahi mahi-maṇḍala dhīra.
 bigata mōha-māyā-mada hṛdaya basata raghubīra. 3.
 tīja triguna-para parama puruṣa śrīramana mukunda.
 guna subhāva tyāgē binu duralabha paramānanda. 4.
 cauthi cāri pariharahu bud'dhi-mana-cita-ahamkāra.

bimala bicāra paramapada nija sukha sahaja udāra. 5.
 pām̐ca'i pām̐ca parasa, rasa, sabda, gandha aru rūpa.
 inha kara kahā na kījiyē, bahuri paraba bhava-kūpa. 6.
 chaṭṭha ṣaṭabaraga kariya jaya janakasutā-pati lāgi.
 raghupati-kr̥pā-bāri binu nahim̐ butā'i lōbhāgi. 7.
 sātaim̐ saptadhātu-niramita tanu kariya bicāra.
 tēhi tanu kēra ēka phala, kījai para-upakāra. 8.
 āṭṭha'im̐ āṭṭha prakṛti-para nirabikāra śrīrāma.
 kēhi prakāra pā'iya hari, hṛdaya basahim̐ bahu kāma. 9.
 navamī navadvāra-pura basi jēhi na āpu bhala kīnha.
 tē nara jōni anēka bhramata dārūna dukha līnha. 10.
 dasaim̐ dasahu kara sanjama jō na kariya jiya jāni.
 sādhana bṛthā hō'i saba milahim̐ na sāram̐gapāni. 11.
 ēkādasi ēka mana basa kai sēvahu jā'i.
 sō'i brata kara phala pāvai āvāgamana nasā'i. 12.
 dvādasi dāna dēhu asa, abhaya hō'i trailōka.
 parahita-nirata sō pārana bahuri na byāpata sōka. 13.
 tēraasi tīna avasthā tajahu, bhajahu bhagavanta.
 mana-krama-bacana-agōcara, vyāpaka, vyāpya, ananta. 14.
 caudasi caudaha bhuvana acara-cara-rūpa gōpāla.
 bhēda gayē binu raghupati ati na harahim̐ jaga-jāla. 15.
 pūnōm̐ prēma-bhagati-rasa hari-rasa jānahim̐ dāsa.
 sama, sītala, gata-māna, gyānarata, viṣaya-udāsa. 16.
 tribidha sūla hōliya jarai, khēliya aba phāgu.
 jō jiya cahasi paramasukha tau yahi māraga lāgu. 17.
 śruti-purāna-budha-sammata cām̐cari carita murāri.
 kari bicāra bhava tariya, pariya na kabahum̐ jamadhāri. 18.
 sansaya-samana, damana dukha, sukhanidhāna hari ēka.
 sādhu-kr̥pā binu milahim̐ na, kariya upāya anēka. 19.
 bhavasāgara kaham̐ nāba sud'dha santanakē carana.
 tulasidāsa prayāsa binu milahim̐ rāma dukhaharana. 20.

Verse no. 203—[In this remarkable verse, Tulsidas has used each of the fifteen days of the waxing phase of the moon to describe the steps one must take to attain beatitude and felicity, to attain oneness with the Lord God and its accompanying sense of spiritual fulfilment that culminates in eternal bliss and peace.]

Oh my Mind (mana)! Abandoning your pride, ego, arrogance and haughtiness (taji abhimāna), you should worship, adore and have devotion for the august feet of your Guru (moral teacher and preceptor; one's spiritual guide and aid) who is like a personified form of the Lord God (Sri Ram) (śrīhari-guru-pada-kamala bhajahu).

By serving a true Guru you can easily and without hassles attain the supreme blissful state of oneness with Lord Hari (Sri Ram) (jēhi sēvata pā'iya hari sukhanidhāna bhagavāna)¹.

[¹This is the primary step and like a stepping stone to achieve one's objective. Obviously one would need someone to guide him in his spiritual path. But one should be careful before selecting a Guru because if the selection is wrong than the guidance would also be wrong. A wrong Guru will be more harmful than not having a Guru at all.

This is the new moon's night because it is from this day that the light of the moon begins to increase day by day, symbolising that when one accepts an acclaimed and realised teacher his journey has kick-started on the right note and towards the right target. Under the aegis and guidance of a selfless, adroit, wise and enlightened teacher, a spiritual aspirant is assured of success in his endeavours, and all his problems, doubts and confusions would be correctly and properly addressed, and he feels happy that he is in the right hands that would be able to handle his progress and his future in the right way.] (1).

Like the day of 'Pratipada' (the first day of the lunar month—"parivā prathama"), the first way, the first mean and the essential one (to achieve the goal of attaining the blissful state of oneness with the Lord God) is to have true (honest and sincere; of sublime, ethereal and spiritual kind of) love, affection and devotion for the Lord (prathama prēma).

It is very remote and a far-fetched idea that one would be able to reach Lord Sri Ram without having the virtues of love, affection and devotion in one's heart (prēma binu rāma-milana ati dūri), though it is also true that the Lord is very close to a creature as he lives or resides in the very heart of all living beings (jadyapi nikaṭa hr̥daya nija rahē sakala bharipūri)².

[²One has not to search for the Lord God anywhere outside if one were wise enough to understand that the Lord resides in his own heart, and the first step that is like opening the door to the Lord's chamber is to have love, devotion and affection for him. Otherwise, all exercise is in vain; all efforts are futile.

Thus, the first essential step is to have sincere and deep love, affection and devotion for the Lord God; to adore, revere and worship the Lord with truthness of the heart and commitment of the mind.] (2).

Like the day of 'Dwitiya' (the second day of the lunar month—"du'ija"), the second way or path is to stabilise the mind and the heart (dhīra) by abandoning or discarding or overcoming the sense of Dvaita ("dvaita-mati chāḍi"—dichotomies; dual nature of God; distinction between God and creature, or God and soul; this and that; lack of uniformity of view; not seeing the one God everywhere).

Once having realised the universal presence of the Lord who is a personified form of the cosmic Consciousness, and having no doubt about this statement, one would see uniformity in this whole creation, would begin to have an equanimity and stability of mind, a mind that is steady and unfaltering mind, a mind that is not fickle and vagrant as such a mind would be detrimental towards attaining success in any field or endeavour whatsoever it may be.

After having thus stabilised and controlled the mind, the spiritual aspirant should roam in the world fearlessly, practicing equanimity, evenness, equality, tolerance and forbearance (carahi mahi-maṇḍala dhīra).

For in all sooth, let it be known that Lord Raghbir (Sri Ram) lives only in those hearts (hr̥daya basata raghubīra) that are free from 'Moha', 'Maya' and 'Ghamand'

(attachments, infatuations, delusions, ignorance, confusions, doubts as well as ego, arrogance, haughtiness, hypocrisy and pride) (*bigata mōha-māyā-mada*)³.

[³This is the second step: and it is to have a universal view of the uniform existence of the Lord God, who is pure Consciousness, everywhere in this creation, without exception. In other words, the spiritual aspirant must learn to see his beloved Lord everywhere around him. He must learn to treat all the creatures alike, and deal with them with a lot of compassion and love because since he is expected to ‘see’ his dear Lord ‘everywhere’, it also includes all living beings. There is no surprise in it—because the Lord ‘lives in the heart of all living beings’, so why should one distinguish between any two creatures?

Further, since Lord Ram lives in a clean environment, he would live in a heart that is clean and pure, and not in one that is dark, corrupted and tainted. To make the heart an abode of the Lord God it is essential to make it calm, pure and peaceful, to eliminate all those factors that cause it disturbances and agitations. Some of these causes come with having doubts and confusions arising out of dichotomies and uncertainties as to what is true and what is not, where the Lord lives and where he does not.

Confusions and doubts arising out of duality is like being in a boat on a choppy ocean; the boat swings and tosses and rocks so violently that its passenger is horrified beyond measure, so how can he ever find peace and happiness?

The immediate bonus that comes to the spiritual aspirant with this attitude of seeing universality in the presence of the Lord, by elimination of Dwaita, is that he is liked by all the creatures in this world since he begins to be friendly towards all living being; no one is his enemy any longer, and he is welcomed and treated with affection wherever he goes. This creates a positive environment for him and aides in his spiritual life as all discord and ill-will are eliminated, and the heart and the mind find peace and tranquillity for good.] (3).

The third step or the third requirement, like the day of the ‘Tritiya’ (the third lunar day—“*tījā*”), is that one should realise the fact that Sri Mukund (the Lord God), the radiance and brilliance of Laxmi, the Param Purush (the Supreme Being; the cosmic Consciousness; the universal and cosmic form of the Lord) is beyond the three Gunas (which represent the three basic attributes or qualities of creation, known as ‘Satvik’, ‘Rajsik’, and ‘Tamsik’) (*triguna-para parama puruṣa śrīramana mukunda*).

Since the spiritual aspirant has already been advised to practice uniformity and universality of the Lord, and to eliminate the sense of duality, he is also expected to eliminate seeing the Lord from the perspective of these three Gunas and distinguishing between the subtle forms of the Lord.

Hence, a wise aspirant should abandon the habit of trying to judge the Supreme Being with the same yardstick with which a foolish person sees and judges the rest of the world, because without eliminating this tendency to harp about the three Gunas and seeing the Lord from this distorted prism one cannot expect to experience supreme bliss and beatitude (*guna subhāva tyāgē binu duralabha paramānanda*)⁴.

[⁴There are three basic ‘Gunas’ or attributes or qualities that govern the personality and character of all living being. They are known as ‘Satvik’, ‘Rajsik’ and ‘Tamsik’. The first is the group of attributes that are the best and the most auspicious; the last is the worst sort, and the second lies somewhere in the middle of the two as it is a

transition zone between the two extremes. These three Gunas are briefly described in a note no. 13 appended to verse no. 57 of this book Vinai Patrika.

Now, since the Supreme Being is a personified form of 'pure cosmic Consciousness' it follows that he is beyond or free from the affects of any of these Gunas. The Lord is a sublime and transcendental Being, and not gross like the world and its creatures that are characterised and defined by one or the other Gunas.

So, this is the third step or essential requirement for God-realisation—to abandon searching for attributes and qualities in an entity known as 'Consciousness' that is essentially sublime, subtle and cosmic in nature.

This understanding or realisation has one big benefit—it brings the spiritual aspirant closer to the truth about his own self known as the Atma which is the same 'consciousness' at the individual level that is known as 'Parmatma' or the Supreme Being at the cosmic and universal level of existence.

This requirement is actually an extension of the previous one where one was asked to eliminate the sense of duality. It is an obvious and natural corollary to it—because if one is torn between doubts and dichotomies, one cannot get peace and happiness even in their rudimentary form, so there is no question of getting it in their best form, in their supreme form—"duralabha paramānanda"] (4).

Like the 'Chataurdashi' (the fourth lunar day—"cauthi"), the fourth way or the fourth requirement for reaching or attaining oneness with the Lord is to forsake the company or getting influenced by the 'Buddhi' (intellect), the 'Mana' (mind), the 'Chitta' (sub-conscious) and 'Ahankar' (pride or ego) (cāri pariharahu bud'dhi-mana-cita-ahamkāra).

By doing this, pure wisdom would sprout or arise in one's heart (bimala bicāra), and thereafter one would be able to attain bliss and stability that originates within his own self, within his inner being, that transcends all confusions and perplexities. It would help him to realise the 'self' which is pure consciousness and a fount of eternal bliss and beatitude (paramapada nija sukha sahaja udāra). It is beyond the grossness of existence where the above mentioned foursome ('Buddhi', 'Mana', 'Chitta' and 'Ahankar') matter⁵.

[⁵These four entities are collectively called the 'Antahakaran' or the 'inner-being' of a creature. The main idea is that after controlling the self from all confusions arising from the external world by eliminating the effects of Dwaita and the Gunas, one should strive to calm down one's inner being by controlling these four factors or units—viz. bud'dhi-mana-cita-ahamkāra.

These entities create a lot of tug and push, like a tug-of-war, on the aspirant, mostly in the opposite direction of each other. He may have overcome all sources of unease and distortions arising from the outside world, but he also needs to control the agitations created inside his own self by these four entities. For instance, the intellect would advise on one line of action, and the sub-conscious would prod him towards a different direction. The person's ego may come in between and he may or may not listen to either the mind or the sub-conscious, and do what his instincts, his impulses tell him.

While for one moment he would be inclined to believe in the existence of the Lord God and to obey the directions given in this verse because his mind agrees with it and his subconscious says that it is the correct path, but instantly he may be in doubt

because his intellect will intervene and call all this hogwash and hearsay and blind faith. He will start arguing and debating on the reliability of the advise given in the scriptures, and judging the truthfulness and the authenticity of an entity that is extremely sublime and subtle, and is essentially beyond the reach of the gross sense organs of the body for them to judge it. So all this creates a lot of confusion and agitations for the spiritual aspirant. He is dislodged from the path he had stepped on in the beginning of his spiritual journey.

It is like a king having too many ministers and advisors, all of them giving contradictory advices to him.

This is the fourth step or requirement for a spiritual aspirant. One should learn to remain calm and unmoved by the proddings and naggings and pinchings of the mind, the intellect, the sub-conscious and one's ego.

One should learn not to be a 'doer' but simply an 'observer'; one should not involve oneself in this world but consider everything neutrally as if they were all playful activities or sport of the Lord God himself. One should live in the world and do what one is expected to do with equanimity and a neutral attitude, being unmoved by the results of his actions, whether they are favourable to him or otherwise.

In other words, a true spiritual aspirant is expected to be dispassionate, detached, neutral and equitable in his dealings with the world. He should not allow ego or pride to come in anywhere. Naturally and logically then, there would be bountiful peace in the heart.] (5).

The fifth day called 'Panchami' (pāṁcā'i) represents the fifth method or requirement for the spiritual aspirant: It is not to be enslaved by, or not to listen to, or pay attention to or heed the demands of (inḥa kara kahā na kījyē) the five sense organs of the body—such as touch, taste, speech, smell and sight, as well as the objects related to them in the gross world (pāṁcā parasa, rasa, sabda, gandha aru rūpa), because by being servile to them, one shall have to fall in a dark, dry well representing this (materialistic, illusionary, deluding, tormenting, selfish and quagmire-like) world (and re-enter the vicious cycle of birth and death) (bahuri parabā bhava-kūpa)⁶.

[⁶This is the fifth requirement for a spiritual aspirant—he must learn to practice self-control or self-restraint over his sense organs of perception. These have a natural tendency to be attracted to their respective objects in the world, creating a lot of temptations for the spiritual aspirant, which if not controlled would make him an easy prey and get trapped in their vice-like grip. He would become indulgent and submerged in this world of material charms and get attached to it. On the one hand he was trying to free himself from all entanglements, and now he has himself volunteered to get trapped if he listens to what his sense organs demand from him.

So a wise person is advised to neglect the urges of his body, for otherwise he would fall in the cycle of birth and death which would rob him of all his peace and happiness. He must remember that his sense organs are his worst enemy because they live with him as long as he lives in this world surrounded by its countless charms that attract these sense organs, and if he loses his guard he would be deluded after some time. So constant vigil is needed against their nefarious designs.] (6).

Like the sixth day called ‘Shasthi’ (chathā), the sixth path or the sixth requirement for attainment of success in one’s spiritual endeavours and coming close to Lord Ram, (“janakasutā-pati” lāgi) to obtain bliss and happiness for one’s self consists of conquering the six hurdles or obstacles which are like one’s enemy in his spiritual quest (ṣaṭabaraga kariya jaya)⁷.

Verily indeed, the fire of greed, desire, yearnings, avarice et al is not quenched (doused; calmed down) (nahim butā’i lōbhāgi) without the water symbolised by the grace and kindness of Sri Raghupati (Lord Ram) (raghupati-krpā-bāri binu).

[⁷These symbolic six ‘enemies’ that need to be overcome, conquered and subjugated are the following: Kaam (lust, passion, desires, lasciviousness, covetousness), Krodha (anger, wrathfulness, ill-will, discord, reprisals, vengeance, animosity etc.), Lobha (greed, avarice, wistful longing, yearning), Moha (ignorance, delusions, attachments, infatuations, enticements, hallucinations and illusions created by this temporal world), Mada (arrogance, haughtiness, ego, pride, hypocrisy, belligerence) and Matsarya (malice, envy, jealousy).

The sixth necessary step that a spiritual aspirant must take is to control all these six negative traits that are present in him. He must remember that he needs the grace of Lord Ram and the Lord’s blessings to be successful in this, because these factors are very strong and they defy all normal efforts to bring them under one’s control. To wit, a devotee has to pray to the Lord to help him overcome these six negativities inside him. Obviously this would entail having devotion and faith in the Lord in the first place, and this would in turn automatically pave the way for success in all other steps because having devotion, faith and affection for the Lord is the fundamental requirement for any spiritual aspirant or seeker.] (7).

Like ‘Saptami’, the seventh lunar day (sātairm), the seventh path or the seventh requirement is to contemplate seriously on the real object of acquiring or receiving this human body (which is impure, short-lived and full of grossness, but it is praised nevertheless as being very rare to get even for the gods).

This body is made of seven elementary constituents (“saptadhātu-niramita tanu kariya bicāra”—blood, lymph, flesh, muscles, bones, sperms and mucous). The only object and purpose of acquiring or receiving this body, the only fruitful use of this human body is to be benevolent, beneficent, compassionate, merciful, helpful and kind to others (tēhi tanu kēra ēka phala, kijai para-upakāra). [To wit, the best use to which one can put his body is to be helpful to others in their hour of need and distress, in a selfless way.]⁸

[⁸The seventh way for a spiritual aspirant who wishes to attain eternal peace and happiness for himself and to reach a stature of being one with the Lord God is to be selflessly helpful to other living beings just as the Lord himself is selflessly helpful and merciful to all living beings. This essentially is based on the philosophy that the living being is an image of the Supreme Being, the Lord of this creation—but to attain this honourable and exalted stature one needs to be like the Lord in the sense that he must exhibit the eclectic and excellent virtues that are exclusive to and characteristic of the Lord. And one of these auspicious and grand virtues is to be a selfless helper of other living beings, just as the Lord himself is.

If the body is not thus employed, it is a worthless and abhorable bundle of filth—blood, mucous, flesh, lymph, bones, veins, muscles, urine, stool etc.

Refer stanza nos. 1 of verse nos. 201 and 202 herein above which also stress on the need to employ one's body to help others.] (8).

Like 'Ashtami', the eighth lunar day (*āṭha'imṣ*), the eighth path or way for a spiritual aspirant is the realisation that Lord Ram is the Supreme Being and a personified form of the cosmic Consciousness, and is therefore absolutely without attributes and free from all the faults or shortcomings associated with this gross creation, because the Lord transcends everything in existence (*nirabikāra śrīrāma*).

Therefore, one must be convinced that the Lord is beyond all the eight aspects and components of Prakriti (Nature) (*āṭha prakṛti-para*).

Verily and in all sooth, say how can this transcendental, sublime, subtle, ethereal and exalted Being known as 'Hari' (Lord Ram) be attained (*kēhi prakāra pā'iyā hari*) while one is burdened by the ugly baggage of countless worldly desires, lusts, wants and wishes which are all extremely gross by their inherent nature as they are all related to the world which is itself extremely gross, coarse, materialistic, mundane and full of negativities of all kinds (*hr̥daya basahim̃ bahu kāma*)⁹.

[⁹How can anything having its origin in something that is faulty, tainted, gross and inane like this material world be equivalent to another thing that is sublime, subtle, pure and exalted like the cosmic Consciousness, which is the primary form of the Supreme Being?

Therefore, if a person has even a trace of link with this world, if he has any taints and negativities such as 'Kaam' in him, he becomes gross and heavy in the sense that he is like a kite that is too heavy to fly freely into the sky, and if its movement is restricted by the virtue of it being tethered to the ground with a short string then it is also prevented to soar higher and higher in the sky!

To wit, if one wishes to attain oneness with the Lord and a spiritual stature where he can identify himself with 'pure consciousness' which is the essential form of the Supreme Being, then he has to inculcate in him virtues that would be in accordance with his wishes—i.e. there must be a perfect resonance between the individual 'self', i.e. the spiritual aspirant, and the supreme 'Self' that is Lord Ram.

Hence, the eighth way of attaining the Lord or establishing oneness with him is to have enlightenment, wisdom and erudition, to be self-realised, to understand that the object of his worship, adoration, devotion and affection is not any human being by the name of 'Ram', but a divine and sublime entity that transcends all aspects of Nature, an entity that is beyond the attributes of Nature itself. The only entity that fits this bill is the 'cosmic Consciousness' that is pure, taintless, attributeless, ethereal and universal in nature. Therefore, Lord Ram is pure Consciousness. And since this 'consciousness' also resides in the body of the spiritual aspirant as his own 'self' known as the Atma or his soul, it follows that with sprouting of wisdom he would realise that the Lord resides in his own being as the Atma. This is 'self-realisation', and obviously it leads to the feeling and the experience of 'oneness with the Lord'!] (9).

Like the ninth day of 'Navami' (*navamī*), the ninth path or the ninth requirement for the spiritual aspirant is the realisation that if one does not secure one's well-being and

welfare (in the form of attaining liberation, deliverance, salvation, emancipation of soul) while living inside this body having nine holes or openings (literally, a “city with nine gates”) (navadvāra-pura basi jēhi na āpu bhala kīnha), then that person would have to wander aimlessly in numerous births like a vagrant, and invite interminable sufferings and miseries for himself in the wake of this foolishness of his (tē nara jōni anēka bhramata dārūna dukha līnha)¹⁰.

[¹⁰There are *nine* so-called doors of the body. These are the following: two ears, two eyes, two nostrils, one mouth, one anus, and one urethra. Refer: (i) Krishna Yajur Veda tradition—Shwetashwatar Upanishad, 3/18; Yog Tattva Upanishad, verse no. 141; and Kshuriko-panishad, verse nos. 2-5. (ii) Sam Veda—Yogchudamani Upanishad, verse no. 107. (iii) Atharva Veda—Bhavana Upanishad, verse no. 2/1.

The aspirant’s true self is his Atma, and this Atma is trapped in a body. Like any prisoner who wishes to find an opportunity to escape from his captivity and bring to an end all his mental agonies and physical sufferings would be looking for an opening in the prison walls to run out of it, the Atma, which is suffering so much from the horrors of birth and death and life in this gross world, should also use this body to find freedom for itself.

It ought to realise that whereas a prisoner would be too happy to find even one single door that is open for him to escape, the Atma should rejoice that its prison in the form of the human body has not one but ‘nine doors’! So on the face of it the Atma’s chances of escape should be high and extremely easy. But it is so ironical and unfortunate that inspite of this golden opportunity to find liberation and deliverance, the Atma representing the creature misses this chance, and it remains trapped in this prison-like body. So what happens? Like a prisoner who is shunted from one cell to another, from one prison to another depending upon his behaviour and doing work allotted to him while he is in the prison, the Atma also roams from one birth to another, from one body to another depending upon the deeds done during any given one phase in the cycle of birth and death.

Therefore Tulsidas gives this ninth advice to a wise spiritual aspirant—that this is his great chance to break free from the cycle of transmigration and attain deliverance, emancipation and salvation for his soul while he has taken birth as a human being, because if he misses this chance then no one can be sure in which kind of body he would be reborn in his next birth—for there are thousands and thousands of forms that a creature’s Atma is forced to assume during its long journey through this world, until the time liberation and deliverance is obtained. Hence, one should control oneself and attempt sincerely and diligently to achieve salvation, emancipation and welfare of the soul while still living in this world with a human body. If the chance is lost now, it won’t come again for a very long time.] (10).

Like the tenth day of the lunar cycle called ‘Dashmi’ (dasaim^ṣ), the tenth way or requirement for a spiritual aspirant is to understand that if he is not able to exercise control or restraint over his ten sense organs (dasahu kara sanjama jō na kariya jiya jāni), then all other efforts made by him to attain Lord Ram, who holds the bow named Sarang in his hands (sāramḡapāni), would fail miserably (sādhana br̥thā hō’i saba milahim na)¹¹.

[¹¹One should have control over the ten sense organs, otherwise all his efforts come to a naught and bear no fruits. On the contrary, he becomes a slave to these ten masters, and such a servile serf cannot expect to meet the Lord.

The ten sense organs of the body are the following: five gross organs of perception such as eyes, nose, tongue, ear and skin, and five gross organs of action such as mouth, hands, legs, excretory and reproductive.

The tenth advice given to a spiritual aspirant is to practice exemplary self-restraint on these ten servants who may make successful or ruin one's spiritual efforts. Forsooth, if a noble person is not able to control his attendants or servants during his journey or even during his routine life, then he is bound to suffer a lot. Since he has to depend upon his servants and attendants in order to carry out his duties and extended responsibilities in this world, if they are corrupt and not under his orders, his household would be in a chaos and all his affairs would be in disarray.

The creature's Atma interacts with the outside world through the medium of the body, and the part of the body that interacts with the outside world is made up of these ten units or components. These ten organs form the outer gross aspect of the creature's body. The body is like a chariot with ten horses. The Atma is the passenger and the creature's intellect and wisdom is his charioteer. If these horses are not controlled, the chariot would rock violently and throw the passenger on the ground, leaving him wounded and mortally suffering. Even if this worst does not happen but the charioteer is careless in the sense he does not guide the horses on the right path, the chariot would head in the wrong direction and go far away from its destination.

In the present case, if the ten organs of the body are not controlled, then either the creature would have to suffer immensely in his present life itself because of some reckless and evil deeds done by these organs which would invariably invite wrath and punishment from the world, or the creature would head somewhere opposite to his wished destination of finding emancipation and salvation as well as accessing Lord Ram. The uncontrolled organs would never let him have peace of mind and heart as their wayward habit would be cause of constant nuisance for the creature.] (11).

The eleventh day of the lunar calendar, known as the day of 'Ekadashi' (*ĕkādāśī*), stands for the eleventh way for the spiritual aspirant: it is to have a steady mind that has a firm belief that there is only 'one Lord God', and one should serve the Lord with full faith, devotion and commitment, and serve no one else (*ĕka mana basa kai sēvahu jā'i*).

By doing this one single 'Vrat' (i.e. by keeping this one point in mind, following this single path, adhering to this one vow in life, and living upto this one promise made to one's own self), a person can get the supreme (the best) fruit (*sō'i brata kara phala pāvai*) in the form of an end to the cycle of birth and death (i.e. the spiritual aspirant is able to attain liberation and deliverance for himself; he is able to attain emancipation and salvation for his soul; he finds oneness with the Lord; he attains a state of eternal blissfulness and blessedness that comes by breaking free from the endless cycle of miseries, grief, pain, troubles and torments that are associated with being entangled in the world of transmigration) (*āvāgamana nasā'i*)¹².

[¹²This 'Lord God' is no one else but Lord Ram. The aspirant's mind should not be vacillating, not be uncertain, not be fluctuating between so many doctrines, principles,

philosophies and ideologies that land him in a lot of confusions about the truth and reality.

This assertion that there is only ‘one Lord God’ is in consonance with the principle of ‘non-duality’ or ‘Adwaita’ as enunciated in stanza no. 3 of this verse.

Further, the advice that one should adore, worship and have devotion exclusively for Lord Ram and no one else is a reiteration of what is said in stanza no. 2: that the first step towards God-realisation is to have single-minded and unfaltering love, affection and devotion for the Lord. This singular virtue is the stepping stone for the success in other spiritual means because if one has no firmness of faith and singularity of belief in the Lord, if he is uncertain about the divinity and holiness of the Lord, if he doubts whether or not the Lord would be able to provide him with freedom from the cycle of transmigration and its associated problems, then the whole purpose of the exercise would be defeated, and the whole spiritual plan would collapse like a house of cards.

The eleventh day of the lunar cycle is observed as a ‘day of fasting’ in Hinduism. It is done in a token manner to cleanse one’s inner-self of spiritual impurities as far as is possible in a similar way as physical abstinence from food gives rest to the body and helps it to clear its intestines and bowels of accumulated toxins that may have gathered in the gut and the other internal organs over the course of unregulated eating habits during the previous month.

This ‘Vrat’ or religious fasting is a symbolic way of doing low-intensity of Tapa (penance and austerity); it is a way of doing self sacrifice because one uses exemplary self-control over one’s sense organs and their natural urges and temptations during this period.

And like the excellent reward that accrues to one by doing anything praise-worthy in one’s life, anything that is noble, auspicious and pious, having single-minded devotion and affection for Lord Ram and worshipping the Lord with singular faith and commitment would also yield exemplary reward relevant to it—which is in the form of liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation for the soul, which means freedom from the cycle of birth and death, and the attainment of an eternal state of blissfulness, beatitude and felicity in its wake.] (12).

The Twelfth day called ‘Dwadashi’ (*dvādasi*) stands for the twelfth method prescribed for the spiritual aspirant: it entails giving of alms and doing charity (*dāna dēhu asa*)¹³.

By doing this, one becomes fearless and no obstacle can hinder his path or cause consternation and affright to him anywhere in this world, in any of the three divisions of the world (*abhaya hō'i trailōka*). [This implies that every creature would be pleased and happy with him. The Gods in heaven, all the mortal living beings on earth, and even the evil spirits of the nether world will respect such a person. After all, everyone honours and likes a person who is selfless and benevolent and charitable by his nature. He will have no enemies, will be surrounded by friends, and therefore he would have nothing to fear from. No one would create any hurdle in his chosen path, but would rather extend all help in any manner they can to him.]

[That is why—] A person who is ever ready to selflessly help others in their need and distress is assured that no distress and misery would torment him (*parahita-nirata sō pārana bahuri na byāpata sōka*)¹⁴.

[¹³Like doing Vrat on the Ekadasi day, one is required to give alms and make charities the next day, i.e. on the day of the Dwadashi. This is because the Vrat of Ekadasi is treated as a spiritual exercise which is like doing a religious sacrifice, and giving of alms and making charities at the end of a sacrifice is mandatory to successfully conclude it.

¹⁴This is another way of reiterating what is already said in stanza no. 8 herein above—which stresses on selfless service done to other creatures. It means one should have a benevolent, beneficent and charitable temperament in life. One should do noble deeds that are without any motive, that are free from self-interest, and that are not done under some compulsion or fear. One should always be eager to involve oneself in doing good to others without favour and fear.] (13).

The thirteenth day is called ‘Trayodashi’ (tēraśi), and it symbolises the thirteenth mean or way for a spiritual aspirant to reach his objective. It is this: one should rise above or transcend or remain unaffected by the characteristic influences of the three stages or states in which consciousness exists in this world (tīna avasthā tajahu)¹⁵.

Once this is achieved, one should singularly worship Lord Ram and have devotion for the Lord (bhajahu bhagavanta)¹⁶.

Verily indeed, the Lord God (here meaning Lord Ram), who is a personified form of the cosmic Consciousness, cannot be perceived or known or attained by employing any of the elements that one would normally employ to learn about anything in this world—such as by the use of one’s Mana (mind and its intellect), by doing of Karma (doing deeds such as fire sacrifice, penance, pilgrimage, repetition of Mantras, etc.) or employing the faculty of speech known as Vaani (the spoken word in the form of discourses, discussions, hearing the scriptures and preaching based on their doctrines) (mana-krama-bacana-agōcara).

The Lord is all-pervading, all-encompassing and omnipresent in this creation (vyāpaka, vyāpya) (because he is a personified form of the cosmic Consciousness). This being so, the Lord is infinite and eternal (ananta)¹⁷. [Like water that is imperceptibly but inherently and surely present in a block of ice, this ‘Consciousness’ is present everywhere.]

[¹⁵The three states of existence of consciousness are the following—the waking known as ‘Jagrat’, the dreaming state known as ‘Swapna’, and the deep-sleep state known as ‘Sushupta’. Hence here the aspirant is advised not to be affected by any of the disturbances caused to his inner-self during these three stages of existence of consciousness. He should become totally calm from the inside and indifferent to the countless causes of unrest in this world in which he lives. This is equivalent to be in a state of transcendental existence called ‘Turiya’ which is a state of consciousness wherein the soul exists in a state which is said to be blissful and calm.

¹⁶From the perspective of the spiritual aspirant who is following the steps mentioned in this verse which lays stress on having steady faith and devotion for Lord Ram, this thirteenth path means that such an aspirant should turn inwards and focus his attention exclusively on having devotion, affection and faith in Lord Ram; he should not allow himself to be disturbed or confused by anything originating in the gross outside world—such as disturbances caused by one’s body and its sense organs, the many temptations and delusions related to the gross world, the demands of the world that he is

asked to meet, and so on. This idea is an extension of the one expressed in stanza nos. 6, 7, 9 and 11 herein above.

¹⁷The Lord is a personified form of the cosmic Consciousness itself that is extremely sublime and subtle. This cosmic Consciousness is all-pervading, all-encompassing, eternal and infinite by its inherent nature. When the spiritual aspirant understands this fact he also begins to realise two important things—(i) the universal presence of the Lord, and that would include in all living beings; and (ii) as the pure Consciousness that also resides in his own inner being as his Atma or soul. Thus, all dichotomy and sense of duality are removed, there is no cause for any more distortion in his view of the Lord vis-à-vis his own self, the rest the creatures and the world around him at large. The universal and uniform existence of the Lord establishes a sort of tranquillity and bliss for the aspirant.

It is to be noted that step-by-step the spiritual aspirant is rising higher in his spiritual endeavours and achieving success in nearing his goal. He has at this stage risen from mere worshipping of Lord Ram as a form of an incarnation of the Supreme Being that has a physical body like other human beings, to a form of Divinity that is sublime and ethereal like the cosmic Consciousness. In this form, Lord Ram stops from being merely an incarnation of the Supreme Being to being the pure cosmic Consciousness that is at the heart of the entire creation. In this form, Lord Ram becomes not only the human incarnation of the Supreme Being but as the all-pervading and all-encompassing form of the Supreme Being known as the ‘Viraat Purush’, the form that has a cosmic dimension, a form that spreads to each and every corner of creation, a form that lives outside as well as inside of everything and entity that exists in this creation.

The Lord cannot be understood or grasped by the mind, deed or speech because he exists in a subtle, sublime and ethereal form, and not like anything that can be the subject matter of perception by the senses.] (14).

The fourteenth day of ‘Chaturdashi’ (caudasi) represents the fourteenth way of thinking that a spiritual aspirant should aspire to have. It is that the Lord is uniformly present in all the fourteen divisions of creation (caudaha bhuvana)¹⁸; and that the Lord is a universal ‘Goupaal’, literally one who takes care of his herd of cows, here meaning the Lord who takes care of all living beings and all entities of creation—the animate as well as the inanimate (acara-cara-rūpa gōpāla)¹⁹.

But unless the creature is able to remove his notion of duality, the Lord does not free him from the trap of this world and from the net of transmigration (bhēda gayē binu raghupati ati na harahim jaga-jāla)²⁰.

[¹⁸As has already been said in earlier stanzas, this is an extension of the idea that the Lord is ‘all-pervading, all-encompassing and infinite in form, as he is a personified form of the cosmic Consciousness.

The fourteen divisions of creation are the following: according to Padma Puran, and they are the following—(A) The upper worlds called Urdhva Lokas are seven in number:—(i) Bhu/Bhūḥ, (ii) Bhuvaha/Bhuvah, (iii) Swaha/Swah, (iv) Maha/Mah, (v) Janaha/Janah, (vi) Tapaha/Tapah, and (vii) Satyam/Satyam. (B) The seven nether worlds or lower worlds called Adhaha/Adhah Loka:—(i) Atal/Atala, (ii) Vital/Vitala, (iii) Satal/Sutala, (iv) Rasaatal/Rasātala, (v) Talaatal/Talātala, (vi) Mahaatal/Mahātala, and (vii) Paataal/Pātāla. The total number of Lokas is, therefore, fourteen.

The Mundak Upanishad of Atharva Veda, Mundak (Canto)1, section 1, verse no. 1 says that these fourteen Bhuvans are protected by Brahma the creator who created this world.

The Atharva Veda's Gopal Uttar Tapini Upanishad, verse no. 35 says that Brahma-Loka is like the ceremonial umbrella on the head of Lord Vishnu, while the seven nether worlds known as the 'Patal-Lokas' represent the Lord's feet.

¹⁹This means that the Lord is the Supreme care-taker of all living beings as well as even the gross things of creation. Everything is duly cared for by the Lord like a wise emperor who does not neglect even the smallest thing in his realm.

²⁰Once again we see that this stanza builds upon the principle of non-duality already affirmed in stanza no. 3 of this verse.] (15).

Like the full moon night of 'Purnamasi' (pūnōm), the fifteenth, the last and the best path or means for attainment of the Lord God (or "God realisation"; experiencing the bliss that comes when one has come in direct contact with the Supreme Being) is to get completely soaked, imbued and drenched in the juice of devotion, reverence and affection for the Lord, i.e. to have the highest level of 'Bhakti' for the Lord (prēma-bhagati-rasa).

Verily indeed, this single factor of having exemplary Bhakti for the Lord God (which is a combination of having devotion, faith, conviction, commitment, affection, love, reverence, and total reliance and surrender to the Lord) is the finest spiritual virtue an aspirant can have, and it is deemed to be equivalent to God-realisation, it is tantamount to having direct access to the Lord God. Hence, a person who has obtained the fruit of Bhakti is deemed to have accessed Lord Hari (hari-rasa jānahim dāsa).

Thus, Bhakti bestows all the eclectic rewards upon the spiritual aspirant that come with God-realisation—such as having the virtues of 'Sama' (equanimity, equality and evenness of mind), 'Seetal' (calmness, tranquillity, peace and serenity), freedom from 'Maan' (ego, haughtiness, false pride, vanity and arrogance), acquisition of 'Gyan' (wisdom, true knowledge, enlightenment, erudition and sagacity), and dispassion or neutrality towards 'Vishaya' (the tendency of the sense organs of action and perception to be tempted towards their respective objects in this gross world to seek self-gratification) (sama, sītala, gata-māna, gyānarata, viṣaya-udāsa)²¹.

[²¹Having "Bhakti" is the pinnacle of all spiritual endeavours, it is like the best fruit and the best flower of the tree which has so many branches with so many flowers and fruits symbolised by all the various efforts that one has made for God-realisation with their own set of rewards and glories.

Bhakti is compared to the 'full moon' because it is the most glorious and the most magnificent and the most rewarding of all spiritual virtues a person can possess. It is a culmination of all other spiritual efforts that an aspirant has been making previously; it is the pinnacle of the shrine of an aspirant's spiritual practices. It is the most glorious and the best of all efforts, as well as the result of all other efforts. It is the nearest one can get to God-realisation as its symptoms or signs are equivalent to being one with the Lord.

A person who practices true Bhakti is loved by the Lord as his dearest devotee, and such a person exhibits such auspicious and noble traits that are synonyms of divinity, piety and holiness—such as experiencing perpetual bliss, blessedness, beatitude, tranquillity and peace, having no attraction for the false charms of the material world,

being free from all ignorance, delusions and their accompanying confusions and agitations, being enlightened and self-realised, and so on and so forth.

Even as the disc of the moon goes on progressively increasing in its shine, beauty, glory and magnificence day-by-day through its 15-day waxing phase till the time it reaches the zenith of these qualities on the full moon night when it is at its best and most charming form, all other efforts made by the aspirant go on enhancing his spiritual stature, glory, potentials and powers till he attains 'Bhakti' which marks his final success in his spiritual pursuit. It is the pinnacle which all spiritual aspirants aim to reach as it is equivalent to being the nearest to the Lord God, and it grants bliss, happiness and joy that is attained with 'God-realisation'.

The importance of 'Bhakti' has been stressed by Lord Ram himself in the epic book written by Tulsidas—"Ram Charit Manas", in its Uttar Kand, (i) Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 45—to Doha no. 46; and (ii) Doha no. 85 along with Chaupai line nos. 3-8 that precede it.] (16).

[In the above stanza it is described how 'Bhakti' is the best of all spiritual achievements and is like the glory of the moon on the full moon night. Now in this present stanza no. 17, Tulsidas says that when a spiritual aspirant has obtained Bhakti, he is very ecstatic, extremely elated, happy and joyous like a person who has reached his goal after a long and arduous journey. It is time to celebrate and cheer up to enjoy the bliss and happiness that comes with Bhakti.

To give an idea of how merry a person who has Bhakti in him feels, Tulsidas has invoked the festival of 'Holi' to draw a parallel. It is a festival when everyone is in an ecstatic and celebratory mood: there is singing and dancing and festivities in abundance everywhere; people cheerfully sprinkle coloured powder and spray coloured scented water on each other and everywhere; they enjoy sumptuous feasts and exchange greetings; even those people who are not favourably inclined are welcomed and embraced; there is an atmosphere of bonhomie and brotherhood; there is a recess from all work and mundane affairs; and so on and so forth.

This general atmosphere of festivity and celebration that is so characteristic of Holi has been cited by Tulsidas to draw a parallel with the way a spiritual aspirant feels and the happiness he experiences within himself when he has attained Bhakti for the Lord God. It is a time for him to celebrate; he is elated, and in an ecstatic and blissful mood. There is no worry in the world for him, and he sings and dances like a lark in spiritual merriment.

The similarity between 'Holi' that is celebrated on a full moon night, and 'Bhakti' that is likened to a full moon is very remarkable. The rituals associated with Holi are observed in the night of the full moon, and the celebrations take place the next day. Here it means that first the person obtains Bhakti, and then he experiences its spiritual rewards that spontaneously makes him feel extremely blissful, cheerful and ecstatic.]

The three great tormentors called the 'Trai-Taap'²² that constantly harass a living being in this world are burnt in the holy fire lit during the festival of Holi (tribidha sūla hōliya jarai). This done, let us now play 'Phaag' or the colours of Holi (khēliya aba phāgu)²³.

[Tulsidas advises the spiritual aspirant—] ‘If you sincerely want supreme bliss to sprout in your heart and mind (*jō jiya cahasi paramasukha*), then follow the path I have advised you (in this verse) (*tau yahi māraga lāgu*).’

[²²The fact that the three traditional tormentors of the creature that are known as the ‘Trai Taaps’ cannot be got rid of without having devotion for Lord Ram has been stressed in verse no. 196, stanza no. 1 in this book *Vinai Patrika*. To wit, Bhakti is an essential weapon to fight this enemy in the form of the Trai-Taap. They consist of the following three tormentors: Daihik—problems arising from the creature’s own body such as diseases and old age; Daivik—related to Gods and spirits who are opposed and unfavourable; Bhautik—torments from other terrestrial creatures and material things of the world, such as their shortage, inaccessibility, incompatibility etc. These are called the ‘great fires’ because they torment all living beings to some degree.

During the rituals associated with Holi, a sacred community fire is lit, and in it offerings are made to symbolise the burning of all sins and evils that a person possesses. Celebrations that are characteristic of Holi are held on the next day.

Similarly, the spiritual aspirant first burns all his negativities, flaws and sins etc. in the symbolic fire of Bhakti for Lord Ram, and then he feels light from the burden of this baggage and celebrates his freedom from them. A person who has Bhakti in him is in a highly cheerful mood like the people who celebrate Holi—he has no worry and no grief; he is ecstatic and exhilarated; he is blissful and at peace with himself.

²³The symbolism of enjoying and celebrating Holi vis-à-vis Bhakti has been explained in the introductory note of this stanza herein above.

Holi is symbolic of fun and frolic, of cheerful and carefree life full of merry making and enjoyment, a life free from grief and worries. It is marked by celebrations, singing, dancing, merry-making, ecstasy and exhilaration. The multiple colours used to play it symbolise the various hues and shades of one’s emotions and sentiments. When colour is liberally sprinkled on people, they all look alike, and this symbolises the removal of distinctions—just as it is expected from a spiritual aspirant as stressed in stanza nos. 3-5, 14, 16 and 17 herein above.

Similarly, one should be drenched from head to toe in the multi dimensional devotion and love for the Lord just like one is drenched from head to toe in the coloured water sprayed on him during Holi celebrations. Like the way people keep aside all formal manners of behaviour and lose all inhibitions and reservations during their revelry at Holi festivities, a devotee of Lord Ram too loses all inhibitions and reservations for the sake of having love, affection, adoration, worship and devotion for the Lord. Devotees of the Lord would dance and sing in merry abundance, in exhilaration and ecstasy, losing all distinctions of caste, colour and creed, and becoming uniform in love and devotion for the Lord so much so that they would hug and embrace each other for the good fortune of having attained the blissful state of God-realisation and becoming eligible to break free from the cycle of transmigration with all its incumbent problems.] (17).

The unanimous view of the Vedas, the Purans and the experts (*śruti-purāna-budha-sammata*) is that the singing of the glories and worldly activities of Lord Murari (i.e. of the Supreme Being during the period of his incarnation as a human known as Lord Sri Ram, the prince of Ayodhya) are like the sweet songs sung merrily during the festival of Holi (*cām̐cari carita murāri*)²⁴.

If one relies on these methods, one can cross this ocean-like world easily and without hassles (**kari bicāra bhava tariya**).

One should however be cautious not to get sucked in the eddy currents of temptations and charms pertaining to the sensual pleasures and objects of this materialistic, mundane and gross existence because it would invariably suck the creature into a vortex representing an endless cycle of birth and death, called transmigration (**pariya na kabahum^o jamadhāri**)²⁵.

[²⁴One should sing the Lord's glories and his holy name cheerfully, whether alone or in a group. It can be done with or without the accompaniment of music and dance. In the latter case it is called doing 'kirtan'. It is a voluntary activity and should be engaged in with devotion and faith, and should not be done under compulsion of any sort. Music and dance add colour and fervour to the exercise, and it engages others who may otherwise be mere spectators or passive witnesses; they now become active participants in this spiritual endeavour.

²⁵Tulsidas means that the outwardly or external enjoyment that comes with singing and dancing while glorifying the Lord and recalling the holy stories pertaining to his life and deeds in his incarnation as Lord Sri Ram should not be merely restricted to a few hours of enjoyment for as long as this music and dancing lasts, but it should be taken to a higher level of sublime spiritualexperience when one begins to enjoy the source of divinity flowing from within his own heart, from within his own self at all moments of his existence. This spiritual experience should be perpetual and not limited for some time only. It is a sort of blissful experience that would give the person so great a sense of ecstasy and make him feel so elated, so thrilled and so exhilarated that it would make all the best of charms pertaining to the material world fade into oblivion for him so much so that the person would not be attracted to the latter at all.

In the beginning it may a little difficult to achieve this exalted state of transcendental existence where one lives perpetually in a state of bliss and ecstasy that is beyond the reach of and unaffected by anything related to the gross world and its objects that try to tempt their respective organs of perception and action in the body of the creature, but by diligent practice this exalted spiritual state becomes perpetual, natural and habitual. When this happens, the link between the 'self' or the Atma of the creature with the gross body and the gross world is broken, and a transcendental state of perpetual bliss and beatitude is obtained.] (18).

Sri Hari (Lord Ram) is the only one who can destroy all doubts, confusions and bewilderments (**sansaya-samana**), who can help one conquer all sorrows, miseries, agonies, troubles and tribulations (**damana dukha**), and who is a treasury and abode of eternal joy, happiness, comfort, solace and succour (**sukhanidhāna hari ēka**).

No matter how much one tries, the Lord cannot be attained without the grace of saints and pious souls (**sādhu-krpā binu milahim na, kariya upāya anēka**). [Hence, grace of saints and holy souls is a key that can open this treasury of eternal blessedness; their company helps one progress on the path of spiritualism and attainment of the Lord God.] (19).

To cross over this mundane, delusory and ocean-like world (**bhavasāgara**), following in the footsteps (or example) of the pious, holy and spiritual life of true saints is like a ship

(kaham' nāba sud'dha santanakē carana). [To wit, just like a person can easily and without botheration cross an ocean on board a ship, a wise person who follows the example of attained and self-realised saints and holy people can easily attain the spiritual goal he has set out for himself to achieve. Their life and words act as examples and a guide for a spiritual aspirant as now he would not have to search for answers and solutions for the numerous questions, doubts and problems that he encounters in his day to day life while engaged in his spiritual pursuit.]

Oh Tulsidas! If one boards this ship as indicated herein above, then surely Lord Sri Ram, who is the destroyer and vanquisher of sorrows, miseries, troubles and tribulations, is attainable without any effort or trouble (i.e. easily, without any hurdles or difficulties) (tulasidāsa prayāsa binu milahim rāma dukhaharana) (20).

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(1.5) Adhyatma Ramayan of sage Veda Vyas, Aranya Kand, Canto 3, verse nos. 36-40½ :-

The ‘Adhyatma Ramayan’ is a classical narration of the story of Lord Ram with special emphasis on spiritualism, metaphysics and theology. It was written in classical Sanskrit by the legendary sage Veda Vyas who is also credited with the classification of the Vedas into the four parts that we find today (viz. the Rig, the Sam, the Yajur and the Atharva Vedas), the compilation of the Upanishads (which are an integral part of the Vedas but are exclusively dedicated to spiritual and metaphysical philosophy as compared to the rest of the texts of the Vedas which are primarily concerned with the Mantras and rituals), and penning the many Purans (mythological histories).

The glorious characters and eclectic virtues of Saints are briefly described by sage Agastya to Lord Ram in the course of the discourse in which the sage says that company of saints is said to be the main path to attainment of Moksha (final liberation and deliverance) of a living being. This principle is narrated in Adhyatma Ramayan’s third Chapter known as Aranya Kand, in Canto 3, verse nos. 36-40½ as follows:-

किं राम बहूनोक्तेन सारं किञ्चिद्ब्रवीमि ते । साधुसङ्गतिरेवात्र मोक्षहेतुरुदाहता ॥३६॥
 साधवः समचित्ता ये निःस्पृहा विगतैषिणः । दान्ताः प्रशान्तास्त्वद्भक्ता निवृत्ताखिलकामनाः ॥३७॥
 इष्टप्राप्तिवित्त्योश्च समाः सङ्गविवर्जिताः । संन्यस्ताखिलकर्माणः सर्वदा ब्रह्मतत्पराः ॥३८॥
 यमादिगुणसम्पन्नाः सन्तुष्टा येन केनचित् । सत्सङ्गमो भवेद्यर्हि त्वत्कथाश्रवणे रतिः ॥३९॥
 समुदेति ततो भक्तिस्त्वयि राम सनातने । त्वद्भक्तावुपपन्नायां विज्ञानं विपुलं स्फुटम् ॥४०॥
 उदेति मुक्तिमार्गोऽयमाद्यश्चतुरसेवितः । ४० ½ ॥

kiṁ rāma bahunoktena sāraṁ kiñcidbravīmi te ।
 sādhusaṅgatirevātra mokṣaheturudāhṛtā ॥ 36 ॥
 sādhaḥ samacittā ye niḥsprhā vigataiṣiṇaḥ ।
 dāntāḥ praśāntāstvadbhaktā nivṛttākḥilakāmanāḥ ॥ 37 ॥
 iṣṭaprāptivipattyośca samāḥ saṅgavivarjitāḥ ।
 sannyaśtākḥilakarmāṇaḥ sarvadā brahmatatparāḥ ॥ 38 ॥
 yamādiguṇasampannāḥ santuṣṭā yena kenacit ।
 satsaṅgamo bhavedyarhi tvatkathāśravaṇe ratiḥ ॥ 39 ॥
 samudeti tato bhaktistvayi rāma sanātane ।
 tvadbhaktāvupapannāyām vijñānaṁ vipulaṁ sphuṭam ॥ 40 ॥
 udeti muktimārgo'yamādyaścaturasevitaḥ । 40 ½ ॥

[Sage Agastya said to Lord Ram—] ‘Oh Sri Ram! What more can I say? I shall tell you the essential things on this subject of Moksha (liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation). It is said that the company of saints has always been the main cause and the primary path of attaining emancipation and salvation for a creature. It is the path that leads to deliverance from the ignorance-induced delusions that are so characteristic of this mundane world of artificiality and impermanence. (36).

Those persons who are even minded—i.e. those who are stable, serene, placid, unruffled, unwavering, calm and balanced; those who practice exemplary level of equanimity, forbearance and fortitude—in all circumstances, whether it is an adverse situation of sorrows and troubles or a favourable one of joy and happiness, those who are without any desires and wants, those who are without any kind of attachment with this world, such as being attached to one’s offsprings as well as one’s wealth and possessions in this world, those who learn to practice self-restraint in all spheres of life, those who have conquered their sense organs and can rein-in natural urge for self gratification, those who are mentally and emotionally serene, calm and tranquil, those who are sincerely devoted and dedicated to you (Lord Ram, the personified form of the Supreme Being—i.e. to God), those who are free from all desires, greed, avarice, yearning and all kinds of ambitions pertaining to the material world (37), ---

--- those who are stable, neutral, unaffected and dispassionate even while going through the throes of destruction (unfavourable circumstance) or construction (favourable circumstances) of life, those who are without encumbrances and attachments of any kind, those who abandon all deeds and actions (i.e. who do not regard themselves as a doer of anything, nor do they expect any reward or punishment for the deeds done as they remain emotionally unattached with the deeds done and the actions taken by their gross physical body which they know is not their ‘true identity’, because this ‘identity’ is the Atma which is pure consciousness and different from the gross physical body), those who are the followers of Brahm (i.e. who believe and have faith in the Supreme Being who is the eternal and Supreme Lord of this creation, the Lord who represents the universal Consciousness which is the only Absolute Truth in creation) (38), ---

--- those who are endowed with ‘Yam’ and other virtues (e.g. self-restraint of passions and other such spiritual virtues), and those who are contented and satisfied with whatever comes their way—such persons who possess these virtues are truly ‘Sadhus’.

[To with, those persons who exhibit the virtues and characters outlined herein above are truly qualified to be called a Saint and Saintly Persons. Such illustrious souls are deemed to be pious, holy, self-realised and spiritually elevated. They are ‘Godly’ by nature. They have a pure and divine heart, and a mind that rises above the delusionary view of life and world.]

In all sooth, whenever one comes into contact with such wonderful and spiritually elevated souls, whenever by some good fortune one has a chance to interact with such illustrious saints, one truly develops interest in the divine stories of Lord God who becomes dear to the heart and soul of such fortunate persons. [To wit, communion with saints and contact with saintly persons is a great good luck, and it ignites the dormant spirit of spiritualism in the heart of a seeker.] (39).

Oh Lord Ram! When this happens, one gets to develop devotion in you; one develops firmness of faith, dedication, conviction and belief in you who are an Eternal Being. This

produces the fruit of having pristine pure wisdom about the ‘truth of existence’, and knowledge about you and your true nature and form. [To wit, company of saints removes the veil of spiritual ignorance and delusions, and it helps the seeker to inculcate spiritual values and practice spiritual virtues himself.] (40).

Forsooth and without gainsay, this is the prime path (the chief way, the primary method, the main course and the best medium) by which one can easily attain liberation and deliverance from this world of transmigration and miseries; it is the easiest and the simplest way to achieve the goal of emancipation and salvation of the soul by those who are clever, wise, knowledgeable and enlightened. (40 ½)’

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(1.6) The Upanishads:-

In the Upanishads, which are great repositories of wisdom and true knowledge, there are numerous instances where the eclectic qualities and grand auspicious virtues of saintly, holy and pious people are enunciated. In this section we shall read some selected verses from the following Upanishads which are relevant to the theme of our present book on Saints:

- (1.6) (i) Shatyayani Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, verse no. 19, 25-27.
- (1.6) (ii) Shandilya Upanishad of Atharva Veda, Cantos 1, Section 1-2.
- (1.6) (iii) Sanyas Upanishad of Sam Veda, Canto 2, verse nos. 1, 55-57, 60.
- (1.6) (iv) Jabal Darshan Upanishad of Sam Veda, Canto 1, verse nos. 4-6; Canto 2, verse nos. 1-12.
- (1.6) (v) Kaivalya Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, verse no. 2.

(1.6) (i) Shatyayani Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, verse no. 19, 25-27:-

[This Upanishad primarily belongs to the class of Upanishads that deal with the philosophy and principles of Sanyas, the way of life marked by exemplary renunciation, dispassion and detachment from everything related to this material world. A true 'Sanyasi' (the person who is pious, holy and a practitioner of the principles of Sanyas) is a spiritually elevated person, and hence what applies to a Sanyasi also applies to a Saint and a Saintly Person. That is why when we read this Upanishad, we would also be reading about the glorious virtues of a Saint.

अथ खलु सोम्यैते परिव्राजका यथा प्रादुर्भवन्ति तथा भवन्ति ।
कामक्रोधलोभमोहदम्भदर्पासूयाममत्वाहंकारादींस्तितीर्य मानावमानौ निन्दास्तुती च वर्जयित्वा वृक्ष इव
तिष्ठासेत् । छिद्यमानो न ब्रूयात् । तदेवं विद्वांस इहैवामृता भवन्ति । तदेतदृचाभ्युक्तम् ।
बन्धुपुत्रमनुमोदयित्वानवेक्ष्यमाणो द्वन्द्वसहः प्रशान्तः । प्राचीमुदीचीं वा निर्वर्तयश्चरेत् ॥१९॥

atha khalu somyaite parivrājakā yathā prādurbhavanti tathā bhavanti /
kāmakrodhalobhamohadambhadarpāsūyāmamatvāhaṅkārādīṃstīrīya
mānāvamānau nindāstutī ca varjayitvā vṛkṣa iva tiṣṭhāset / chidyamāno na
brūyāt / tadevaṃ vidvāṃsa ihaivāmṛtā bhavanti / tadetadṛcābhyuktam /
bandhuputramanumodayitvānavekṣyamāṇo dvandvasahaḥ praśāntaḥ /
prācīmudīciṃ vā nirvartayamścāreta // 19 //

19. Oh dear gentlemen! [I have described to you what steps a person should take to get himself formally initiated into the order of 'Parivrajaks' (renunciate, ascetic, friars, monks or mendicants). Now I shall enumerate their characteristic glorious virtues and basic temperaments that are inherent in their nature, and the disciplines and regimen they

are expected to follow religiously and diligently with firm faith, conviction and sincerity. These Parivrajaks (Sanyasis) have overcome such negative traits as 'Kaam' (broadly meaning worldly passions, lust, desires and longing for sensual gratification), 'Krodh' (anger, wrathfulness, cursing and vehemence), 'Lobh' (greed, avarice, rapacity, longing for material gain), 'Moha' (worldly attractions, infatuations, delusions and ignorance), 'Dambha' (vanity, hypocrisy, deceit, conceit, pretensions and falsehoods), 'Darpa' (false pride, ego, arrogance, superiority complex and haughtiness), 'Asuya' (criticizing and finding faults with others, denouncing them and pricking holes in other people's character and deeds), 'Mamta' (having love and longing for someone or something; to be infatuated, to have undue endearment), 'Ahankar' (ego, pride, arrogance, vanity, haughtiness and hypocrisy) etc.

They remain unmoving, unruffled and unaffected by either being shown respect, honour and praise, or being treated with disdain, insult and contempt. That is, they have exemplary equanimity, fortitude, forbearance and tolerance as their hallmark. They remain steady, firm and unwavering like a tree in the face of either praise or criticism; they treat praise and rebuke equally, with stoic calm and equanimity.

They do not speak (i.e. do not curse, show no anger, are not vindictive, seek no retribution, punishment or revenge) in spite of being harmed or tormented in any manner by others (exactly the way Jesus Christ remained calm and forgiving when falsely implicated before being crucified).

This is how those who are adroit, wise, erudite and enlightened find the nectar-like elixir of bliss and eternity, called Amrit*, which leads the soul to liberation and deliverance from the fetters that shackle it to this fearful world while they are still alive in it. [This is called 'Jivan Mukti'¹, or being free from the bondages of this world while living a normal life, but with a difference that this world has no relevance for such exalted souls; for all practical purposes the world ceases to exist for them.]

In this context, there is a sacred dictum of the Vedas--'After having done one's duty of taking due care of one's brothers, sons etc. (i.e. the family) according to the best of one's ability, one should not look back at them (i.e. one should not worry unnecessarily for them; one should not expect anything from them; one should not expect any reciprocal service and duty bound action from them to take care of their benefactor and mentor). It should be a case of 'do your duty and forget'. In stead, once a person takes to Sanyas (i.e. once he becomes a friar or an ascetic), he should snap all ties with them and go out in the Eastern or Northern direction as a wandering mendicant. He should be constantly on the move, all the while meditating and contemplating upon the pure consciousness 'self' or the Atma. That is, he should stop getting sucked in the vortex of delusions and seek the Truth about the Atma which is pure consciousness, as opposed to wasting his time on pursuing falsehoods.

[The Sanyasi is advised to go far away from his native place so as to ensure that he completely breaks all his ties with it. If he remains nearby, there are good chances of his peace being disturbed, and his renunciation and indifference being undermined by visits of his near and dear ones and their pleadings and narration of woes to him, of his remembering his past life and feeling a sense of re-attachment with the world he has left behind, etc. Being a human being after all, he is bound to be perturbed and feel mentally disturbed; he would be constantly buffeted and tossed emotionally by his past. It is better therefore to put his past life completely behind him and move ahead with his new life as a

Sanyasi. So when he goes far away, by and by he would forget everything of his past. His ‘umbilical cord’ with his past world, which he had so assiduously built and nurtured from scratch, would be snapped for good. He would feel humble like the ordinary man next to him because he would forget that sometime back he was, say, a rich man or someone who occupied a high position in the society. He will feel free like a de-caged bird.

There is another significant point here—the fact that he is advised to go in the East and North direction. Why? It is because the Far East is the land of the rising sun, which is a metaphor for spiritual elevation and enhancement of one’s mental and intellectual reach. It is a place of origin of many ancient religions, many schools of eclectic thoughts and philosophies, an ancient land of enlightenment and wisdom, a land of philosophers and mystics. While moving east, the Sanyasi would see the rising sun everyday before him and its movement higher and higher into the sky till it reaches its zenith during noon, as opposed to the west direction where the rising sun would be at his back, and with the passing of each hour the sun would be sinking further and further, all the while losing a bit of its splendour and dazzle till it finally vanishes in the realm of darkness of the night. The rising sun of the east would remind him of the rising in him of spirituality and divinity on a regular basis. On the contrary, if he had gone west he would be seeing the setting sun daily, symbolising the setting of these eclectic values and their giving way to darkness of the night representing the negative qualities of delusions, ignorance and spiritual decadence.

Similarly, the North direction is a metaphor for upliftment, enhancement and getting up, for rising and moving ahead to reach for something that is higher and better. It is the opposite of falling down and sinking into moral degradation and spiritual demotion, which would be the case if he was advised to move to the South. The south direction is a metaphor for demotion, degradation, degeneration, decadence, and spiritual fall of the aspirant. Besides this, from the perspective of geography also, the land mass of India has vast stretches of the ocean in the south, and it is practically impossible to move far in that direction. Instead, it is more practical and prudent to move to the rejuvenating, serene, tranquil and picturesque environment of the lush green verdant forests, vibrant wild life, blooming flowers, gurgling rivers and enchanting valleys of the lofty mountains in the Himalayan range located in the North to find a place that is conducive to spiritual pursuits, a place that could give peace, succour and solace to the soul of the tormented man in the final days of his life after he has spent his entire lifetime in tiring worldly pursuit.

Hence it is a practical advice given by the Upanishad to move either to the East or the North, instead of to the West and the South.] (19).

[Note--¹There are basically two types of *Muktis*—(1) Jivan Mukti, and (2) Videh Mukti. The word ‘Amrit’* appearing in the text refers to the eternal elixir of beatitude and felicity that a creature strives to obtain. A person who has attained Jivan Mukti--which implies that he has obtained liberation from the fetters that shackles a creature to the body and the external world and has found deliverance from its horrible torments (Mukti) even while it is alive and has a body (Jivan)—is deemed to have tasted that elixir (Amrit). He physically lives in this world but remains oblivious of it.

The concept of *Jivan Mukti* and *Videha Mukti* can be briefly described as follows:---The word ‘Jivan Mukta’ means that such persons will become emancipated even though they are still living in this world. They would

become enlightened, wise and realised, and Maya or delusion and ignorance would no more have any effect on them. The concept of 'Jivan Mukta' has been described by other scriptures in the following way— (a) According to Brihad Aranyak Upanishad, 4/4/7, 'यदा सर्वे प्रमुच्यन्ते कामा येऽस्य हृदि श्रिताः । अथ मर्त्योऽमृतो भवत्यत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते ॥', 'When all the desires present in one's heart are eliminated, then such a mortal being becomes immortal and attains Brahm in this body itself why he is still alive'; (b) According to Vivek Chudamani, 543, 'निर्धनोऽपि सदा तुष्टोऽप्यसहायो महाबलः । नित्यतृप्तोऽप्यभुञ्जानोऽप्यसमः समदर्शनः ॥', 'A Jivan Mukta person is one who remains ever contented though he has no riches; he is very strong, potent and powerful though helpless and without support; he is perpetually satisfied though he does not enjoy the sense objects of comfort in this world; he treats everyone equally though he is without an exemplar'; (c) According to Vivek Chudamani, 544, 'अपि कुर्वन्नकुर्वाणश्चाभोक्ता फलभोग्यपि । शरीर्यप्यशरीर्येष परिच्छिन्नोऽपि सर्वगः ॥', 'A Jivan Mukta person is he who remains inactive (uninvolved) though doing everything; he remains untouched by the fruits of past actions though witnessing and experiencing them (i.e. he remains unaffected and unruffled); he does not identify himself with his body though he possess one'; (d) According to Laghu (minor) Yog Vashistha, 5/93 'रागद्वेषभयादीनामनुरूपं चरन्नपि । योऽन्तर्व्योमवदत्यच्छः स जीवमुक्त उच्यते ॥', 'He is called a Jivan Mukta who, though buffeted by such emotions as love, hate, fear and the like, remains unaffected and pure and spotless in his heart as the sky'.

Therefore, 'Jivan Mukti' means freedom from being mentally engrossed in this deluding and artificial world and becoming free from the shackles that tie a person to the cycle of transmigration in this world while he still physically lives in it and carries out his assigned and designated duties and works with dispassion and detachment.

The stimuli or impulses originating in the artificial external world that create emotions of likeness or un-likeness, love or hatred, dearness or aversions, are all received by the five sense organs of perception of the gross body (such as eyes, nose, ears, tongue and skin). They are analysed and sorted out in the subtle body by the mind and intellect. The Atma is given the final brief or gist by its assistant in the form of the intellect on these various stimuli, impulses or information received in the form of the various perceptions of the external world as gathered by the sense organs. Bereft of this physical gross body having these sense organs—which act as the radar for the supreme boss which is the Atma sitting in the control room represented by causal body and using the mind-intellect complex of the subtle body as the instrument panel to receive all the information about the external world and ordering the body to act accordingly—there will be no reception of stimuli, and hence the Atma will be free of being deluded by such stimuli, and as a result, it will have no emotions or agitations caused by such stimuli. The Atma, therefore, will remain blissful, peaceful, tranquil and happy in its secluded, serene and sanitised environs. It is like disconnecting the boss from the external world by dismantling the link between his control room and the external world perceived through by the array of the radars present in the form of the sense organs of the body. Once the radar is cut off, all receptions cease, and the control panel goes blank. The Atma will be peaceful and blissful because it will not be agitated by constant bombardment by useless and annoying stimuli and impulses from the external world.

Further, since the Atma, as an independent, individual entity, does not have its own physical body (remember, the creature's body is merely the 'habitat' of the Atma; it is not its 'own' body in the sense that the Atma does not have any ownership right over the body, which is only a temporary residence for it much like a hotel or inn), it naturally follows that it wouldn't have the various organs of perception and action which the physical gross body of the creature has. Therefore, in the absence of the physical body of its own, the Atma will have no chance or scope of being able to be disturbed by the different stimuli from the external world directly. It gets disturbed though indirectly through the sense organs of the gross body of the creature receiving stimuli from the external world. In brief the Atma is an independent resident of the gross body of the creature, and had it not been for the external sense organs of the body, the Atma would have lived perpetually in complete bliss in its causal body where it resides.

Air is present everywhere, but it is neither visible nor felt unless it blows as a soft breeze when it is felt by its touch on the skin. So, in this case, the soul of a person who has become 'Videha Mukta' is compared to this all-pervading but invisible wind or air which is the mainstay of life in the form of breath or 'Pran'. Consequentially, when a person dies, the breath easily moves out of the body without any trouble. Air as breath or Pran is not a dead entity but very much alive and active like the Atma or soul of the creature. Both the Pran and the Atma, as breath and consciousness respectively, are equally important to maintain life inside the body. They are like two sides of the same coin. When a person is freed from his body upon death, his Atma is liberated from the boundaries that are imposed upon it by the body. The Atma sets itself free and merges with the vast cosmos which is present outside the body even as the 'Pran' or breath present inside the body is liberated from it when it is exhaled and merges with the air present outside the body. This is tantamount to attaining complete liberation without any kind of restrictions that are normally imposed by the body on the Atma of the creature.

Since the true identity of the creature is not his body but the Atma, in the case of 'Videha Mukti', this Atma or soul exits from the trapping of the body much like the breath going out from inside the body and finding liberation in the outside air. Since the body has died, it will not breathe, and therefore the breath need not re-enter it again. The air (breath) called 'Pran' has found permanent liberation. Even as the air does not perish after it leaves the body, the Atma which is the true identity of the creature also does not perish once it leaves the body and is set free.

The word 'Videha' means 'without a body' while the word 'Mukti' means 'liberation and freedom, emancipation and salvation'. So loosely, the phrase 'Videha Mukti' means 'freedom from the encumbrance and limitations of the body'. This 'Videha Mukti', generally speaking, is possible when the individual Atma, which is the truthful identity of the creature, leaves the body to merge with the cosmic Atma present outside the body of the individual creature. The example of the breath leaving the body is the best way to explain the concept. While the breath is inside the body, it represents the Atma of the individual because it is surrounded by the physical, gross body, but as soon as it is exhaled it becomes synonymous with being provided with 'Videha Mukti' because it finds freedom from the encumbrances and limitations of the body and merges with the wind present in the vast space outside the body. So if a

wise creature becomes totally unaware of his body so much so that he does not even feel the pain of a pin pricking it, when he is totally oblivious of the fact that the body even exists, then in that state of existence he is equivalent to having actually lost the body altogether —that is, the creature has obtained ‘Videha Mukti’. This state is usually achieved during meditation by Yogis when they enter ‘Samadhi’ which is a trance-like state of consciousness.

In Maho-panishad, canto 2, verse nos. 38-64 of the Sam Veda tradition (an English version has been published separately), king Janak emphasised to sage Sukhdeo that after inculcating all the virtues as enumerated therein, a person not only becomes ‘Jivan Mukta’, or freed from the burdens cast by this mundane world, but also attains ‘Videha Mukti’, or is freed from the encumbrances and limitations caused by the body at the same time. These two types of liberation and deliverance go hand in hand; they complement each other. The best example of a person having both these forms of Muktis simultaneously is king Janak himself because although he is a king taking care of the mundane work of the kingdom, internally he is completely detached from the world and is considered the most enlightened and wise king that ever existed. That is why he is also called ‘Videha’. The concept has also been explained in detail by Sri Ram to Hanuman in canto 1 of Muktikopanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda tradition which is chapter 19 of this anthology. Similarly, Adhyatmo-panishad, also of this Vedic tradition, deals with different aspects of Jivan Mukti, especially in its verses 44-47 dedicated to this concept.]

तमेव धीरो विज्ञाय प्रज्ञां कुर्वीत ब्राह्मणः । नानुश्यायाद्बहूञ्छब्दान्वाचो विग्लापनं हि तत् ॥२५॥

tameva dhīro vijñāya prajñāṃ kurvīta brāhmaṇaḥ /
nānudhyāyād-bahūñchabdānvāco viglāpanaṃ hi tat // 25 //

25. An erudite and wise Brahmin who is steady and persistent in his spiritual pursuit of seeking that which is the ultimate Truth and absolute Reality, i.e. Brahm who is imperishable, eternal and infinite, should fix his attention unwaveringly on that Truth and Reality once that enlightenment dawns upon him. He should establish his intellect and mind firmly on that ultimate, supreme and transcendental Truth (Brahm).

One should not allow oneself to be trapped in a quagmire of words because they are like a trap and a misuse of the faculty of speech. [That is, a Sanyasi should guard against indulgence in debates, discussions, gossiping and chattering as well as attending lectures or giving them himself or answering queries, because they are all a cause of vexation for the spirit. The supreme Truth is so indefinable, incomprehensible and irrefutable that it cannot be explained and defined by words; its profundity and endless vastness cannot be canned and encrypted in words, and neither can it be ascertained or deduced by debates and discussions. That is why it is ordained that he observes silence.] (25).

बाल्येनैव हि तिष्ठसेन्निर्विद्य ब्रह्मवेदनम् । ब्रह्मविद्यां च बाल्यं च निर्विद्य मुनिरात्मवान् ॥२६॥

bālyenaiva hi tiṣṭhāsennirvidya brahmavedanam /
brahmavidyāṃ ca bālyaṃ ca nirvidya munirātmavān // 26 //

26. He should be unattached to anything just like a child¹. A Sanyasi should remain firm in his renunciation, detachment, dispassion and indifference towards the external world. ‘There is nothing besides Brahm’—this should be his firm conviction, faith and belief; he should be firmly grouted in this truth. He should realise the truth of Brahm like an enlightened, wise, learned and scholarly adult, while like a child he should remain indifferent and detached from this materialistic world. Consequentially, he should enjoy the company of his Atma or his pure consciousness and see it everywhere. Therefore, he never feels alone, because the Atma is always there to give him company. That is, once he has realised the truth about the ubiquitous and supreme Atma, he should forsake all that is non-Atma, i.e. the deluding and misleading artificial world. Once illusions are dispelled, the Truth prevails; he sees the Atma in the other person as much as he sees it in his own self. In fact, all that he surveys become one Atma because he is able to peer behind the veil of the gross world and see the same universally sublime and immutable Truth as the subtle Atma everywhere. When he reaches this enlightened state when he understands the real meaning of ‘non-duality’, it can be safely said of him that he has attained liberation and deliverance from the fetters that shackle a creature in this world (26).

[Note---¹A *child* gets a toy to play; for a little while he remains engrossed and infatuated with it, then he throws it away and forgets it for good. He starts doing something else and never bothers about that toy again. A child is also not bothered about all that is happening around him in this world as long as he is playing with the same toy; he remains lost within himself. A child also makes an easy friend and hardly can be called anybody’s enemy. A child is easy to please and befriend. A child has a pure and innocent heart which is untainted or biased by any worldly considerations. A child would treat everything alike; it would not distinguish between a rope and a snake. That is why a friar is compared to a child—pure and un-corrupt, unattached and unbothered, one who remains engrossed within himself and is oblivious of the external world, one who is a friend of all and enemy of none; one who treats all alike.

Jesus Christ has clearly emphasised this fact about the child in the Holy Bible, Gospel of St. Matthew, 18/1-5 when he says, ‘Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven; and Jesus called a little child unto him and set him in their midst; and he said—Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven; whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven; and who receiveth one such little child in my name receiveth me’.]

यदा सर्वे प्रमुच्यन्ते कामा येऽस्य हृदि श्रिताः । अथ मर्त्योऽमृतो भवत्यत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते ॥२७॥

yadā sarve pramucyante kāmā ye'sya hṛdi śritāḥ /
atha martyo'mṛto bhavatyatra brahma samaśnute // 27 //

27. When all the desires, yearnings, hopes and expectations of the heart subside, calm down, or are eliminated and vanquished altogether, then he (the Sanyasi), though being mortal like other ordinary creatures, becomes immortal and tastes the exhilarating elixir of bliss and happiness obtained by contentedness (27).

[Note—No one can hope to fulfill all his dreams and accomplish all his desires in full. Some part of it will certainly remain unfulfilled. For an ordinary man, this is a cause of frustration, dismay, distress and perplexity. He begins to pursue his objective with renewed vigour and might even succeed in actually accomplishing the unfulfilled part of his objective, but all this leaves a trail of consequences, good or bad, for him. For example, his peace of mind is affected, his body groans under the stress; he cannot please all around him and this leaves so many disgruntled people, and so on and so forth. In brief, 'true peace' is never possible unless all worldly aspirations and expectations are done with for good. 'To become immortal' is a metaphor for being liberated from the dark pit of delusions and illusions, because the latter create the fear of failures and getting trapped. A person who has no desires and aspirations will not have the chance to face failures and frustrations. The peace and bliss that is attendant to such detachment is tantamount to being freed from the bondage of fear, frustration, distress, dismay, vexations, uncertainties and perplexities which are symbolic signs of death of the freedom of the Spirit.]

(1.6) (ii) Shandilya Upanishad of Atharva Veda, Cantos 1, Section 1-2:-

Though this Upanishad deals with the concept of Sanyas, i.e. the life of a person who has taken the vow of renunciation and absolute detachment from this mundane world and everything related to it, and instead spend the rest of his life and time in spiritual pursuit and acquisition of wisdom and truthful knowledge of the Atma, the pure conscious self, leading to enlightenment and deliverance of the soul, it nevertheless, in the course of its exposition and elucidation, enumerates the eclectic qualities and divine virtues of saintly persons. These virtues were enumerated by the highly enlightened ancient sage named Atharvan when he described the essential features of Yoga (meditation and establishment of a union between the individual creature's Atma or his soul and the cosmic Atma or the cosmic Soul known as the supreme Consciousness) for the benefit of another great sage Shandilya after whom this Upanishad is named.

Now, let us see what they are in the words of this magnificent Upanishad—

शाण्डिल्यो ह वा अथर्वाणं पप्रच्छआत्मलाभोपायभूतमष्टाङ्गयोगमनुब्रूहीति । स होवाचाथर्वा
यमनियमासनप्राणायामप्रत्याहारधारणाध्यानसमाधयोऽष्टाङ्गानि । तत्र दश यमाः । तथा नियमाः ।
आसनान्यष्टौ । त्रयः प्राणायामाः । पञ्च प्रत्याहाराः । तथा धारणा । द्विप्रकारं ध्यानम् । समाधिस्त्वैकरूपः ।
तत्राहिंसासत्यास्तेयब्रह्मचर्यदयार्जवक्षमाधृतिमिताहारशौचानि चेति यमा दश । तत्राहिंसा नाम
मनोवाक्कायकर्मभिः सर्वभूतेषु सर्वदाऽक्लेशजननम् । सत्यं नाम मनोवाक्कायकर्मभिर्भूतहितयथार्थाभिभाषणम्
। अस्तेयं नाम मनोवाक्कायकर्मभिः परद्रव्येषु निःस्पृहता । ब्रह्मचर्यं नाम सर्वावस्थासु मनोवाक्कायकर्मभिः
सर्वत्र मैथुनत्यागः दया नाम सर्वभूतेषु सर्वत्रानुग्रहः । आर्जवं नाम मनोवाक्कायकर्मणां विहिताविहितेषु जनेषु
प्रवृत्तौ निवृत्तौ वा एकरूपत्वम् । क्षमा नाम प्रियाप्रियेषु ताडनपूजनेषु सहनम् । धृतिर्नामार्थहानौ
स्वेष्टबन्धुवियोगे तत्प्राप्तौ सर्वत्रः चेतःस्थापनम् । मिताहारो नाम चतुर्थांशावशेषकसुस्निग्धमधुराहारः । शौचं
नाम द्विविधं बाह्यमान्तरं चेति । तत्र मृज्जलाभ्यां बाह्यम् । मनःशुद्धिरान्तरम् । तदध्यात्मविद्यया लभ्यम्
।१॥

śāṅḍilyō ha vā atharvāṇaṃ paprachha-
ātmalābhōpāyabhūtamṣṭāṅgayōgamanubrūhīti /
sa hōvācātharvā yama-niyam-āsana-prāṇāyāma-pratyāhāra-dhāraṇā-dhyān-
samādhayōṣṭāṅgāni /
Tatra daśa yamāḥ /
tathā niyamāḥ /
āsanānyaṣṭau /
trayaḥ prāṇāyāmāḥ /
pañca pratyāhārāḥ /
tathā dhāraṇā /
dviprakāraṃ dhyānam /
samādhistveka-rūpaḥ /
tatrā-hiṃsā-satyāsteya-brahmacarya-dayārjava- kṣamā-dhṛiti-mitāhāra-śaucāni
ceti yamā daśa /
tatrāhiṃsā nāma manovākkāyakarmabhiḥ sarvabhūteṣu sarvadā'kleśa-jananam /
satyaṃ nāma manōvākkāyakarmabhirbhūtahitayathārthābhībhāṣanam /
asteyaṃ nāma manōvākkāyakarmabhiḥ paradravyeṣu niḥsprhatā /
brahmacaryaṃ nāma sarvā-va-sthāsu manōvākkāyakarmabhiḥ sarvatra
maithunatyāgaḥ /
dayā nāma sarvabhūteṣu sarvatrānugrahaḥ /
ārjavaṃ nāma manōvākkāyakarmaṇāṃ vihitāvihiteṣu janeṣu pravṛttau nivṛttau vā
ekaruupatvam /
kṣamā nāma priyāpriyeṣu sarveṣu tādanapūjaneṣu sahanam /
dhṛtirnāmārtha-hānau sweṣṭa-bandhu-viyoge tatrāptau sarvatra cetaḥsthāpanam
/
mitāhārō nāma caturthāṃśāvaśeṣaka-susnigdha-madhurāhāraḥ /
śaucaṃ nāma dvididhaṃ bāhyamāntaraṃ ceti /
tatra mrjālābhyāṃ bāhyam /
manaḥśuddhirāntaram /
tadadhyātmaidyayā labhyam // section 1//

Canto 1/Section 1 –1. Once upon a time, sage Shandilya¹ approached the great ancient sage Atharva² and requested him to preach him on the various aspects of Yoga as a means of realizing the Atma, the soul or the pure consciousness which is also called the ‘self’.

Shandilya requested sage Atharva, ‘Oh Lord! Please teach me about the eight-fold path of Yoga that can help me to realise the Atma and its essence.’

The wise and enlightened sage Atharva replied, ‘Oh great sage! Yoga (meditation and contemplation) has eight limbs or aspects or branches, called ‘Ashtaanga Yoga³’. These are Yam (self-control), Niyam (observation of spiritual laws or rules), Aasan (sitting postures), Pranayam (breath control), Pratyahar (restraint of the mind), Dharna (belief), Dhyana (concentration of mind; remembrance) and Samadhi (trance-like state of permanence in Yoga).

Yam and Niyam are of ten types each, Aasans are of eight types, Pranayam has three phases, both Pratyahar and Dharna have five types each, Dhyana is of two types, while Samadhi is of only one type with no variations.

The ten types or aspects of Yam are the following—Ahinsa (non-violence), Satya (truthfulness), Asteya (non-stealing), Brahmacharya (abstinence, continence, celibacy), Daya (mercy), Saralata (simplicity, humility), Kshama (forgiveness), Dhairya (patience), Alpa-ahar (moderation in eating), and Pavitra (purity and cleanliness).

[Now, each of these terms are being defined—] ‘Ahinsa’ means not harming or causing pain to any creature, at any time, and by any means—not by one’s thoughts or involvement of the mind in any way, not by speech or words, not by the body and its actions. [That is, non-violence should be holistic and comprehensive in nature—it is not limited to only avoiding physical cruelty or aggression but also includes mental and verbal aspects.]

‘Satya’ means to tell, honestly, truthfully and with the greatest sincerity one can have, whatever is for the good and true welfare of the other person, whether he likes it or not. This would involve the mind and its thoughts, the speech and the words used to tell the truth, and the body that implements this truth in the shape of deeds done by it and actions taken by it. [That is, Satya involves not telling things simply because they might appear pleasing to the hearer, or said out of some vested interest at stake, but to say things which are genuinely in the interest and long-term good of the other person. Such things might be unpleasant to hear in the beginning and might even cause rebuke or ill-will for the speaker of the truth, but they give the speaker or the advisor great mental and spiritual satisfaction for having spoken the truth without deceit or fear, besides helping to create positive vibrations around him, and ushering in an atmosphere of trust and brotherhood.]

‘Asteya’ broadly means non-stealing, and it includes the idea of keeping one’s self aloof from the wealth of others, of not being attracted towards such assets that do not rightly belong to one’s own self, of eyeing the wealth of others with envy and jealousy, of having a greed for them, yearning for them, and waiting for an opportunity to either harm them or deprive the other person of his possessions, or usurping and grabbing the assets rightfully belonging to others by any crooked or deceitful means one can think of. This neutrality and non-lusting must be genuine and sincere, and should involve one’s mind

and its thoughts, one's speech, as well as one's body and the deeds done by it or actions taken by it. One should be sincere in not being tempted by the wealth of others, and of course this would involve the mind and the sub-conscious which must be duly trained and cultured. [That is, one must never be envious of other people's prosperity and acquisitions; one must never allow the mind to ever contemplate of harming these assets or plan to grab them by force or conceit. Similarly, one must never allow the speech to ever utter a word of jealousy and say anything that might harm these assets simply because they belong to others, or create prejudice against the rightful possessor of such assets. One must not allow the body to do anything that would in anyway, directly or indirectly, cause harm to the assets that belong to others. Since the general meaning of the word 'Asteya' is 'non-stealing' it follows that even mental greed or yearning for something that belongs to others, and imagining how good it would have been if it belonged to me, is as good as the actual stealing of it. When the Upanishads talk about implementation of any principle, they imply a wholesome attitude and a holistic approach towards it, and not only physical aspect of it such as its literal implementation which is devoid of the spirit of the doctrine. Not physically able to steal anything but be mentally obsessive about it is as good as actually stealing it. In other words, the purity of mind, sub-conscious and intellect are as important as the physical act of abstaining from stealing.]

'Brahmacharya' is to abstain from all sexual activities or any kind of indulgences and unrestrained behaviour involving the mind, the speech as well as the physical body and its sense organs under all circumstances. [That is, mere observance of physical celibacy is not enough. One must observe total control over the mind and its faculties so that they are not allowed even to think of any lustful subject or indulge in any inauspicious, unrighteous, unethical, immoral and improper thoughts related to sense gratification or attractions of the material sense objects of the world. One must never think or talk about sensual subjects that arouse passions and disturb the tranquillity of the mind. One must never allow the gross organs of the body to be attracted towards objects of self gratification, or of sensual pleasures and comforts. In short, all sensual attractions, all forms of indulgences, all instances of temptations, all examples of self-gratification, and all sorts of unrestrained behaviour of the mind, the speech and the body are covered by the term Brahmacharya. It means total and comprehensive self-restraint or self-control in all spheres of life, and not just of the organs of sensual pleasures.]

'Daya' refers to having compassion and mercy towards all the creatures, to be graceful and kind towards all, from the lowly and the humblest to the highest and the exalted.

'Aarjav' or 'Dhairya' means to have exemplary tolerance, fortitude, courage, forbearance, resilience and patience of mind, to be immensely steady in one's thoughts and behaviour, to restrict one's speech and desist from speaking any wrong word against anyone or to anyone, and to keep the body under strict control and not react under any kind of provocation or situation, whether favourable or unfavourable. It implies that a person remains completely neutral and equanimous when faced by favourable and expected circumstances, or by unfavourable and untoward ones.

'Kshama' implies to be truly forgiving and un-affected by any offense caused by the other person, to bear with stoic calmness, equanimity, forbearance and a sense of neutrality all sorts of behaviours one has to face from others, whether done inadvertently

or purposely, whether such behaviour is favourable or unfavourable, whether it is likable or not. One must be exemplarily calm, unruffled and be forgiving towards others, whether one is praised and honoured by them, or criticized and humiliated by them. One must be sincerely forgiving for any kind of mischief, any kind of misdeed, kind of transgression, any kind of provocative behaviour, any sort of insults, aspersions, asides or insinuations inflicted or cast upon him by other person, directly or indirectly, or by situations created by his adversary that lead to him being subjected to humiliation and insult. Kshama involves remaining unruffled and completely calm, both emotionally as well as sentimentally, under all prevailing situations and under all instigations. One must not harbour any animosity, ill-will, a sense of grievance, a feeling of hatred or a desire for revenge against anyone, or for any deed done by the latter, which has in any way harmed one's own interest or even has been a cause of annoyance for him. [Therefore we see that Kshama, Daya and Dhairya go hand in hand; one must accompany the other to give meaning to what is being said in this great Upanishad. It has already been emphasized that a wholesome approach is needed when one reads the Upanishad and hopes to benefit from this eclectic and grand philosophy promoted by it.]

'Dhriti' is having equanimity, neutrality, fortitude, firmness and steadiness of mind under all circumstances, even when one is subjected to immense emotional turmoil, both of the positive kind such as having happiness and joys, as well as of the negative kind such as being subjected to immense anguish and pain. [That is, one must remain unruffled and maintain one's poise and calm under opposing situations—such as the one when he suffers from some great financial loss or loses his dear and near ones on the one hand, or when he begets some great fortune or meets his beloved ones unexpectedly on the other hand.]

'Alpa-ahar' is to eat with moderation or restraint. It implies eating only so much as to keep one-fourth of the stomach empty. It also implies eating such things that are soothing for the system and non-irritating by nature, things that are invigorating and energizing for the body. Such eatables are foods that are soothing for the digestive system, as well as sweet, pleasant and comforting for the body in general. Some of such eatables are clarified butter (Ghee) of the best quality, unadulterated milk, and other such things.

'Shauch' means to be clean and purified both externally as well as internally. While external cleanliness can be done by rubbing the body with clay and washing off the dirt with water, internal cleanliness and purity is achieved by keeping the mind, the sub-conscious and the intellect free from all sorts of taints, corruptions and negativities, and instead concentrating their efforts towards auspicious and righteous endeavours such as on spiritualism and attainment of the Truth. [Both sorts of cleaning are necessary. One should keep the physical body clean because it is the residence of the Atma, the pure 'self', and if the residence is dirty and filthy it would create a negative environment for the Atma, causing the latter restlessness and having a negative impact on its nature. Further, the body is regarded as the temple of the Lord because this Atma is a miniature form of the cosmic Atma known as the 'Parmatma', the Supreme Being. Just like a man keeps his place of worship, the 'shrine', physically clean so as to maintain its sanctity, it is equally important to keep one's body clean as it is the abode of the 'personal deity' known as the Atma. But this body is driven by the mind and its various faculties, and therefore to ensure that the personal shrine of the Atma in the form of the physical body

is able to maintain its sanctity and credibility it is imperative to keep the internal apparatus clean and un-corrupt. If the mind and its components are not clean then no matter how clean the external body may be it is of no good to the spiritual aspirant, for sooner rather than latter the body would fall prey to the many temptations of the corrupt world and its attending delusions. Therefore, all efforts of the mind should be diverted away from the falsehoods of the material world of the sense objects and focused on the Atma and the universal truth of the conscious 'self'.] (1).

[Note—¹*Shandilya*—The word 'Shandilya/Shandilya' means the son of sage Shandila. In ancient scriptures the name of sage Shandilya appears at various places, the earliest reference being in the Shatpath Brahman (9/4/4/17; 10/1/4/10) which belongs to the Shukla Yajur Veda. It is believed that it was compiled around 3000 B.C.

Shandilya was a great authority of the fire ritual, and in fact the fire which he worshipped has been named after him as Shaandila. He was a pupil of sage Atharva from whom he learned this present Shandilya Upanishad, and his main disciple was named Kushri. According to other lists of lineage, his teachers included Vaatsay, Kaishorya, Kashyap, Vaishtapureya, Gautam etc.

Since the Shandilya Upanishad was taught to him by sage Atharva, it obviously follows that the two sages were contemporaries of each other.

The Chandogya Upanishad also refers to sage Shandilya in its Canto 3, section 14 wherein the sage taught the knowledge of the divine Being known as Brahm which have a clear resonance in Cantos 2 and 3 of our present Shandilya Upanishad.

The great epic Mahabharata mentions sage Shandilya many times as being a sage who attended the court of king Yudishthira (Sabhapurva, 4/17). He had propounded the laws governing giving of donations (Mahabharata, Anushashanpurva, 65/19).

Sage Shandilya is credited with the composition of the treatise on Bhakti or devotion, called the Bhakti-sutras—the essential principles that govern the attainment of Bhakti. Besides it, the Shandilya Upanishad as well as Shandilya Sanhita are also attributed to him.

According to the Ram Rahasya Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 1, of the Atharva Veda, he was one of the sages who had approached Hanuman, the wisest, the highly enlightened and the most dedicated devotee of Lord Ram, to enquire about the profound metaphysical philosophy related to the Lord.

²*Atharva*— Sage Atharva is the ancient sage who first revealed the fourth Veda called after his name, i.e. the Atharva Veda. He was the son of Brahma, the creator, according to Vedic mythology. He first brought down fire from the heaven to earth, and hence was the first sage to have propagated the worship of the sacred fire. The word 'athar' is the absolute word for the fire element, and hence this sage was named 'Atharvan' to commemorate this auspicious deed of his. He made the supreme Fire God, who is synonymous with the dynamic powers of the Supreme Being called Brahm, make this earth as his habitat, thereby paving the way for the forthcoming generations to utilise the stupendous powers and potentials of this fire element in practical terms here on earth itself. Since he brought the fire down on earth, he was also the first to initiate the process of worship of this element, both in its sublime form as the Fire God and its more tangible and gross form as the sacred fire

worshipped during formal ritual of the fire sacrifice as well as in other informal forms as done by various sections of society in their daily lives. In fact, sage Atharva was considered as the Fire manifested, so pure and holy he was.

When he brought the Fire God in the form of the sacred fire from the heaven, he offered Soma (the extract of a herb called Som and used as a holy and sanctified liquid-offering meant to be offered to the Gods for their eternal life and sustenance) to him to please him and to show respect to this God who was now the guest of honour for Atharvan. In order to please him further while offering Soma to him, the sage chanted the hymns that he had learned from his father, the creator Brahma. This started the practice of offering of Soma to the sacred fire during the ritual of the fire sacrifice along with the chanting of hymns of the Atharva Veda.

According to the Purans, his earthly wife was Shanti, the daughter of Kardama Prajapati. He is regarded as a personification of the Fire God, and is often invoked in conjunction with another great sage named Angiras (who was another son of Brahma). In this form he is called 'Atharvangiras' (Atharvan + Angiras) and is regarded as the father of the Fire God to commemorate the fact that these two sages are responsible for the honour and exalted position that the Fire God occupies in the pantheon of Gods, and also the fact that they were responsible for propagating the worship of the fire as the most holy and the most sacred form of worship of the Supreme Being.

According to Mundakopnishad of Atharva Veda, Mundak 1, section 1, verse no. 1, Atharva is the eldest of the six mental-born sons of Brahma. Brahma had first taught him the best metaphysical knowledge called Brahm Vidya, and Atharva had later taught it to Angiras, his younger brother and first disciple (Mundakopnishad, 1/1/2). The descendents of Atharva came to be known as Atharvaan, and those of Angira as Aangiras. One of the many important sages preached by sage Atharva was Shandilya/Shandilya, son of sage Shandila, and this teaching is contained in the present Upanishad called the 'Shandilya Upanishad' dedicated to sage Shandilya in his memory.

Since sage Atharva had started the practice of worship of the Fire God in the form of the sacred fire of the fire sacrifice and had used the initial Mantras taught to him by his father Brahma, the Mantra of this Veda came to be known after him as 'Atharvaa', and since his brother Angira had carried forward this practice started by his older brother by actually invoking these Mantras during formal sacrifices held from time to time after the first exercise, the Mantras came to be known after both the brothers 'Atharvaangiras'.

The Mantras of the Atharva Veda which were initially pronounced by sage Atharva came to be known after him as 'Atharvaa' or 'Atharva', and those by the two brothers jointly as 'Atharvaangiras'.

According to Mahabharat, the great epic related to Lord Krishna penned by sage Veda Vyas, Atharva had searched out the fire concealed in the ocean (Mahabharat, Vanparva, 222).

Some of the Upanishads taught by sage Atharva are the following—Atharva Veda's Prashna Upanishad, Mundak Upanishad, Atharva Shikha Upanishad and Shandilya Upanishad—all belonging to the Atharva Veda tradition.

Since he was the worshipper of the Fire God, it is natural for him to worship the Sun God as a manifestation not only of the supreme Brahm but also of the Fire God. The hymns dedicated to the Sun God as contained in the Surya Upanishad of the Atharva Veda, which is the seventh Upanishad of this Veda, is attributed jointly to sages Angira and Atharva. Refer verse no. 1 of Surya Upanishad.

³*Astanga Yoga*—Some of the Upanishads that deal with this philosophy of Yoga are the following—(i) Krishna Yajur Veda = *Varaaha Upanishad*, Canto 5, verse nos. 11-14; (ii) Atharva Veda = *Par Brahm Upanishad*, verse no. 2.

The chief exponent of Yoga was sage Patanjali, and he had crystallized the principles of Yoga in his Yog Sutra which contains 185 Sutras or formulas or keys for doing Yoga. Yoga is one of the 6 schools of Indian Hindu Philosophy. We shall now briefly see the essential elements of Patanjali's Yog Sutra.

Patanjali is considered the grandfather of Yoga. Here we shall see in brief his basic ideas of Yoga, and we would observe that they are more philosophical in their content, import and application than the mere physical exercise involved in doing routine Yoga (meditation). Patanjali's philosophies on Yoga are universally applicable to all the Upanishads, whether they are mere philosophical treatises or the ones dealing with only meditation exercises in detail. In the context of Upanishads on Yoga, let us have a brief glimpse on what sage 'Patanjali', has to say on the subject.

Patanjali has enumerated eight-fold path of Yoga, called Ashtanga Yoga—or the Yoga with 8 limbs or branches. Each phase of his prescription is designed to enable the practitioner to attain the supreme consciousness by quieting the mind and merging it with the truth which is universal, all pervading and infinite.]

तपःसन्तोषास्तिक्यदानेश्वरपूजनसिद्धान्तश्रवणह्रीमतिजपव्रतानि दश नियमाः । तत्र तपो नाम
विध्युक्तकृच्छ्रचान्द्रायणादिभिः शरीरशोषणम् । संतोषो नाम यदृच्छालाभसंतुष्टिः । आस्तिक्यं नाम
वेदोक्तधर्माधर्मेषु विश्वासः । दानं नाम न्यायार्जितस्य धनधान्यादेः श्रद्धयार्थिभ्यः प्रदानम् । ईश्वरपूजनं नाम
प्रसन्नस्वभावेन यथाशक्ति विष्णुरुद्रादिपूजनम् । सिद्धान्तश्रवणं नाम वेदान्तार्थविचारः । ह्रीर्नाम
वेदलौकिकमार्गकुत्सितकर्मणि लज्जा । मतिर्नाम वेदविहितकर्ममार्गेषु श्रद्धा । जपो नाम विधि
बद्धरूपदिष्टवेदाविरुद्धमन्त्राभ्यासः । तद्विधं वाचिकं मानसं चेति । मानसं तु मनसा ध्यानयुक्तम् ।
वाचिकं द्विविधमुच्चैरुपांशुभेदेन । उच्चैरुच्चारणं यथोक्तफलम् । उपांशु सहस्रगुणम् ।
मानसं कोटिगुणम् । व्रतं नाम वेदोक्तविधिनिषेधानुष्ठाननैयत्यम् ॥१॥

tapahsantōṣāstikyaadāneśvarpūjanasiddhāntāśrawaṇahrīmatijapavratāni daśa
niyamāḥ /
tatra tapō nāma vidhuktakrichracāndrāyaṇā-dibhiḥ śarīrāśōṣaṇam /
saṃtōṣō nāma yadrichālābhasaṃtuṣṭhiḥ /
āstikyaṃ nāma vedōktadharmādharmeṣu viśvāsaḥ /
dānaṃ nāma nyāyārjitasya dhanadhānyādeḥ śraddhayārthibhyaḥ pradānam /
īśvarpūjanaṃ nāma prasannaswabhāven yathāśakti viṣṇugurudrādipūjanam /
siddhāntāśravaṇaṃ nāma vedāntārthavicāraḥ /
hrīnāma vedalaukikamārgakutsitatarkamaṇi lajjā /

matirnāma vedavihitkarmamārgeṣu śraddhā /
 japō nāma vidhi vadguruupadiṣṭavedāviruddhamantrābhyāsaḥ /
 tadidvavidham vācikaṃ mānsaṃ ceti /
 mānasaṃ tu manasā dhyānyuktam /
 vācikaṃ dvividhamuccairūpāṃśubhedena /
 uccairuccāraṇaṃ ythōktaphalam /
 upāṃśu sastraguṇam /
 mānasaṃ kōtiguṇam /
 vrataṃ nāma vedōktavidhiniṣedhānuṣṭhānanaiyatyam / section 2/

Canto 1/Section 2— The term ‘Niyam’ (literally meaning certain rules and regulations that one is strictly expected to follow in order to be successful in one’s endeavour) applies to the following observances—Tapa (austerity, penance and sufferance for some noble and auspicious cause), Santosh (contentedness), Astik (to be a believer), Daan (to give charity and make alms), Ishwar-poojan (worship of God), Siddhanta-srawan (listening to the tenets and doctrines of the scriptures being explained), Hri (shame, prudence, modesty and self-respect), Mati (thoughts, intellect, sense, understanding, inclination, convictions, desires of the mind, and being mindfulness of one’s duties and ethical behaviour), Japa (repetition of Mantras), and Vrat (religious fasting, observing austerity, keeping righteous vows and strict self-control or self-restraint).

[Now, each of these terms would be explained in a holistic way.] The term ‘Tapa’ in the context of Yoga (meditation) is to observe various religious sacraments such as the ‘Krischa Chandrayan¹’ which helps the body to become thin, energized, fit, reactivated and detoxified, as well as shed its unnecessary flab and burden of ailments.

‘Santosh’ means to be satisfied and contented with whatever is available by providence, and never to greed or yearn or wish for more.

‘Aastik’ (believing) implies that one should sincerely believe in what the Vedas have said about religion and other spiritual matters.

‘Daan’ is to give alms to the poor, make donations and charities to the deserving, with due respect to the dignity and self respect of the recipient or the beneficiary, without expecting anything in return. These charities and donations must be made out of the wealth that has been obtained by rightful means, and which rightly belongs to the person who gives such alms, or makes donations or charities. [In other words, if charities are made to humiliate others, to demean their spirits and social standing, to show them that they are underprivileged, unfortunate and inferior to the donor, to create a situation when the other members of the society become lazy, indolent and unproductive in the expectation of getting largesse without making efforts to meet their requirements by doing deeds, or to show off one’s wealth and majesty, or to reap some sort of worldly fame and name as a philanthropic person etc., or if such charities or alms are made out of assets acquired by unlawful and unethical means—then such alms, charities and donations are deemed to be null and void.]

‘Ishwar-poojan’ is to honour, to offer respectful worship and to pay sincere obeisance to the Supreme Being in his various manifestations, such as Lord Vishnu (the second of the Trinity Gods, the sustainer and protector of creation, and the Lord who had manifested as various incarnations on earth) and Lord Shiva (the third of the Trinity

Gods, the concluder of creation and the patron God of ascetics) amongst others. Such worship and honour should be done cheerfully, with great devotion and faith, and by following the proper sanctified method for this purpose as narrated in the scriptures.

‘Siddhanta-srawan’ is to attentively hear the tenets and doctrines of the Vedas and the Upanishads being explained by those who are well-versed in them, those who are highly erudite and extremely learned in the finer nuances and intricacies of these great scriptures.

‘Hri’ (shame, modesty, self-respect and dignity) is to feel ashamed at one’s own self for doing something that goes against the eclectic doctrines of Dharma (ethics, morality, righteousness, auspiciousness, probity, propriety and correct thought and action). Therefore, it also entails that one avoids doing anything that is regarded as unholy, lowly, demeaning, degrading and despicable by the Vedas as well as by traditional wisdom and universally accepted convention.

‘Mati’ (thoughts, intellect, sense, understanding, inclination, convictions, desires of the mind, and being mindfulness of one’s duties and ethical behaviour) is to sincerely wish and have an inborn inclination to follow the tenets of the Vedas. It would include proper training of the mind-intellect apparatus to think and contemplate rightly, correctly and with a positive attitude about the right things and in a right perspective. One should therefore turn away from those things that are demeaning and degrading for the soul, and which undermine the exalted stature of one’s divine ‘self’.

‘Japa’ is to honestly practice (repeat and meditate upon) the Vedic Mantra (hymn) that has been prescribed by one’s Guru (moral preceptor). Japa is done in two ways—one is verbal or audible Japa, and the other is non-verbal or mental or silent Japa. The mental or silent form of Japa is done by repeating the Mantra mentally in a silent mode without uttering a word audibly, and involves concentration of the mind and turning its thoughts inwards. The verbal or audible form of Japa is again of two types—viz. one that is done loudly, and the other that is simply muttered. The Japa done while muttering the Mantras silently is thousands of times more beneficial than doing Japa loudly, and mental Japa that is done silently without even opening the lips is far better than even the one done by slowly muttering the words, and it is multiple times more beneficial.

‘Vrat’ (observance of religious vows) is to diligently, steadfastly, honestly, consistently and regularly follow the different eclectic principles, the doctrines and the tenets of the Vedas and the Upanishads—to avoid things that are proscribed by them, and do things that are prescribed by them (1).

[Note—¹The word ‘Chandrayan’ means ‘following the phase of the moon’, while ‘Krischa’ means to become thin and lean. Hence, the term *Krischa Chandrayan* means to make the body thin by strictly restricting the diet according to the established system of doing the Chandrayan Vrat. Hence it involves restricting one’s food intake by strictly following the phase of the moon—reducing it gradually during the waning phase of the moon, and increasing it in a step-by-step reverse order in which it was reduced during the waxing phase of the moon.

The Hindu scriptures have prescribed a number of methods of atonement for one’s misdeeds and expiations for sins. The Chandrayan is the universal penance for expiation of almost any kind of sin—especially where no specific remedy is prescribed.

It is so-called as during this exercise one follows the phase of the moon in his eating habits. Starting with fifteen morsels of food on the full-moon day it is gradually reduced by one morsel per day till the new-moon day when not a single morsel is eaten by the aspirant. Then from this day onwards, one morsel per day is increased till the full-moon day when once again he eats fifteen morsels. This is one cycle of the penance. It can be repeated as many times as desired according to the intensity of the sin to be atoned for. This penance is also called ‘Pipillikaamadhyā’ or ‘middle of an ant’ exercise because it starts and ends with full fifteen morsels of food with nil food in the middle.

There is a variation of the Chandrayan described above. In the modified version, the penance is started with one morsel on the full-moon day, gradually increased to fifteen morsels on the new-moon day and then progressively reduced by one morsel each day till the full-moon day when once again only one morsel is eaten. This is called ‘Yavamadhya’ or ‘middle of the wheat grain’—as this grain is thickest at the center and tapers off at the two ends.

In the third variation, eight morsel of food is eaten each day for a month’s time. This is called ‘Yati-Chandrayan’—or the Chandrayan that is prescribed for wandering ascetics who beg for food for sustenance.

The size of the morsel of food is approximately that of a big myrobalan fruit. A person who undertakes the penance called Chandrayan should tonsure the head, do initial fasting as a preparatory step, offer libations of clarified butter (Ghee) and water to the Gods, consecrate the food before eating it, and worship the Moon God.]”

(1.6) (iii) Sanyas Upanishad of Sam Veda, Canto 2, verse nos. 1, 55-57, 60:-

As the name suggests, this Upanishad is dedicated expressly to the philosophy of Sanyas—which means renouncing the material world and its deluding charms, and instead focusing the mind and devoting one’s life in search of the spiritual truth that leads to final liberation and deliverance from the cycle of transmigration, and grants emancipation and salvation to the soul of the creature.

Now let us briefly read the relevant parts of these referred verses to quickly see what they have to say in relation to the auspicious virtues of a saintly person—

चत्वारिंशत्संस्कारसंपन्नः सर्वतो विरक्तश्चित्तशुद्धिमेत्याशासूयेर्ष्याहंकारं दग्ध्वा
साधनचतुष्टयसंपन्न एव संन्यस्तुमर्हति ।१॥

catvāriṁśatsaṁskārasaṁpannaḥ sarvato viraktaścittaśuddhimetyāśā-
sūyersyāhaṁkāraṁ dagdhvā sādhanacatuṣṭayasāpanna eva saṁnyastumar-
hati // 1 //

Now, the basic and bare necessary virtues needed in a person to become eligible to accept Sanyas are being enumerated and discussed. One who is endowed with or is accomplished in the 40 types of virtues or accomplishments is only eligible to become a Sanyasi (or accept the path of Sanyas).

He should be completely dispassionate towards and detached from all persons and things pertaining to this world. He should keep his mind and intellect clean and uncorrupted. He should reduce to ashes (completely annihilate and forsake) Asha (pronounced as 'Aashaa'; meaning numerous hopes and expectations), Asuya (pronounced as 'Asuyaa'; meaning envy, jealousy, malice, detractions), Irshya (pronounced as 'Irshyaa'; meaning jealousy, envy, grudge, malice) and Ahankar (pronounced as 'Ahankaar'; meaning false sense of pride, ego, vanity, haughtiness, arrogance, hypocrisy).

He should possess the four noble characteristics of—(i) Vivek (judicious wisdom, intellect, erudition, discrimination ability), (ii) Vairagya (renunciation, dispassion, detachment, disinterest from all the desires to enjoy this world and its comforts, even the comforts of heaven), (iii) the six so-called spiritual wealths¹, and (iv) Mumukshu (sincere and strong desire for liberation and deliverance, emancipation and salvation of the soul). Only such a person is eligible to accept Sanyas (1).

[Note :- ¹The so-called six spiritual wealths or assets are the following— (a) Sham (self restraint, control) (b) Dam (forbearance, tolerance, patience), (c) Uprati (renunciation, detachment, dispassion), (d) Titiksha (endurance, sufferance, patience), (e) Samadhan (solution and answer to all confusions and doubts), and (f) Shraddha (faith, reverence, belief, conviction).]

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।
यः समः सर्वभूतेषु जीवितं तस्य शोभते ॥५५॥

yasya nāhaṅkṛto bhāvo buddhiryasya na lipyate /
yaḥ samaḥ sarvabhūteṣu jīvitam tasya śobhate // 55 //

A person (Sanyasi) who does not feel or think that he is the 'doer of deeds', whose mind and intellect is free from any sense of attachment, infatuation, endearment and passions, who treats all mortal beings (of the world) equally —verily, the existence and life of such a person (Sanyasi) is auspicious, honourable, revered, praiseworthy and is worth living (55).

योऽन्तःशीतलया बुद्ध्या रागद्वेषविमुक्तया ।
साक्षिवत्पश्यतीदं हि जीवितं तस्य शोभते ॥५६॥

yo'ntaḥṣīṭalayā buddhyā rāgadveṣavimuktayā /
sākṣivatpāsyaṭīdaṃ hi jīvitam tasya śobhate // 56 //

A person (Sanyasi) whose inner self is very cool, quiet, comforting, peaceful, serene, unruffled and tranquil, whose mind has freed itself from, 'Raag' and 'Dwesh' (attachments, attractions, affections, infatuations as well as hatred, animosity, jealousy, ill-will, malice), and who observes this world as a mere witness (i.e., does not get emotionally and mentally involved or engrossed in it)—verily, the life and existence of such an exalted person is indeed auspicious, honourable and worthy (56).

येन सम्यक्परिज्ञाय हेयोपादेयमुज्झता । चित्तस्यान्तेऽर्पितं चित्तं जीवितं तस्य शोभते ॥५७॥

yena samyakparijñāya heyopādeyamujjhatā /
cittasyānte'rpitaṃ cittaṃ jīvitam tasya śobhate // 57 //

A person (Sanyasi) who has become fully enlightened and wise, who pays no attention to what is good or what is bad, and who has merged his intellect and mind with the supreme knowledge and enlightenment embodied by his Atma—verily, the life and existence of such a person is really and truly auspicious, worthy of honour and praises (57).

पावनी परमोदारा शुद्धसत्त्वानुपातिनी । आत्मध्यानमयी नित्या सुषुप्तिस्थेव तिष्ठति ॥६०॥

pāvanī paramodārā śuddhasattvānupātinī /
ātmadhyanamayī nityā suṣuptistheva tiṣṭhati // 60 //

Such a person (Sanyasi) is able to purify and raise to a higher stature even those who are fallen, lowly and wretched because of their compassionate, most magnanimous and generous nature. He is the one who faithfully accepts the absolute Truth and Reality, is engrossed in contemplating on the pure self called the Atma, and is established firmly in his eternal form in which there is no awareness of both the external, gross, physically visible world as well as the imaginary world created by the mind. This state of existence is called 'Sushupta' (or the deep sleep state of consciousness) (60).

(1.6) (iv) Jabal Darshan Upanishad of Sam Veda, Canto 1, verse nos. 4-6;
Canto 2, verse no. 1:-

Canto 1, verse nos. 4-6:-

सांकृते श्रुणु वक्ष्यामि योगं साष्टाङ्गदर्शनम् । यमश्च नियमश्चैव तथैवासनमेव च ॥४॥
 प्राणायामस्तथा ब्रह्मन्प्रत्याहारस्ततः परम् । धारणा च तथा ध्यानं समाधिश्चाष्टमं मुने ॥५॥
 अहिंसा सत्यमस्तेयं ब्रह्मचर्यं दयार्जवम् । क्षमा धृतिर्मिताहारः शौचं चैव यमा दश ॥६॥

sāṃkr̥te śruṇu vakṣyāmi yogaṃ sāṣṭāṅgadarśanam /
 yamaśca niyamaścaiva tathaivāsanameva ca // 4 //
 prāṇāyāmastathā brahmanpratyāhārastataḥ param /
 dhāraṇā ca tathā dhyānaṃ samādhiścāṣṭamaṃ mune // 5 //
 ahiṃsā satyamasteyaṃ brahmacaryaṃ dayārjavam /
 kṣamā dhṛtirmitāhāraḥ śaucaṃ caiva yamā daśa // 6 //

The great Yogi (ascetic) named Dattatreya replied, ‘Oh Sankriti! I shall elucidate the system of philosophy of Yoga having 8 main branches or limbs. Listen to them carefully. They are the following— (i) ‘Yam’ (self restraint of passions), (ii) ‘Niyam’ (following rules and regulations; a regulated life; sacrosanct principles and tenets, codes of conduct), (iii) ‘Aasan’ (various sitting postures) [4], (iv) ‘Pranayam’ (control of breath), (v) ‘Pratyahar’ (to divert the mind away from gratification of sense organs and exercising control over it), (vi) ‘Dhaarna’ (firm belief, conviction and faith), (vii) ‘Dhyan’ (concentration and focusing of the mind and intellect, contemplation and mediation), and (viii) ‘Samadhi’ (a trance like state when the ascetic loses all awareness of the external world and remains in a blissful state [5].

‘Yam’ (self restraint) is again of 10 types— (i) ‘Ahinsa’ (non-violence and non-cruelty), (ii) ‘Satya’ (truthfulness), (iii) ‘Asteya’ (non-theft or non-stealing), (iv) ‘Brahmacharya’ (celibacy, continence, non-lust), (v) ‘Daya’ (mercy, compassion), (vi) ‘Kshama’ (forgiveness) (vii) ‘Saratata’ (simplicity, humility, non-deceit), (viii) ‘Dhriti’ (stability, unwavering and steadfastness of mind), (ix) ‘Mitahar’ (regulated diet) and (x) ‘Saucha’ (purity, both external and internal) [6] [4-6].

Canto 2, verse nos. 1-12:-

तपः संतोषमास्तिक्यं दानमीश्वरपूजनम् । सिद्धान्तश्रवणं चैव ह्रीर्मतिश्च जपो व्रतम् ॥१॥
 एते च नियमाः प्रोक्तास्तान्वक्ष्यामि क्रमाच्छृणु ॥२॥

tapaḥ santoṣamāstikyaṃ dānamiśvarapūjanam /
 siddhāntaśravaṇaṃ caiva hrīrmatiśca japo vratam // 1 //
 ete ca niyamāḥ proktāstānvakṣyāmi kramācchṛṇu // 2 //

The 10 ‘Niyams’ (meaning rules, regulations, laws and ethics, codes of conduct and behaviour, principles and practices, manners and etiquettes to be followed or observed by a seeker or aspirant are the following—(i) ‘Tapa’ (observing austerity and doing penances; enduring sufferance and hardships), (ii) ‘Santosh’ (contentedness and satisfaction), (iii) ‘Aastik’ (to have firm belief and conviction, specially in relation to God and spiritual matters), (iv) ‘Daan’ (charity, alms, donation), (v) ‘Ishwar-Pooja’ (worshiping and honouring God, the supreme Lord), (vi) ‘Siddhanta Srawan’ (hearing of the tenets and principles as enshrined and enunciated by the various scriptures), (vii) ‘Lajja’ (modesty) (viii) ‘Mati’ (intellect, discriminatory powers, wisdom) (ix) ‘Japa’ (repetition of holy name of the Lord God and assorted Mantras or spiritual formulas from the scriptures), and (x) ‘Vrat’ (observance of vows, keeping promises; fasting and abstinence from food and pleasure) [1].

I shall now describe them one by one below [2] [1-2].

वेदोक्तेन प्रकारेण कृच्छ्रचान्द्रायणादिभिः । शरीरशोषणं यत्तत्तपं इत्युच्यते बुधैः ॥३॥

vedoktena prakāreṇa kṛcchracāndrayaṇādibhiḥ /
śarīraśoṣaṇaṃ yattattapa ityucyate budhaiḥ // 3 //

To subject the body to sufferings and hardships by observing various vows and fasting, such as for example ‘Krichra Chandrayan’¹ and other such austerities and penances as mentioned in the Vedas, is called ‘Tapa’ by those who are experts and scholars in the knowledge contained in the Vedas (3).

[Note:- ¹The word ‘Krichra’ means one which gives troubles, one which torments and inflicts pain, one which bestows miseries and difficulties. The word ‘Chandrayanam’ is a religious sacrament regulated by the waxing and waning phases of the moon. It is a sort of fasting wherein a person takes 15 mouthfuls of food on the day of the full moon. Thereafter, with each passing day of the waning phase of the moon, 1 morsel of food is progressively reduced until the time when no food is taken on the day of the dark moon. Subsequently, during the waxing phase of the moon, 1 morsel of food is progressively increased till the time of the full moon when again 15 morsels or mouthfuls are taken. That is, on the dark moon day, the aspirant observes complete fasting. The next day, i.e. the first day of the waxing moon, 1 morsel is taken, on the second day, 2 morsels are taken, and this progresses till the full moon day when 15 mouthfuls are taken. This process of fasting is done to do penances and repentance for one’s sins.]

को वा मोक्षः कथं तेन संसारं प्रतिपन्नवान् । इत्यालोकनमर्थज्ञास्तपः शंसन्ति पण्डितः ॥४॥

ko vā mokṣaḥ kathaṃ tena saṃsāraṃ pratipannavān /
ityālokanamartha-jñāstapaḥ śaṃsanti paṇḍitāḥ // 4 //

‘What is true ‘Moksha’ (i.e. the true meaning of liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation), how and why does the Atma get trapped in the net cast by this deluding and artificial world?’

The answer is this: Discussion and pondering about, deep research and insight into, and contemplation and meditation upon this subject is defined as the ‘Real form of Tapa’ by those who are wise, enlightened and expert in the knowledge about the absolute Truth and Reality behind creation.

[To wit, focussing the mind and its various faculties in pursuit of spiritualism and understanding the Truth of the Soul, the Atma and the pure Consciousness, is said to be the correct path that leads to Moksha, i.e. attainment of final liberation and deliverance for the creature from the endless cycle of birth and death in this mortal world with all its accompanying horrors. Deep research and contemplation in this field of metaphysics and spiritualism necessitates concentration of mind and exemplary self control over all the senses of the body. Hence it is a true form of Tapa or true form of austerity and penance as the spiritual aspirant has to forgo all comforts and pleasures that come by allowing the senses to pursue their own path of self gratification and enjoyment of the material world. True renunciation and detachment itself is a difficult task, and so practicing them is also a severe form of Tapa. It leads to Moksha as it frees the creature from all attachments with the artificial world.] (4).

यदृच्छालाभतो नित्यं प्रीतिर्या जायते नृणाम् । तत्संतोषं विदुः प्राज्ञाः परिज्ञानैकतत्पराः ॥५॥
 ब्रह्मादिलोकपर्यन्ताद्विरक्त्या यल्लभेत्रियम् । सर्वत्र विगतस्नेहः संतोषं परमं विदुः ।
 श्रौतै स्मार्ते च विश्वासो यत्तदास्तिक्यमुच्यते ॥६॥

yadṛcchālābhato nityaṃ prītirya jāyate nṛṇām /
 tatsantoṣaṃ viduḥ prājñāḥ parijñānaikatatparāḥ // 5 //
 brahmādilokaparyantādviraktyā yal labhet priyam /
 sarvatra vigatasnehaḥ saṃtoṣaṃ paramaṃ viduḥ /
 śraute smārte ca viśvāso yattadāstikyamucyate // 6 //

Whatever is available easily, without any yearnings or greed or desire or hope or longing for or expectations or without causing any inconvenience or harm to others, to be satisfied with it and remain ever contented and cheerful (without making a fuss, fretting for more and better things, and fuming when those things are not available)—this has been called ‘Santosh’ (contentment and satisfaction) by those who are experts and wise in essential transcendental knowledge (5).

To remain completely uninterested in and aloof from everything, to be dispassionate and detached from all the comforts of this world as well as even the joys and comforts of the abode of Brahma and other Gods (i.e., heaven), to practice equanimity, fortitude and forbearance, to be eternally and infinitely happy, blissful, peaceful, tranquil and serene under all circumstances—this has been defined ‘the best type of Santosh’ by great souls who are most enlightened and wise. To have firm belief,

faith and conviction in the principles, maxims, axioms, doctrines and tenets enshrined in and enunciated by the Vedas and other ancient scriptures—this is called ‘Aastikta’ or being a firm believer and follower of ‘Dharma’ (righteousness, probity, propriety, noble and virtuous thoughts and actions, and having faith in religious behaviour, tenets of the scriptures and their doctrines (6) [5-6].

न्यायार्जितधनं श्रान्ते श्रद्धया वैदिके जने । अन्यद्वा यत्प्रदीयन्ते तद्दानं प्रोच्यते मया ॥७॥

nyāyārjitadhanaṃ śrānte śraddhayā vaidike jane /
anyadvā yatpradiyante taddānaṃ procyate mayā // 7 //

The wealth that is produced or acquired by righteous means and is given as charity, alms or donation to scholarly persons who are well versed in the Vedas (i.e., those who are learned), or/and to those who lead a chaste, virtuous and righteous life but are under financial difficulties or undergoing unfavourable circumstances—I regard such giving away of wealth as ‘Daan’ (charity, alms giving and donation) (7).

रागाद्यपेतं हृदयं वाग्दुष्टानृतादिना । हिंसादिरहितं कर्म यत्तदीश्वरपूजनम् ॥८॥

rāgādyapetaṃ hṛdayaṃ vāgaduṣṭānṛtādinā /
hiṃsādirahitaṃ karma yattadīśvarapūjanam // 8 //

Truthful and real ‘Ishwar Pooja’ (worship of God) is—keeping the heart free from various faults such as ‘Raag’ (various attractions, infatuations, endearments and allurements of this mundane, delusionary, entrapping and artificial world), keeping the speech free from ‘Asatya’ (speaking a lie or indulging in falsehoods), and keeping away from ‘Hinsa’ (cruelty, violence, both physical and mental, actual or implied) (8).

सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं च परानन्दे परं ध्रुवम् । प्रत्यगित्यवगन्तव्यं वेदान्तश्रवणं बुधाः ॥९॥

satyaṃ jñānamanantaṃ ca parānandaṃ paraṃ dhruvam /
pratyagityava-gantavyaṃ vedāntaśravaṇaṃ budhāḥ // 9 //

It is the Truth, it is an embodiment of ‘Gyan’ (truthful knowledge, wisdom, erudition and enlightenment), it is eternal, infinite and without a beginning and an end, it is the best and the most exalted, it is universal, constant and immutable, it is steady and unwavering, and it is an embodiment of supreme bliss and beatitude as well as happiness and peace’—this is the Atma. To hear this principle tenet repeatedly, and having a firm conviction in the truthfulness of what is being said and heard, has been called ‘hearing of Vedanta’ by the

wise and enlightened ones (hearing the discourses on the Vedas and the Upanishads as enunciated by those who are scholars and wise teachers).

[The word Vedanta is significant here because it implies the conclusion of the philosophy of the Vedas, their essentials summarised in the teachings of the Upanishads. Vedanta literally means ‘the end of the Vedas’. They contain the essentials and the boiled-down and distilled essential elements of the Vedas] (9).

वेदलौकिकमार्गेषु कुत्सितं कर्म यद्भवेत् । तस्मिन्भवति या लज्जा ह्रीः सैवेति प्रकीर्तिता ।
वैदिकेषु च सर्वेषु श्रद्धा या सा मतिर्भवेत् ॥१०॥

vedalaukikamārgēṣu kutsitaṃ karma yadbhavet /
tasminbhavati yā lajjā hrīḥ saiveti prakīrtitā /
vaidikeṣu ca sarveṣu śraddhā yā sā matirbhavet // 10 //

To have natural reluctance, shyness and hesitation to do anything which is deemed as unrighteous, un-virtuous, degrading and denigrating, loathsome and contemptible and worthy of abandonment by the Vedas as well as by established traditions of the society and the world —this is known as ‘Lajja’ or to have shame, to be modest, to feel shy and dishonourable in doing anything wrong, and to be bashful about it, to abhor it.

To have full and firm belief and faith in, to revere and honour the words and teachings of the Vedas —this is called ‘Mati’ (righteous thoughts, correct wisdom and proper use of intelligence) (10).

गुरुणा चोपदिष्टोऽपि तत्र संबन्धवर्जितः । वेदोक्तेनैव मार्गेण मन्त्राभ्यासो जपः स्मृतः ॥११॥

guruṇā copadiṣṭo’pi tatra saṃbandhavarjitaḥ /
vedoktenaiva mārgēṇa mantrābhyāso japaḥ smṛtaḥ // 11 //

To diligently and faithfully repeat the divine ‘Mantras’ or hymns of the Vedas¹ according to the prescribed norms or methods as laid therein in spite of the fact that elders might advise and give permission to follow other means or methods to repeat or chant or pronounce the Vedic hymns —this is known as doing ‘Japa’ (repetition of Mantras) (11).

[Note:- ¹The words of the Vedas are called ‘Smṛiti’ because in ancient times, the Vedic texts were passed from generation to generation, from the teacher to his disciples, by verbal mode, and perpetuated by the process of ‘hearing and memorising’, called ‘Sṛuti’. They weren’t written down as text books, but were instead learnt by rote. This however had its limitations and was the main cause as to why there was so much tinkering and interpolations with the texts of the Vedas. This is also the reason why so many different versions and interpretation exist for the texts, causing schisms. These additions and

interpolations, whether done intentionally or inadvertently, were so intertwined with the texts that it was impossible to delineate them and to know what originally was said in the texts by the sages who had first conceptualised those Vedas. One single wrong letter or word or phrase memorised by a disciple will be passed on to the next generation of disciple in the wrong way. And, if there was no tampering, it surely must have been a marvellous achievement, a remarkable feat by any reasonable standard that the texts which we have today are those that existed when they were first conceptualised.]

कल्पसूत्रे तथा वेदे धर्मशास्त्रे पुराणके । इतिहासे च वृत्तिर्या स जपः प्रोच्यते मया ॥१२॥

kalpasūtre tathā vede dharmasāstre purāṇake /
itihāse ca vṛttirya sa japaḥ procyate mayā // 12 //

To keep the wayward tendency of the mind focused and concentrated on the Vedas, the ‘Kalpasutras’ (the various principle tenets and codes of behaviour as prescribed for the different eras), the various ‘Dharma Shastras’ (religious scriptures), ‘Purans’ and ‘Itihas’ (mythological and traditional histories), or to keep the mind busy in reading, studying, discussing and learning those texts —this is true ‘Japa’ in my view (12).

[Note:- The general meaning and understanding of the word ‘Japa’ is ‘constant repetition of any holy name of the God or any divine word or Mantra’. This verse tells us that if that is not possible for a man, or if he is not interested in it, then the next best option for him is to read good books. This will have similar good effects on his mind as doing ‘Japa’. Because if the mind is not kept busy, it will gravitate towards corrupt and pervert thinking; it cannot sit idle. If it is not possible to leash it by means of chanting or repetition of ‘Mantras’, then at least it should be reined in by reading good books instead of allowing it to wander aimlessly here and there like a vagrant indulging in useless roaming about. Remember, an idle mind is the workshop of devil. See also Trishikhi-Brahma Upanishad, verse nos. 2/28-34 of Shukla Yajur Veda in this context. An English version of this Upanishad has been included in a separate vol. no. 3 published by this author in this series of the anthologies of the Upanishads classified according to their respective Vedas.]

(1.6) (v) Kaivalya Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, verse no. 2:-

तस्मै स होवाच पितामहश्च श्रद्धाभक्तिध्यानयोगादवैहि ॥२॥

tasmai sa hōvāca pitāmahaśca śrdhā-bhakti-dhyān-yōgādavaihi //2//

2—Brahma (the creator of the visible world) began his discourse, saying—‘Oh Aashwalaayan! You should try to understand that eclectic knowledge which is the best and extremely magnificent awareness pertaining to the divine Supreme Being by inculcating the auspicious virtues of Shradha (having faith, conviction, reverence and veneration), Bhakti (sincere devotion and submission for the object of worship), Dhyan (constant contemplation and remembrance; focusing of the mind on the object of pursuit), and practice of Yoga (meditation and contemplation; diligent effort to bring about a union between the individual soul and the universal Soul of the creation by harnessing all the hidden powers and energy of the body and mind to achieve the aim of spiritual enlightenment and attainment of mystical potentials). [In other words, Brahm-realisation is possible by employing these great and most effective instruments of spiritual enlightenment more than any other means.] (2).

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Chapter 2

Character Traits of NON-SAINTS

In this Chapter no. 2 we shall read about the evil characters and ominous dark qualities of 'Non-Saints'. Such people exhibit traits that are the opposite of what are possessed by Saints. They are regarded as a scourge of society and are detrimental for the good and well-being of the world at large. Their company is never good for anyone in anyway to keep, and only those who are cursed would find pleasure in keeping company of Non-Saints. Whatever goodness and virtue that a person may possess are drained if he has any interaction with Non-Saints, for the latter's pervert nature, their wickedness and extreme selfishness affects the otherwise noble person's psyche to such an extent that by-and-by he too becomes evil and vile one like them. Non-Saints are virtually like leeches that prey on the morality and nobility of the Spirit of even the most conscientious of persons, ruining their character and moral fibre, and causing their spiritual downfall.

In the scriptures it is advised that a wise person is one who guards himself from such Non-Saints at all costs—for it would be like drinking poison, willingly or unwillingly, if one allows oneself to have any sort of dealing with those who are sinful, wicked, pervert, deceitful, crooked and fallen by their inherent nature.

After reading the glorious virtues of Saints in Chapter no. 1 and about the dark qualities of Non-Saints in this Chapter no. 2, it would be easy to distinguish between them.

For the purpose of reading about Non-Saints and their negative influence, we shall read from Goswami Tulsidas' two Books—viz. 'Ram Charit Manas' and 'Dohawali' where the negative traits of Non-Saints have been enumerated in a succinct and precise manner.

(2.1) Ram Charit Manas of Goswami Tulsidas.

(2.2) Dohawali of Goswami Tulsidas.

(2.1) (i) Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Doha no. 4 along with Chaupai line nos. 1-11 that precede it, and Chaupai line nos. 1-2 that follow it:-

[In the opening verses of his epic 'Ram Charit Manas', Tulsidas has praised everyone and has prayed to one and all seeking their blessings and good wishes so that he is able to fulfill his mission of narrating the glorious and divine story of Lord Ram, the Lord dearest to his heart, successfully and without any unwarranted obstacles. During this process of humbly seeking everyone's patronage and blessing Tulsidas has also bowed and prayed to those who are wicked and evil, i.e. the 'Non-Saints'.

Now, on the face of it this seems extremely odd and incredulous that a great saint like Tulsidas would even think to pray to and praise those who come under the category of Non-Saints. But this is a very clever and wise move by the erudite and prudent poet as he wants to keep those who are wicked and evil-in-heart in good humour by pretending to offer his respects to them, lest they feel side-lined and insulted by him and therefore do their best to harass and torment him no end, and do whatever they possibly can do to stop him from achieving success in his endeavour. Tulsidas has expressly said this thing while offering his obeisance to the wicked and the vile, the Non-Saints, when he says that these people find great pleasure in tormenting others for no rhyme or reason, and so it is wiser to keep them happy with the purpose of keeping them at bay instead of antagonizing them by either neglecting them or criticizing them outright.

Another reason why Tulsidas has paid his obeisance to both the Saints as well as the Non-Saints is that he recognizes the truth of the metaphysical principle that the same universal Soul, the same Supreme Consciousness known as the Atma, is present in all living beings. This universal Soul is represented by Lord Ram who was a manifestation of the Supreme Being as a human being. This is clearly stated by him in Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 8 where it is said “*sīya rāmamaya saba jaga jānī. kara'um̃ pranāma jōri juga pānī*”—i.e. ‘I bow my head with my hands folded and my palms touching each other as a mark of respect to one and all because I see my Lord Sri Ram in every living being in this world’. This statement obviously means that at the subtle level there is no difference between a Saint and a Non-Saint. The difference occurs only at the grosser level of existence where a person cultivates evil nature and becomes sinful, a situation that makes him a ‘non-saint’. For remember, the ‘soul’ is inherently pure and ‘saintly’, but when the same soul (which incidentally is the ‘true identity’ of all the Jivas, all living beings) allows itself to be subdued by the grosser forces of creation, then the person in whom this soul dwells is branded a ‘non-saint’. On the other hand, if the soul is able to retain its primary glory by conscientious effort on the part of a person, then the latter is called a ‘saint’.

But even while praying to such Non-Saints Tulsidas has pointed out their negativities and evil character, saying in effect that he wished to keep them pleased precisely for these reasons—for otherwise they would unleash their horrifying acts against him, and causing unwarranted torment and hindrance in his work.

For our purpose this helps us to understand the evil nature and the pervert character of Non-Saints. Hence, let’s start reading them as follows:

चौ०. बहुरि बंदि खल गन सतिभाएँ । जे बिनु काज दाहिनेहु बाएँ ॥ १ ॥

पर हित हानि लाभ जिन्ह केरें । उजरें हरष बिषाद बसेरें ॥ २ ॥

caupāī.

bahuri bandi khala gana satibhā'ēm̃. jē binu kāja dāhinēhu bā'ēm̃. 1.

para hita hāni lābha jinha kērēm̃. ujarēm̃ haraṣa biṣāda basērēm̃. 2.

Tulsidas says—‘Now I bow my head sincerely (bandi --- satibhā'ēm̃) to those who are wicked (khala gana) (so that they leave me alone in peace, do not create unnecessary

nuisance for me, and let me move ahead in my endeavour to narrate the divine story of Lord Ram), because they have a natural habit of and a propensity for creating trouble and mischief for others without rhyme or reason, even to those who are their well-wishers and cause no harm to them (jē binu kāja dāhinēhu bā'ēm̃). (1)

[Now, Tulsidas enumerates the negative qualities of those people who are classified as 'non-saints'—i.e. those who are wicked, wild, pervert, sinful, evil, deceitful, jealous, full of vices, mean and lowly.]

Non-saints are wicked people who are evil and pervert. In their view, harming the interest of others is equivalent to getting profit for themselves. They get immense pleasure when others are uprooted or destabilised or ruined, and feel grief and become miserable if others are established, become prosperous, are happy and cheerful. (2)

[It is to be noted that Tulsidas has clearly stated the reason why he is praying to those who are called 'Non-Saints'. He wants to keep them in good humour and pleased so that they don't feel offended that Tulsidas has neglected them and insulted them by not bowing before them even as he has prayed and bowed to others. Non-Saints are egoist, hypocrites and haughty, and they easily get angry if they feel someone has not offered them respect. So Tulsidas thought to himself that there is no use of unnecessarily creating a problem if it can be avoided. It is wiser not to provoke people who come under the category of being 'non-saints' and inviting their wrath; what harm is there if a little pretension of showing false respect to them by bowing one's head before them can help in avoiding a confrontation with them wicked rascals.

But then he thought that if he does not clarify his position then it would give a wrong signal to posterity. So he lists the negative traits of Non-Saints, saying in effect that it is not that he does not know that such people are bad and evil by every imaginable count, but it is wiser to keep them pleased and at bay by false praise so that they do not create a ruckus and throw a spanner in the wheel of some noble endeavour. What great purpose would be served by stoking their hurt ego and inviting their wrath unnecessarily?

Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, Chaupai line nos. 17-20 that precede Doha no. 121.]

हरि हर जस राकेस राहु से । पर अकाज भट सहसबाहु से ॥ ३ ॥

जे पर दोष लखहिं सहसाखी । पर हित घृत जिन्ह के मन माखी ॥ ४ ॥

hari hara jasa rākēsa rāhu sē. para akāja bhaṭa sahasabāhu sē. 3.

jē para dōṣa lakhahim̃ sahasākhī. para hita ghr̥ta jinha kē mana mākhī. 4.

They are like 'Rahu'¹, the trunkless head of the demon who devours the sun and the moon to cause the solar and the lunar eclipses respectively, for the good name and fame of Lords Hari (Vishnu) and Har (Shiva). [Lord Vishnu is the second god of the Trinity responsible for sustenance of creation, and Lord Shiva is the third god of the Trinity responsible for conclusion of creation. These two gods are regarded as the senior most in the pantheon of gods. Hence, this stanza means that wicked and unsaintly people do not

like the good name and fame of the Lord to spread, and they do everything within their might to obstruct them and ridicule them.]

They are like the very powerful and strong demon called Sahastra Bahu² (the one with a thousand arms) when it comes to harming the interest of other creatures. [To wit, they use thousands of ways and countless stratagems to torment others and see that they and their interests suffer. They derive sadistic and animal-like pleasure in doing so.] (3)

They see even minor faults of others with a thousand eyes. [To wit, they magnify even inconsequential shortcomings in others. They literally use the magnifying glass to scrutinize each and every action, word, behaviour and other aspects of the other person's life so that they can pounce upon him at the first slip that he makes, and are ever eager to prick holes in others and find one fault in them which they blow out of proportion as an opportunity to humiliate him, ridicule him and cause discomfort to him. As already said earlier, they derive sadistic pleasure in doing so, in spite of themselves being full of gaping black holes and vices of all kinds.]

For anything that is good for the welfare of others, they act like an insect that falls in clarified butter to ruin it. [The good of others is compared to clarified butter here, and wicked people to the insect. By falling in the butter, the insect has nothing to gain, but it nevertheless falls in it just to ruin the butter even if this means its own death. Likewise, wicked and pervert people would allow themselves to suffer if it also means suffering for others.] (4).

[¹Rahu and Ketu—The legend has it that Rahu was the eldest son of the demon Viprachitti and his wife Shinghikaa. His younger brothers were Ilvala, Vaataapi, Narak amongst others. When Lord Vishnu, disguised as the beautiful Mohini, was distributing the ambrosia of eternity called Amrit to the Gods during the episode of the churning of the ocean as told in the Purans, Rahu assumed the form of a God and surreptitiously entered the lines of the Gods to take this Amrit. When his cheating was discovered, Vishnu cut-off his head with his weapon called the Chakra Sudarshan (a circular saw-like discus). But it so happened that before the head was severed Rahu had already drunk some Amrit, and so did not die. His head and torso became two independent entities. The former was called 'Rahu' and the latter 'Ketu'.

Since the Moon God and the Sun God had betrayed him, Rahu takes revenge by devouring them periodically to satisfy his hunger. He devours them when they are in their full glory—viz. he devours the Moon God during the full moon night, and the Sun God only during the day time, either when the sun rises or during its journey across the sky, but never at sunset when the sun is already losing its radiance and is on the decline.

Again, since the head of Rahu was severed from the neck, hence both the Moon God and the Sun God re-emerge from the lower end of the head after they have been devoured by the mouth of Rahu. This is why the moon and the sun appear to be getting gradually cut-off from view from one end of their discs, symbolizing their gradually entering the mouth of Rahu as the latter begins to devour them. Then for some time they remain dark or obstructed from view symbolizing the period when they remain inside the mouth of Rahu. Finally, they gradually regain their original shape symbolizing their ejection from the lower end of Rahu's neck where it was severed from the trunk.

Thus we see that the mythological origin of the solar and lunar eclipse can be traced to this event of the churning of the ocean and the demon Rahu getting his head cut-

off because he had cheated Vishnu in an attempt to drink Amrit. But having already drunk this elixir, he could not die; the head became Rahu and the trunk became Ketu (a comet). Because of this enmity, Rahu extracted a boon that he would eat the sun and the moon periodically when he felt hungry, which, according to mythology, he does during the solar and lunar eclipses respectively. The sun or the moon enter his mouth (the beginning of the eclipse), and emerge from his severed throat (marking the end of eclipse).

The story of Rahu appears in Srimad Bhagwat Maha-Puran, Chapter 8, Canto 9.

Actually however, the phenomenon of the lunar eclipse is due to the earth's shadow falling on the moon's surface when it comes in the path of this shadow during its revolution around the earth. This scientific fact was known to the great Rishis (sages and seers) who had preached the Upanishads, and it is clearly mentioned in Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 2, verse no. 74 of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition which says "When the moon is said to be devoured by the demon Rahu (the severed head of a demon) during the lunar eclipse, people start offering worship, making sacrifices, doing penances, taking purifying baths, giving alms and making charities, observing austerities etc. so that the Moon God is freed from the demon's curse, but all their deeds are a waste of effort and done in utter ignorance because there is no such event, and the darkness on the moon's disc is actually a shadow of the earth falling upon it. This shadow would go away on its own when the time comes even if no such hue and cry is raised by worried worshippers. So it is a height of stupidity and profound ignorance to even think that the Moon God has been cursed or is being devoured, and by doing so many religious deeds it can be freed from its torments."

Similarly, the solar eclipse is caused when the moon comes in between the shiny surface of the sun and the view from earth, thereby blocking the former's view from the latter's surface.

The elongated torso of Rahu came to known as 'Ketu' and it is recognized as the comet in modern science. That is why sighting of the comet is regarded as a bad omen.

Both Rahu and Ketu are placed amongst the nine planets. They represent the two nodal points where the celestial equator cuts the ecliptic.

In iconography, Rahu is depicted as just a head or even as a snake's hood.

²Sahastra Bahu— The story of 'Sahastra-baahu' in brief is as follows—There was once a thousand-armed Kshatriya (warrior class) king known as 'Sahastraarjun' or 'Arjun with a thousand hands'. He was the son of king Kritvirya whose kingdom was known as Anup; its capital city was known as Maahismati and it was situated on the southern bank of river Narmada.

In his early life he was a very righteous and conscientious person, a man of upright thoughts and noble conduct. After the death of his father when the court ministers wished to anoint him on the throne of the kingdom, he refused, saying: 'Kingdom leads a king to hell if he cannot live upto the expectations of his subjects and rule according to the principles of Dharma (righteousness and probity). The main source of income of a king is 'tax collected from his subjects', but if this tax is collected in an improper way, and if it is not utilized for the welfare of the subjects of the kingdom in accordance with the principles of Dharma which say that the main use of state revenue is to ensure that traders are given all facilities and protection for carrying out legitimate trade, are not

looted by thieves, the subjects of the kingdom are given due protection and their interests are always kept ahead of everything else, and so on and so forth. So unless I acquire such powers and abilities by doing Tapa (penance), I will not accept the throne.'

When Sahastrabahu said this, the great sage Garg advised him that if he indeed wishes to do Tapa and acquire mythical powers to rule the vast kingdom in accordance to Dharma then he should go and serve Lord Dattatreya, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Dattatreya lived in a cave of Mt. SahyaParvat and did Tapa there (Markandeya Puran, Canto 18). So, Sahastrabahu went to Lord Dattatreya and began serving him diligently for a long period of ten thousand years.

According to Padma Puran, Sristi Khand, Canto 12, when Dattatreya was pleased with his service and austerities, he granted him four boons: (i) First, the king asked for one thousand arms. (ii) Second, he wished that no one in his kingdom would even dare to think in an unrighteous and sinful way. (iii) Third, he wanted to conquer the whole earth and rule over it. (iv) Fourth, that if he has to die then it must be in the battle-field at the hands of a warrior who is superior to him in every way.

According to Markandey Puran, Canto 18, verse nos. 14-18, the king was granted ten boons as follows: (i) The powers and authority to rule over his subjects without acquiring sins. (ii) The ability to know the thoughts of others. (iii) No one should be able to face in the battle-field (i.e. he should become invincible). (iv) During a war he should have a thousand arms so as to fight his opponent with all of them at once. [This is also mentioned in Harivansha Puran, Canto 33, verse no. 14.] (v) He should have unhindered access to all places in the sky, water, earth, mountains and the nether world. (vi) If he has to die then it should be at the hands of someone stronger than him. (vii) If by chance he goes astray and falls on the wrong path, then he must have a chance to get good advice and company of saintly persons (i.e. he must be given an opportunity to mend his ways). (viii) He must have illustrious persons as his guests so that he can serve them and get their blessings. (ix) His wealth should never diminish even after liberal charities and giving of alms regularly; there should be no shortage of wealth in his kingdom. (x) The virtue of Bhakti (having devotion for Lord God) should be firm and perpetual in him.

In Mahabharat, Van Parva, Canto 115, verse no. 12, it is said that by the grace of Dattatreya the king acquired an air-plane made of gold; that he ruled over the entire earth; and that no one could stop his chariot. He was a great Emperor who conquered the whole world and made liberal charities. He is also regarded as a great scholar of Tantra Shastra.

He was so powerful and mighty that when he bathed in the ocean and thrashed it with his thousand arms, he could turn the tide backwards. He would splash the water so heavily that marine creatures were tossed into the air like ninepins. [Brahm-Vaivarta Puran, Ganesh Khand, Canto 23-27.]

But the Laws of Creation are such that every good thing has to come to an end one day; nothing is eternal and permanent in this mortal gross world. This also applied to Sahastrabahu. As time passed, he became extremely haughty and cruel. He started subjugating even the Gods so as to remove all challenges to his authority and power. It is said that he ruled for eighty-five thousand years before he was killed by sage Parashuram.

Once he was asked by the Fire God for alms, and the noble king could not refuse. The Fire God used this grant to burn everything and cause havoc everywhere, because he was certain that Sahastrabahu would not stop him. During this burning spree, the Fire destroyed the hermitage of sage Apava (who was later on known as sage Vasistha

according to Brahm Puran during its description of the race of Yayaati). The sage cursed king Sahastrabahu that his arms, relying upon whose strength the Fire God had destroyed his hermitage and was wreaking havoc on earth, would be cut by sage Parashuram. [Refer: Mahabharat, Shanti Parva, Canto 49, verse nos. 35-45; and Padma Puran, Sristi Khand, Canto 12.]

One day, he was wandering along the shore of the ocean and out of his pride and haughtiness he covered it with thousands of arrows. The Ocean assumed a form and appeared before him to plead that he stop showering arrows into the water as all the marine creatures that live in the water would die. Sahastrabahu accepted the prayer but asked the Ocean to tell him about someone who could face him in battle, as he was itching for a face-off with anyone who could claim to be stronger than him as he wished to conquer the opponent and become an unchallenged warrior in this world. The Ocean told him to go sage Jamdagni whose son Parashuram would be fit opponent for him and would welcome him in battle. [Refer: Mahabharat, Ashwamegh Parva, Canto 29.]

Such was Sahastraarjun's sense of ego and pride that he could not bear that someone stronger be there on earth in his presence. So he collected his huge army and went to the hermitage of sage Jamdagni.

The sage duly welcomed the king and extended warm hospitality to him. Sahastraarjun was however astonished at the lavish way the forest-dwelling hermit had entertained him. So he wanted to know the reason. Upon finding out that the sage managed to do this miracle because he possessed a divine cow known as 'Kamdhenu' or Kapila cow which could produce anything desired in an instant, the greedy king was filled with jealousy. Driven by avarice and rapacity, he demanded that the sage give this cow to him. Obviously Jamdagni refused. So the king forcefully snatched the cow from him and in the ensuing tussle he killed Jamdagni.

At that time, Jamdagni's brave son Parashuram was not there. When he returned, home he found his mother grieving. Coming to know of the reason, he immediately took the vow that he will eliminate all the Kshatriya kings from the surface of the earth by killing all of them. His mother had beaten her chest twenty-one times as a sign of mourning, so he declared that he will continue to wipe out the Kshatriya kings for an equal number of times, i.e. for twenty-one generations.

He comforted his mother and attacked Sahastraarjun, severed all his thousand arms with his battle-axe and then killed him. [This story is narrated in Mahabharat, Ashwamegha Parva, Canto 29.]

Extremely peeved by the Kshatriya race to which this king belonged, Parashuram vowed to eliminate the entire race from the surface of the earth as a revenge for the killing of his father. This was the reason why Parashuram had fought and killed thousands of Kshatriya to avenge the killing of his father by Sahastraarjun.]

तेज कृसानु रोष महिषेसा । अघ अवगुन धन धनी धनेसा ॥ ५ ॥

उदय केत सम हित सबही के । कुंभकरन सम सोवत नीके ॥ ६ ॥

tēja kṛṣānu rōṣa mahiṣēsā. agha avaguna dhana dhanī dhanēsā. 5.
udaya kēta sama hita sabahī kē. kumbhakarana sama sōvata nīkē. 6.

They are as vicious, stern, fierce, crude, rude, vengeful and scorching as the raging fire, and are comparable to the God Yam¹, the god of death, as regards their anger and wrathfulness. They have a rich treasury of evil virtues of sins and vices so much so that they are comparable to Kuber, the treasurer of gods who has immense wealth at his disposal, in this respect. [To wit, in vengefulness and anger they are compared to the Yam, and in the quantity of sins and vices they have they are like Kuber.] (5)

Their ascendance in this world is like the appearance of the comet² which is an evil omen heralding ruin and destruction for all others in this world. Therefore, it is better for them that they keep sleeping like the demon Kumbhakaran³ (who was a brother of Ravana, the demon king of Lanka, and slept for months together which was a sort of blessing for others, because when he woke up once in a while he ate everything he laid his hand upon, creating widespread ruin and shortage in the kingdom). [Unholy and unsaintly people are better off remaining dormant and in oblivion, because if they are given any chance to become active and influential, it would be detrimental for the welfare of the rest of the society.] (6)

[¹The word used in the text is ‘mahīṣēsā’. It means ‘the God who is the lord of a buffalo’, or ‘the God who rides a buffalo’. Yam, the god of death, is the one who rides a buffalo, and his angry, wrathful, vicious, stern and uncompromising temperament is just like that of non-saints.

Another interpretation of this word is that it refers to a ferocious demon named ‘Mahisasur’ or the demon with the body of a wild buffalo. He was a ferocious demon so-called because he had the form of a huge wild buffalo, or could assume this form at his free will. He was the son of the demon Rambha; his mother was named Mahishi. In Srimad Bhagvat Mahapurān, 6/18/16, he is said to be the great grandson of the demon Hiranyakashipu.

He did severe Tapa (penance; austerity) on the summit of Mt. Hemgiri and obtained a boon from Brahma (the creator) that he would not be killed by anyone except a woman. The demon thought that if no male can kill him no matter how strong his opponent is, it is well nigh impossible for a woman to face him for he considered woman as physically weak and meek who could be easily subdued and conquered by him if she ever dared to challenge his might. After acquiring this boon he became extremely ruthless because he felt no one would ever kill him. So he conquered the heaven and the Gods; enslaving them and usurping their power and authority, and declaring himself as the ‘lord of the world’.

When the Gods prayed to the Mother Goddess to eliminate this demon, she assumed the form of Goddess Kalika Devi, the ‘Goddess of Death’. In the fierce battle that ensued between her and Mahisasur, a description of which is given in Markandeya Purān, Mahisasur Vadha, Canto 3, the Goddess finally slayed him.

Mahisasur is regarded as an embodiment of anger, cruelty, viciousness, wrathfulness and vengefulness as well as pride, ego and haughtiness. So therefore non-

saints are also compared to him. Like this demon, the non-saints cause immense misery to one and all, and they are difficult to control.

His story also appears in 'Devimahatamya' which is considered as a part of Markandeya Puran, Chapters 78-90. However, it is also believed that Devimahatamya is an independent work that was later on inserted in the Markandeya Puran. It is also known by two other names: viz. Durgasaptashati and Chandi. This work has three parts known as (i) 'Pratham-Charit' that has chapter no. 1 and deals with the greatness of goddess Mahakaali; (ii) 'Madhyama-Charit' that has three chapters, 2, 3 and 4, and deal with the greatness of goddess Laxmi; and (iii) 'Uttama-Charit' that has chapters 5 to 13 and deal with the glories of goddess Maha-Saraswati.

It is in the second part, i.e. 'Madhyama-Charit', that the story of Mahisasur is narrated. It is said here that the demon was slayed by Goddess Durga who rides a lion.

²Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, Chaupai line no. 20 that precedes Doha no. 121. It says the same thing.

³Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line nos. 6-8 that precede Doha no. 177. When Kubhakaran, the younger brother of the demon Ravana, did severe Tapa, and Brahma, the creator, appeared before him to grant him a boon, he saw the colossal body of Kumbhakaran and thought that if he ate daily then the whole earth would begin to starve. So Brahma instructed the goddess of wisdom known as Sarada or Saraswati to confuse and delude Kumbhakaran's mind, and so he asked for a stupid and absurd boon—which was that he should enjoy sleep for six continuous months! And the day he woke up he ate so greedily and voraciously that the earth faced a crisis of food for a long time thereafter. How voracious his appetite was, and how ferocious and colossal he was is clearly hinted in Ram Charit Manas, Lanka Kand, Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 64, Chaupai line no. 2 that precedes Doha no. 65, and Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 67—to Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 71 that describe the scene of the battle at Lanka where Kumbhakaran fought Lord Ram and was finally slayed by the Lord.]

पर अकाजु लागि तनु परिहरहीं । जिमि हिम उपल कृषी दलि गरहीं ॥ ७ ॥
बंदउँ खल जस सेष सरोषा । सहस बदन बरनइ पर दोषा ॥ ८ ॥

para akāju lagi tanu pariharahīṁ. jimi hima upala kṛṣī dali garahīṁ. 7.
banda'um̃ khala jasa sēṣa sarōṣā. sahasa badana barana'i para dōṣā. 8.

Even as hail destroys the harvest though it is ruined itself in the process and dies (i.e. dissolves and go to waste after ruining the standing crop), such evil and un-saintly people enjoy causing harm to others and obstructing their interest and well-being for no rhyme or reason, and even it means that they have to die for it¹. [To wit, wicked people would die to cause harm to others. They find sadistic pleasure in tormenting others and inflicting misery upon them. Earlier it was merely said that they derive pleasure in harming or

troubling others, and here it is emphasized that not only this, they are so wicked, cruel, mean and evil-minded that they won't mind suffering themselves if it creates problems for others.] (7)

I (Tulsidas) treat such people as the thousand-hooded serpent called Seshnath, and pay my respects to them. [This is said in sarcasm. Tulsidas compares them to the celestial serpent known as Seshnath who is said to have a thousand tongues. He says that this huge dragon-like serpent pours venom and spouts fire from its mouth, and anyone daring to go near it would be scorched to death. So non-saints are like this dragon. Nay, non-saints are worse than an ordinary poisonous serpent, for they are like a thousand-hooded dragon. When they open their mouth to speak, the words that come out are like the scorching fire spouting from the mouth of a dragon. They spit abuses and mouth sinful words which are a thousand times more irritating and pricking than the bite of a serpent. So Tulsidas says that it is better to bow before them and avoid them from a distance lest they would scorch him with their ferocious fire-spewing venomous tongue!]

They have the habit of highlighting and shouting loudly with thousands of mouths about the faults of others. [To wit, they rarely think about their own faults, but exaggerate those of others.] (8)

[¹A similar idea is expressed in Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, (i) Chaupai line no. 3 that precedes Doha no. 100; and (ii) Chaupai line no. 19 that precedes Doha no. 121.]

पुनि प्रनवउँ पृथुराज समाना । पर अघ सुनइ सहस दस काना ॥ ९ ॥
 बहुरि सक्र सम बिनवउँ तेही । संतत सुरानीक हित जेही ॥ १० ॥
 बचन बज्र जेहि सदा पिआरा । सहस नयन पर दोष निहारा ॥ ११ ॥

puni pranava'um^ṁ pṛthurāja samānā. para agha suna'i sahasa dasa kānā. 9.
 bahuri sakra sama binava'um^ṁ tēhī. santata surānika hita jēhī. 10.
 bacana bajra jēhi sadā pi'ārā. sahasa nayana para dōṣa nihārā. 11.

Again, I (Tulsidas) treat them as king Prithu¹ because they have thousands of ears to hear about faults and shortcomings of others. [King Prithu had sought a boon from Lord Vishnu that he may have thousands of ears to hear the greatness and the glories of the Supreme Being. But these wicked people enjoy hearing wicked things, and they are all ears for wild gossip, back-biting and tattling.] (9)

Similarly, I treat them like Indra, the king of Gods, who derives pleasure in drinking ambrosia, because like Indra these wicked people derive pleasure in drinking wine and other intoxicating drinks. [To wit, whereas Indra and other Gods like to drink nectar and other good drinks, people who are non-saints like to indulge in intoxicating drinks and eat things that are generally not worthy to be eaten.] (10)

They always like to use words which are harsh and rude just like the weapon of Indra that is known as Vajra. [This weapon of Indra is said to be extremely harsh and merciless. Similarly, the words that non-saints use for others cause immense pain to them.]

And when it comes to observing and closely analyzing the faults of others, they have thousands of eyes ready for it (just like the so-called thousand eyes of Indra)². [Indra was cursed to have thousands of holes in his body as symbolic eyes because he had cheated sage Gautam's chaste wife Ahilya. These holes were shaped like eyes so that the world could know about Indra's promiscuous nature. Likewise, evil people use their faculty of sight to see wrong in other people and in everything else in this world. Again, like the Indra drinking the lowly wine inspite of his being the king of gods and having an easy access to the ambrosia meant for the gods, these wicked and lowly people enjoy things which are not regarded in high esteem. They are born as humans, but do not use this once in a lifetime opportunity to do something good and constructive for their own spiritual welfare as well as for the others. Instead, they enjoy wallowing in the muck and the junk of this world and its material objects, spending their lifetime scheming against others, plotting how to harm them, finding immense pleasure in gratifying their sense organs and satisfying their lust and passions.] (11)

[¹King Prithu was a great ruler who ruled according the laws of Dharma (laws of righteousness, probity, propriety and noble thought and conduct). He was a religious man who is credited with making the earth habitable and civilized by establishing great towns and cities and a civilized society in a planned manner. All the Gods were pleased with him. His story appears in Srimad Bhagvat Mahapuran, 4/15-20. Once Lord Vishnu appeared before him and asked him to request for a boon of his choice. Prithu said: 'Oh Lord. I don't want heaven. If indeed you are pleased with me then grant me a boon that I may hear your glories and stories of your divinity and greatness with a thousand ears.' [Refer: Srimad Bhagvat Mahapuran, 4/20/24.]

Citing this example Tulsidas says that wicked people are like king Prithu, but with a difference. While Prithu wished to hear about the Lord God with his thousand ears, those who are non-saints revel in hearing wicked things and dirty gossip without end.

²Indra is the King of Gods, but unfortunately he is extremely passionate and lustful. The reason is that from the metaphysical point of view he personifies the sense organs of a creature that are always eager for gratification and yearn for sensual pleasures of this gross material world. According to mythology, Indra was once cursed by sage Gautam to have a thousand holes all over his body because he had deceitfully had sex with the sage's wife named Ahilya by assuming the form of her husband. The sage said: 'You see nothing but a vagina everywhere; so let the world see your body punctured by a thousand holes symbolising the vaginas you yearn for.'

Citing this instance, Tulsidas says that non-saints are like Indra because they enjoy seeing unholy things and find endless pleasure in indulging in sensual things of the world.]

दो०. उदासीन अरि मीत हित सुनत जरहिं खल रीति ।
जानि पानि जुग जोरि जन बिनती करइ सप्रीति ॥ ४ ॥

dōhā.

udāsīna ari mīta hita sunata jarahim khala rīti.
jāni pāni juga jōri jana binatī kara'i saprīti. 4.

It is a natural habit of wicked and evil minded people that they become jealous, develop malice and become indignant upon hearing something good about others, or about their welfare and good fortune, irrespective of the fact that such persons may have nothing to do with them, are not even remotely related to them or concerned with them, or may be their friend or enemy. Taking this habit of theirs into consideration, I (Tulsidas) thinks it proper to join my hands (palms of the hands) to pray to them (to leave me alone in peace). (Doha no. 4)

चौ०. मैं अपनी दिसि कीन्ह निहोरा । तिन्ह निज ओर न लाउब भोरा ॥ १ ॥
बायस पलिअहिं अति अनुरागा । होहिं निरामिष कबहुँ कि कागा ॥ २ ॥
caupāī.

mairam apanī disī kīnha nihōrā. tinha nija ōra na lā'uba bhōrā. 1.
bāyasa pali'ahim ati anurāgā. hōhim nirāmiṣa kabahum'ki kāgā. 2.

I (Tulsidas) have done my bit by praying to them and showing my respect to them, entreating them to be kind to me and spare me any trouble. But (I know for certain that) they (non-saints and wicked people) would not defer from their path; they would not restrain themselves and refrain from doing what they are accustomed to do (which is to torment others endlessly for no rhyme or reason). [To wit, although a wise person may be careful not to offend wicked and non-saintly person and might also show superficial respect to such people just to keep them in good humour, yet these rascals pay no heed to his kind overtures and remain true to their habit of causing distress and misery to others. Tulsidas means that though he has done the incredulous thing of bowing his head to non-saints in the hope that they would leave him to have his peace, yet he is quite certain that they would continue to haunt him because it is their dismal nature to remain ungrateful and unobliging.] (1)

Say, would a crow ever become a non-meat eater (i.e. a vegetarian) even if one rears it carefully and feeds it fondly with the choicest of food. [A crow is a carnivore, and it is its inborn and natural habit; meat is its natural food. So no matter how hard ones tries, but as soon as a crow sights a piece of flesh it would pounce upon it. Likewise, non-saintly persons cannot forgo their natural habit and propensity to torment others and cause misery to them even if one does one's best to please them and keep them happy. To wit, a wise person must not expect anything from a non-saint except evil and rebuke.] (2)

(2.1) (ii) Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 39—to Doha no. 40:-

चौ०. सुनहु असंतन्ह केर सुभाऊ । भूलेहुँ संगति करिअ न काऊ ॥ १ ॥
caupāī.

sunahu asantanha kēra subhā'ū. bhūlēhuṁ saṅgati kari'a na kā'ū. 1.

[Having outlined the sublime virtues of Saints, Lord Ram now lists the negative qualities of non-Saints so that the difference between them is clearly marked out. It also helps to understand the virtues of Saints more clearly as now a contrast can be made. If Saints are holy and pious people, the non-saints are wicked, evil, pervert and sinful. The non-saints have characters that are just the opposite of those possessed by saintly people.]

Lord Ram told Bharat—‘Now listen; I shall enumerate the outstanding negative qualities of non-saints (‘A-Sant’). One should be wary of them and not establish any contact whatsoever with them even by mistake. (1)

तिन्ह कर संग सदा दुखदाई । जिमि कपिलहि घालइ हरहाई ॥ २ ॥

tinha kara saṅga sadā dukhadāī. jimi kapilahi ghāla'i harahāī. 2.

Their company is invariably a cause of pain, torment, troubles, misery and grief for a person just like a cow of low breed known as ‘Har-haai’ would negatively influence and corrupt another cow of high breed known as ‘Kapilaa’ if both are kept together. (2)

[Note—The cow of low breed is known as ‘Harhaai’ as it has the bad habit of grazing on other’s field and eating everything lying on the wayside, such as paper, wild or dry grass in a field that is dirty and unkempt, thrown away leftover food items that are stale, rotting and stinking, and in general keeping itself dirty and acting in an unholy manner. This term is usually applicable to a stray cow that goes begging for food from house to house; it will keep its self dirty, and its body is infested with germs, worms, fleas and maggots; it kicks even its care-taker and refuses to be milked; it sits at filthy places. The Harhaai breed of cow is fierce by nature, and it is prone to attacking people at the slightest provocation.

In contrast, the ‘Kapilaa’ cow is of a good and noble breed. It shuns all the negative traits of the Harhaai cow. If a cow of good breed, known as ‘Kapilaa’, is left to accompany the bad cow, known as the ‘Harhaai’, then over time the former would naturally develop the same bad habits as the latter. Similarly, when someone keeps contact with an evil person, then in due course of time the former will gradually develop the bad habits of the latter.

Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, 2nd part of Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 46 in which Lord Ram tells sage Narad that saints never step on a wrong path even by mistake.]

खलन्ह हृदयँ अति ताप बिसेषी । जरहिं सदा पर संपति देखी ॥ ३ ॥

khalanha hṛdayam̐ ati tāpa bisēṣī. jarahim̐ sadā para sampati dēkhī. 3.

Wicked people have a constant heart-burn; they are ever jealous of those who are happy and cheerful, and become indignant and full of malice when they see the prosperity and well-being of others; they can't tolerate it! (3)

[Note—This character is the opposite of the nature of saints who feel happy when others are happy, and sad when others are sad—refer: Ram Charit Manas, (i) Uttar Kand, 2nd part of Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 38, as well as (ii) Aranya Kand, 2nd part of Chaupai line no. 1 and line no. 2 that precede Doha no. 46 (where Lord Ram has preached sage Narad).]

जहँ कहँ निंदा सुनहिं पराई । हरषहिं मनहुँ परी निधि पाई ॥ ४ ॥

jaham̐ kahum̐ nindā sunahim̐ parāī. haraṣahim̐ manahum̐ parī nidhi pāī. 4.

Whenever they hear criticism of others, they feel so happy and derive immense pleasure as if they have unwittingly found some great treasure lying on the way. [They grab the opportunity to add some fresh spicy and malicious gossip to the already caustic things being said. They consider themselves fortunate at having had the opportunity to help add to the negative information about the person being criticized.] (4)

[Note—This verse is an extension of verse no. 3 above. Refer also to Ram Charit Manas, 7/40/2-3. These lines appear below.

Those people who harbour the negative trait of jealousy, malice and envy in their heart are bound to have heart-burn when they see others happy and prosperous. Naturally, when they hear others being criticized, they feel gleeful and elated. They feel cheerful and exhilarated as if they are given free of cost the valuable assets of others.]

काम क्रोध मद लोभ परायन । निर्दय कपटी कुटिल मलायन ॥ ५ ॥

kāma krōdha mada lōbha parāyana. nirdaya kapaṭī kuṭila malāyana. 5.

They are ever engrossed in practicing Kaam (lust, passions, desires etc.), Krodha (anger, wrathfulness), Mada (arrogance, pride, hypocrisy and haughtiness) and Lobha (greed, rapacity and avarice).

They are merciless, without compassion, are wicked, cruel, pervert, deceitful, impersonators, and sinful; they are a virtual treasure trove of such negative qualities. (5)

[Note—These four vices of Kaam, Kodha, Mada and Lobha are like siblings; they come and live together, and vanish also together. In Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, Doha no. 38 (1st line), Vibhishan has advised Ravana that “Kaam, Kodha, Mada and Lobha are the four paths that lead to hell (i.e. to sufferings and pain)”.]

बयरु अकारन सब काहू सों । जो कर हित अनहित ताहू सों ॥ ६ ॥

bayaru akārana saba kāhū sōm. jō kara hita anahita tāhū sōm. 6.

They are inimical to all, and harbour animosity and hatred for others even without any rhyme or reason. They are extremely ungrateful and thankless because they betray and cause harm even to those who are good to them and have been helpful to them. (6)

[Note—Non-saints have a natural tendency of harming even those who do good to them. Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, Chaupai line no. 18 that precedes Doha no. 121 that reiterates this view when it says “Wicked people are inclined to harm others even if it serves them no good or is not in their interest just the rat that destroys everything in the house and the field though it has nothing to gain from causing this ruin”.

Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line nos. 1 and 7 that precede Doha no. 4; and Uttar Kand, Chaupai line no. 18 that precedes Doha no. 121.]

झूठइ लेना झूठइ देना । झूठइ भोजन झूठ चबेना ॥ ७ ॥

jhūṭha'i lēnā jhūṭha'i dēnā. jhūṭha'i bhōjana jhūṭha cabēnā. 7.

They are liars, impersonators, pretentious and deceitful. They tell a lie when something is to be given to others, and tell a lie when anything is to be taken from others. Similarly, they tell a lie to eat something, and tell a lie when something is to be given to others to eat.

[In other words, their whole world is based on lies and falsehood. No reliance must be put in what they say, what they do, what they give, and how they behave. Their holy principle is ‘falsehood, deceit, conceit and lie’; this drives all their thinking and behaviour. They are boastful and pretentious—they boast that they have done this good and that charity, while the fact is just the opposite. They might say that they have had delicious food when invited to a royal banquet, whereas in fact they may have not been able to eat two square meals for the last couple of days.] (7)

बोलहिं मधुर बचन जिमि मोरा । खाइ महा अहि हृदय कठोरा ॥ ८ ॥

bōlahim madhura bacana jimi mōrā. khā'i mahā ahi hṛdaya kaṭhōrā. 8.

They speak sweetly like the peacock, but their hearts are cruel, ferocious and full of venom.

[The peacock has a pleasant voice, but it is so toxic internally that it can devour and digest serpents which are themselves highly poisonous. Hence, one should be careful and wary of them. Non-saints are smooth talkers and this helps them to lay their trap to deceive unaware people.] (8)

दो०. पर द्रोही पर दार रत पर धन पर अपबाद ।
ते नर पाँवर पापमय देह धरें मनुजाद ॥ ३९ ॥

dōhā.

para drōhī para dāra rata para dhana para apabāda.
tē nara pāmvara pāpamaya dēha dharēm manujāda. 39.

They keep malice, hatred, ill-will and animosity with others, and keep a greedy eye over their women and their wealth. They enjoy hearing criticism of others and themselves indulge in criticizing them. Verily, such sinful, pervert, wicked, lowly and fallen men are demons in human form. (Doha no. 39)

चौ०. लोभइ ओढ़न लोभइ डासन । सिस्नोदर पर जमपुर त्रास न ॥ १ ॥
caupāī.

lōbha'i oṛhana lōbha'i dāsana. sisnōdara para jamapura trāsa na. 1.

‘Lobha (greed and rapacity) is their blanket and mattress. [That is, their whole life is surrounded by greed and rapacity. They spend their entire life in attempts to satisfy their greed. Their waking hours as well as their sleeping hours, i.e. their entire life, is overcome with greed. Their mind is overwhelmed with greed; they think of nothing else but satisfying their greed at all costs. While they sleep they dream to acquire so many things of this world; when they are awake they spend their life pursuing the object of their greed. They are never satisfied and contented. The more they have the more they want. This results in a chain of desires that never allows them any peace and rest of mind and soul.]

Their behaviour and life is no different and better than that of an animal—because it is spent in eating and indulgence in sex. They have no fear of hell and its torments. (1)

काहू की जाँ सुनहिं बड़ाई । स्वास लेहिं जनु जूड़ी आई ॥ २ ॥

kāhū kī jaum̃ sunahim̃ barā'ī. svāsa lēhim̃ janu jūrī ā'ī. 2.

If they happen to hear someone being praised, they sigh and take deep breath as if shivering and suffering from high fever. (2)

[Note—Refer: Ram Charit Manas, (i) Baal Kand, Doha no. 4; (ii) Uttar Kand, Chaupai line nos. 3-4, 6 that precede Doha no. 39, as well as Chaupai line nos. 3-6 that follow below as they all express the same idea in different ways.]

जब काहू कै देखहिं बिपती । सुखी भए मानहुँ जग नृपती ॥ ३ ॥

jaba kāhū kai dēkham̃ bipatī. sukhī bha'e mānahum̃ jaga nrpatī. 3.

And on the other hand, if they see or find that others are in some unfortunate situation or facing difficulty or suffering in any way, they get ecstatic, feeling cheerful and exhilarated as if they have acquired the kingdom of the whole world. (3)

स्वारथ रत परिवार बिरोधी । लंपट काम लोभ अति क्रोधी ॥ ४ ॥

svāratha rata parivāra birōdhī. lampṭa kāma lōbha ati krōdhī. 4.

They are extremely selfish and self-indulgent; they are even against and inimical to their own family members and their kith and kin. They become liars and pretenders, as well angry and wrathful because they are overcome with perversion, passion, lust, greed and yearning. (4)

मातु पिता गुर बिप्र न मानहिं । आपु गए अरु घालहिं आनहिं ॥ ५ ॥

mātu pitā gura bipra na mānahim. āpu ga'e aru ghālahim ānahim. 5.

They do not respect and pay heed to anyone, even their own parents, their Guru (teacher and guide), and the Brahmins (elderly and wise men of society). They are despicable and ruined themselves, and have a propensity of ruining others and making them wicked by their bad influence and corrupt company. (5)

करहिं मोह बस द्रोह परावा । संत संग हरि कथा न भावा ॥ ६ ॥

karahim mōha basa drōha parāvā. santa saṅga hari kathā na bhāvā. 6.

Overcome with delusions and moral ignorance, they develop and harbour ill-will, malice, jealousy and animosity with all others. They neither like the company of saints and holy people, nor do they like to hear the divine stories of the Lord God. (6)

[Note—The heart and mind of non-saints are so tainted and overshadowed with negativity that anything related to the Lord God is unacceptable to them. In this situation, how can any good virtues find a foothold in their inner-self?]

अवगुन सिंधु मंदमति कामी । बेद बिदूषक परधन स्वामी ॥ ७ ॥

avaguna sindhu mandamati kāmī. bēda bidūṣaka paradhana svāmī. 7.

They are like an ocean of bad qualities and evil tendencies. They have a pervert intellect and corrupt mind. They are full of passions, lust and yearning. They criticize the Vedas (scriptures) and ridicule them. And they claim ownership of wealth rightly belonging to others (i.e. they snatch things from others and claim that these assets belong to them). (7)

बिप्र द्रोह पर द्रोह बिसेषा । दंभ कपट जियँ धरें सुबेषा ॥ ८ ॥

bipra drōha para drōha bisēṣā. dambha kapaṭa jiyam̐ dharēm̐ subēṣā. 8.

They keep animosity and ill-will with all, but have a tendency of treating Brahmins with greater contempt. Their heart is full of cunning, fraud, falsehood, deceit and conceit, but externally they wear attractive attire and exhibit a pleasant appearance (to mislead and cheat the world, for their exterior is quite the opposite of what is inside their mind and heart). (8)

दो०. ऐसे अधम मनुज खल कृतजुग त्रेतां नाहिं ।
 द्वापर कछुक बृंद बहु होइहहिं कलिजुग माहिं ॥ ४० ॥

dōhā.

aisē adhama manuja khala kṛtajuga trētām̐ nāhim̐.
 dvāpara kachuka bṛnda bahu hō'ihahim̐ kalijuga māhim̐. 40.

Such kind of despicable, wicked, sinful, pervert and lowly men are not found in Sata Yug and Treta Yug, are in a miniscule number in the Dwapar Yug, but are abundant in countless hordes, and dime a dozen in the Kali Yug. (Doha no. 40)

[Note—There are four eras or epochs according to Hindu belief. The first is called 'Sata Yug', the second 'Treta Yug', the third 'Dwapar Yug', and the fourth is called 'Kali Yug' which is the current era. These four eras complete one cycle of creation and destruction. It is believed that the first two eras were highly righteous and noble, while the last, the Kali Yug, is highly corrupt and polluted morally. The Dwapar era had characteristics lying somewhere between the two extremes of being highly righteous and highly corrupt.]

(2.1) (iii) Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, Chaupai line nos. 17-20 that precede Doha no. 121:-

सन इव खल पर बंधन करई । खाल कढ़ाइ बिपति सहि मरई ॥ १७ ॥
 खल बिनु स्वार्थ पर अपकारी । अहि मूषक इव सुनु उरगारी ॥ १८ ॥

sana iva khala para bandhana kara'ī. khāla kaṛhā'i bipati sahi mara'ī. 17.
 khala binu svāratha para apakārī. ahi mūṣaka iva sunu uragārī. 18.

The wicked people with a pervert mind are like the hemp which is used as a rope to bind others; they would not mind getting their skin peeled-off it this causes harm to others inspite of the fact that this may result in their own death. (17)

Oh the Enemy of Serpents (uragārī—i.e. Garud)! A wicked and evil person is like a serpent or a rat who cause harm or injury to others even if this results in no personal gain or good for the¹. (18)

[¹A rat has the habit of nibbling at household things and destroying stores without rhyme or reason. A snake would bite a person and kill him even if this does not benefit it in any

way. Likewise, a vile person derives immense pleasure by seeing others suffering and wallowing in pain, and this seductive pleasure increases manifold if he becomes an instrument to inflict these torments. Instead of feeling a pang of guilt and empathy for those who are caused suffering due to him, and inspite of gaining nothing himself with the wicked act of his, an evil man feels happy and enjoys the sight of others overcome by pain and grief.

Refer also to Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, Chaupai line no. 3 that precedes Doha no. 40 in this context.]

पर संपदा बिनासि नसाहीं । जिमि ससि हति हिम उपल बिलाहीं ॥ १९ ॥
दुष्ट उदय जग आरति हेतू । जथा प्रसिद्ध अधम ग्रह केतू ॥ २० ॥

para sampadā bināsi nasāhīm. jimi sasi hati hima upala bilāhīm. 19.
duṣṭa udaya jaga ārati hētū. jathā prasid'dha adhama graha kētū. 20.

In fact, a person who is wicked, pervert and evil would not regret perishing himself after causing immense harm to others and destroying whatever they possess just like the hail that first destroys the crop standing in the field (of the farmer) and then perishes itself (by melting away)¹. (19)

The rise or ascendance or elevation of people who are wicked, vile, sinful and pervert is a harbinger of ill-fortune for the world at large like the rise of the comet in the sky (because a comet is regarded as a bad omen which brings in its wake natural calamities and other catastrophic events). (20)

[¹The hail first batters the standing crop and destroys it, and then it melts away. Similarly, a vile person would enjoy destroying the wealth of others even if it means that he himself loses all that he has.]

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(2.2) Dohawali of Goswami Tulsidas: verse nos. 334, 336, 360-362, 375, 380, 382, 398-413, 505:-

334. मिलै जो सरलहि सरल ह्वै कुटिल न सहज बिहाइ ।
सो सहेतु ज्यो बक्र गति ब्याल न बिलहिं समाइ ॥

334. milai jō saralahi sarala hvai kuṭila na sahaja bihā'i.
sō sahētu jyōm bakra gati byāla na bilahiṁ samā'i..

A crook and wicked person cannot abandon his natural tendency for pretensions, crookedness, deceit, fraud, cunning, wickedness and other such negative habits. If he feigns integrity and friendship, pretending to be simple-hearted in his dealings with a straight-forward and upright man, the latter should be wary of him because there must be some catch somewhere. There must be some vested interest in the heart of a cunning man when he pretends to be amiable, courteous, helpful and friendly towards others who are sure to be caught unaware by his pretensions.

For instance, a snake, who cannot move straight but always goes in a zig-zag and winding manner, moves in a straight line only when it has to enter its hole in the ground. [That is, a snake will move in a straight line only when it suits its needs, for otherwise it has a natural habit of moving in a crooked manner in a zig-zag fashion. Since it cannot enter its dwelling in a curved manner, it straightens up, but otherwise it never moves in a straight line. Likewise, cunning and wicked people can never be honest and faithful; they cannot be trustworthy and reliable even though they may appear to be so by their pretentious friendly and cooperative behaviour. If they do appear to be so then surely there must be something fishy in them. So, one must be wary of such people.] (334)

[Note—In Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 4 that precedes Doha no. 7 a similar idea is expressed in the context of saints and non-saints. There it is emphasized that sometimes wicked people behave nicely and honestly as a result of their contact with good people and their company, but this is a rarity for their natural tendency is to be wicked and cunning.]

336. संग सरल कुटिलहि भएँ हरि हर करहिं निबाहु ।
ग्रह गनती गनि चतुर बिधि कियो उदर बिनु राहु ॥

336. saṅga sarala kuṭilahi bha'eṁ hari hara karahiṁ nibāhu.
graha ganatī gani catura bidhi kiyō udara binu rāhu..

Only Lord Vishnu and Lord Shiva (i.e. God) can protect a gentleman if unfortunately he has the company of evil persons. [In other words, bad company or bad contacts are very dangerous for a man.]

When Rahu (the demon with only a head; the comet) was counted among the 'Grahas' (planetary stars that control one's destiny according to astrological principles), the clever Brahma (the God of creation) destined that his head would be severed from the trunk (to ensure that he would not deceitfully and treacherously kill and eat up all the other good Grahas because he was inherently very cruel, cunning and crooked).

[Rahu was a demon who cunningly disguised himself as a God and sat with them during the distribution of Amrit, the ambrosia of eternity and bliss, at the time of the legendary churning of the ocean. So he got a drop of the Amrit, but his cunning and deceit was discovered by Lord Vishnu who cut off his head. The head became known as Rahu, and the trunk as Ketu, a comet. But since Rahu had drunk the ambrosia of eternity he could not die, so was placed amongst the constellation of stars known as 'Grahas' that govern the destiny of all living beings in this world. But unlike other Grahas, Rahu is universally regarded as a malicious one.] (336)

360. तुलसी गुरु लघुता लहत लघु संगीत परिनाम ।
देवी देव पुकारिअत नीच नारि नर नाम ॥

360. tulasī guru laghutā lahata laghu saṅgīta parināma.
dēvī dēva pukāri'ata nīca nāri nara nāma..

Tulsidas says that the result or effect of keeping company of lowly, evil and wicked people is that even exalted persons become degraded to ignominy, disrespect and disrepute.

For instance, even when wicked people keep first or second names after some gods or goddesses, their names are still pronounced with contempt though the word is the name of some holy god or goddess.

[Normally, when the name of a god or a goddess is pronounced by someone, people hear it with reverence and tend to bow their heads as a mark of respect. But this does not happen when some evil person keeps his own name after some god or goddess. As soon as his name is called out and people realise that a sinful person is being referred to and not some divine god or goddess, their natural and immediate reaction is of revulsion and annoyance.

The idea here is this—when exalted gods or goddesses allow their names to be associated with evil people, their names lose their sanctity and holiness, and this name is treated with contempt because of its association with a wicked person though it also happens to be the name of a holy god. In other words, if an otherwise nice and saintly man keeps company with vile and wicked people, he is bound to be adversely affected by this association. He cannot claim that he is not affected by bad company; the world will link a good man with the company he keeps, and this results in an otherwise good man getting a bad reputation inspite of him being holy and pious internally. So, the best recourse is to avoid evil company.] (360)

361. तुलसी किँ कुसंग थिति होहिं दाहिने बाम ।
कहि सुनि सकुचिअ सूम खल गत हरि संकर नाम ॥

361. tulasī ki'ēm̃ kusaṅga thiti hōhiṁ dāhinē bāma.
kahi suni sakuci'a sūma khala gata hari saṅkara nāma..

[Following up on Doha no. 360—] Tulsidas says that by staying in bad company even good becomes bad. For instance, it is well known that the names of great and exalted gods such as Hari (Lord Vishnu, the second of the Trinity Gods and the sustainer of creation) and Shankar (Lord Shiva, the third of the Trinity Gods and the concluder of creation) are auspicious and holy, but if the same names are assumed by people who are misers and miscreants then these holy names lose their sanctity, and they forfeit the right to respect and reverence that are normally due to them, so much so that people hesitate to even pronounce them. (361)

[Note—In Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 7 it is said that—“if someone says such names in the morning, then he does not get food to eat that day, so unholy the name becomes.”]

362. बसि कुसंग चह सुजनता ताकी आस निरास ।
तीरथहू को नाम भो गया मगह के पास ॥

362. basi kusaṅga caha sujanatā tākī āsa nirāsa.
tīrathahū kō nāma bhō gayā magaha kē pāsa..

If one lives in or keeps the company of the evil, the sinful, pervert and the wicked, and hopes or expects to find or get respect and honour, or to acquire good virtues that bestows him with good name and fortunes, then such a hope or expectation is in vain, and such a man lives in a fool's paradise.

For instance, one of the great and holy pilgrim cities situated near Magadh province (in the eastern state of Bihar in India) has acquired the nickname of 'Gaya'—i.e. 'one that has been irretrievably lost', in spite of it being so holy that it provides salvation to the soul and prevents it from going to hell.

[According to tradition, people offer sacrifices to the spirit of dead ancestors at this place to ensure that they do not go to hell but find a permanent place in heaven. But the irony is that the name of the place implies something opposite—its name 'Gaya' means 'gone, lost forever', though its function is to retrieve the soul from hell and place it in the heaven. The reason for this misnomer is its closeness to an inauspicious place known as the 'Magadh' province. This unholy association has its negative effect in as much as a holy place that provides emancipation and salvation is given a name 'Gaya' that is very misleading regarding the function it performs.

Therefore, if a man keeps bad company and feigns innocence, then he cannot free or absolve or exonerate himself from the negative consequences of such bad company.] (362)

375. प्रभु सनमुख भएँ नीच नर होत निपट बिकराल ।
रबिरुख लखि दरपन फटिक उगिलत ज्वालाजाल ॥

375. prabhu sanamukha bha'eṁ nīca nara hōta nipaṭa bikarāla.
rabirukha lakhi darapana phaṭika ugilata jvālājāla..

A wicked person of a low mentality becomes exceedingly haughty and arrogant when he finds that his master or patron is favourable towards him.

[When a man who is intrinsically pervert and wicked finds that his senior is favourably inclined towards him due to some reason, then instead of feeling humble and obliged he becomes arrogant and haughty, throwing his weight around on his other colleagues, showing off his privileged status, and thinking that no one can harm him anymore and he can bully others at will, because the chief likes him more than others, and any complaint against him would not be entertained by him. A person of an inherent good nature, on the other hand, would become more cooperative with his colleagues, and would always go out of his way to help them.

Similarly, a wicked minister of a king may become arrogant, cruel and exploitative if he finds that the king favours him over other courtiers, and instead of looking for the welfare of the subjects of the kingdom with greater zeal and using his privileged position in the hierarchy of the kingdom, he will begin tormenting the people.] For instance, when a mirror or a lens-glass (or a quartz) find that the sun is facing them (a metaphor for the sun taking interest in them and paying its attention to them over all the other things on earth), they become extremely hot (a metaphor for being arrogant, haughty, pervert, hypocrite and stubborn), and begin to imitate the sun by radiating heat as much as the sun itself by reflecting its heat.

[When the mirror faces the sun, it reflects the sun so intensely that looking at the image of the sun in the mirror would be same as looking at it directly in the sky with naked eyes. If the mirror is left facing the sun for some time, it becomes very hot.

Similarly, a convex lens focuses the sun's rays so intensely that if dry leaves are put at its focal point then the heat generated would burn them. The same leaves do not get burnt when lying in the open under the sun, but the lens burns them as if it itself was the sun. No other ordinary piece of glass would be able to do this; only the lens is able to imitate the sun and spew heat and energy sufficiently strong to burn dry leaves or paper.

These two examples are used by way of metaphors by Tulsidas to emphasise the point how lowly people do not realise that they have no powers or abilities themselves but it comes from the senior authority over them, and therefore they have no reason to become proud of something they are able to do or successes they achieve. Their successes and achievements are not due to their own abilities or skills, but due to the blessing or patronage of their senior. So they should be obliged towards him and serve

him with greater sincerity instead of waiting for an opportunity to stab their patron and mentor in the back.] (375)

380. लखि गयंद लै चलत भजि स्वान सुखानो हाड़ ।
गज गुन मोल अहार बल महिमा जान कि राड़ ॥

380. lakhi gayanda lai calata bhaji svāna sukhānō hāṛa.
gaja guna mōla ahāra bala mahimā jāna ki rāṛa..

On sighting the mighty elephant, a low-witted dog runs away with its dry piece of bone (thinking that the elephant shall take it away). That fool (the dog) does not know about an elephant's qualities, values, eating habits, sense of self-respect and strength.

[The dog does not have the might and stature of an elephant. It thinks that the elephant will misuse his big body and strength to bully it into giving the bone. The stupid dog does not know that the elephant does not eat bones; that it need not run away from the elephant because the latter is not at all interested in this lowly creature lying on the wayside nibbling hungrily at the piece of dry bone. The elephant feeds on green leaves and the banana fruit; it is well looked after and fed by its tamer unlike the stray dog who has nothing else to satisfy its pangs of hunger than to bleed in its mouth biting at the dry bone.

Tulsidas means that stupid people tend to hide their sins and faults when they see wise men. They are so stupid in doing so. These wise men have nothing to do with their shortcomings and vices; they will not touch them even if offered to them. And neither are they jealous of the little goodness that the lowly man has. So it is wiser to welcome them and keep their company instead of running away and concealing their faults. By being forthcoming and frank, the sinful man has only to gain and nothing to lose—because the wise man will show him the correct path.] (380)

382. ठाढ़ो द्वार न दै सकैं तुलसी जे नर नीच ।
निदहिं बलि हरिचंद को का कियो करन दधीच ॥

382. ṭhāṛhō dvāra na dai sakaiṁ tulasī jē nara nīca.
nindahim bali haricanda kō kā kiyō karana dadhīca..

Tulsidas says that people of evil and wicked temperament do not give anything themselves to a beggar standing at their doorway, but they enjoy finding fault with or criticizing other great donors such as king Bali¹ and Harishchandra² (who are recognised as legendary generous givers or donors), and say that Karna³ and Dadhichi⁴ had not done any great deed for which they are praised and remembered.

[All the persons mentioned in this Doha are renowned for their charitable and magnanimous nature. They were great donors who never allowed any seeker to return empty-handed from their doors. They are cited as exemplary examples of charitable

nature and as one of those rare persons who never bothered about their own comfort and future when it came to making charity and giving away anything asked once they gave their word for it. In spite of this fact, rascals who are extremely miserly and selfish, who do not want to make charity and help others in need, men of jealous nature who cannot cope with praise of others, criticize these noble-hearted heroes who never thought twice while giving charity, alms or donations. Wicked people accuse these great legendary donors as being stingy and miserly.] (382)

398. खल उपकार बिकार फल तुलसी जान जहान ।
मेढुक मर्कट बनिक बक कथा सत्य उपखान ॥

398. khala upakāra bikāra phala tulasī jāna jahāna.
mēḍhuka markāṭa banika baka kathā satya upakhāna..

Tulsidas says that the world knows that it is not only futile but even harmful and counter-productive to be good, helpful, kind and sympathetic towards crooks, rascals and evil-hearted miscreants.

The parables narrated in the book 'Satyopakhan (true moral stories) relating to a frog, a monkey, a trader and a stork/crane are proofs of this fact. (398)

[Note—(i) The story of a frog : – In order to get rid of his rivals and relatives, a frog invited a snake to stay with him, thinking that being well-fed, the snake would feel obliged of him. The snake ate all his (frog's) relatives, friends, compatriots and kins one by one, and then prepared to eat the host, the selfish frog himself. The frog saved himself somehow in the nick of time.

(ii) The story of the monkey : – A monkey had a crocodile as a friend. On the other side of the river there was a rich forest of sweet fruit trees. The monkey used to go there on the back of the crocodile, and as a return favour shared with him the fruits that he brought back from the forest. One day the crocodile's wife told him that she wished to eat the heart of the monkey as it is said to be very delicious. At the instigation of his wife, the crooked and ungrateful crocodile hatched a plan. He told the unsuspecting monkey that he is very obliged to him as he had been bringing fruits for him regularly, and therefore he wished to take him for a joy ride on the water of the river where he lived, just like he saw people enjoying a boat-ride. The monkey rode on the crocodile's back and the two reached the middle of the river. The crocodile then told the monkey that he wants to take out his heart as it is wanted by his wife. The monkey was witty, so he told the crocodile that he has left his heart back home on the tree on the banks of the river. So would he please take him there so that he can fetch the heart for his friend's wife? The foolish crocodile believed the monkey and brought him to the bank, whereupon the monkey jumped off and saved his life.

(iii) The story of the trader :– A trader was befriended to a king. The latter one day called the former and told him that he wanted to do some sort of occult worship where a virgin

girl was needed. So will the trader please send his young daughter to the king's palace so that the rituals can be done? The unsuspecting trader wished to oblige his friend, the evil king, so he sent his daughter. The vile king then raped her. The trader was horribly mortified, but he did not have the wherewithals to get even with the king. So he had to suffer from this ignominious event as long as he lived.

(iv) The story of the stork/crane : – This story is narrated in detail in Mahabharat, Shanti Parva, Canto nos. 168-173. This story in brief is as follows—A lowly Brahmin by the name of Gautam, who never did any religious duties or worshipped God, used to live in Madhya Desh (central provinces). He once migrated to the northern territories known as Mlecha Desh (the land of the heathen). He went to the household of a big dacoit there, and asked for alms. The dacoit welcomed him as he was a Brahmin by birth, and besides giving him routine alms also gave him a widow to serve him.

Gautam lived there for a long time and adopted the life-style and practices of the people with whom he lived. So he became a hunter and flesh eater; he got accustomed to kill birds and animals mercilessly for food, and rob travelers for money.

One day an old friend of his from his previous village came to meet him during his wanderings, and when he saw Gautam as a fallen man he felt very sad and sorry. He reminded Gautam of his birth as a Brahmin, and the horrific consequences of what he was doing to feed his stomach. Gautam explained that he was very poor and he had to leave his village in search of money. But he now feels very ashamed of himself, and requested the guest-friend to stay for the night, for the next day he will also quietly sneak out with him.

The next day, the guest Brahmin went away anonymously without warning as he feared that there was some trick laid out for him. After that, Gautam too left the place silently and went south in the direction of the ocean. During the journey he met a group of merchants and joined them. After some time, this group was killed by wild elephants. So Gautam was alone once again, but he continued on his journey. He reached a pleasant forest, and saw a huge banyan tree. It was evening and so he decided to rest there for the night. As darkness fell, a stork/crane named 'Bak', who was the king of birds and a son of sage Kashyap, came to take rest on the tree for the night.

Gautam was hungry, so he contemplated to kill the bird and eat it. But Bak was a holy soul. That tree was its permanent abode, so when it saw that a hungry Brahmin has come to take shelter for the night, it arranged food for him and fanned him with its huge wings. During talk, Gautam told Bak that he was a Brahmin by birth and was very poor. The kind-hearted Bak took him on his back to the king of Demons and asked the latter to help the Brahmin. The king was making charities at that time to Brahmins, so he willingly gave Gautam a lot of material wealth, such as gold and other things. Gautam carried this heavy load on his back and came to the place where Bak was waiting for him. Meanwhile, the kind Bak had already arranged food for two—for Gautam and himself. After meals, the two retired for the night.

Gautam was inherently crooked, sinful, cruel and ungrateful. His mind was obsessed with the thought of eating the flesh of the bird. He kept wondering and waited for an opportunity. So when the unsuspecting bird was fast asleep, Gautam flung it in the fire. He cooked the bird's meat, and the next day started on his journey with this meat and the bag of gold that was given to him by the king.

As it happened, when the Bak did not go to meet his obliging friend the king of demons, the latter got anxious, wondering why his friend Bak has not come to say good-bye as he used to do before going away. So he sent his son to find out what had happened. The son came to the banyan tree and saw the heap of bones in the fire. The son went after the sinful and ungrateful Brahmin, Gautam, caught hold of him and brought him in chains to his father's court. The king was peeved beyond measure and got the nasty Brahmin tortured and killed. The demons refused to eat his (Gautam's) flesh, and so called the flesh-eating savages who also refused to eat it as it was extremely poisonous because it was the meat of a man who was treacherous and had committed a horrendous sin of betraying his own benefactor, the Bak.

The king performed the last rites of his dear friend Bak. He propitiated a Goddess named Surbhi Devi. Saliva from her mouth fell upon the bones of Bak the crane/stork, and the bird came back to life. Bak was so nice a soul that instead of cursing Gautam to go to hell, it requested Indra, the king of heaven, to spare the Brahmin and revive him back to life. So Gautam too came back to life. But in due course of time, he died a most miserable death and went straight to hell where he was subjected to immense horrors.]

399. तुलसी खल बानी मधुर सुनि समुझिअ हियँ हेरि ।
राम राज बाधक भई मूढ़ मंथरा चेरि ॥

399. tulasī khala bānī madhura suni samujhi'a hiyam̐ hēri.
rāma rāja bādhaka bhaī mūr̥ha mantharā cēri..

Tulsidas says (advises) that one should be very careful and alert when they hear wicked people speaking apparently sweet and pleasant words because they are more often than not very misleading.

[The wicked people use sweet words to camouflage wickedness, cunning, deceit, conceit and treachery. They pretend to be one's true friend and speaking for one's good, but internally they may be attempting to pull the rug from under one's feet. So it is always wise to properly judge what they say and not take their words on face value.

To cite an example, Tulsidas gives the instance from the story of Lord Ram as narrated in the Ramayana as follows—]

The low-witted, short-sighted and utterly stupid hunchbacked maid Manthara had prevented Sri Ram's anointment as Prince Regent of Ayodhya by using sweet words which hid cunning and deceit to impress upon Kaikeyi, the step-mother of Ram and Manthara's queen-mistress, that she (Manthara) was her well-wisher and it was in her (Kaikeyi's) interest if Ram did not ascend the throne. In other words, Manthara, who was inherently wicked and crooked, became an obstacle in Sri Ram becoming the king of Ayodhya with the aid of sweet and pleasant sounding words.

[Had Kaikeyi been wise, prudent and sensible, she would have thought the things over and not jumped to ridiculous conclusions relying upon the words of a crooked woman who hid a dagger while appearing to be friendly. Manthara used sweet words to prevail upon Kaikeyi that she (Manthara) was speaking for her good, and if Ram became

a future king then she (Kaikeyi) and her son Bharat would have to live a second class life for the rest of her days. Bharat would have to serve Ram as a servant or a distant minister, and will not get the respect that he deserves. So Kaikeyi must do something and prevent her husband, king Dasrath, from going ahead with his plans of anointing Ram as the heir to the throne.

Kaikeyi got swayed by Manthara's pretentious friendliness, and she could not fathom the horrific consequences that would unfold if she believed this wicked woman. The result of believing and reposing faith in the wicked maidservant was that Ram was sent to forest exile for 14 years, Sita, Ram's wife, and Laxman, Ram's brother, too accompanied the Lord, king Dasrath died out of grief and shock, Bharat refused to accept the crown and decided to lead a life of a hermit, and the whole kingdom was engulfed in grief and sorrows of an unprecedented scale, going into a tailspin of turmoil and misery.

All this turmoil, grief, misery and ignominy had its root in Kaikeyi believing the pleasant and sweet words of a crooked woman without thinking for herself if what Manthara said is credible and possible or not. So Tulsidas uses this incident to warn us to be careful and alert while paying attention to the words of wicked and crooked people.]

[Note—This entire episode is narrated in fine detail in the epic Ram Charit Manas in its Ayodhya Kand.

The idea expressed in this Doha that sweet words that appear to be friendly on the face and spoken for one's welfare by inveterately wicked people are as dangerous as daggers or poison laced with sugar has also been reiterated elsewhere by Tulsidas.

Examples: (i) In Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, Chaupai line nos. 7-8 that precede Doha no. 24 that say—"When an evil person pretends to be humble and bows before someone, then the latter should be immediately alarmed and become alert—as this is a very dangerous sign, just like the case of a goad, a bow, a serpent and a cat bending low. {They bend when they have to strike their victims. Otherwise they will be straight.} The sweet and friendly words of a wicked person are as fearful and dangerous as flowers that bloom without their season. {Every plant has a time when its flowers bloom. Untimely blooming of flowers indicate that there is something seriously wrong with the annual cycle of seasons, and it is not the flower's blooming untimely that is dangerous in its self but the disturbance of the regular cycle of seasons, rainfall, summer and winter as they would very adversely effect the crops.}"

(ii) In Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, Chaupai line no. 3 that precedes Doha no. 22 that says—"Her (Manthara's) words were sweet to hear but had horrific consequences as if she was making her (Kaikeyi) drink poison mixed with honey to hide the former's horrible effect."]

400. जोंक सूधि मन कुटिल गति खल बिपरीत बिचारु ।
अनहित सोनित सोष सो सो हित सोषनहारु ॥

400. jōnka sūdhi mana kuṭila gati khala biparīta bicāru.
anahita sōnita sōṣa sō sō hita sōṣanahāru..

The way (path) of a leech is crooked (it can't move in a straight line but only in a zig-zag fashion, and its fang is also curved like a hook), but it has a straight-forward mind because it is interested in drinking only bad blood of the host.

[The leech has a bad name because it is parasite thriving on the blood of the host animal. In spite of this ignominy, there is one good aspect of the leech—it does not pretend to be a holy saint who abstains from drinking blood. It makes its intentions clear—that if someone allows the leech to remain on the body then the latter would suck his blood. At least a person is warned of the effects that a leech would have on his body. This is far better than pretending to be friendly and stabbing on the back.

Another good aspect of the leech is this—that in spite of getting a bad name as a blood-sucking parasite, the leech is actually beneficial for the animal as it drinks only bad blood, i.e. blood that is harmful to the animal due to floating microscopic cellular debris in it.]

On the contrary, one should treat or regard a wicked person with great scorn and suspicion because on their surface they appear to be benign, friendly, simple-hearted, sweet-talking and generally concerned about one's welfare, but internally they are extremely vicious, cruel, selfish and malicious. They are the real parasites of the society.

[In other words, wicked people who use all imaginable vile and cunning means to satisfy their vested interests, who would stoop to extreme low levels, feign friendship and benevolence by using pleasant words and affectionate demeanours to trap others and then suck on them like a blood-sucking parasite, are more loathsome and far worse than a leech who does not deceive but makes its intention clear at the outset that it will drink the blood of the host.

The leech, being straightforward and honest in its intentions and habit, does not deceive the host; rather it is good for the host animal as it cleans the latter's blood of its impurities. On the other hand, wicked and prententious people who feign holiness and friendliness on the surface but have daggers hidden behind their cloaks are far more dangerous and injurious. A man must be wary of such cunning and crooked persons whose exterior appearances are the opposite of what is in their mind and heart.] (400)

401. नीच गुड़ी ज्यों जानिबो सुनि लखि तुलसीदास ।
ढीलि दिऐँ गिरि परत महि खैंचत चढ़त अकास ॥

401. nīca gurī jyōm jāni vō suni lakhī tulasīdāsa.
dhīlī di'ē giri parata mahi khair̥cata caṛhata akāsa..

Tulsidas says that based on his experience, and after due consideration and thought, he gives the following advice—that a wicked person should be compared to a kite which falls down to the ground if the string is slackened, but rises to the sky if it is pulled and made taut.

[When the string is pulled and made taut by the kite flier, the kite rises in the air, but when he loosens the string the kite falls to the ground. Similarly, a wicked person becomes arrogant and overbearing if he is given even the slightest of encouragement or

shown laxity and tolerance, but the same person would behave properly if he is kept under discipline and tight leash. In other words, it is not advisable to show unnecessary kindness or courtesy towards those people who are inherently crooked and wicked for they are bound to misinterpret one's good natured behaviour as his weakness, and would prey upon him like a hawk. Therefore, one must treat them sternly, without showing any friendly emotions or courteous behaviour.] (401)

[Note—In Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, Chaupai line no. 15 that precedes Doha no. 106 that emphasizes “a man must avoid a wicked person from a distant like one shuns a rabid dog”.]

402. भरदर बरसत कोस सत बचै जे बूँद बराइ ।
तुलसी तेउ खल बचन सर हए गए न पराइ ॥

402. bharadara barasata kōsa sata bacaiṁ jē būṁḍa barā'i.
tulasī tē'u khala bacana sara ha'ē ga'ē na parā'i..

Tulsidas says that it might be possible for one to travel 100 Kosa (miles) in torrential rain without being getting wet, but it is impossible to escape the vicious arrow-like (i.e. offensive) talk and comments of the wicked and rascals.

[This is a sort of oxymoron. It is impossible to travel such a long distance in heavy rain without getting wet. But Tulsidas asserts that if by some remote chance or magic this may become possible or true, but to escape from scathing attacks by selfish people who are wicked, rascals, crooks and backstabbers is impossible.

In other words, it is certain that rascals will invariably criticize even those people who have helped them, who have been their benefactors and well-wishers. One must not expect such people to ever feel obliged for any good done to them. They will stab in one's back at the first opportunity.] (402)

403. पेरत कोल्हू मेलि तिल तिली सनेही जानि ।
देखि प्रीति की रीति यह अब देखिबी रिसानि ॥

403. pērata kōl'hū mēli tila tilī sanēhī jāni.
dēkhi prīti kī rīti yaha aba dēkhibī risāni..

[Giving another example, Tulsidas says—] An oil-merchant, knowing fully well that the sesame seed has oil content, puts it into an oil extrusion mill to extract its oil (without showing any qualms, regrets or mercy towards the oil-bearing seed).

So, if this is what happens to the seed when the merchant loves the oil-bearing seed and is calm by his temperament, just imagine the fate when he is angry. (When the

merchant is in good temper, he shows no mercy towards the seed. How much worse can happen when he is in a bad temper?).

[The oil-merchant loves the oil-bearing seed as it is his livelihood. In spite of this, he has no regrets or does not feel guilty in throwing the helpless seed in the crusher to extract oil from it, and once this is done he has no value for the seed. He goes about his job calmly and cheerfully without giving a second thought to the suffering that the seed is subjected to. This is his behaviour when he is calm and friendly. Say, what will happen if he is angry and finds that the seed is not yielding oil according to his expectations? Obviously he will use more bitter force on the poor seed, may be he will throw it in a fire to roast it and eat it!

Tulsidas cites this example to emphasise how wicked rascals treat even their helpers and benefactors. No good can be expected from them under any circumstances—for they will have no second thoughts to routinely exploit those from whom they have regularly benefited, but matters become worse if they get angry or annoyed in any way for then they tend to become vicious and cause greater harm and injury.] (403)

404. सहबासी काचो गिलहिं पुरजन पाक प्रबीन ।
कालछेप केहि मिलि करहिं तुलसी खग मृग मीन ।

404. sahabāsī kācō gilahiṁ purajana pāka prabīna.
kālachēpa kēhi mili karahiṁ tulasī khaga mrga mīna..

Tulsidas wonders how can, and in which company, the poor, the weak and the humble creatures, such as the birds, the deer and the fish, spend their lives in peace (i.e. survive easily) when those with whom they are destined to live, their compatriots and peers who share the same habitat as them, swallow them alive?

[That is, if a person is harmed by his own kith and kin, if those on whom he has faith and trust betray him, if one's close associates and peers whom one expects to help him and support him in times of need and lend their arms to help him tide over bad luck decide to stab him in the back—then say who can protect such an unfortunate person? In other words, a person's worst enemy is one who stays close to him and upon whom he relies and has total faith, but who is so wicked, evil, unscrupulous and without morals that he would betray that person without any second thought. One ought to be wary of such elements.]

For instance (Tulsidas says), the poor and helpless smaller bird is killed and eaten by the falcon which is also a bird and shares the same sky with its prey as a common dwelling place. Similarly, the harmless poor deer is killed by the lion that also happens to share the forest as a common dwelling with other animals, and being their king is supposed to protect his subjects rather than kill and eat them. Likewise, the smaller fish is eaten by larger fish though both share the water as their common habitat.

Their misery and misfortune does not end there—for if they manage to escape the members of their race, they are caught and killed for food by other inhabitants of the land such as villagers or city-dwellers. [That is, if by good luck the fish somehow escapes

being eaten by a larger fish, it lands in the fisherman's net and is finally eaten by humans.] (404)

[Note—Tulsidas has cited these instances to make an observation about this world in which those who are weak and humble have no succour or refuge anywhere. They are always tormented and made to suffer by those who are strong, powerful and mighty. By inference Tulsidas means that for all such creatures the only hope is Lord God. The Lord is the protector and sustainer of the humble and the meek, and if a creature understands this fact then it must submit itself to the Lord God and pray to the Lord for its protection and help. The Lord God is so merciful that he will handle things in such a way that this poor creature escapes all harm and lives its life peacefully. For instance, the fish would neither be eaten by a larger fish nor would it be caught by the fisherman's net. The falcon will miss the bird, and the deer too would also manage to escape from the clutches of the lion. Something or the other will happen miraculously on the spot and the creature escapes being hurt.

In the Old Testament, Book of Psalms, Psalm no. 11 is a prayer to this effect which says—

“1: In the LORD put I my trust: How say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?
 2: For, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart.
 3: If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?
 4: The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men.
 5: The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.
 6: Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup.
 7: For the righteous LORD loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright.”

Then in Psalm no. 124 it is said—

“7: Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped.
 8: Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.”

As to the question ‘why would one be betrayed by those on whom one has trust and faith?’ there is a clear answer—“Greed”. Refer: Holy Bible, Old Testament, Book of

Proverbs, Chapter 1, verse nos. 17-19 that say—

“17: Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any bird.
 18: And they lay wait for their own blood; they lurk privily for their own lives.
 19: So are the ways of every one that is greedy of gain; which taketh away the life of the owners thereof.”]

405. जासु भरोसें सोइऐे राखि गोद में सीस ।
तुलसी तासु कुचाल ते रखवारो जगदीस ॥

405. jāsu bharōsēm sō'i'ai rākhi gōda mēm sīsa.
tulasī tāsu kucāla tēm rakhavārō jagadīsa..

Tulsidas says that if the person on whose lap one puts his head while going to sleep, commits treachery or felony (viz. kills the sleeping person, betraying his trust), then only God can help!

[In other words, if a person upon whom one has full trust betrays, then no one can save him except God. The implication is clear—one can guard oneself against declared enemies, but it is impossible to safeguard against treacherous and unfaithful friends. So let the merciful God forbid one from keeping such companions even inadvertently.] (405) [Note—Doha no. 400 which cites the example of a leech is relevant in the context of the present Doha. The meaning of both the Dohas is the same—it is very dangerous to have companions who are sweet talking and feign friendship externally, but are cruel, selfish and treacherous internally.]

In Kavitawali of Tulsidas, there is a verse with the same idea. In this book's Uttar Kand, verse no. 80, line nos. 5-8 it is said—"Oh Lord! Observing the ever increasing demeanours and crookedness of Kali-yuga, and finding that the gate-keeper is also a thief, my heart is trembling with fear for my safety. Oh merciful Lord. Though you are always alert in protecting the interests of your servant Tulsidas, but still out of fear I repeatedly beseech you to exert extra precautions please!"

406. मार खोज लै सौह करि करि मत लाज न त्रास ।
मुए नीच ते मीच बिनु जे इन के बिस्वास ॥

406. māra khōja lai saunha kari kari mata lāja na trāsa.
mu'ē nīca tē mīca binu jē ina kēm bisvāsa..

Such wicked and treacherous rascals who find access to one's house (find out the personal secrets; gain entry in one's inner-circle; gain his confidence and trust) by first becoming friends with him, vowing allegiance to him, pretending loyalty and feigning friendship, then once they are inside and learn about all the private affairs of their host who has reposed full faith in them, they conspire against him and ultimately kill him, and to make matters worse they neither show any remorse or regret at their vile deed nor have any qualms while planning and executing their most heinous and reprehensible act, nor fear God or Dharma (i.e. have any fear of God for disobeying the laws established by him)—well, if anyone trusts such wicked felons then he is surely courting death voluntarily!

[In other words, it is absolutely stupid to rely upon wicked and treacherous people.] (406)

407. परद्रोही परदार पर परधन पर अपबाद ।
ते नर पावँर पापमय देह धरें मनुजाद ॥

407. paradrōhī paradāra para paradhana para apabāda.
tē nara pāvamāra pāpamaya dēha dharēm manujāda..

Those who keep unnecessary animosity towards others, poach on or desire others' wives and wealth, and are engrossed in finding fault with all—such evil and sinful persons are demons in the guise of human-beings. (407)

[Note—This Doha appears in Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, as Doha no. 39. The characters of evil people have been outlined in detail in Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, from Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 39—to Doha no. 40.]

408. बचन बेष क्योँ जानिए मन मलीन नर नारि ।
सूपनखा मृग पूतना दसमुख प्रमुख बिचारि ॥

408. bacana bēṣa kyōm jāni'ē mana malīna nara nāri.
sūpanakhā mrga pūtanā dasamukha pramukha bicāri..

How can one know that any person, a male or a female, is wicked and rogue with a dark, pervert, deceitful, vicious and sinful mind and heart by his or her external attires, features, manners or talk? [That is, it is next to impossible to determine immediately if the other person is good or wicked. It takes time and experience to learn about his true nature and intentions.]

In this context there are several examples from the epics. For instance there are the examples of Supernakha, Marich, Putna and Ravana (etc.) [All of them had evil intentions and cruel hearts, but were so soft-spoken and pleasant externally that their intentions and evil nature could not be understood immediately. In other words, one must be always vigilant when dealing with strangers, especially those who show unnatural pleasantness and friendliness.]¹ (408)

[Note—¹All of them had assumed pleasant demeanours and external forms when they wanted to cheat their targets.

Supernakha—She was a sister of Ravana, the demon king of Lanka. Once she had assumed a very attractive form of an enchantress when she wanted to lure Lord Ram into marrying her. Her deceit however has no effect on the Lord, and he got her nose and ears chopped off by his younger brother Laxman. This single event led to the great war of Lanka because Sita was abducted by Ravana as a revenge for the deforming of his sister Supernakha by Ram, and Lord Ram was forced to launch a campaign to recover her from

his clutches, culminating in the destructive war. This incident is narrated in Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, from Chaupai line no. 3 that precedes Doha no. 17—to Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 23.

Marich—He was a great demon warrior and a commander of Ravana’s army. In order to steal Sita from the hermitage of Lord Ram at Panchavati, Ravana approached him to become a golden deer so that he can implement the plan that he had hatched to abduct Sita. The idea is that Marich had assumed a very attractive form of a golden deer when he and his master Ravana had crooked intentions. Though it is not mentioned in this Doha, but the story goes that even Ravana had assumed the form of a mendicant when he actually went to Sita to physically take her away. It was Marich’s and Ravana’s harmless and pleasant form that camouflaged their evil intentions. This incident is narrated in Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, from Chaupai line no. 7 that precedes Doha no. 23—to Doha no. 28.

Putna—She was a merciless demoness sent by Kansa, the cruel demon-like king of Mathura, to kill Lord Krishna by feeding the child milk from her breast. Lord Krishna had killed her by sucking the life out of her in the guise of suckling her. This story is narrated in detail in Srimad Bhagwat Maha-Puran, Skandha 10, Canto 6.

Kansa—He was a cruel king of Mathura who intended to kill Lord Krishna when he politely invited the Lord to his court. This entire story is narrated in detail in Srimad Bhagwat Maha-Puran, Skandha 10, from Canto 36 to 44.]

409. हँसति मिलनि बोलनि मधुर कटु करतब मन माँह ।
छुवत जो सकुचइ सुमति सो तुलसी तिन्ह की छाँह ॥

409. hamśati milani bōlani madhura kaṭu karataba mana mām̐ha.
chuvata jō sakuca'i sumati sō tulasī tinha kī chām̐ha..

Tulsidas says that it is always wise and better to shun even the shadow of (i.e. it is invariably prudent to avoid and keep a safe distance from) those who are deceptively sweet and pleasant in their speech (talk), behaviour and demeanours, smiling and laughing in a very cordial, friendly, affable and courteous manner in their formal meetings and external dealings, but who are exceedingly and unrelentingly cunning, vicious, wicked, deceitful and cruel in their hearts and minds. (409)

[Note—In Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, Chaupai line no. 8 that precedes Doha no. 39 it is said that evil persons have a character that “they are like the peacock which has a voice that is sweet and pleasant to hear, but which eats poisonous snakes and is able to digest the reptile because their innards harbour more powerful poison than that of the serpent”.]

410. कपट सार सूची सहस बाँधि बचन परबास ।

कियो दुराड चहौ चातुरीं सो सठ तुलसीदास ॥

410. kapāṭa sāra sūcī sahasa bām̐dhi bacana parabāsa.
kiyō durā'u cahau cāturīm sō saṭha tulasīdāsa..

Tulsidas says that those who try to conceal thousands of pointed needles or daggers symbolized by their treachery, deceit, wickedness as well as their evil mind, heart, nature and intentions, in a thick cloth symbolized by words that are pleasant and sweet to hear—well, are indeed rascals and scoundrels! (410)

411. बचन बिचार अचार तन मन करतब छल छूति ।
तुलसी क्यो सुख पाइए अंतरजामिहि धूति ॥

411. bacana bicāra acāra tana mana karataba chala chūti.
tulasī kyōm sukha pā'i'ai antarajāmihi dhūti..

Tulsidas wonders how can anyone—whose speech, thoughts, behaviour, body, mind and heart as well as actions all are corrupt and polluted by the evils of deceit, conceit, wickedness, crookedness, cunning, trickery, treachery etc.—ever be happy by trying to deceive even the Lord residing inside all of us. [Tulsidas means that cunning and wicked people may be able to fool the outside world, but they forget they can't fool the Supreme Being who lives inside each living being as his Atma, his soul. The result is that these people would have to suffer from a 'guilty conscious'—which means that their disguise has been ripped apart. They can never live in peace with themselves.] (411)

[Note—In Vinai Patrika, verse no. 263, stanza no. 3, Tulsidas says—“Oh Lord! It is not possible to cheat you by pretensions and false talk because you are the Lord of the mind/knowledge and the speech (and therefore know the truth, and can't be deceived). You are omniscient—knowing everything that is outside as well as inside (i.e. everything that is obvious and clearly seen as well as that which is secret and hidden). How is it possible therefore to hide the reality of the word and the heart from you? Hence, if I try to play smart with you and speak lies, i.e. have something else in my heart than what I speak, then let me be a fly in butter (which dies as soon as it falls in the butter, and everyone picks it up and throws away). In other words, if I dare use cunning and deceit with my Lord Ram, then let me perish.”

Again, in Vinai Patrika, verse no. 171, stanza no. 3, Tulsidas says—“I commit deceit and falsehood with my Lord Ram who lives inside me (as my true self, the Atma), and is omniscient. I try to hide my sins and evils from the Lord who lives inside all creatures. But oh Lord, how great are you and how thankful I am to you that inspite of this demeanour and crookedness of mine you have never turned your heart and mind against this humble servant of yours.”

Lord Ram has himself declared in Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, Chaupai line no. 5 that precedes Doha no. 44 that “Those who have a pure and uncorrupt heart are able

to have access to me; for I do not like deceit, conceit, crookedness, pretensions, falsehood and other vices that are like holes in the moral fabric of a creature”.]

412. सारदूल को स्वाँग करि कूकर की करतूति ।
तुलसी तापर चाहिए कीरति बिजय बिभूति ॥

412. sārādūla kō svām̃ga kari kūkara kī karatūti.
tulasī tāpara cāhi'ai kīrati bijaya bibhūti..

Tulsidas expresses astonishment at how people disguise themselves or behave with dignity or majesty like a lion but do deeds that are like that of a dog, and then expect honour, fame and victory!

[That is, it is impossible to acquire any good name and reputation if one pretends to be upright and righteous but does things that are most unrighteous and shameful. It is not possible to cheat the world for a long time, and one's falsehood is bound to come out in the open sooner or later, giving him an immense amount of bad name.] (412)

[Note—The lion is the king of jungle. It hunts for its meals, and never eats any animal killed by others. The dog on the other hand eats all sorts of leftovers and even rotting flesh of dying animals killed by others. The dog eats all the time, is never satisfied, and goes wagging its tail from household to household for morsels of food.

Citing this example, Tulsidas says that some people pretend that they are noble and righteous, but when one observes them from close quarters they are actually found to be just the opposite. Even if a dog wears the skin of a lion it cannot abandon its nasty habits, nor can the lion behave like a dog even it is forced to paint itself like one. The idea is that one must be wary of people who pretend to be honourable and righteous but are most lowly and wicked.

Tulsidas has cited another example to stress the same point. In Kavitawali, Uttar Kand, verse no. 32, line no. 4 it is said—“One must stop behaving and acting like a crane and a crow while claiming to be a royal bird known as the Swan”. The crane and the crow both eat meat and drink blood, but the Swan is known to eat pearls and drink only pure milk. The crane and the crow are regarded as very wicked and vile birds, because they prey upon their victims and pounce upon them unawares, but the Swan is regarded as a wise bird that never cheats.]

413. बड़े पाप बाढ़े किए छोटे किए लजात ।
तुलसी ता पर सुख चहत बिधि सों बहुत रिसात ॥

413. baṛē pāpa bāṛhē ki'ē chōṭē ki'ē lajāta.
tulasī tā para sukha cahata bidhi sōm̃ bahuta risāta..

People do not feel hesitant or have a sense of guilt in committing big crimes (sins; misdeeds) but they feel ashamed at minor crimes. [For instance, people will try to project themselves as being honest and upright by not wanting to steal a pin belonging to others, but they have no second thoughts, regrets or compunctions in usurping the wealth and property of others. One says that he feels unclean if he has not taken a bath in the morning, but the same person has no guilt in being internally dirty and polluted by harbouring all sorts of negative thoughts and bad intentions. A person may preach truthfulness, morality and ethics to others, but when examined it is found that the same preacher is full of lies and deceit, is morally corrupt, pervert and fallen in his private life.] Tulsidas observes that inspite of this irony people still expect happiness and peace, thinking they are righteous and noble. They accuse the Creator of being malevolent and prejudiced against them if any of their desires are not fulfilled or if they suffer for their misdeeds. [Such people do not realize that they are merely reaping the harvest of the seed they have sown.] (413)

[Note—It is difficult for a person to see faults with himself; he will very easily prick holes in the moral fibre of others but neglects the ones in his own self. Since moral success and good destiny depend upon one's righteous deeds and noble thoughts, those persons who pretend to follow the laws of Dharma (righteous, probity, propriety and ethics) but actually do not cannot achieve their desired objectives. Then they accuse the Creator of being biased against them or not rewarding them for being good. They forget that they are under delusions of being good, for the fact is that they are quite the contrary.

For instance, they think that they have done a good thing of not stealing a pin from the other person, but during the course of life they have been adopting all means and strategy to acquire wealth and property which rightfully belongs to the society at large.

Another instance is this—making a public show of charity by giving some donations but having no reluctance, regrets, sense of guilt or compunctions in extracting maximum interest from a person who has come to pawn his jewellery to meet some personal emergency, and even pilfering with his gold.

Let us take another example. Everyone would agree that making offerings of food to deities in temples is a religious act. But if someone is dying from hunger and a person does not feed him but offers food to stone idols in temples in the hope of pleasing God in the belief that he is doing a very holy thing, common sense says that he isn't. And if such a person is not able to please God and accuses the latter of being malevolent towards him inspite of his offering regular worship in a shrine, then say who is at fault, the God he worships or the man himself? The answer is—'the man'. This is because he had overlooked the fact that the Lord lives in all living beings, and if the man could see the Lord in a stone idol then could he not see the same Lord in a living being who was dying for food? Could he not judge for himself that the Lord has come to test him in the form of a hungry man?

This deluded man thought that by offering of food to the deity in a temple he was doing a religious act, but he forgot that by refusing food to a hungry man he is doing a sinful act that would off-set the good effects of his religious act of offering food in the temple.]

505. जथा अमल पावन पवन पाइ कुसंग सुसंग ।
कहिअ कुबास सुबास तिमि काल महीस प्रसंग ॥

505. jathā amala pāvana pavana pā'i kusaṅga susaṅga.
kahi'a kubāsa subāsa timi kāla mahīsa prasaṅga..

Just like fresh air that begins to smell either as foul or as fragrant depending upon the place it passes through or the surface it grazes upon during its passage, the time and circumstances that the subjects of a kingdom face too depends upon the nature of the king, whether the king is bad or good.

[If the king is good and wise, if he is merciful and compassionate, his subjects live happily and in comfort. On the contrary, if the king is cruel and stupid, the subjects of the kingdom have to face hard times. In other words, the company of a good king makes his subjects happy and the kingdom prosperous, while a wicked king causes pain and ruin.]

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Chapter 3

Comparison of SAINTS and NON-SAINTS

In this Chapter we shall read how ‘Saints’ and ‘Non-Saints’ compare with each other. During the course of our reading we will also learn why both Saintly as well as Non-Saintly persons co-exist in this world. It makes a very interesting and fascinating reading. For this purpose the following Texts have been quoted:-

(3.1) Ram Charit Manas of Goswami Tulsidas.

(3.2) Dohawali of Goswami Tulsidas.

(3.1) (i) Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line no. 3 that precedes Doha no. 5—to Doha no. 7:-

बंदउँ संत असज्जन चरना । दुखप्रद उभय बीच कछु बरना ॥ ३ ॥
बिछुरत एक प्राण हरि लेहीं । मिलत एक दुख दारुन देहीं ॥ ४ ॥

banda'um̃ santa asajjana caranā. dukhaprada ubhaya bīca kachu baranā. 3.
bichurata ēka prāna hari lēhīm̃. milata ēka dukha dārūna dēhīm̃. 4.

[In these verses, Tulsidas has compared Saints and Non-Saints by judging them against each other in a judicious manner like a true judge by using the same sets of criteria or similar parameters for both to determine why and how one is good for the society and the other is bad. He sort of pits the Saint against the Non-Saint and lets us judge for ourselves their usefulness or otherwise for us. It ought to be noted here that the distinction between a Saintly person and a Non-Saintly person is made solely on their inherent character, qualities and virtues, either positive or negative, but not at all on their birth, caste, creed, religion and lineage. This is very important as it gives a secular, balanced and an unbiased method of judgement that is based entirely on merits and qualities of a person with no other factor interfering in arriving at the final verdict.]

Tulsidas says—‘I bow at the feet of both the saintly people as well as those who are unsaintly. Both give pain and grief—but there is a difference between the two. (3)

What is the difference between a saint (i.e. person who is holy, pious, noble, righteous, truthful and spiritually enlightened and wise) and a non-saint (i.e. a person who is the opposite of a saint; he is wicked, cruel, sinful, pervert, corrupt, evil, selfish and

gross by nature)? Well, the difference is that when the first (i.e. the saintly person) leaves someone, it gives sorrow of separation; no one wants a saint to go away; their company provides happiness and a positive energy to one and all. On the other hand, when the second type of person (the non-saint; the wicked and the pervert) meets someone then he immediately causes a lot of pain and trouble to the latter. [To wit, pain and grief of separation is felt when a saint leaves someone, while meeting a wicked person becomes a cause of grief and sorrow the instant he is met.] (3-4)

उपजहिं एक संग जग माहीं । जलज जोंक जिमि गुन बिलगाहीं ॥ ५ ॥
सुधा सुरा सम साधु असाधू । जनक एक जग जलधि अगाधू ॥ ६ ॥

upajahim̄ ēka saṅga jaga māhīm̄. jalaja jōnka jimi guna bilagāhīm̄. 5.
sudhā surā sama sādhu asādhū. janaka ēka jaga jaladhi agādhū. 6.

Both a saint and a non-saint are born in the same way in this world, and both live in the same world. But while the former (the saint) is like a beautiful lotus flower, the latter (the non-saint; the wicked and the pervert, the sinful and the corrupt) is like a blood-sucking leech. [The lotus grows in a dirty pond, but it is so inherently pure by nature that the dirty water does not stick to its petals. The lotus is universally treated as a metaphor for purity, beauty, cleanliness, immaculacy and holiness. On the other hand, the leech is a parasite; it thrives on the blood of others. Likewise, the saintly people are a blessing for the world, and they adorn it and add beauty and purity to it. On the contrary, the un-saintly and wicked people are a burden for the world and a wart on the face of the society.] (5)

A saint is like the ambrosia that helps one to overcome the fear of death and provides a remedy for all the worldly torments, while the wicked non-saints are like wine which is the cause of all problems faced by a person. Both are born in the same world which is like a vast ocean. [Both the ambrosia and the wine are sweet to drink; both are liquids. But while the ambrosia helps to uplift the creature and provides his soul with invigoration and renewed spiritual energy, the wine saps whatever energy he possesses and throws him into a tailspin of hallucinations and moral degradation. The same principle applies to a saint and a non-saint. The world is compared to an ocean because it is vast and most difficult to overcome. It tosses and traps the creature like the heaving ocean full of whirlpools and huge waves. The ocean is cited here especially because the ambrosia and wine are believed to have been first produced during the churning of the ocean by the gods and the demons in some ancient past.] (6)

[Both types of people, i.e. a saintly person as well as a non-saintly person, are born in the same world, in the same time frame of history, and most often even in the same household. We have many examples of this. We have Ravana, the demon king of Lanka, who was extremely cruel and evil, and his brother named Vibhishan who was righteous and pious by his very nature. We have Hiranyakshipu, the evil demon king, and his own son Prahalad who was an ardent devotee of Lord God. Then we have the Kauravs and the Pandavas in the epic Mahabharat—both had opposite characters.

So we see that it is not necessary that brothers born of the same father will have the same character and nature. Both the types of people, the saintly ones and the non-saintly ones, are born in the same world, and hence the 'world' is their common parent. Tulsidas has cited the instance of poison and wine as well as ambrosia which were produced during the churning of the ocean by the gods and the demons in some ancient time. They had the same source of birth (the ocean) and cause (its churning by the gods and the demons), but their effect was diametrically opposite to each other. While ambrosia is life-giving and holy, poison and wine are killers.

To wit, saints and non-saints are to be judged and distinguished based on their character, qualities, nature and virtues, and not by their birth or caste or creed. This fact is explicitly mentioned in the next verse.]

भल अनभल निज निज करतूती । लहत सुजस अपलोक बिभूती ॥ ७ ॥
सुधा सुधाकर सुरसरि साधू । गरल अनल कलिमल सरि व्याधू ॥ ८ ॥

bhala anabhala nija nija karatūtī. lahata sujasa apalōka bibhūtī. 7.
sudhā sudhākara surasari sādihū. garala anala kalimala sari byādihū. 8.

Those who are good, noble and righteous on the one hand and those who possess the opposite qualities on the other hand, acquire a good or bad name and reputation that are in accordance with their respective nature, virtues, qualities and character. [To wit, saints and holy people acquire good name, fame and reputation because of their exemplary good virtues, while the evil and wicked person gets bad name and infamy because of his own character and not due to some else's fault.] (7)

Saintly persons are like the ambrosia (that is life-giving and invigorating), the moon (which has a soothing effect after the heat of the sun) and the holy river Ganges (which provides water to all and is regarded as a river that has descended from the heaven, and therefore its water is regarded as sanctified and can grant liberation to the creature if he worships it with due reverence). [To wit, contact with saintly persons is rejuvenating for the spirit and gives joy to the heart and mind.]

Non-saintly persons, on the other hand, are like poison, or fire (that ruthlessly burns everything that comes its way) and a polluted river whose water is so filthy and stinking that it better to avoid even touching it. [To wit, contact with non-saintly persons undermines one's goodness and casts a dark shadow over whatever good qualities that one may have.] (8)

गुन अवगुन जानत सब कोई । जो जेहि भाव नीक तेहि सोई ॥ ९ ॥

guna avaguna jānata saba kōī. jō jēhi bhāva nīka tēhi sōī. 9.

Everyone knows the good virtues and the positive effects of the ambrosia, the moon, the holy river Ganges, and the company of saints and pious people. Similarly, everyone also knows the horrifying effects of coming in contact with poison, fire, the countless rivers symbolizing sins in the present era called Kali Yuga, and of cruel hunters.

In spite of that, one person prefers the company of the former group, and the other of the other group according to his natural inclinations and bent of mind. This is because one chooses things that are to his liking. (9)

[Everyone knows that it is good to have company of saintly people, and equally unwise to have contact with wicked and sinful persons, but still there are people who prefer to court the wicked and the corrupt because it suits their narrow vested interests and temperament. They are so stupid that they bargain their long-term spiritual good for some short-term material benefit.

On the other hand we have people who would go to great troubles to meet saintly persons and enjoy their company. It is their natural habit and instinct to avoid the unholy and prefer the holy.

This idea is further expanded in the following Doha no. 5.]

दो०. भलो भलाइहि पै लहइ लहइ निचाइहि नीचु ।
सुधा सराहिअ अमरताँ गरल सराहिअ मीचु ॥ ५ ॥

dōhā.

bhalō bhalā'ihī pai laha'i laha'i nicā'ihī nīcu.
sudhā sarāhi'a amaratām'garala sarāhi'a mīcu. 5.

Those who are naturally good and internally holy and pious have an inborn tendency and a natural inclination to accept what is good, holy, pure and clean, while those who are internally wicked and inherently pervert will always swerve towards that which is bad, unholy, unrighteous, impure and corrupt. It is just like the natural habit of ambrosia which has a natural propensity to provide immortality and overcome the fear of death, while the natural habit of poison is to kill. [To wit, it is natural for saints to give joy, happiness and a feeling of blessedness to all those who come in contact with them just like the case of ambrosia that provides joy and immortality to the creature who drinks it. On the other hand, non-saints are poisonous for the society and lead one to fall and become sinful by having mere contact with them just like the case of actual poison that kills immediately anyone who drinks it even inadvertently.] (Doha no. 5)

चौ०. खल अघ अगुन साधु गुन गाहा । उभय अपार उदधि अवगाहा ॥ १ ॥
तेहि तें कछु गुन दोष बखाने । संग्रह त्याग न बिनु पहिचाने ॥ २ ॥

caupā'ī.

khala agha aguna sādhu guna gāhā. ubhaya apāra udadhi avagāhā. 1.
tēhi tēm kachu guna dōṣa bakhānē. saṅgraha tyāga na binu pahicānē. 2.

The stories of sins and wicked qualities of non-saints, and the holy and noble virtues of saints are legendary and countless; they are limitless like the vast ocean. (1)

That is why I have briefly narrated some of the good virtues of Saints and evil qualities of Non-Saints because unless one knows about them it is not possible to be aware of who a Saint is and who a Non-Saint is, and therefore one is not able to distinguish between them and be on the guard.

Without this knowledge and awareness, it is also not possible for a person to choose which virtues and characters are worthy of inculcating, emulating and practicing in one's life, and which ones are to be avoided. (2)

भलेउ पोच सब बिधि उपजाए । गनि गुन दोष बेद बिलगाए ॥ ३ ॥
कहहिं बेद इतिहास पुराना । बिधि प्रपंचु गुन अवगुन साना ॥ ४ ॥

bhalē'u pōca saba bidhi upajā'ē. gani guna dōṣa bēda bilagā'ē. 3.
kahahim bēda itihāsa purānā. bidhi prapañcu guna avaguna sānā. 4.

[In the following verses Tulsidas explains why Saints and Non-Saints are both present in this world even though undoubtedly Non-Saints are a like scum; they are like a thorn for the world and its scourge. Why not have only Saints amongst us and get rid of Non-Saints? Well, it's not possible, and Tulsidas now gives his wise reason for it as an answer to this vexing question.]

This entire creation, consisting of the good and the bad, the noble and the ignoble, the wise and the wicked, the straightforward and the crooked et al (bhalē'u pōca saba), are created by the Creator Brahma (bidhi upajā'ē). All have the right to live. But the Vedas (ancient scriptures) have segregated them and classified them into two separate categories based on their inherent nature, temperament, qualities, virtues and character. (3)

The Vedas (primary scriptures), the Ithihas (ancient Hindu historical narratives such as the story of the Ramayan and the Mahabharat) and the Purans (ancient Hindu history based on mythological narratives) have unanimously said that the creation of Brahma is a combination of the good and the bad qualities¹. (4)

¹It is a great paradox of creation that the good and the bad coexist and cohabit in this world. Perhaps the good old Creator wished to strike a balance between the two and wished to see how these two forces would interact with each other and help him to perpetuate his creation. He thought that if everything was kept holy and righteous and good, then all the creatures, the Jiva or the living being, would soon find deliverance from this gross world and get salvation. Should this happen, who will go to hell? Then again, everyone becomes righteous and holy, what would be the need of creating so many

Gods and so many rules of conduct because good people would not commit sins and would not need a set of laws to tell them what to do and what not to.

Besides this, where would there be the need of a Doctrine of Karma which says that a creature is judged by the deeds done by him. Everyone knows that the true identity of a creature is not his gross body but his Atma or soul that is pure consciousness which is inherently pure, holy, un-corrupt and self-illuminated with knowledge and wisdom. So if this was the case, where would 'sins' and 'vices' come into play?

Herein lies the great secret of creation: Though it is true that the Atma is the real identity of the creature, but this Atma lives inside a gross body and has to act via this body. The mind and the intellect (Buddhi) and its ability to pick and choose between any two options by applying wisdom (Vivek) is the factor that determines what the creature, read the 'Atma', does. The Creator gave the creature the power to choose and determine what suits him best. It is here that the need arose for the Creator for creating an array of choices—such as the choice between the good and the bad. If the Atma falls prey to the distorted advice given to it by the mind that comes under the influence of the sense organs of the body and chooses the bad path such as those pursued by Non-Saintly persons, it would lead to the downfall of the concerned creature. On the other hand, if the Atma decides to rely on its own inner voice and overlooks the pestering demands of the gross body that wants gratification and the mind that yearns for pleasures, then the creature would become righteous and pure like the Atma itself.

Obviously, for the creation to perpetuate and the cycle of birth and death to keep on rolling, to allow this world to be populated by all sorts of creatures of all genres and families, from the lowly to the highest, it was necessary for the Creator to keep a maze of options and opportunity open so that the creatures could decide for themselves what destiny they would like to pursue—whether they want their Atma to find eternal peace and freedom from the tangle of this world, or whether they wished to enjoy more of this world by indulging into it. For to happen there must be a choice; if everything is immaculate and clean and holy and pious then the mind and the Atma would have nothing to choose from, for whatever they choose would be of a good nature, and all the creatures would soon find liberation and deliverance for themselves. By-and-by, the wheel of creation would grind to a halt, so thought Brahma. And then he would have to continue creating newer and newer creatures. But if the creature would be sinful and indulgent in this world, they would re-enter this world in a new birth, and hence the cycle of creation would roll-on on its own.

Indeed, Brahma was very clever in this—that he created the bad and the good simultaneously to ensure the wheel of creation that he has created and set in motion carries on on its own without him having to exert any more of his energy? Innovative thinking really!

But he thought over the matter that if it was necessary to create bad qualities in order to keep the creature entangled in this world instead for finding liberation from it, then it was equally important to create good qualities at least to keep a balance, for otherwise he would be creating a Monster that would kill him first. So he created goodness and saintly persons to balance the negative effect of evil and non-saintly persons. This gave him leverage—that in case things went out of hand, he would encourage and help the holy and the saintly figures to helm the affairs of this creation and subdue the bad and the evil who were non-saintly.

In fact, this is what actually has been happening down the centuries and eras. At one point of time there is a noble and good ruler, then as time passes there is a vile ruler who is ruthless and cruel, and once again some good, righteous and gracious ruler comes to rule over the earth—and the cycle continues.

Saints and Non-Saints are like the two poles of a magnet; a magnet is incomplete without its two poles, the north and the south. One attracts and the other repels. Likewise, this creation is kept in balance by the presence of Saints who counter the negative effect of Non-Saints.

The following verses further elaborate on this concept.]

दुख सुख पाप पुन्य दिन राती । साधु असाधु सुजाति कुजाती ॥ ५ ॥
दानव देव ऊँच अरु नीचू । अमिअ सुजीवनु माहरु मीचू ॥ ६ ॥

dukha sukha pāpa pun'ya dina rātī. sādhu asādhu sujāti kujātī. 5.
dānava dēva ūm̄ca aru nīcū. ami'a sujīvanu māhuru mīcū. 6.

Indeed, the world (the creation of Brahma) is a mixture of pain and grief as well as joy and happiness, of sin and evil as well as merit and goodness, of day and night (symbolizing light and darkness respectively), of the saints and the non-saints (i.e. of saintly qualities and non-saintly vices), of high and the low forms of birth, --- (5)

--- of demons and gods (i.e. of demonic qualities and godly ones), of the high and the low (i.e. those who are noble and glorious, and those who are lowly and vile; also meaning high mountains and low valleys), of nectar and poison that grant life and death respectively. (6)

माया ब्रह्म जीव जगदीसा । लच्छि अलच्छि रंक अवनीसा ॥ ७ ॥
कासी मग सुरसरि क्रमनासा । मरु मारव महिदेव गवासा ॥ ८ ॥

māyā brahma jīva jagadīsā. lacchi alacchi raṅka avanīsā. 7.
kāśī maga surasari kramanāsā. maru mārava mahidēva gavāsā. 8.

It (the world) is a paradoxical creation consisting of a combination of Maya (delusions and attachments with material world) and Brahm (the pure cosmic Consciousness that is free from all Maya), of Jiva (the living being; the creature represented by his Atma) and Jagdish (the Lord God who is the ruler of this entire creation; here referring to the Supreme Being who is also known as the Parmatma, the Supreme Atma).

Then there are the rich and the poor; the plenty and the dearth of the basics; the pauper and the king! (7)

It is not limited to this, for there is the place called Kashi (or Varanasi which is regarded as a holy land where those who die find deliverance from the cycle of birth and death) and the place called Magadha (which is said to be a cursed place).

Then on the one hand there is the holy river Ganges which is said to have descended from the heaven and hence called the 'river of gods', and on the other hand there is the river known as Karmanasha which is unholy and impure so much so that if one takes a dip in its water then whatever goodness and merit he may have accumulated till this point of time are all washed away by its polluted water. [To wit, while taking a bath in the Ganges is considered as holy and auspicious, doing so in the river Karmanasha has the opposite effect.]

On one hand there is the uninhabitable land of the vast desert of Marwar (in the present day state of Rajasthan in western India) and on the other hand there is the green and fertile land of Maalvaa with its rich cultivable soil.

Similarly, there are the Brahmins (who are said to represent Brahma and hence their name; they are supposed to be learned and wise men, and therefore get respect in the society), and there are also the barbarians who are cruel hunters who relish eating flesh (and are also lowly by nature). (8)

सरग नरक अनुराग बिरागा । निगमागम गुन दोष बिभागा ॥ ९ ॥

saraga naraka anurāga birāgā. nigamāgama guna dōṣa bibhāgā. 9.

Similarly, there is the heaven and the hell. [The heaven is a pleasurable destiny for the good and the meritorious people where they go after death. Hell is the very opposite of heaven where life is a suffering and full of utter misery and torment where sinners go after death.]

There is love, affection, emotional attachment and union on one side, and separation, grief, detachment, dispassion and renunciation on the other side.

In this aforesaid way, the sacred scriptures such as the Vedas etc. have separated the good and the bad, and have classified them into separate categories accordingly. (9)

दो०. जड़ चेतन गुन दोषमय बिस्व कीन्ह करतार ।

संत हंस गुन गहहिं पय परिहरि बारि बिकार ॥ ६ ॥

dōhā.

jaṛa cētana guna dōṣamaya bisva kīnha karatāra.

santa hansa guna gahahiṁ paya parihari bāri bikāra. 6.

The Creator has made this mortal world consisting of animate as well as inanimate creatures in such a way that it has both the good and the bad qualities in varying proportions. But true Saints are those who, like the legendary Swan, accept only the good virtues and goodness of the world symbolized by pure and un-adulterated milk, while discarding aught and everything that is gross and mundane (i.e. is un-virtuous, unholy and unrighteous) symbolized by water¹. (Doha no. 6)

[¹The ‘Swan’ has a unique quality—it drinks only pure milk and leaves aside its pollutants or adulterations such as additional water that is used to dilute it to increase its volume, as done by milk merchants to get more money from the same quantity of pure milk. Saints accept all that is pure and holy, and simply neglect aught that is naught.

Refer: Ram Charit Manas, Ayodhya Kand, Chaupai line nos. 5-7 that precede Doha no. 232 where Lord Ram has said similar thing while praising Bharat.]

चौ०. अस बिबेक जब देइ बिधाता । तब तजि दोष गुनहिं मनु राता ॥ १ ॥
काल सुभाउ करम बरिआई । भलेउ प्रकृति बस चुकइ भलाई ॥ २ ॥
caupāī.

asa bibēka jaba dē'i bidhātā. taba taji dōṣa gunahim manu rātā. 1.
kāla subhā'u karama bari'ā'im. bhalē'u prakṛti basa cuka'i bhalā'im. 2.

When the Creator becomes favourable to a person, he grants him the wisdom not only to be able to discriminate between the good and the bad qualities but also to be able to develop a strong liking for the good ones and abhor the bad ones. (1)

However, it often happens that under the influence of times and circumstances, or habits and inclinations that one develops while living under unrighteous and spiritually adverse conditions in this world that also effects the sort of deeds done by him, a person, who is otherwise very holy and pious and noble, unfortunately becomes so deluded and corrupt that he misses the chance of doing good and being virtuous, and instead gets inclined towards the bad and the evil, altogether forgetting about his primary good nature. (2)

सो सुधारि हरिजन जिमि लेहीं । दलि दुख दोष बिमल जसु देहीं ॥ ३ ॥
खलउ करहिं भल पाइ सुसंगू । मिटइ न मलिन सुभाउ अभंगू ॥ ४ ॥

sō sudhāri harijana jimi lēhīm. dali dukha dōṣa bimala jasu dēhīm. 3.
khala'u karahim bhala pā'i susaṅgū. miṭa'i na malina subhā'u abhaṅgū. 4.

Just like persons who are basically good, righteous, pious and holy, such those who are devotees of Lord Hari (Lord Vishnu; Lord God), may have fallen from their good path and acquired some demerit due to some mistake they might have made in their lives, are able to overcome their failings, spiritual errors and sinfulness by coming in contact with Saints and Saintly Persons, and in the process they regain their earlier purity and holiness and reclaim their claim to glory and meritorious position in the world --- (3)

--- in a similar way, even those who are inherently wicked, unholy and sinful too acquire some positive virtues and exhibit goodness when they come in contact with Saints and Saintly Persons. But the irony is that this glory and merit is short-lived as they

are habituated to revert back to their bad and ugly old ways; they aren't able to shed their evil nature and wicked ways. (4)

[These verses basically say that communion with saints has a positive effect on one and all in an universal manner. But while those who are basically good and holy make a permanent gain from such contact and interaction with Saints, those who are inherently wild, sinful and wicked do not benefit in the long run.

Devotees of Lord God overcome any mistakes they might make or sins they might commit in life by making a diligent effort to repent for them and mend their way by way of surrendering themselves and their offenses to the Lord and vowing not to repeat their mistakes again, and in the process they not only eliminate the negative effect of their sins and misdemeanours but also get good name and fame in this world when they are guided by Saints. But those who are inherently wicked and evil do not gain much even after coming in contact with righteous and holy people such as great Saints. Though they too are influenced by the latter's positive energy and spiritual qualities so much so that a positive change begins to happen to them, but this change is short-lived as compared to those who are spiritually elevated and devotees of Lord God for sooner rather than later the wicked persons would tend to revert back to their bad old ways while the pious persons acquire perpetual goodness.

To wit, it is to the credit of Saints and noble persons who are pious, righteous and holy that when wicked and evil persons come in contact with them the latter are influenced by the former's positive energy and eclectic qualities so much so that they too begin to do good and act nobly themselves. But unholy and unrighteous people have bad qualities so deeply engrained in them, so deeply embedded in their mind and psyche that after some initial good acts and signs of rehabilitation they have a natural tendency and an inherent propensity to revert back to their bad old ways.]

लखि सुबेष जग बंचक जेऊ । बेष प्रताप पूजिअहिं तेऊ ॥ ५ ॥
उघरहिं अंत न होइ निबाहू । कालनेमि जिमि रावन राहू ॥ ६ ॥

lakhi subēṣa jaga bañcaka jē'ū. bēṣa pratāpa pūji'ahim tē'ū. 5.
ugharahim anta na hō'i nibāhū. kālanēmi jimi rāvana rāhū. 6.

Those who are crooked and wicked inwardly often get outwardly honoured in the world due to their pretension of being a holy men because they don a garb of a pious and saintly person (5).

But sooner or later their deceit comes out into the open and they are exposed just like was the fate of Ravana (the demon king of Lanka who had disguised himself as a mendicant to kidnap Sita, the wife of Lord Ram, from the forest, but was ultimately exposed and his truth as a ferocious demon revealed which led to his slaying by the Lord in the ensuing war of Lanka)¹, or that of Kalnemi (another demon who tried to cheat Hanuman by posing as a hermit, but his truth was also revealed and Hanuman killed him)² and Rahu (a demon who disguised himself and sat amongst the line of Gods to

drink nectar of eternity, but was exposed by the Sun and the Moon Gods, and as a result had his head cut by Lord Vishnu's discus)³.

[Note—To wit, a wicked person will be exposed sooner or later. He may have mislead the world for some time by his pretentious behaviour of a saintly and good person, but his inherent evil nature will soon have the better of him and his truth as a evil and sinful person would come out in the open. Indeed, evilness, sinfulness, wickedness and crookedness can't be hidden for long. So therefore, non-saints cannot cheat the world for much long no matter how best they try.

¹The story of Ravana abducting Sita disguised as a mendicant is narrated in Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, Chaupai line nos. 7-16 that precede Doha no. 28.

²The story of Kalnemi trying to deceive Hanuman and getting killed in the process is narrated in Ram Charit Manas, Lanka Kand, Chaupai line no. 1 that precedes Doha no. 56—to Chaupai line no. 6 that precedes Doha no. 58.

³The story of Rahu and how he was exposed and got his head cut by Lord Vishnu is narrated in Srimad Bhagvat Mahapurān, 8/9/24-26.]

किएहँ कुबेषु साधु सनमानू । जिमि जग जामवंत हनुमानू ॥ ७ ॥
हानि कुसंग सुसंगति लाहू । लोकहँ बेद बिदित सब काहू ॥ ८ ॥

ki'ēhum' kubēṣu sādhu sanamānū. jimi jaga jāmavanta hanumānū. 7.
hāni kusaṅga susaṅgati lāhū. lōkahum' bēda bidita saba kāhū. 8.

Even if a Saintly Person has donned some garb or has to assume some form that may look odd and unholy outwardly, he is still praised and honoured in the world for his inherent goodness and excellent virtues and character just like the case of Jamvant and Hunuman¹. (7)

Bad company is exceedingly harmful and injurious, while good company is highly beneficial and helpful. Bad company is worthy of contempt, while good company is worthy of emulation. This is a fact that is well known; everyone knows it and it is endorsed by the scriptures such as the Vedas. (8)

[¹Jamvant was the king of bears, and Hunuman had the body of a monkey. But inspite of this shortcoming they have been lauded and extolled in the scriptures for their good virtues and devotion for Lord Ram. Their physical form of a bear and a monkey respectively did not come in the way of them acquiring good fame and acclaim in this world.

To wit, a wise person should not be misled by the external appearances of Saints and Saintly Persons. It is their natural goodness that one should pay attention to.]

गगन चढ़इ रज पवन प्रसंगा । कीचहिं मिलइ नीच जल संग्गा ॥ ९ ॥
साधु असाधु सदन सुक सारीं । सुमिरहिं राम देहिं गनि गारीं ॥ १० ॥

gagana carḥa'i raja pavana prasaṅgā. kīcahiṁ mila'i nīca jala saṅgā. 9.
sādhu asādhu sadana suka sārīṁ. sumirahiṁ rāma dēhiṁ gani gārīṁ. 10.

When a dust particle comes in contact with the gust of wind, it rises up high in the sky, while the same dust particle comes down to earth and enters a dirty swamp when it comes in contact with water (either as rain falling down on earth or as water running on the surface of earth after heavy rainfall and collecting in pools and swamps). [In other words, contact with saints raises the creature to a high pedestal of respect and glory, while contact with wicked and sinful people pulls him down and heaps ignominy and miseries on him.] (9)

The parrot and the blackbird living in the house of a saint learn to speak sweetly and utter the holy name of Lord Ram, while those who live in the house of an un-saintly man learn to abuse, to speak rudely and use cuss words. [This shows the effect that company has on a person. The parrot and the blackbird pick up the words spoken in the normal course of the day in the house where they live. In the saint's house they learn sweet and holy words such as the divine name of Lord Ram, and become soft spoken. In the household of a wicked and evil person, they learn cuss words and become abusive. This instance is used to show what happens to a man if he keeps good company, and what if he keeps bad company.] (10)

धूम कुसंगति कारिख होई । लिखिअ पुरान मंजु मसि सोई ॥ ११ ॥
सोइ जल अनल अनिल संघाता । होइ जलद जग जीवन दाता ॥ १२ ॥

dhūma kusaṅgati kārikha hō'ī. likhi'a purāna maṅju masi sō'ī. 11.
sō'i jala anala anila saṅghātā. hō'i jalada jaga jīvana dātā. 12.

Smoke assumes different forms and acquires different names depending upon from where it originates and what things it comes in contact with. For instance, smoke having a lowly origin such as that coming from a smouldering fire lit to burn some sort of garbage is suffocating in nature and only produces dark soot that is of no use to anyone (and it needs to be scrubbed clean on any surface upon which it settles).

On the other hand, if the same smoke arises from the wick of a lighted candle or an earthen lamp that uses pure oil as fuel to produce light, then this smoke converts into soot that settles on a surface from which it is scooped up and mixed with some oil or any other lubricant to become a beautiful and useful thing such as the writing ink with which holy books such as the Purans and other books of knowledge are written. [To wit, when a smoke is formed from smouldering heaps of lowly things such as half-burnt wood, leaves, dry grass, coal, flakes made from cow-dung etc., it is dark and suffocating and

causes nuisance for others, but the same smoke is sought after as a writing medium when it has a high origin such as that which is formed by the flame of a lighted candle or an oil lamp because it settles down as a soot that is then collected and used as a writing medium by mixing it with some oil etc. In ancient times, writing ink was made from soot that was mixed with some oil.] (11)

The same smoke by its conjunction with water, fire and wind is converted into a cloud that brings rain and life to this world. [The cloud is also a sort of smoke because it is alike it in most every respect. The cloud is formed or made when the 'heat' (fire) of the sun is able to evaporate the 'water' from the ocean that condenses in the higher reaches of the atmosphere to form the 'cloud'. This cloud is carried to all the places on the surface of the earth with the help of the 'wind', thereby bringing rain and life to the earth.] (12)

[To wit, the same 'smoke' assumes three distinct identities and values depending on circumstances of its birth and environment. In the first case when it has a lowly origin as when produced by burning garbage it becomes useless and harmful. In the second case when it arises from a lighted lamp which is regarded as noble because it gives light and removes darkness, the smoke gets its due respect and value for then it is used as a writing material. In the third instance, this smoke is adored as life-giving cloud which grants life unto the world in the form of rain when it is associated with other pure elements of Nature such as (i) water element (i.e. the ocean from which the cloud draws its water content, and which forms the very body of the smoke-like cloud), (ii) the fire element (i.e. the heat of the sun that evaporates the water from the ocean), and (iii) the wind element (that first transports the evaporated water to higher reaches of the atmosphere to form cloud, and then transports this cloud over to all parts of the earth).

In all sooth, likewise, a person becomes good or bad depending on the company he keeps; any knowledge too becomes good or bad depending upon the source from where it is acquired, on who uses it, on the mind that is used to use it, and on the purpose for which it is used.

The following Doha no. 7 further expands on this concept.]

दो०. ग्रह भेषज जल पवन पट पाइ कुजोग सुजोग ।

होहिं कुबस्तु सुबस्तु जग लखहिं सुलच्छन लोग ॥ ७ (क) ॥

dōhā.

graha bhēṣaja jala pavana paṭa pā'i kujōga sujōga.

hōhim kubastu subastu jaga lakhahim sulacchana lōga. 7 (a).

The planets (or 'stars' that are said to have influence upon a person's life and destiny in accordance with the principles of astrology), medicines or herbs, water, air and cloth becomes good or bad in the world depending upon what they are associated with. Only the wise and illustrious ones are able to distinguish between them and understand this phenomenon. (Doha no. 7-a)

[There are nine 'Grahas' or stars and planets that influence a person's life depending upon which place they occupy and which Graha sits next to which in a person's birth chart that is known as the horoscope. The same Graha can be beneficial or harmful depending upon these conditions.

In the same way, merely selecting a single correct 'medicine' or 'herb' is not important to cure a disease, for much depends upon other factors such as other complimentary medicines or herbs that are used with the principle remedy, the dosage of the medicine, the accompanying proper diet and the lifestyle that is to be regulated, the severity of the disease, the age of the patient, the environment in which the patient lives, and many other such tangible and intangible factors combine to give result of any given medicine.

Similarly, plain and simple thing such as the ordinary 'water' assumes multitudes of forms and shapes and names and roles depending upon as many factors. For instance, the same water is called a river, a stream, an ocean, a pond, vapour, steam, cloud, etc. Then we have salt water, sweet water, lemon water; dirty water and clean water; potable and unpotable water; hard water and soft water; then we have ice and snow and glacier and frost and hail and rain and sleet; boiling water and frozen water; then the water assumes many shapes such as that in a cup, a tumbler, a glass, a bucket, and so on and so forth the list may go on and on.

The 'air' also has countless forms and names. For instance there is the air called breath, the air called atmosphere, the air that is called a some-kind of gas, the hot and the cold air, the storm and the gust of wind and the breeze and the tornado as also the whirlwind, the sweet fragrance of the flower or the repulsive foul air from a decomposed corpse, the enticing aroma of some delectable food and the vomit-inducing pungent smell of the same food that rots.

And 'cloth' is no exception either form this wonder of variety and multiplicities in its manner of forms, of shapes, of usage and of names etc., for we have the fine silken raiments adorning the body of a king to the tattered rags that wrap a pauper to the robe of a monk; then we have the bridal veil and the dead man's shroud, the robe of a high priest to the apron of a surgeon who saves lives, and that of a butcher who snuffs out one. To wit, the same piece of cloth can have countless forms and sizes, and multitudes of shapes and names and usage as well. Each piece of cloth has a name and importance depending on a particular situation.]

सम प्रकास तम पाख दुहँ नाम भेद बिधि कीन्ह ।

ससि सोषक पोषक समुझि जग जस अपजस दीन्ह ॥ ७ (ख) ॥

sama prakāsa tama pākha duhum̐ nāma bhēda bidhi kīnha.
sasi sōṣaka pōṣaka samujhi jaga jasa apajasa dīnha. 7 (b).

The proportion of light and darkness of the moon is the same in the two fortnights of the month such as the light fortnight and the dark fortnight respectively. But the Creator has named them differently.

While the one fortnight during which the brightness and the light of the moon waxes gradually to grant increasing happiness and joy to the world, and as it symbolized a gradual enhancement of positive values—it was thus named the ‘bright fortnight’ by the Creator to honour this glory.

On the other hand, the other fortnight when the moon wanes and symbolizes rise of gloom and dark forebodings, it was named as the ‘dark fortnight’ by the same Creator. (Doha no. 7-b)

जड़ चेतन जग जीव जत सकल राममय जानि ।
बंदउँ सब के पद कमल सदा जोरि जुग पानि ॥ ७ (ग) ॥

jaṛa cētana jaga jīva jata sakala rāmamaya jāni.
banda'um̐ saba kē pada kamala sadā jōri juga pāni. 7 (c).

So therefore, realizing that this creation that consists of inanimate as well as animate things and creatures is nothing but a manifestation of Lord Ram in all its forms, I (Tulsidas) therefore always bow my head and pay my respects at the feet of all with my palms joined together in supplication. (Doha no. 7-c)

[This is an important observation. Tulsidas gives the reason why he has chosen to show respect even to the unworthy ‘non-saints’. It is because all living beings—nay, even the inanimate things such as the planets and the plants, and for that matter all that exists here, there and anywhere else in whatever form and state—are all one or the other form of the same Supreme Being known by the name of Lord Ram.

Forsooth and without gainsay, so says the Upanishads, there is nothing but Brahm in this universe! This is Brahm, that is Brahm, and there is nothing but Brahm!!]

देव दनुज नर नाग खग प्रेत पितर गंधर्ब ।
बंदउँ किंनर रजनिचर कृपा करहु अब सर्ब ॥ ७ (घ) ॥

dēva danuja nara nāga khaga prēta pitara gandharba.
banda'um̐ kinnara rajanicara kṛpā karahu aba sarba. 7 (d).

[Extending his all-encompassing and all-inclusive view of this creation, Tulsidas says—]

I give my reverence to one and all—to the gods, the great demons, the human beings, the serpents and other subterranean creatures, the birds, the spirits (holy and unholy), the souls of departed ancestors, the celestial beings such as the Gandharvas and Kinnars (who live in heaven and are said to be dancers and musicians for the gods), the nocturnal creatures (such as the wild animals and ghosts that venture in the night alone)—in fact

one and all who exist in this universe, I pray to you all to have your grace upon me and be kind and gracious to me. (Doha no. 7-d)

[To wit, in the Lord God's creation everything, good or bad, small or large, has a place and right to exist; so we ought to let them all have their peace. It should be remembered that inspite of all the maladies and darkness, with all its thorns, taints, scars and itches that are symbolized by the non-saints, the world of the Lord is still a beautiful place to tarry in with its saints and saintly souls who are like the sunshine that invariably breaks from behind the shroud of dark clouds to illuminate the world, and the lotus flower that blooms and remains ever so clean even while being in the middle of a dirty pond.]

(3.1) (ii) Ram Charit Manas, Uttar Kand, Doha no. 37 along with Chaupai line nos. 5, 7-8 that precede it:-

Once, Lord Ram was asked by Bharat, his younger brother, and others also to enlighten them about the characters and qualities of Saints and Non-Saints. Then, Lord Ram laid out the salient features of both, and when comparing Saints to Non-Saints he observed as follows:

संत असंत भेद बिलगाई । प्रनतपाल मोहि कहहु बुझाई ॥ ५ ॥

santa asanta bhēda bilagā'ī. pranatapāla mōhi kahahu bujhā'ī. 5.

[Bharat asked Lord Ram—] 'Oh Lord who cares for those who have taken shelter with thee! Tell me the different virtues, attributes, qualities and nature of saints and non-saints in such a comprehensive way that a clear distinction can be made between the two of them (i.e. between the saints and non-saints), and I can properly understand them without any ambiguity.' (5)

[Note—The last word 'Bujhaai' means to explain things in such a way that the listener fully understands them, and has no ambiguity about them.]

संतन्ह के लच्छन सुनु भ्राता । अगनित श्रुति पुरान बिख्याता ॥ ६ ॥

santanha kē lacchana sunu bhrātā. aganita śruti purāna bikhyātā. 6.

[Then Lord Ram enumerated the grand positive virtues of saints so that not only is the query of Bharat satisfied but such knowledge can also help others to be enlightened about them. The Lord then goes on to describe the negative qualities of non-saints. This helps

to bring into focus the difference between the two types of persons: the saints and the non-saints. The contrast between the characters of the two becomes very evident. It helps a person to determine with whom to have relations in life and whom to avoid; or whom to follow as an ideal and whom to neglect in life.]

The Lord said—‘Listen brother. The auspicious and divine virtues of saints are countless (i.e. it is not possible to list them all here, but still I’ll tell you the main ones), and they are famed in the scriptures such as the Vedas and the Purans. (6)

[Note—Bharat asked the Lord to tell him the virtues and characteristic qualities of saints and non-saints in a comprehensive manner. The Lord therefore stresses that it will take an independent tome to enumerate all the virtues and glorious characters of them if one were to list all of them and explain all of them exhaustively. So it will be better to outline only the salient features at present. Bharat must realise this therefore, and should not think that the salient features or important virtues that the Lord was about to narrate to him are all there is to it. There are countless more of them, but if one becomes aware of the important ones he can automatically get an idea of what the rest would be based on common sense. The auspicious virtues enumerated herein now act as the basis or foundation for the rest of the virtues which are not expressly mentioned here as they are more like off-shoots of the primary ones which are enumerated now.]

संत असंतन्हि कै असि करनी । जिमि कुठार चंदन आचरनी ॥ ७ ॥
काटइ परसु मलय सुनु भाई । निज गुन देइ सुगंध बसाई ॥ ८ ॥

santa asantanhi kai asi karani. jimi kuṭhāra candana ācarani. 7.
kāṭa'i parasu malaya sunu bhāī. nija guna dē'i sugandha basāī. 8.

The difference between a saint and a non-saint is like the relationship between an axe and sandalwood. The axe tries to cut and harm the sandalwood tree, but the latter is so kind and gracious that it lends its sweet fragrance to its cutter, the axe. (7-8)

[Note—The axe has the natural habit of cutting trees; to ‘cut’ is the axe’s job; it’s natural to it. It can’t act otherwise. On the other hand, the sandalwood has the natural habit of lending its sweet fragrance to anything that comes in contact with it—it’s its natural habit.

Both of them, the axe and the sandalwood, act according to their natural and inborn temperament and instincts. The merciless axe always harms the sandalwood tree by cruelly cutting it into pieces, while the sandalwood is so forgiving, tolerant and graceful that instead of cursing the axe and vowing vengeance against it, it lends its sweet fragrance to the latter as a token of a welcome gift.

Likewise, true saints are always forgiving, tolerant, calm, understanding, merciful and gracious, spreading their goodness all around them like the sandalwood that spreads its fragrance wherever it is present. On the other hand, the non-saint is a cause of torments and miseries wherever he is, irrespective of whether or not he has anything to

gain by harming or causing pain to others. This fundamental difference in attitude sums up the difference between a saint and a non-saint.]

दो०. ताते सुर सीसन्ह चढत जग बल्लभ श्रीखंड ।
अनल दाहि पीटत घनहिं परसु बदन यह दंड ॥ ३७ ॥

dōhā.

tātē sura sīsanha caṛhata jaga ballabha śrīkhaṇḍa.
anala dāhi pīṭata ghanahim parasu badana yaha daṇḍa. 37.

[Though the sandalwood does not curse the axe, but Mother Nature does not spare the axe from being punished. How? This is explained now.]

The sandalwood retains its fragrance and is used as an offering to the fire sacrifice and for other auspicious needs, but the face (cutting edge) of the axe is put in the fire and beaten by a heavy hammer to sharpen its edge. (Doha no. 37).

[Note—In spite of being deformed and dismembered, the cut pieces of the sandalwood tree are regarded fit and holy to be used in fire sacrifices. This is an exception—because normally anything that is cut and injured is deemed unholy and unfit for this purpose as it is regarded as polluted. Even when animal sacrifices were done in ancient times, a sacrificial animal was closely examined for any physical deformities, as only a healthy and perfect sample was deemed fit for offering as sacrifice during the rituals. These virtually ‘injured (cut) pieces’ of the sandalwood which should have been deemed unfit for offering to the sacrificial fire are instead used willingly. This is tantamount to Mother Nature praising it for its goodness and virtuous character of forgiveness and tolerance.

As opposed to the sandalwood, the axe is put in blazing fire and hammered hard to sharpen its edges each day after the daily grind of cutting trees. It is a metaphoric way of severely punishing it in spite of the fact that it has had the good fortune of having coming in contact with the sandalwood and acquiring some of its goodness by way of fragrance that lingers for a long time after the axe is done with its job of cutting the sandalwood tree. The axe still gets put in the fire and beaten mercilessly to sharpen it for the next cutting job, and there are fair chances that the next tree that it cuts has none of the glories associated with the sandalwood. Thus, non-saints are so unfortunate that even if they have the good fortune of being in direct touch of great saints, they are unable to benefit from this good luck but continue to suffer in this world, remaining burdened with the yoke of ignominy and evil that are natural and inherent to them.

There is another interpretation of this example of the sandalwood and the axe. The sandalwood tree gives out more intense fragrance when it is cut. This is due to effusing of sweet fragrant sap when the tree and its branches are cut. The tree is located at a single place, but the pieces that are cut from it are taken to different places where they spread their fragrance. This is a metaphoric way of saying that saints are able to influence a large section of society in spite of their remaining at one place.]

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(3.2) Dohawali of Goswami Tulsidas, verse nos. 337-343, 353-355, 358-359, 377, 458-459:-

337. नीच निचाई नहिं तजइ सज्जनहू कें संग ।
तुलसी चंदन बिटप बसि बिनु बिष भए न भुअंग ॥

337. nīca nicā'ī nahim̐ taja'i sajjanahū kēm̐ saṅga.
tulasī candana biṭapa basi binu biṣa bha'ē na bhu'aṅga..

A wicked man does not abandon his wickedness even on having company of a gentleman. Tulsidas gives an example and says that inspite of living on a Chandan (Sandalwood) tree, a poisonous serpent never gets rid of its poison (venom).

[In other words, inherently wicked persons who have become stubborn in their habits would never abandon their wickedness though they may live in the company of good people.

The sandalwood tree is said to be cool and soothing. Though the poisonous serpent lives in this tree, it never acquires the habits of the tree to be cool and soothing towards those with whom it comes in contact. When the sandalwood tree gives its sap when rubbed, it is invariably cool and rejuvenating, but when the serpent is touched and provoked, it will bite, and its bite is always poisonous and fatal.

In other words, a gentleman will always remain a gentleman, while a crook will always be a crook. It is almost impossible to overcome inborn habits and natural inclinations or tendencies that are firmly ingrained in one's inner-being and mould a person's personality and character.] (337)

338. भलो भलाइहि पै लहइ लहइ निचाइहि नीचु ।
सुधा सराहिअ अमरताँ गरल सराहिअ मीचु ॥

338. bhalō bhalā'ihī pai laha'i laha'i nicā'ihī nīcu.
sudhā sarāhi'a amaratām̐ garala sarāhi'a mīcu..

A good man is known by his goodness, while a wicked one by his wickedness. 'Sudha' (or 'Amrit'), the elixir that provides eternity, is praised by all and its value lies in its healing qualities and its ability to provide eternity and rejuvenation, while at the same time 'Garal' (a severe poison) is worth its name only if it kills, if it can cause death, and it is this quality in it for which it is remembered and recognised by all.

[Everything has certain special qualities in it for which it is renowned and remembered. For instance, Amrit is remembered when one needs a liquid for the purpose of rejuvenation, while when one needs to kill, the poison comes to mind. What use is the Sudha if it can't heal, and what is the value of poison if it can't kill? Hence, everything

has certain basic qualities in it which make it stand out in the crowd, and gives the particular thing its recognition and place in the world. This quality may be good or bad.

Tulsidas means that it is natural for a gentleman to show noble characters and he will always be a nice person with praiseworthy qualities irrespective of the circumstances in which he lives or provocations he has to fend off. The same logic applies to a wicked man—he will never abstain from his wickedness no matter how good he is treated and how good is the environment in which he lives.]

339. मिथ्या माहुर सज्जनहि खलहि गरल सम साँच ।
तुलसी छुअत पराइ ज्यो पारद पावक आँच ॥

339. mithyā māhura sajjanahi khalahi garala sama sām̐ca.
tulasī chu'ata parā'i jyōm̐ pārada pāvaka ām̐ca..

For a true gentleman, falsehood is like poison, and for a miscreant and rascal, truth is like a poison. At the touch of falsehood a gentleman would run away (i.e. he will abhor deceit, conceit, pretensions, lies and falsehood), and a crooked rascal on the other hand would run away from truth just like mercury evaporates on coming in touch with fire.

[On being heated, mercury expands and appears to run away from the source of heat. This principal is used to measure body temperature in a clinical-thermometer. This analogy is employed here by Tulsidas to show how a good man would run away from evil, and a wicked man from good.] (339)

340. संत संग अपबर्ग कर कामी भव कर पंथ ।
कहहिं संत कबि कोबिद श्रुति पुरान सदग्रंथ ॥

340. santa saṅga apabarga kara kāmī bhava kara pantha.
kahahim̐ santa kabi kōbida śruti purāna sadagrantha..

Communion with saints is the way for liberation (emancipation) of soul, while company of indulgent people leads the way to entrapment in this illusionary world. This fact is pronounced by all the saints, poets and the wise-ones, and it endorsed in all the scriptures such as the Vedas and the Purans. (340)

341. सुकृती न सुकृती परिहरइ कपट न कपटी नीच ।
मरत सिखावन देइ चले गीधराज मारीच ॥

341. sukr̥ṭa na sukr̥ṭī parihara'i kapaṭa na kapaṭī nīca.
marata sikhāvana dē'i calē gīdharāja mārica..

Persons who have a noble soul do not shirk from their nobility and piousness, whereas crooked rascals do not shy from wickedness and being evil in their entire lifetime. In the epic story of the Ramayana, the vulture Jatau and the demon Marich have shown the truth of this statement by the way they died.

[The vulture king Jatau died in an attempt to rescue Sita from the clutches of the evil demon Ravana as the latter was forcibly taking her away to his city of Lanka after stealing her from the hermitage of Lord Ram—thereby showing that he (Jatau) had sacrificed his life for a noble cause. On the other hand, the demon Marich had courted death willingly so that Ravana could abduct Sita. The story goes that he had disguised himself as a golden deer to provoke Sita to ask Lord Ram to go and bring it to her so that she could tame it, and when the Lord went to capture the illusionary deer, the demon Ravana stealthily approached Sita and abducted her. Not contented with his evil deeds, Marich had shouted the name of Laxman at the time of dying when Lord Ram shot it down with an arrow, to give the impression that he was being called upon to help the Lord. And as soon as Laxman left the hermitage Ravana went ahead with his evil gameplan to abduct Sita.

The idea is that a person who is good and noble in his heart will always remain so, and he who is wicked, pervert and evil will always be such.] (341)

[Note—One the one hand there was Jatau who had laid down his life trying to help the distraught Sita in her time of misfortune, proving that a soul who is noble at heart will be ever willing to sacrifice his own self for the good and welfare of others. And on the other hand there was Marich who died just for the opposite reasons—to help Sita be abducted by another equally pervert demon, Ravana. Both died—but for opposite causes. Jatau died an honourable and pious death, and Marich died a most disgraceful and dishonourable death. Even in his death Jatau proved the nobility and holiness of his soul, while Marich proved that he was inherently wicked and evil in his inner-self.

According to the story of the Ramayana, Marich was spared his life by Lord Ram when this demon had gone to defile the fire sacrifice of sage Vishwamitra, but the wicked demon felt no sense of obligation or gratitude for the Lord and chose to be instrumental in getting his honourable wife Sita abducted. This story is narrated in Ram Charit Manas, Baal Kand, Chaupai line nos. 3-4 that precedes Doha no. 210 (sparing the life of Marich); and Aranya Kand, Doha nos. 24-27 (death of Marich).

On the other hand, Jatau had met Lord Ram while the Lord was meandering his way through the dense forest during his exile, and the vulture had promised to afford them protection because of some old ties he had with Ram's father, king Dasrath. Jatau lived up to his words and preferred death to living when he saw the wailing Sita begging him for protection as the pervert Ravana was flying through the sky with her in his chariot. Jatau intervened, and there ensued a fierce battle between the two—Ravana and Jatau. But ultimately the poor vulture's wings were chopped off by Ravana, resulting in Jatau being mortally wounded and falling to the ground where Lord Ram later found him, washed his wounds and then did his last rites himself as if Jatau was his own father. This story is narrated in Ram Charit Manas, Aranya Kand, Doha no. 13 (Lord Ram meeting and befriending Jatau), and Aranya Kand, from Chaupi line no. 7 that precedes Doha no. 29, to Doha no. 32 (Jatau's death to save Sita, and the former's liberation and deliverance).]

342. सुजन सुतरु बन ऊख सम खल टंकिका रुखान ।
परहित अनहित लागि सब साँसति सहत समान ॥

342. sujana sutaru bana ūkha sama khala ṭaṅkikā rukhāna.
parahita anahita lāgi saba sāṁsati sahata samāna..

Gentlemen are helpful like the beneficial cotton and sugarcane plants, while rascals and evil persons are akin to a heavy axe or a hammer or chisel that are used to cut through stones and wood. Both of them, i.e. the gentleman and the rascal, suffer, but one (the gentleman) does so for the benefit of others while the other (the rascal) suffers so as to harm others and cause them pain.

[The beneficial plants are cut and thrashed, but inspite of this suffering they produce benefits for their tormentors. The cotton plant ultimately produces yarn, and the sugarcane is ground and pulped to produce sugar. On the other hand, a heavy hammer hits the axe or the chisel which in turn bites into the stone or the wood to cut them to pieces or at least to chip away their surfaces and deform their original shape if they are not able to completely break the stone or the wood altogether.

Similarly, good people will gladly suffer if their sufferings can help others, while evil people derive sadistic pleasure if their sufferings can cause pain to others and make them suffer too.] (342)

343. पिअहिं सुमन रस अलि बिटप काटि कोल फल खात ।
तुलसी तरुजीवी जुगल सुमति कुमति की बात ॥

343. pi'ahim sumana rasa ali biṭapa kāṭi kōla phala khāta.
tulasī tarujīvī jugala sumati kumati kī bāta..

[Giving another example of the difference between the attitude of a gentleman and an evil person, Tulsidas says—]

The black-bee only takes nectar from the flowers but do not harm them or their habitats, the trees (i.e. they don't cause any damage to the flower or the tree), while the forest dwelling tribals known as the Kols and the Bhils (who are hunters and cruel people) cut down the same trees, which provide them with fruits and flowers as well as the natural environ of the forest where these tribals live, to use them as firewood (i.e. they don't show any compunction at mercilessly cutting down the trees that provide them with their basic requirements of food and habitat).

[Both the black-bee and the Kols and Bhils survive on trees or their products, but by their actions the former shows its nobility and gracious nature, while the other its wickedness, cruelty and shortsightedness. The black-bee is wise as it knows that if the flower survives it will produce more nectar, and the bee will have an endless supply of

nourishment. The Kol and the Bhil are stupid; they cut down the tree and do not realise that they are axing the very source of their sustenance by way of fruits, flowers and firewood, and a day will come when the entire forest would be afforested and they will be robbed of their natural habitat.] (343)

353. पुन्य प्रीति पति प्रापतिउ परमारथ पथ पाँच ।
लहहिं सुजन परिहरहिं खल सुनहु सिखावन साँच ॥

353. pun'ya prīti pati prāpati'u paramāratha patha pām̃ca.
lahahim̃ sujana pariharahim̃ khala sunahu sikhāvana sām̃ca..

Those who are gentleman, wise, intelligent and discriminating strive to have merit and good virtues in them—they prefer doing good deeds, having enduring and pure form of love and affection, having a good name, honour and respect, and while acquiring worldly successes they also strive to attain spiritual gains by way of enlightenment, liberation and deliverance.

The reverse is true for those who are evil and sinful by nature. They do just the opposite and abhor the things accepted or pursued by gentlemen and good people. [In other words, such persons will never do good deeds and would prefer sinful acts. They will be selfish in all their relationships; if they pretend to have love then it is with the aim of some selfish needs. They are least concerned by what sort of fame they get, as long as they are famous; if the world remembers as cruel rascals, or as scoundrels and scamsters, so far so good for them! And similarly, they aren't bothered about spiritual welfare—because for them making merry is the only reward of taking birth.]

Tulsidas warns us to pay heed to what he says—and distinguish between the good and the evil men. [In other words, Tulsidas advises us to be careful in our dealings with these two types of people.] (353)

354. नीच निरादरहीं सुखद आदर सुखद बिसाल ।
कदरी बदरी बिटप गति पेखहु पनस रसाल ॥

354. nīca nirādarahim̃ sukhada ādara sukhada bisāla.
kadarī badarī biṭapa gati pēkhahu panasa rasāla..

The perverts, rascals and evil men feel glad on being scolded, reprimanded or insulted (i.e. they do not mind it, and are accustomed to it), while people of noble and upright nature who occupy a high status in society feel comfortable and happy on being respected, on being shown honour and courtesy.

To understand this difference, one must look at a banana and a plum tree on the one hand, and a jackfruit and a mango tree on the other hand.

[The former two trees—viz. the banana and the plum—bear more fruits when they are pruned. The banana tree is cut at its lower end, and the plum tree at its tip. In other words, only when they are bodily harmed will they produce fruits or rewards. Pampering them and leaving them unharmed will ruin them completely. So they resemble evil men who need stern control.

On the other hand, the latter two trees—viz. the jackfruit and the mango trees—give more fruits when they are tended properly, taken care of, left uncut and regularly watered. These two trees are like gentlemen.

In other words, gentlemen feel happy and reward the world by their selfless services if the world shows them their due respect, while rascals need restraining, admonishing and the fear of punishment if one expects to get anything done by them.] (354)

[Note—In Ram Charit Manas, Sundar Kand, Doha no. 58 it is said—“No matter how hard and countless numbers of times one tries, but the banana tree will not bear fruits by watering it. The only way to make it bear fruits is to cut its stem. Similarly, those who are wicked and lowly need constant warnings and reprimands, that is the only way to keep them in line; they will never listen to courteous words, and it not possible to sway them by prayers (requests or begging).”]

355. तुलसी अपनो आचरन भलो न लागत कासु ।
तेहि न बसात जो खात नित लहसुनहू को बासु ॥

355. tulasī apanō ācarana bhalō na lāgata kāsū.
tēhi na basāta jō khāta nita lahasunahū kō bāsu..

Tulsidas says that there is no one who does not like his own behavior and way of thinking.

For instance, those who eat garlic daily are not affected (or offended) by its odour. [Garlic has a bad odour, and those who are not accustomed to eating it would feel repulsed by any food that has garlic in it; it produces nausea in them. But those who eat garlic regularly have no such repugnance towards it, and rather relish food that contains garlic. Likewise, those who are accustomed to sinful behaviour and evil thoughts are not offended with what they are doing or thinking; it’s a routine matter for them. But others abhor such behaviour and thoughts.] (355)

[Note—This is the reason why sinful creatures need help and guidance. Left to themselves they have become immune to the misdeeds they do; it is only when some wise men points out to them that they can realise their mistakes. Herein lies the importance of a Guru (moral preceptor, guide and teacher)—to show the sinful and lowly that the path they are following is wrong, and then point out to them the path that is correct and good for them.]

358. तुलसी भलो सुसंग तेँ पोच कुसंगति सोइ ।
नाउ किंनरी तीर असि लोह बिलोकहु लोइ ॥

358. tulasī bhalō susaṅga tēṁ pōca kusaṅgati sō'i.
nā'u kinnarī tīra asi lōha bilōkahu lō'i..

Tulsidas says a man becomes either wise and good or wicked and bad depending upon good or bad company which he keeps respectively.

Oh people, watch how the same iron undergoes transformation. When iron is used to make a boat, it takes people across water; when it is used as a string to make a stringed musical instrument such as a guitar, it produces melodious music.

But when the same iron is used to make a sword or an arrow, it kills; it is transformed into an instant killer! (358)

[Note—When iron comes in contact with an engineer who makes boats and ships, it is used to ferry people across water in the river or the ocean. When iron comes in contact with a musician it is used to create heart-warming music. That is, the iron meets a good destiny.

But the same metal known as iron kills and slays when it comes in contact with armies and smiths who make weapon.

Similarly, if a man keeps good company he is bound to become good, and if he keeps bad company he will become bad.]

359. गुरु संगति गुरु होइ सो लघु संगति लघु नाम ।
चार पदारथ में गनैँ नरक द्वारहू काम ॥

359. guru saṅgati guru hō'i sō laghu saṅgati laghu nāma.
cāra padāratha mēm ganaiṁ naraka dvārahū kāma..

The company of good people makes one respected and revered in the society, while that of evil people degrades one to ignominy and disrepute.

The detestable quality of 'Kaam' (lust, passions and desires) is counted as one of the four great fruits or rewards that one gets for doing auspicious deeds of merit. The other three fruits or rewards are 'Artha' (prosperity and material welfare), 'Dharma' (righteousness and nobility) and 'Moksha' (emancipation and salvation; liberation and deliverance).

[When a person does good deeds and acts righteously, leading a life of auspiciousness and noble thoughts and conduct, he is rewarded by welfare and honour in this material world while he is alive, and upon death he gets liberation and deliverance. Besides this, he gets a bonus in the form of fulfillment of his desires related to the world in spite of his acquiring the ability to obtain spiritual liberation and deliverance.

This quality known as 'Kaam' is usually regarded as a negative quality, and is looked down by the wise ones. It is grouped with other negative traits in a man, such as anger (Krodh), greed (Lobha), arrogance and haughtiness (Mada), delusions (Maya) etc. But when the same 'Kaam' is enjoyed by a person who leads life according to the laws of Dharma (righteous conduct), then it becomes a reward much sought after.] (359)

377. नीच निरावहिं निरस तरु तुलसी सींचहि ऊख ।
पोषत पयद समान सब बिष पियूष के रुख ॥

377. nīca nirāvahiṁ nirasa taru tulasī sīñcahi ūkha.
pōṣata payada samāna saba biṣa piyūṣa kē rukha..

Comparing a selfish man with a selfless man, Tulsidas says that an evil man (i.e. one who is selfish and self-centered) has no qualms in uprooting dried-up (dead) trees from the fields and throwing them away (because they are useless for him), while he waters and tends to the sugarcane plant (because he benefits from it).

[In other words, a selfish man will have no second thoughts in breaking relationships with and even betraying the other person even though he had been a long-term companion if the latter does not serve the former's vested interest. As long as the companion is in good times and the selfish man derives some benefits from him, he will be the former's friend, but if the companion faces rough time and is no longer of help to the selfish man then the latter would have prick of the conscience in turning his face away. The selfish man will not even think of helping his companion during his rough patch though the latter had been helping the former throughout his life.]

Citing the instance of the cloud, Tulsidas says that the cloud showers its rain uniformly on the whole earth, and both the poisonous as well as the sweet (i.e. beneficial) trees are benefited by its rain; the cloud nourishes them without distinction, and is equally benevolent upon them.

[The noble-hearted man will not shy away from helping the downtrodden and the less privileged. He will as easily and comfortably befriend a poor man and talk cheerfully with him as he will with the mighty and the powerful. He blends equally with all members of the society. On the other hand, evil persons with a haughty nature will show off their stature by hobnobbing and rubbing shoulders with the mighty and the powerful while sniffing snobbishly and contemptibly at the poor and the downtrodden, treating them with disdain as if they were scums of the society.] (377)

458. रबि हर दिसि गुन रस नयन मुनि प्रथमादिक बार ।
तिथि सब काज नसावनी होइ कुजोग बिचार ॥

458. rabi hara disi guna rasa nayana muni prathamādika bāra.
tithi saba kāja nasāvanī hō'i kujōga bicāra..

If the seven lunar days (i.e. the days according to the lunar month consisting of a thirty-day cycle) of 'Ravi' (corresponding to 'Dwaadashi' or the 12th day after the full moon), 'Har' (corresponding to 'Ekaadashi' or the 11th day after the full moon), 'Disi' (corresponding to 'Dashmi' or the 10th day after the full moon), 'Guna' (corresponding to 'Tritiyaa' or the 3rd day after the full moon), 'Rasa' (corresponding to 'Sashti' or the 6th day after the full moon), 'Nayan' (corresponding to 'Dwitiya' or the 2nd day after the new moon), and 'Muni' (corresponding to 'Saptami' or the 7th day after the new moon), fall respectively on a Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday—then these are considered very inauspicious dates and they prove detrimental for success in any work.

[In other words, one must avoid doing anything new, anything other than the routine, or enter into any new venture on any such date of the calendar month which corresponds to the above combination. For instance, if a Monday happens to fall on the 12th day after the full moon, then it is an inauspicious combination, and one must avoid doing anything new on this day.] (458)

[Note—The lunar dates have been indicated symbolically in this Doha as follows:-

(a) The Ravi is the name of the 'Sun'. According to ancient scriptures, the Sun God is also known as Aditya, and there are said to be 12 such Adityas. Hence, by referring to 'Ravi', the 12th day of the moon known as 'Dwaadashi' is indicated.

(b) The same principle applies to the rest of the dates. The word 'Har' refers to Rudra, a form of Lord Shiva. There are said to be 11 Rudras. Hence, the term 'Har' refers to the 11th day of the moon known as 'Ekaadashi'.

(c) The word 'Disi' means direction. There are said to be 10 directions—viz. north, north-east, east, south-east, south, south-west, west, north-west, zenith and nadir. Hence, the term 'Disi' refers to the 10th day of the moon known as 'Dashmi'.

(d) The word 'Guna' means the basic qualities that are inherent to all the creatures in this creation. There are said to be 3 Gunas—viz. Sata Guna, Raja Guna, and Tama Guna. Hence, the term 'Guna' refers to the 3rd day of the moon known as 'Tritiya'.

(e) The word 'Rasa' means juice or taste. There are said to be 6 types of tastes. The six tastes are the following flavours that the tongue feels—sweet, acidic, bitter, pungent, sour and salty. They are compared to the six seasons in this world. Refer Bhavana Upanishad of the Atharva Veda tradition, verse no. 2, stanza no 10.

Sometimes, the six tastes are listed as being sweet, salty, sour, bitter, pungent or hot, and astringent. Sometimes acidic (vinegar) and bland are also regarded as separate category of tastes. Refer Garbho-panishad, verse no. 1 of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition.

Hence, the term 'Rasa' refers to the 6th day of the moon that is known as 'Shashti'.

(f) The word 'Nayan' means the eye. Since there are 2 eyes, the term refers to the 2nd day of the moon known as 'Dwaadashi'.

(g) The word 'Muni' means a sage. There are said to be 7 celestial sages—viz. Gautam, Bharadwaj, Vishwamitra, Jamdagni, Vashishtha, Kashyap and Atri. They belonged to the early Vedic period called the Vaivastava Manu Manvantar (the period of ancient history during the time of Vaivastava Manu).

According to the epic Mahabharata, they are however the following—Marichi, Atri, Angira, Pulaha, Kratu, Pulastya and Vashishtha. They belonged to the era known as the Swayambhu Manu Manvantara.

Hence, the term ‘Muni’ refers to the 7th day of the moon known as ‘Saptami’.]

459. ससि सर नव दुइ छ दस गुन मुनि फल बसु हर भानु ।
मेषादिक क्रम तें गनहि घात चंद्र जियँ जानु ॥

459. sasi sara nava du'i cha dasa guna muni phala basu hara bhānu.
mēṣādika krama tēm ganahi ghāta candra jiyam̐ jānu..

If the moon falls in the following signs of the Zodiac, it should be considered very dangerous and harmful:– in the first house of Aries (“Mesha”), in the second house of Cancer (“Karka”), in the third house of Libra (“Tulaa”), in the fourth house of Sagittarius (“Dhanusha”), in the fifth house of Taurus (“Vrisha”), in the sixth house of Leo (“Singha”), in the seventh house of Scorpion (“Vrishchika”), in the eighth house of Capricorn (“Makar”), in the ninth house of Gemini (“Mithun”), in the tenth house of Virgo (“Kanyaa”), in the eleventh house of Aquarius (“Kumbha”), and the twelfth house of Pisces (“Meen”). (459)

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Chapter 4

Character Traits of SAINTS and NON-SAINTS

The Holy Bible

There are countless number of instances in the Holy Bible which tell us about the glorious virtues and characters of true Saints and Saintly Persons, and at the same time pointing out for us the unholy nature and evil characters of those who are Non-Saintly. In this Chapter we shall read about them by quoting directly from this Scripture in a wholesome and extensive way. A painstaking effort has been made to select and present the verses that are relevant to the theme of our present book on 'Saints and Non-Saints' from the different Books of the New Testament in the chronological order in which they appear in the main text.

As we have noted above, much has been written in the Holy Bible about the good spiritual values and excellent qualities that mark out saints and saintly souls from all others. These eclectic values and noble spiritual qualities are found in the form of guidelines, instructions and advices that are given all throughout in this great scripture, and they are so specific and clear in their meaning and import that no further elaboration and explanation is needed for them. Indeed truly and without gainsay, if a person does follow these instructions then surely and certainly that person would be a personified form of a true saint and represent godliness itself. Then there would be no need to go out and seek any saint elsewhere, for what good would it wrought for us if we learn ought nothing from saints and their lives that would prove to be of any benefit or use for us in our own lives and help us to improve our own selves. Forsooth, the good purpose of reading these fine verses would be served only when we learn from them to improve not only ourselves but even the world around us in our wake. Then it would be really come true that heaven indeed comes to abide here on earth, and the contrary would obviously prevail if non-saintly qualities are dominant factors that rule the roost.

For ease of reading, this Chapter has been divided into three parts as follows:

- (4.1) Why should one pay attention to Saints.
- (4.2) Characters and Virtues of Saints and Saintly Souls.
- (4.3) Characters of Non-Saints and Evil Persons.
- (4.4) Rewards for being a Saintly Person.

(4.1) The HOLY BIBLE: Why should one pay attention to Saints:-

St. John, 5/24: ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come to condemnation, but is passed from death unto life’.

St. John, 6/38: ‘For I (in the form of Saints) came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me (for the good and welfare of the human race)’.

1 John, 4/ 6: Why should we heed Saints? ‘We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth us not’.

3 John, 2-4: ‘Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in (spiritual) health even as thy soul prospereth, for I rejoiced greatly when the bretheren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth, I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth’.

Jude, 3: ‘Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints’.

Philippians, 3/2: True saints help us to ‘Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers’ in this world’.

Titus, 2/11-12: ‘For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men (in the guise of saints); Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should be soberly, righteously and godly in this present world’.

Titus, 3/7: So that ‘Being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life’.

Hebrews, 1/1-2: ‘God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past (and so does in the present and would in the time to come) unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken to us (through these holy and pious souls)--- ’.

Hebrews, /1, 3: ‘Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip; --- How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him’.

2 Peter, 2/9: ‘The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgement to be punished’.

2 Peter, 3/13: For saints help us to ‘look for new heavens and new earths wherein dwelleth righteousness’.

1 John, 1/3: Saints speak the truth, the truth they have learnt and heard by meditating, by closely observing this world, and by hearing the voice of their consciousness and soul—‘That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye may also have fellowship with us’.

1 John, 1/5, 9: Saints show us the path of light, the path that leads to God—‘that God is light, and there is no darkness in him; if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness’.

1 John, 3 / 4, 8-9: Why avoid sins by obeying saints? Well, ‘for sin is the transgression of the Lord’s laws. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning; and whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot commit sin because he is born of God’.

Romans, 8/5-7: ‘For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit; for to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace; because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be’.

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(4.2) The HOLY BIBLE: Characters and Virtues of Saints and Holy Persons:-

(1) St. Matthew, 5/1-19, 21-22, 27-30, 33-36, 42, 44-48:

1: And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

2: And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

3: Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4: Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

5: Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

6: Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

7: Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

8: Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

9: Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

10: Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11: Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

12: Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

13: Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

14: Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

15: Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16: Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

17: Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.

18: For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

19: Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

21: Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

22: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

27: Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

28: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

29: And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

30: And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

[Verse nos. 29-30 should be understood for their true hidden meaning instead of their mere literal interpretation. No one is expected to puncture one's eyes to become blind or maim one's self by cutting off the arm—for self injury is also a sin in itself. The message here is that one should be exceedingly diligent in controlling oneself and one's sense organs so that they do not commit sin and fall prey to temptations of the sensual world.]

34: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

35: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool:

36: Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

42: Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

44: But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

45: That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun

to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

46: For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

47: And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

48: Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

[Note—Briefly therefore, a Saint is one who: is humble, meek, righteous, merciful, pure in heart, are light of the world, does good work, does not kill or commit violence against others, is not angry with anyone, does not commit adultery, restrains his sense organs from doing evil of any kind, does not swear, and that too falsely, be of a charitable and magnanimous nature, giving others what is asked for if he can so help, loves even his adversaries and opponents, and strive to be perfect in every possible way, as much as he can.]

(2) St. Matthew, 6/1-34:

1: Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

2: Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

3: But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

4: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

5: And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

6: But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

7: But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

8: Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

9: After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

10: Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

11: Give us this day our daily bread.

12: And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

13: And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

14: For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

15: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

16: Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

17: But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

18: That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

19: Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

20: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

21: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

22: The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

23: But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

24: No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

25: Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

26: Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

27: Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

28: And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

29: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30: Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

31: Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32: (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

33: But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

34: Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

[Note—A Saint does silent charity without boasting of it, prays quietly without show, is forgiving by nature, observes fasting and abstinence from temptations, sees only good things and avoid seeing at evil things, is faithful to only one master and serves him diligently and honestly, practices renunciation by neither being bothered about money nor clothes, relies on the Lord God for all his needs such as food, clothes, shelter etc., is not worried about the future, and practices righteousness.]

(3) St. Matthew, 7/1-20, 24-27:

1: Judge not, that ye be not judged.

2: For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

3: And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

4: Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

5: Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

6: Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

7: Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

8: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

9: Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

10: Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11: If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

12: Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

13: Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

14: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

15: Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

16: Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

17: Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

18: A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

19: Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

20: Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

24: Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

25: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

26: And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

27: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

[Note—A Saint does not judge others, has no pride and ego in him as his eyes see everyone equally, preserves and values noble characters and virtues, and never bargains them for anything in this world, treats all with compassion, goodness and understanding as he would want himself treated by others, is alert towards falseness and guards against hypocrites and pretenders who profess to be holy but are wolves in disguise, and he follows the laws of the Lord, the laws of ‘Dharma’.]

(4) St. Matthew, 15/28:

28: O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt.

[Note—A Saint understands the value of having faith in God.]

(5) St. Matthew, 17/20:

20: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

[Note—A Saint should have faith in God as this endows him with immense mystical powers.]

(6) St. Matthew, 24/45-47:

45: Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

46: Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

47: Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

[Note—A Saint who has faith in God and trusts him is beloved of the Lord.]

(7) St. Mark, 10/19:

19: Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

[Note—A Saint does not commit adultery, kills, steals or robs, bears false witness or commits fraud. He respects his parents.]

(9) St. Mark, 11/22-25:

22: Have faith in God.

23: For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

24: Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

25: And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

[Note: A Saint should have faith in God, and should be forgiving by nature.]

(10) St. Mark, 12/28-33:

28: And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?

29: And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is: The Lord our God is one Lord:

30: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

31: And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

32: And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he:

33: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.

[Note—A Saint believes in only One God and loves him with all his heart; he loves his neighbour too as the same Soul dwells in all living beings.]

(11) St. Luke, 5/20:

20: And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

[Note—A Saint knows the importance of having faith in Lord God for this helps him overcome his guilt of sins. But remember: this ‘faith’ has to be true and honest, and it should be accompanied by a sincere desire to repent and mend one’s ways. It is only then that the sins are forgiven.]

(12) St. Luke, 6/27-38:

27: But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,
28: Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

29: And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also.

30: Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again.

31: And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

32: For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

33: And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

34: And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

35: But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

36: Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

37: Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

38: Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

[Note—A Saint loves even those who hate him, and prays for their soul; has a magnanimous and charitable disposition, giving others what they want from him, without hesitation for the Lord God would give the Saint in return; deals with others in the same way that he expects them to deal with him; and is merciful.]

(13) St. Luke, 7/50: Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

[Note—A Saint knows that faith in Lord God is sure to save his soul.]

(14) Acts, 20/19-20:

19: Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, ---
20: And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house.

[Note—A Saint is humble in mind, of a soft heart, and desists from temptations. He shares his goodness and knowledge and experience with others who wish it to be shared with them.]

(15) Romans, 6/22:

22: But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

[Note—A Saint is free from sins and considers himself a true servant of God.]

(16) Romans, 8/5-9:

5: For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

6: For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

7: Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

8: So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

9: But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.

[Note—A Saint is not carnally minded, but spiritual in his mind and heart.]

(17) Roman, 10/17: [How does faith come? Well, the answer is this:--]

17: So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

(18) Romans, 12/1-2, 9-21:

1: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2: And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

9: Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

10: Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

11: Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12: Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

13: Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

14: Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

15: Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

16: Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

17: Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18: If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

19: Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is

written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

20: Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

21: Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

[Note—A Saint is ready to sacrifice all that he has for the sake of the Lord God. He is always willing to cleanse and purify his mind more and more. He has abundant love and affection for all in his heart; he avoids sins; accepts all that is good; is not lazy; is sincere in his spiritual pursuit; does everything as a service of the Lord God; is always cheerful and happy, patient and tolerant; prays to the Lord; serves other saints to the best of his resources; is hospitable, warm and welcoming; never curses anyone but blesses all; shares joys and pains of others; has evenness of mind and treats all living beings equally; is not deceitful and pretentious; is honest and truthful; lives peacefully in the world; harbours no ill-will or revenge for anyone; is able to overcome evil and hatred, and replace it with goodness and kindness.]

(19) 1 Corinthians, 2/9-15:

9: But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10: But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

11: For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12: Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

13: Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

14: But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

15: But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

[Note—A Saint searches for good things, spiritual wisdom and the Truth as revealed by the scriptures in the name of the Lord; he avoids foolishness and hearsay.]

(20) 1 Corinthians, 10/6, 8:

6: Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

8: Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

[Note—A Saint does not lust for evil things; does not commit adultery and sexual misdemeanours.]

(21) 1 Corinthians, 15/33-34:

33: Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

34: Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.

[Note—A Saint abhors evil talk and evil manners; he is righteous and is careful against sins.]

(22) 2 Corinthians, 4/2, 8-9, 15-18:

2: But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

8: We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

9: Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

15: For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

16: For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

17: For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

18: While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

[Note—A Saint is not dishonest, crafty and deceitful; is never distressed or perplexed during adversities as he practices equanimity and fortitude; believes in the grace of the Lord God; he seeks things that are spiritual and not temporal.]

(23) 2 Corinthians, 5/6-9:

6: Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord:

7: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)

8: We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

9: Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.

[Note—A Saint realizes that the body is separate from the soul, and therefore gratifying the body is not serving the soul or nourishing it, but is rather exhausting one of his natural

affinity for divinity and holiness.]

(24) 2 Corinthians, 9/6-12, 14-15:

6: But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

7: Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

8: And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

9: (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

10: Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)

11: Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God.

12: For the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God;

14: And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you.

15: Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift (unto us in the form of Saints).

[Note—A Saint gives cheerfully to others whatever he can afford to give and share with them; he sows rich seeds of goodness and spirituality, and hence reaps a likewise rich harvest; he seeks God's grace through prayers.]

(25) Galatians, 5/13-14, 22-23, 25-26:

13: For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

14: For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

22: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

23: Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

25: If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

26: Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

[Note—A Saint serves all, including his neighbours and bretherens, with due kindness and love; he loves the virtues of peace, gentleness, goodness, faith; he wants joy of the spirit instead that of the body; he does not want false glory; he does not envy others nor provokes anyone with vain talk.]

(26) Ephesians, 5/1-21:

- 1: Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;
 2: And walk in love ---
 3: But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;
 4: Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.
 5: For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of God.
 6: Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.
 7: Be not ye therefore partakers with them.
 8: For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:
 9: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)
 10: Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.
 11: And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.
 12: For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.
 13: But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.
 14: Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, ----.
 15: See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,
 16: Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.
 17: Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.
 18: And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;
 19: Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;
 20: Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father ---;
 21: Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

[Note—A Saint loves the virtues of love, righteousness, truth; he never likes things or talks that are filthy and evil; he does not engage in vain talk; he loves fellowship of saintly souls and spiritual-minded persons; he does not drink to get intoxicated; he enjoys meditation that brings the bliss of the spirit; he exults in singing the glory of the Lord in hymns and psalms; he thanks God for everything.]

(27) Philippians, 4/1, 4-9

- 1: Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.
 4: Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.
 5: Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.
 6: Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving

let your requests be made known unto God.

7: And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds ---.

8: Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

9: Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

[Note—A Saint is a firm believer in God; he is moderate; he prays to Lord God and thanks him for everything; he rejoices in the eternal presence of the Lord God about him.]

(28) Colossians, 3/12-15:

12: Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

13: Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

14: And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

15: And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

[Note—A Saint is merciful, kind, humble in mind and heart, meek, forgiving, charitable and peaceful in heart, and thankful; he does not mind suffering for things that are good and godly.]

(29) Colossians, 4/5-6:

5: Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.

6: Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

[Note—A Saint walks the path of wisdom himself, and at the same time tries to show the path of wisdom to others.]

(30) 1 Thessalonians, 3/3-5:

3: That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.

4: For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know.

5: For this cause, when I could no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some

means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain.

[Note—A Saint guards against temptations of all sorts.]

(31) 1 Thessalonians, 4/4-9, 11-13:

4: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;

5: Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:

6: That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.

7: For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

8: He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.

9: But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

11: And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

12: That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.

13: But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

[Note—A Saint must keep himself free from lust and anything that defiles the purity of the soul; he must not commit fraud; he should be holy and clean, within and without; he should be honest in his spiritual pursuit; he should try to save others whose souls are surrounded in darkness.]

(32) 1 Thessalonians, 5/14-26:

14: Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

15: See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men.

16: Rejoice evermore.

17: Pray without ceasing.

18: In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

19: Quench not the Spirit.

20: Despise not prophesyings.

21: Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

22: Abstain from all appearance of evil.

23: And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

24: Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

25: Brethren, pray for us.

26: Greet all the brethren with an holy kiss.

[Note—A Saint should be exemplarily kind and compassionate, help the weak and be patient to all; he should abhor evil and follow that is good and righteous; he must pray without fail and thank the Lord God for every small thing; he should be blameless always; he should welcome everyone warmly.]

(33) 2 Thessalonians, 3/2-6, 10-16:

2: And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.

3: But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.

4: And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.

5: And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God.

6: —that ye withdraw yourself from every brother that walketh disorderly ---

10: For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

11: For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

12: Now them that are such we command and exhort --- that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

13: But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.

14: And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.

15: Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

16: Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all.

[Note—A Saint guards against wicked and disorderly men; he should rely upon God and invoke his love; he should earn his own bread by engaging himself diligently in constructive work instead of being lazy and eating for free; he should avoid busybodies, stragglers and idlers.]

(34) 1 Timothy, 2/1-4:

1: I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men;

2: For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

3: For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;

4: Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

[Note—A Saint should pray and offer supplication on his and other's behalf to the Lord God. He should lead a peaceful and quiet life of meditation.]

(35) 1 Timothy, 4/4-16:

4: For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:

5: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

6: If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

7: But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.

8: For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

9: This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation.

10: For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

11: These things command and teach.

12: Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

13: Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

14: Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

15: Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

16: Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

[Note—A Saint should treat everyone with love and equanimity as all are good children of the same God. He should cultivate godly characters and be an example for others in words and deeds. He should read good books and imbibe their knowledge correctly; he should meditate on this knowledge for his own good as well as for the good of others.]

(36) 1 Timothy, 6/6-13, 16-19:

6: But godliness with contentment is great gain.

7: For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

8: And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

9: But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10: For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

11: But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

12: Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

13: I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things,

16: Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

17: Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

18: That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

19: Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

[Note—A Saint should be pious and holy from within; he should be contented; he should guard against temptations; he should fight for the good and the right things. Instead of yearning for worldly riches, he should strive for the richness of the soul and the goodness of character.]

(37) 2 Timothy, 1/3-4, 6-9:

3: I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;

4: Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;

6: Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

7: For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

8: Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

9: Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace.

[Note—A Saint should have a clean conscience. He should not fear to speak the truth as he has the power of the almighty Lord to protect him.]

(38) 2 Timothy, 2/15-26:

15: Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

16: But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

17: And their word will eat as doth a canker;

18: Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

19: Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.

20: But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

21: If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

22: Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

23: But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.

24: And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,

25: In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

26: And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

[Note—A Saint should shun futile talk and worldly lust. He should do good work, have righteousness, faith, charity and peace. He should be gentle to all. He should always take the side of the Truth.]

(39) 2 Timothy, 4/2, 8:

2: Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

8: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

[Note—A Saint should preach the Word of God to others in a truthful manner.]

(40) Titus, 1/7-9:

7: For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

8: But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

9: Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

[Note—A Saint should be blameless and above reproach. He should be calm and composed, not given to short temper. He should be hospitable, lover of good company, sober, just, holy and temperate.]

(41) Titus, 2/1-12:

- 1: But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:
 2: That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.
 3: The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;
 4: That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,
 5: To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.
 6: Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded.
 7: In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,
 8: Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.
 9: Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again;
 10: Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.
 11: For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,
 12: Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

[Note—A Saint should speak of truth and in a truthful manner. He should be discreet, honest, chaste, good, self-disciplined, sober and righteous.]

(42) Titus, 3/1-4, 7-11:

- 1: Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work,
 2: To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.
 3: For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.
 4: But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared,
 7: That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.
 8: This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.
 9: But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain.
 10: A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject;
 11: Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

[Note—A Saint should speak ill of no one; he should not get into fights and brawls; he should be a gentle and saintly disposition; he should be kind and not hateful; he should abhor futile debates and questions.]

(43) Hebrews, 6/5-12:

- 5: And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,
- 6: If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance;
- 7: For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:
- 8: But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned.
- 9: But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.
- 10: For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.
- 11: And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end:
- 12: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

[Note—A Saint should not shy away from administering the word of God; he should patient; he should not slothful and unfaithful towards the Lord God; he should strive to be good and righteous so that the seed that he sows through his words bear good fruits like the earth that produces a harvest in the likeness of the seed that is sown.]

(44) Hebrew, 11/1-3:

- 1: Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.
- 2: For by it the elders obtained a good report.
- 3: Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

[Note—The whole 11th Chapter of the Hebrews is dedicated to highlighting the importance of having faith in Lord God.]

(45) Hebrews, 13/1-7, 21:

- 1: Let brotherly love continue.
- 2: Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.
- 3: Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.

4: Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

5: Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

6: So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

7: Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

21: Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight.

[Note—A Saint should have brotherly love for everyone. He should not be covetous. He should be firm in his convictions and say boldly that the Lord God is his protector.]

(46) James 1/3-8, 12-27:

3: Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

4: But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

5: If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

6: But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

7: For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

8: A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

12: Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

13: Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

14: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

15: Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

16: Do not err, my beloved brethren.

17: Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

18: Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

19: Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

20: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

21: Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

22: But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

23: For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

24: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

25: But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

26: If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

27: Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

[Note—A Saint should be perfect in whatever he says and does; he should be patient in his work and faith; seek the blessing of true wisdom from God; He should understand the importance of asking God for help to get proper wisdom; and above all he should have firm faith in God and not have doubts in his mind, as a ‘double-minded’ person is wavering and unstable, unable to do anything and achieve success in his endeavours of any kind.

He should be of a firm and steadfast mind, not be doubtful and dithering and uncertain about the doctrine of God, and what he preaches others about it; he should resist temptation and lust in all their hues because they invite sin and condemnation of the spirit; he should not get angry nor swear at any one; and more important than anything else, he should ‘walk the talk’. Further, inspite of living in a world full of evil and corruptions he himself should be pure and above reproach.]

(47) James, 2/2-17:

2: For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;

3: And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:

4: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

5: Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

6: But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?

7: Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?

8: If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

9: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

10: For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

11: For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

12: So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

13: For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

14: What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

15: If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

16: And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

17: Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

[Note—A Saint should treat all living beings equally and with equanimity, and he should not judge someone based on his appearances and position in society; he should not despise the poor nor favour the money-bags; he should be careful against adultery, killing; he should share all his resources with those who are unfortunate by providing them food, shelter and succour as best as he can; and he should not only say that he has faith in God but prove it by his noble actions.]

(48) James, 4/6-12:

6: But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

7: Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

8: Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

9: Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.

10: Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

11: Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.

12: There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?

[Note—A Saint should not be proud at all, but be exemplarily humble; he should submit to God; he should not speak evil of anyone lest it would corrupt his tongue and mind and heart; and he should not judge others but mind his own business.]

(49) James, 5/8-16:

8: Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

9: Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.

10: Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.

11: Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

12: But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

13: Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

14: Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

15: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

16: Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

[Note—A Saint ought to be patient in heart with a hope that his soul would find peace in the Lord God; he should not harbour grudge against anyone; he should endure and have forbearance and fortitude; he should never swear or curse; he should pray and have faith in God; and he should confess before God about his sins and guilt to free his conscience of the burden of ill.]

(50) 1 Peter, 2/15-20:

15: For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

16: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

17: Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

18: Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.

19: For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.

20: For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

[Note—A Saint silences his opponents and those who are evil by his goodness and good deeds; he should feel free from all worldly bondages to express the truth; he should be free from maliciousness and conceit and pretensions. He should honour all human beings; love them and be kind to them. He should fear Lord God and be humble before him, thinking himself to be servant of the Lord. He should maintain his poise and calmness even when faulted and criticized though he has done no wrong.]

(51) 1 Peter, 3/8-17:

8: Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:

9: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.

10: For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:

11: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it.

12: For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.

13: And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

14: But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

15: But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

16: Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

17: For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.

[Note—A Saint should be of an even mind. He should be compassionate, loving, pitiful and courteous to all. He should not be revengeful but be forgiving and understanding; he should bless even those who talk evil of him. He should be righteous and conscientious.]

(52) 1 Peter, 4/7-12, 15-19:

7: But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

8: And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

9: Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

10: As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

11: If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified --- for ever and ever. Amen.

12: Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

15: But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.

16: Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

17: For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

18: And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

19: Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

[Note—A Saint should be of a charitable disposition. He should take precaution that he is never, repeat 'never', do anything that would make him accused of murder, theft, an evil-

doer and a busybody. He should be ready to suffer for his beliefs.]

(53) 1 Peter, 5/2-3, 6-9:

- 2: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;
- 3: Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.
- 6: Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:
- 7: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.
- 8: Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:
- 9: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

[Note—A Saint should strive to show others the correct and the true path, and should not mislead them for selfish ends. He should surrender himself humbly before Lord God. And he should be steadfast in his faith.]

(54) 1 John, 1/1-6, 8-10:

- 1: That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;
- 2: (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)
- 3: That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.
- 4: And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.
- 5: This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.
- 6: If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:
- 8: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
- 9: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
- 10: If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his words are not in us.

[Note—A Saint speaks truthfully from his heart and what he has experienced of divinity himself. He is ready to confess for his sins before God for he does not claim to be sinless as no man can ever claim so, but he is sincere in this confession in as much as he does not repeat his sins again.]

(55) 1 John, 2/4-17:

4: He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

5: But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

6: He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.

7: Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.

8: Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

9: He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.

10: He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

11: But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

12: I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.

13: I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.

14: I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

15: Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16: For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

17: And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

[Note—A Saint ‘walks the talk’; he does what he preaches others. He does not hate. And he does not have any attachment with the mortal material world of grossness and temptations because he knows that ‘If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him’ for ‘the world is mortal and impermanent, while the Spirit or the Soul is immortal and eternal’.]

(56) 1 John, 3/1-11, 13-15, 17-22:

1: Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

2: Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

3: And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

4: Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.

5: And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

6: Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.

7: Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.

8: He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

9: Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

10: In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

11: For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.

13: Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

14: We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

15: Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

17: But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

18: My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

19: And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

20: For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

21: Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.

22: And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

[Note—A Saint sees his beloved Lord God in every living being and hence loves all the creatures. A Saint has universal love for all living beings because all are sons of the same Lord God. He abhors sins; he does not hate anyone; he condemns none; and he treats everyone as his brother and shares whatever he has with them.]

(57) 1 John, 4/4-8, 11-13, 16-21:

4: Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

5: They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

6: We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

7: Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

8: He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

11: Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

12: No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

13: Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

16: And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

17: Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

18: There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

19: We love him, because he first loved us.

20: If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

21: And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

[Note—A Saint has universal love for all living beings because all are sons of the same Lord God.]

(58) 2 John, 2, 5-6:

2: For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.

5: And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.

6: And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

[Note—A Saint believes in the universality of the Soul, and therefore in having universal love for all living beings.]

(59) 3 John, 3-5, 11:

3: For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth.

4: I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

5: Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers;

11: Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.

[Note—A Saint believes in and teaches about Truth. He speaks against evil and extols goodness.]

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(4.3) The HOLY BIBLE: Characters of Non-Saints and Evil Persons:-

Having read wholesomely about holy and noble persons, persons who are ‘true Saints in right earnest’, now let us read the Bible a little for the warning signs of unholy and wicked persons, the ‘Non-Saintly’ characters from whom one wouldst do good to himself by being guarded against such people. These evil characters of ‘non-saints’ are so obvious and stark that a simple reading of the following verses of the Bible would not need any further clarification, especially in the context of the earlier reading where the goodness of saints have been clearly emphasized and underlined.

(1) Romans, 3/10-18:

10: As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

11: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

12: They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

13: Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

14: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:

15: Their feet are swift to shed blood:

16: Destruction and misery are in their ways:

17: And the way of peace have they not known:

18: There is no fear of God before their eyes.

(2) 1 Corinthians, 2/9:

9: But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

(3) 1 Corinthians, 3/3:

3: For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

(4) 1 Corinthians, 6/8-11:

8: Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.

9: Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

10: Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

11: And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

(5) Galatians, 5/17-21:

17: For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

18: But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

19: Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

20: Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

21: Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

(6) 2 Thessalonians, 2/10-12:

10: And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11: And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

12: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

(7) 1 Timothy, 4/1-2:

1: Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

2: Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron.

(8) 1 Timothy, 5/12-13:

12: Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith.

13: And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not.

(9) 1 Timothy, 6/4-5, 9-10:

4: He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,

5: Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that

gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.

9: But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10: For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

(10) 2 Timothy, 3/1-7:

1: This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

2: For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

3: Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

4: Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

5: Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

6: For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts,

7: Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

(11) 2 Timothy, 4/3-4:

3: For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

4: And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

(12) Titus, 1/10-16:

10: For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision:

11: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

12: One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies.

13: This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;

14: Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.

15: Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled.

16: They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

(13) James, 4/1-2:

1: Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.

2: For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

[To wit, evil persons do not benefit at all by wise teaching or reading of the scriptures, and they remain as vile and corrupt as ever.]

(14) 2 Peter, 2/1-3:

1: But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

2: And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

3: And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

(15) 1 John, 3/8:

8: He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning.

(16) Jude, 4, 8-10, 12-13, 15-16, 18-19:

4: For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

8: Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

9: Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

10: But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

12: These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

13: Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

15: To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

16: These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

18: How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

19: These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

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(4.4) The HOLY BIBLE: Rewards for being a Saintly person:-

Now we shall read briefly about the rewards that accrue to a person who follows a saintly way of life, an auspicious and noble life marked by piety, holiness, purity, goodness and righteousness.

(1) Romans, 6/22-23:

22: But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

23: For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life.

(2) Roman, 8/6, 14, 18, 28, 38-39:

6: For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

14: For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

18: For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

28: And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

38: For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39: Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God.

(3) Roman, 12/1-2:

1: I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

2: And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your

mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

(4) Romans, 14/8:

8: For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

(5) 1 Corinthians, 3/8:

8: Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

(6) 1 Timothy, 6/8, 14-21:

8: But godliness with contenment is great gain.

14: That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable,

15: Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;

16: Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

17: Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;

18: That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

19: Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

20: O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

21: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.

(7) 2 Timothy, 4/18:

18: And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

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About the Author

Ajai Kumar Chhawchharia left home when he was approximately 29 years of age due to an inner call of his heart that told him to devote his life in the service of his beloved Lord God, Sri Ram. Worldly attractions did not enchant him at all. So, he didn't marry, and after his father's death he came and settled permanently in Ayodhya, the holy town in India associated with Lord Ram.

Presently he works as an honorary manager of a world famous Kanak Bhavan Temple at Ayodhya, and spends his time writing in English so that the world can access the wonderful nectar of metaphysical, spiritual and devotional philosophy that is contained in Indian scriptures for which they are so renowned.

His English Books published separately by a reputed publisher of India, the details of whom can be had by contacting the author on his email given below, include: (i) The series on '108 Upanishads' in five volumes having eighteen parts, (ii) Veda Vyas' 'Adhyatma Ramayan' in two parts, (iii) 'Devi Puran Ramayan', (iv) Valmiki's 'Adbhut Ramayan', and (v) 'Biography of Lord Ram' based on Tulsidas' books.

Genre of Writing: Spiritualism, Philosophy, Metaphysics, Religious, Devotional and Theological.

The author's Books are available for order online both in 'e-book' format and 'paper-back book' format at following websites—

- (a) www.amazon.com (in their 'kindle' + 'paper-back book' versions),
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- (d) <https://archive.org> at the following URL:
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List of Books that are currently available as mentioned above :-

(A) (1) The Chariot of God: Dharma Rath; (2) OM and Naad; (3) YOGA—Its Practice and Philosophy according to the Upanishads; (4) Ram Geeta; (5) The Revelation of Creation—as envisioned in the Upanishads; (6) The Pentagon of Creation: As Expounded in the Upanishads; (7) The Triumvirate of Creation; (8) Maya: The Whirlpool of Delusions in Creation; (9) Surdas-Ram Charitawali; (10-a) The legend of Lord Shiva: Book 1 'Lord Shiva's marriage with Parvati'; (10-b) Book 2 'Lord Shiva's Sacred Hymns'; (10-c) Book 3 'Shiva's different names & their significance, Shiva Puran, Upanishads'; (11) the Mahavakyas of the Upanishads; (13) Lord Ram's marriage with

Sita (based on Tulsidas' books "Ram Charit Manas", "Janki Mangal", "Ram Lala Nahachu" & "Geetawali", and sage Veda Vyas' book "Adhyatma Ramayan"; (14) "Anthology of Sacred Hymns, Stotras & Mantras of Lord Ram"; (15) "Vairagya Shatkam" of king-sage Bhartrihari; (16) An Anthology of the Sanyas Upanishads-Parts 1 and 2; (17) "Kaag-Bhusund Ramayan" or the "Aadi Ramayan" based on Tulsidas' Ram Charit Manas; (18) The Legendary Glory of Hanuman; (19) "Narad Bhakti Sutra"—Aphorisms for Devotion for God and the Principles of Love for the Lord; (20) "Shandilya Bhakti Sutra"—Aphorisms for Devotion for God and the Principles of Love for the Lord according to the illustrious sage Shandilya; (21) "Bhakti Sutra Mala"—A Garland of Spiritual Wisdom in the form of an Anthology of Aphorisms pertaining to Bhakti or devotion, love and affection for Lord God; (22) Glory of Lord Ram's Holy Name, Sacred Mantras, Stotras & Hymns; (23) Saints and Non-Saints: Their Distinguishing Characters and Qualities; (24) A True Guru (Qualities, Importance and Need of a True Teacher, Preceptor, Guide and Advisor); (25) "Sundar Kand" of Ram Charit Manas; (26) The Story of Ravana and the Epic War of Lanka—Told in Slow Motion (based on, and will have the full relevant Text of, Ram Charit Manas, Adhyatma Ramayan, Anand Ramayan, Geetawali Ramayan, and Kavitalawali Ramayan).

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Book under preparation:

(C) A full-blown English rendering of Tulsidas' epic 'Ram Charit Manas' is under preparation. It will be a unique Book and an elaborate one, as it would run into many thousands of pages that would endeavour to explain each single verse of Ram Charit Manas in detail from different perspectives, with the aid of explanatory notes and references.

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