

CANTO III : Nurturing Merit, Washing away Sins

Section 1

Summary : The earth is all-tolerating and saintly while the sea steals her wealth, stores it up, and the clouds collude with it. The nectar gathered by the sea from the earth is transferred and stored up in the moon.

[189] Whenever a cataclysm has taken place on earth, it has been because of flooding of water.

Tempting the earth with coolness, someone has robbed it, which is why it has been reduced to its pathetic state that we see today – it is neither a sustainer nor a giver of wealth. And water is a storehouse of gems, with riches flowing to it from the earth.

To cast a craving glance on another's wealth shows ignorance, and when you grab and shore up another's property, it is a severe case of living in a sleep of delusion. It is a very base act, for it troubles both yourself and others, and leads to a term in hell.

The sea, having committed this despicable act, has revealed its ignorance, its thoughtlessness. [190] The earth is sworn not to retaliate even against a harm-doer. That is why the earth is called the all-tolerating one, not the all-consuming one. And, to be all-tolerating is to find everything in life. That is the path the saints have trodden.

The Sun-god, just and fair, could not tolerate this injustice by the sea, nor could he tell this to anyone. Even so, he did not rest passive, he constantly endeavoured to dissolve the unjust side and help the just side to win.

So, with his hottest rays he evaporated all the water of the sea. Now the endless wealth accumulated by the sea by thievery could be seen by the gods and the king of gods. But see the working of one's inherent nature – the evaporated water became steam, [191] turned into clouds and kept concealing its sins and deception, filling up the sea again and again.

Many were the attempts to bribe the sun, but he did not deflect from his lawful path. But the moon got disturbed in this matter and sided with the water principle. He deviated from his divine aim and took a heavy bribe. That is how this owner of meager wealth is a holder of nectar – sudhaakar – today.

All the nectar of the earth accumulates in the sea, then gets transmitted upward, and it is sudhaakar, the moon, that consumes the nectar, not the sea. The sea is fated to remain salt. The moon reflects that what he did was not befitting his position and feels ashamed. His bright forehead is marked with a blot. [192] Otherwise why would he not come out in daytime, why would he come out of his home only at night? That, too, like a thief – scared and hiding his little face. And why does he stay so far away from the earth while the sun goes from close quarters?

It's a pity. The stars imitate the moon. Here the sea is in the same situation, it surges up on seeing the moon and boils upon seeing the sun.

It is a bitter truth that money-minded eyes cannot make out spiritual riches. The craze for money has reduced big names to shameful acts.



108 Acharya Vidyasagarji with his Muni-sangh for the deep meditation 'tapasya' under a cave during Vihar (travel)

The earth aims to exalt the sea to a respectable position – the sea that shores up pearls and guards them with the help of violent creatures.

It is a different matter that even the sea is a house of authentic pearls, because pearls are made of water – water is transformed into pearls. [193] All the same, when you think on this subject you realize that the earth plays the lead role in this act. Water is turned into a pearl in an oyster, which is made of earth. The earth has trained the oyster and sent it into the sea. The patient earth's aim is to liberate water from ignorance, make it a pearl – to draw it up from the pit into which it has fallen and to place it in a high position.

This is compassion. This is the right action for a human being.

But how is it possible for all to have a truth-ward nature? Water cannot give up its wayward ways. The nature of water is not to murmur and bounce – that is a mere pretext. Its nature is... deceptive.

On the sea's wide chest, innumerable oysters float with an open mouth, waiting for water drops. [194] As soon as a drop or two fall into oysters, the sea shuts their mouth and sinks them, afraid that someone might grab them. And it hides them in its fathomless, unreachable depth. If a diver reaches there to bring back the wealth to the earth, he is himself robbed. It is difficult for him even to return empty-handed.

Day and night an army guards this wealth – deadly venomous pythons, crocodiles that move about freely. At the sight of anyone unfamiliar they swallow him whole. If he eludes their grasp... then... then what? At least the surroundings can be made poisonous by emitting venom. That is why the sea has a rich store of poison.



A warm welcome is extended to 108 Acharya Vidyasagar-ji and his 'Munisangh' at Nagpur

The earth stays firm in her generosity despite the water principle's mean and vengeful ways.

The earth, though fully familiar with the ways of water, is not shaken from its stance. Leave aside obstructing an ungrateful being, [195] she doesn't even think of such an act. Look at the earth's generosity for the sake of living untroubled. She always thinks of everybody's welfare.

Just look. The bamboo is a fragment of the earth. She has told the bamboo that its beauty – the beauty of its race – lies in turning water into pearls and in doing this ages after ages. It should breathe deeply in times of struggle as well as in joyous times. What to say now? Mother Earth, having so ordained, the water raining from the clouds on dense bamboo forests on tall hills, where the trees touch the sky, started turning into vanshamuktaa – bamboo pearls. That is why Krishna the flute-player freely praises his flute and adorns himself with a pearl necklace. And he caresses the flute lovingly with his beautiful red lips. [196] Then in return he hears with his ears the melodious music, getting spellbound, losing himself in his daily and nightly dreams.

Similarly, the cobra, the pig, the crocodile, the elephant and the cloud – after whose names pearls have been named – are engaged in obeying the earth. The pearls so named are the bamboo-pearl, the oyster-pearl, the cobra-pearl, the pig-pearl, the crocodile-pearl, the elephant-pearl and the cloud-pearl. Even in the formation of the cloud-pearls, it is the earth which is responsible, as will be clear presently.

Because of all these peculiarities, the fame of the earth grew to the uttermost limit. And the moonbeam developed a fever.

The disdain for the earth grew further, and the water principle very quickly made its chess-moves under the moon's direction: occasionally the rainfall was scant. It started creating mires on the earth. To hurt the unity and [197] integrity of the earth, it started creating numerous parties.

A multiplicity of parties is a slayer of peace, isn't it? As many schools of thought, so many types of propaganda, so many ways of life. If you mix liquor with water, it exhausts you, doesn't it?

That is why here you find support for excess of rains, shortfall of rains and unseasonal rains.

For a minor selfish end, for some useless fame, all kind of untoward happenings can take place.

Where is the prayer, where the worship of the lord for everybody's welfare?

While this went on, this wide-eyed pen spoke up: "Shame on the degrading, world-destroying evil mentality! Shame on the oppressive, grievous money-minded men that are like a great vulture!"



108 Acharya Vidyasagar-ji, alongwith his brother :
Muni Shri Samaysagar-ji and Muni Shri Yogsagar-ji on a holy pilgrimage

The potter goes out of town on an errand, and the evil sea deposes three wickedly trained female clouds to flood and destroy the dry pitcher. The sun dissuades these clouds by discoursing on the virtues of womankind, defining a woman as something more than just a body – a pure, sobering principle.

[198] Three or four days have passed. the potter was under compulsion to go out of town on some errand. But only his body is away, his mind again and again returns to his home.

The body is called an organ – ang – while the mind is the bodiless one inside. From it, the god of love is born. It is the generator of all attachments, the disturber of all shades and moods.

Body control is easy while mind control, though not impossible, is problematic. It is like drinking bitter poison.

The sea thought, “The absence of the potter and the presence of dryness in the pitcher is my golden opportunity.” So, in its diplomatic way, through the agency of waves that called out to Lord Shiv, saying “Har, Har,” it signalled to the clouds. And the clouds had been already trained. [199] The sea is dull-brained. This doesn't imply that it is brainless.

The sea lacks the instinct to help others. That is its inborn nature.

Real intelligence lies only in this – in achieving others' welfare and destroying the calamities that befall one's own self and others.

At a signal from the sea, three female clouds start off. They are thin-waisted; they're respectfully alert, a storehouse of immense quantities of water, slow-paced like the elephant, and deluded. They walk down a lane in the sky. The first cloud, wearing a sari white as curds, outwardly looks like a chaste woman engaged in spiritual practice.

The next cloud has a mind contrary to the god of love. She is of one mind with her husband. [200] Her sari is like the laughter of the orange-coloured flame-of-the-forest flower. Her feet are dyed red in a way that puts the rose to shame. The renowned beauty Padmini feels shy before her. Wherever this cloud went, it changed the glow of the place. The last cloud is wearing a sari of the hue of pure gold, not imitation.

Their effort is, first of all, to influence the light of the sun. They circumambulated the sun. Within a matter of minutes, the sunlight was affected no doubt, but the sun was not affected or defeated. He did not change his routine a bit.

Seeing that his wife was affected, he launched into a discourse that was opportune but edgy: "In the boundless time past, [201] we have never heard nor seen a cataclysm on the earth triggered by womenfolk. These clouds that have come intent on bringing a cataclysm appear to deface their culture, don't they?

"Whether the hungry and thirsty children are her own or somebody else's, a mother's milk is not withheld but rather gushes out. The milk is waiting only for this opportunity.

"Is the compassionate heart also thirsting for bringing a cataclysm today? Are people selling off their religion for the protection of the body? Are people losing their shame to garner wealth?

"Womankind has many peculiarities that are held as ideal by men.

"Though always in bondage, women don't – even for a moment – commit an excess of sins. They are sin-shy. Why otherwise would they be called timid?

"Usually, women have to walk on the evil path only when forced by men. [202] But womenfolk have been honoured for their discrimination between good and bad.

"Their eyes radiate compassion. Hostility never touches them. One freely gets sociability and friendly gestures from them. A woman has no enemies and she is not a cutting tool like the saw.

"It is a woman who brings a holy environment or a great festival in life.

"She inspires unique faith in the heart of a forlorn, helpless, supportless man who is tired of life – a faith in the patient Mother Earth.

"It is she who tells man the right way to his destination.

"Not only this, listen further. A man who suffers from diarrhoea, [203] a man whose power of self-control has gone slack, a man who suffers from a craving for amassing overmuch wealth, is treated by a woman with a drink of butter-milk.

"The one who inspires decisive knowledge, who dispels darkness and

ignorance and awakens life is called weak – abalaa, a Hindi synonym for 'woman' in common parlance. Or, the one who focuses man's wandering mind from the past happenings and the hopes of the future to the present moment is called a woman.

“A woman is not a calamity, as the synonym 'abalaa' for woman signifies. She is a solution without a problem. In the absence of a woman, even a strong man becomes weak and the whole world proves to be a nest of problems. That is why the synonym 'abalaa' for woman is justified – she is not a calamity.

[204] “The Hindi word for a maiden, 'kumari', signifies that she is the earth that yields wealth. Hence, this earth will be lush with treasures as long as maidens are there. That is the reason why saints consider a maiden to be the first among the auspicious beings of the world.

“A householder's life appears seemly when he performs his religious duty – dharma; acquires lawful wealth – artha; and satisfies his due desires – kaama. These are his scripture-given tasks of a worthwhile life, his purusharthas. While trying to complete these tasks, normally it is the man who commits sins, and it is the woman who always endeavours to neutralize sin with merit. Only in order to impose control on man's desire and to make his worship fault-free, she conceives. She saves man from the tendency to over-accumulate and overspend by duly distributing the wealth earned.

[205] “Woman assists man in a householder's religious duties such as charity, worship and service. She makes him do all this, thereby guarding the religious tradition.

“She is a picture of equanimity, purity and self-control and she makes man proficient in the three scriptural tasks (purusharthas) namely righteous conduct (dharma), earning of wealth (artha) and fulfilling desires (kaama).

“You who desire happiness, listen. A daughter is a home of pleasant qualities and a source of comforts and conveniences. So say the scriptures.

“A daughter is one who accomplishes the welfare of two – her own and that of her husband, however fallen he may be. [206] Her presence is auspicious in two families – her own and her in-laws'. She brings happiness in this world and the next. Wherever she may be, she anyhow looks after the welfare of those around.

“We need to understand the importance of the word 'mother' as well. This word is closely related to knowledge. The power of understanding can never be acquired except by the blessings of the mother principle. That is why there is no man here – father or grandfather – who is the foundation stone of all. The birth-giver of all is the mother principle.

“In the absence of the mother principle, the knower-known relationship comes to a standstill. Such being the case, you tell me who will find peace, joy and liberation, why and how. That is why in this life let mother be always respected and honoured. Praises be.

[207] “For centuries, woman has been advising the male kind: 'You who are inflamed with desire, listen for a while. I am a woman but I'm not merely a body, I'm something else as well. Try to peep within the physical form, ask for something other than this composite of flesh and bones. What I have to give, you want to receive. That is something that is permanent; that is spotless brilliance. Be grateful to that weightless glow?’”



Ashok Patni-ji and Sushila Bhabhi offering bits of food 'Aahar' to Acharyashri-ji

The sun's disquisition changes the heart of the lady clouds and they worship him. Dust particles embrace the water-drops, and cloud-pearls are born, which rain on the pitcher.

This discourse of the sun touched the clouds' heart, and contrary feelings vanished. The debate came to a close, and in a few moments the dialogue also came to a close. As the outer form changed, so did the inner form. All three clouds changed.

[208] They felt that the side of their husband, the sea, was wrong while the side of the sun, the master of the world, was right. On learning of their bright tradition, they felt disgust at the crime they had committed, even disgust at themselves. So they at once said, "Master, pardon us our wrong. This servant begs for an opportunity to serve. When shall these eyes see a spectacular sight? May the dust settle down, master.

"The food which is untasted by us but which is an endless source of joy – may we taste that food."

The discrimination that knows milk from water, which knows what to do and what not to do, awakened in their heart. They became servants of a worthy master. They saw with even-minded eyes, and their body, mind and speech became gentle and pleasant.

They became engaged in charity, compassion, they became humble. They gave up their passions, [209] became detached and simple like the swan.

They became tolerant, nonviolent. They became reverential to sages and saints, worshipful of ascetics. They became impartial, and sang praises of the just side.

They cursed, as it were, the craving for the sensuous enjoyment to come. With wet eyes that were white, red and yellow, and full of respect and courtesy, they circumambulated the sun, to convert sins into meritorious deeds.

The earth's eyes observed all these happenings: the surface physicality shimmered and united with the affectionate heart within.

The earth's innumerable hands, in the form of innumerable particles of dust, quickly rise into the air. They reach the action point. They are there to caress the

water-drops that flow from the eyes of the clouds, rest awhile on the cheeks and shine, being the spotless white indicators of a pure life. [210] As soon as the distances were bridged, the solid particles met with the liquid particles in an embrace.

The residual conditionings – sanskaaras – of deception were also wiped out and all became deceit-free. This is how water was liberated. This is how the cloud-pearl was born of the clouds.

Whose was the qualification? What was the material cause? Whose is this help? What is this contribution? Whose is the pain? What is the life? Whose is the inspiration? Who is the saviour? All these doubts were cleared automatically. The whole mystery was out as pearls rained on raw pitchers in the potter's yard. A devotee appeared to prostrate himself before his revered feet.



*Acharyashri-ji and his holy Faithfulls (Shravak-gan) during Vihar
(travel on foot) in scorching heat*

The king comes to know of the pearl-rain and rushes with his team to appropriate the gems. But his mates fall unconscious upon touching the unearned wealth. The potter arrives, prays for the sufferers' recovery, gives them the pearls and apologizes to the king for the unwitting discomfort to him.

[211] The potter is absent and pearls rain in his yard. The whole atmosphere was lost in wonder. The neighbouring eyes peer greedily.

The news travelled in no time to the ears of the king. What to say now! The king's mouth waters. He comes with his train of courtiers that are lured and greedy. They are amazed to see the unique sight.

The troop is signalled to pack up the pearls in large bags. For the courtiers, the signal is like a command. As soon as they bend to pick up the treasures, a solemn voice thunders in the sky: "Terrible, terrible, terrible. It's a sin... it's a sin... it's a sin. What are you doing? Exert yourself, exude sweat. [212] You have been given the strength of arms, to show your prowess. Understand man rightly. If you swallow a ball of butter without doing physical labour, you'll never be able to digest it. Rather, your life will be in danger.

"A stranger woman is like mother, and unearned wealth, even pebbles of gold, are like dirt in the eyes of a noble man. But alas, where on this whole earth do you find such goodness? Only wickedness survives."

Even upon hearing these bitter and mocking words, the courtiers stretch out their hands. And as soon as they touch the pearls, they are as if stung by scorpions. Their body was roasted like a paapad on embers or a flame. They flounced and turned from side to side. From head to foot, in every limb they experienced an acute pain, as if on account of venom. The greedy troop including the grasping minister fell unconscious, their bodies turning blue. [213] On seeing this, the king also got scared. He could not open his mouth, as if his lips were locked. His pulse slowed down. He feels that somebody's mantric power has transfixed him. The hands cannot move – they are arrested. The feet cannot move – they are frozen. The eyes are blurred. The ears cannot hear, they are lost. He wants to retaliate but he cannot. He is in a fix. The atmosphere gets serious.

At that moment, onlookers crowd the place. The potter, too, arrives. As soon as he sees the sight, three lines are drawn in his eyes – of wonder, sadness and detachment.

The wonder is on account of the huge crowd, [214] the sadness is on account of the unconscious courtiers and the transfixing of the king; and the detachment is on account of the revelation that those who are enmeshed in woman and wealth are never free from unbearable sorrow. The potter wept at the thought that his yard had become an accident spot. Where people were prepared for heaven and other higher regions, a calamity had befallen that day. God, why is this auspicious yard a rink of fights?

It appears to him that his meritorious deeds had fructified into this happening. He prays to the lord for his own and others' good:

“May life not be robbed. May peace and joy prevail. May these people come to their senses – both physically and morally. May they be flooded with energy.”

For some moments, the atmosphere stops pulsating. The potter is lost in prayers. [215] Then the silence breaks with a loud utterance of the syllable AUM. The potter charges with the silent chant of a mantra some cold water on his palm. He prays in his heart for the well-being of people and sprinkles the water on the unconscious cabinet of ministers. Then, what to say!

Within a moment, their eyelids stir and the eyes open like a lotus in a lake, whose petals open into a gentle smile at the touch of sunrays.

On recovering their consciousness, the troop runs away from the pearls; the king, too, moves away, afraid that the mishap might be repeated. Then, the potter speaks without any eagerness, with a choked throat and a subdued trembling voice. His eyes water, his hands are joined, he bows with humility: “Master, my crime may please be pardoned. [216] You are the keeper of subjects, you are merciful. We are subjects, fit to receive your mercy. You are our parent, we are your children. This is your wealth. Our protection lies in your company.

“You and your courtiers had to suffer because of my absence. But such a thing will not repeat itself, master. Have no fear.”

So saying, the potter packed the bags with pearls with his own hands, with no fear in his heart. When the royal brigade and the king see this sight, they at once utter: “Hail the religion of truth. Hail the religion of truth.”

The pitcher criticizes the king for his greed.

At this moment, even the raw pitcher addresses the king with these germane words: “Your majesty, you have been saved by a hair's breadth. You are very lucky indeed. Otherwise you would have been evaporated by the heat [217] and you would have been lost in thin air. And what kind of wisdom is it that you touched a lighted scented stick? If the scented stick was drinking in its own fragrance, it would have been a different matter. But it was sending its mild perfume to your nose.

“Secondly, the crossing of the line of caution – Laxman-rekha – whether by Raavan or Seeta, or even by Raam himself, is sure to attract a nemesis.” One who burns in a desire for excess of money, who treats money as his life-breath and salvation, one who is enchanted by money, is not a pundit of ethical economics.

“In the shadow of this sensuous age of falsehood – kaliyug – most of the world has learnt only this lesson, being affected by business-minded surroundings, by prostitution...



The perfect ‘mudra’ of peaceful prayers - to be in touch with the Almighty

The pitcher's words ire the king. The potter instructs the pitcher not to preach to elders, and the king's rage subsides. The potter prays to the king to accept the gift of the pearls.

[218] The pitcher's ironical dig produces all at once three reactions on the king's wide forehead – shame, waves of anger, and worried thoughts on account of the actuality of the happening.

On seeing the transformation on the king's face, the potter considered the king's mind, then cast a sideward glance at the pitcher.

May the pitcher's words – knowledgeable about the self but piercing, producers of sweetness over time but bitter today – may these words come to a stop, so that his goodwill for the king may be expressed. The pitcher comes to know the king's hereditary tender nobility.

The potter addresses the pitcher, “If a youngster even by mistake preaches to elders, it is a sign of great and sorrow-generating ignorance. But to inculcate elders' good qualities, [219] that is to say to promise that you will follow the holy path, is a great, nectarine blessing. And, for an elder to give advice to youngsters suo motto even in a dream, that is to say, to imitate them in preaching, is to close the doors to happiness.

“But yes. If youngsters humbly ask for what is good for them, then to preach to them in sweet, short words about their welfare, impartially and without spiritual loss to yourself, is to balm one's sorrows.”

As the potter advises the pitcher, the king's rage gradually subsides – like the mercury in a thermometer or like the boiling milk into which a few drops of water have been added. [220] His excitement was quelled and his mental disorder gave way to peace. Seeing this, the potter with joined hands submits thus: “O wielder of the sword, O merciful, be kind to us who deserve your kindness. Do the favour of accepting this wealth.

“Don't treat it as a gift. Your majesty, this is your necklace, your decoration. This is your victory. For us to use or enjoy this wealth would be our defeat.”

The pearls, too, plead for their acceptance by the king, and the ruler does so.

The pearls on top in the bag peep outside and see and listen to the potter's humble prayer to the king. They even understood, through the king's gentle smile, the excitement of joy in the king's mind, his inclination to accept the offer. They are as if saying, "O king, this befits your status. Do accept."

But listen, the pearl – muktaa – is true to its name; it is free – mukt – [221] from attachment or aversion, free from the faults of pride, arrogance and envy. First they dropped from the sky into the yard, then scattered apart and were stashed in bags. Now they are proceeding to the royal palace with honour. They are being freely praised, but when did they listen to their praises as if hypnotized? They become crisis-quelling necklaces of happy women. They become protective festoons on doors, placing their hands on the heads of visitors. Even then the pearls remain unchained, free from pride.

The king thinks over the potter's prayer and the supporting words of the pearls, he thinks over the atmosphere and gladly accepts the offer. [222] He takes the rare wealth of pearls and enriches the royal coffers.

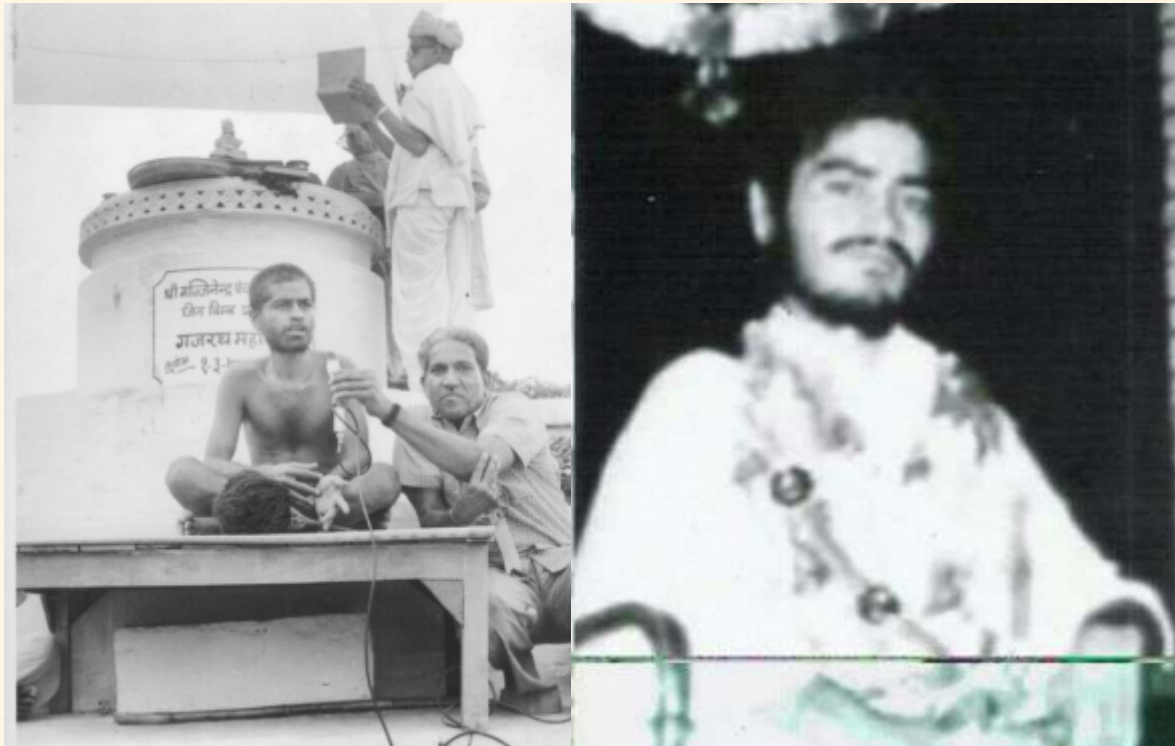


A life of simplicity and penance - now & ever

The earth's brilliance, outshining the moon's, increases.

Similarly, the earth's white radiance puts to shame the rays of the moon and spreads in ten directions, into the limitless void.

The simple love for the earth which varied kinds of glow cherish, goes on increasing – the glow of men valiant like the sun, of rich folk, intelligent folk, courageous folk, of pictures, of infants and animals, of lucky adolescents, of young men and women, of bands of ascetics, of landlords and saints, of chaste women, of hardworking rishi-like farmers, of wielders of the sword or the pen, of men rich in supernatural powers, of enlightened souls, of men of great qualities, of trees and gurus, of fragrant leaves, of larger clusters of bushes, of bunches of fruits and tender flowers, of smooth newly-sprung leaves, of hills and festivals, of ever-sliding rivers, of beautiful lotus-rich lakes... and so on.



The intensity & depth of the Discourse being lucidly explained by Acharyashri-ji, when young.
And, Acharyashri-ji, taking the 'Diksha' - the holy moment of being true to oneself,
one's faith and the FAITH-GIVER

The sea schemes afresh to damage the pitcher. The fire of the sea-bottom threatens the sea, at which the sea rejoins with vehement hostility.

[223] Oh, what is this topsy-turvy outcome? This is the poisonous way of the sea. It gets irritated on observing the earth's rising fame. O friend, this is a feeling of intolerance, no doubt.

The clouds had been sent to destroy the pitcher and reduce it to clay, for this they had been trained. But seeing that they were returning shyly, having worshipped the foe and enhanced the earth's glory with a rain of pearls, the sea instantly became extremely agitated. Its eyes grew red, its brows were furrowed, and its solemnity turned to fear. [224] It foresaw an unhappy future. With a sinful and polluted mind, the sea reflectively utters these words: "A woman – whether your own wife or another's – has this inveterate nature: she never clings to any one side. Otherwise, is it an easy thing to give your resignation to your motherland and mother's home? And that too without a twinge of sorrow, without effort? As for men, this is not only a tough job, it is impossible at all times. That's why a woman should not, even by mistake, become the controller of a family's cultural tradition. And she should not be told of confidential parlays, of your secret stand."

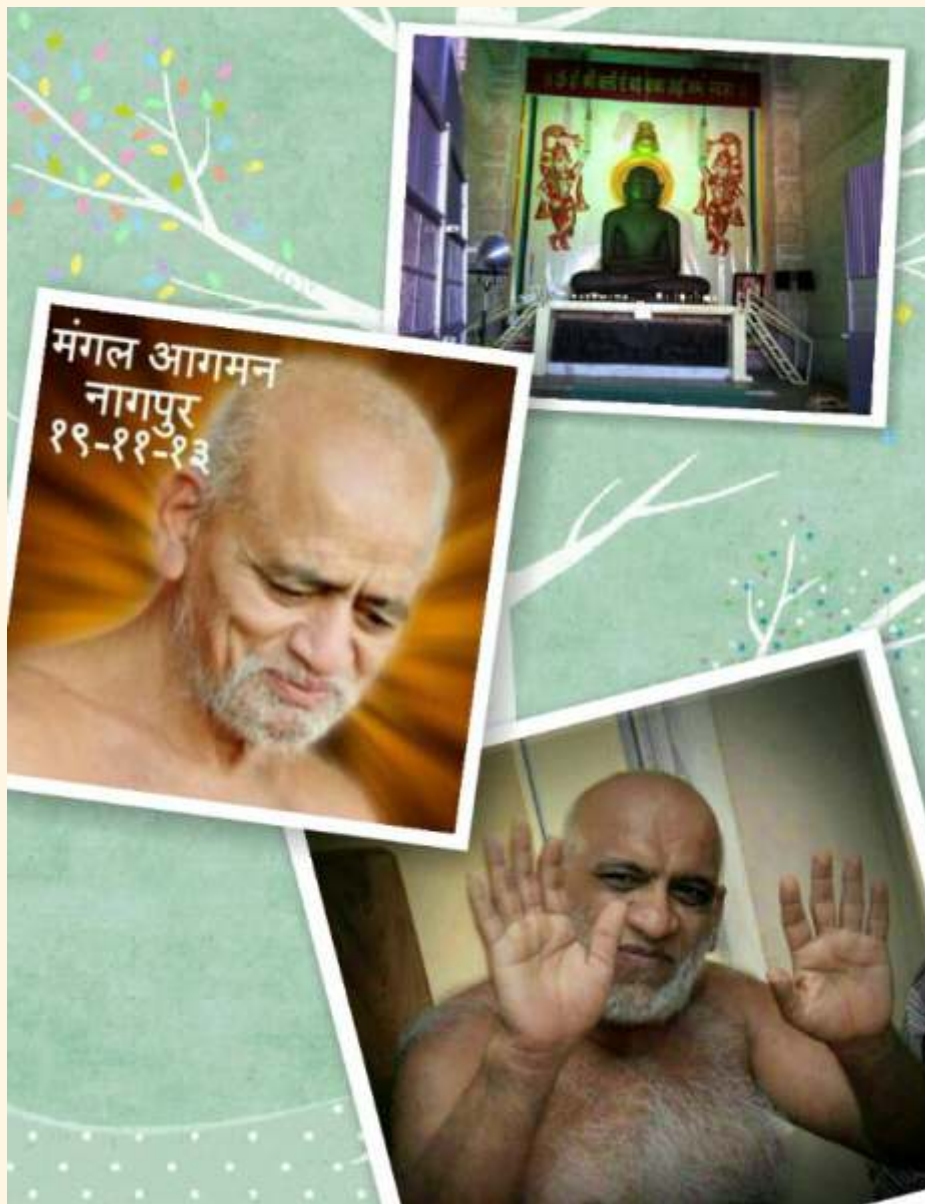
The sea cherished a bitter hostility towards the earth, arrogance towards its elders and an insatiable lust to rule over all, to consume all. [225] The glowing sun could not stand the position taken by the sea. The sun, therefore, secretly signalled to the fiery principle which was an inhabitant of the sea-bottom, which was of the same caste as the sea. However, in result, the sea-bottom fire flared up, declaring, "O sea, a house of salt, even a moment is enough for me to drink you up."

When occasion calls, even gentlemen and noble souls have to resort to an outburst of feeling to accomplish their job. Otherwise their nobility turns base, and wicked people get worshipped. How can good people ever like such a thing?

The sea guffaws and says sarcastically, "What you say is one thing and what you do is quite another. You don't do what you say nor say what you do. [226] The sun is burning overhead, you are flaring up beneath, but where is there a change in the coolness of my waters? The waters neither burn nor boil. What a pity that despite my cool company you didn't cool down, you didn't give up your hot temper.

“Secondly, because of your hot nature, your bile always overflows and your mind is always stirred up.

“Why otherwise would you rave like a madman as to what you would do? To normalize your bile, beg of me for a remedy, drink in the nectar that is like moonbeams. And don't ever side with the sun.”



The FAITH-GIVER Almighty. the FAITHFUL follower and the blessings receiver

The sea launches three male clouds, evil by nature and long trained by himself in warfare, on a mission to demolish the pitcher.

[227] The sea is chockfull of deceptions. Its labours begin again with the chief aim of inundating the earth with a cataclysm.

That is why this time it has trained, over a long, long period of time, three male clouds. They are not female clouds to change their party or to melt with pity within no time.

The chief job of these clouds has been to obstruct good work. The job is heinous and its consequences miserable.

They rise one by one from the salty, watery sea like airplanes, taking their party along. The first cloud is so dark that a swarm of beetles that has confusedly separated from its companion looks upon this cloud as the lost friend and repeatedly goes and meets it. And it returns disappointed. It means the first cloud is darker than the beetle.

[228] The second one is blue like a venomous snake spitting venom. It is blue-throated, sportive. In its blue glow, a ripe and yellowed rice field looks green. The last group of clouds is pigeon-grey. All three of them are dark of the heart as they are dark outwardly, too.

To comment on their mindset: they are mighty and sinful. They nurture an unmitigated ego. Their hearts are pitiless and they continually engage in quarrels. They cannot digest their food unless they quarrel. The ghosts run away scared on seeing them from afar. The no-moon night also gets terrified and hides somewhere far from them. That's why this kind of night comes out of its house only once in a month. [229] The night is a sister of the clouds. The sea befriended the moon and the moon earned a bad name, a blot on his character. Because the moon could not marry a beautiful woman, he got related to the night. The sea is responsible for this.

They are possessed by the ghost of attachment and can never be controlled by anyone, whatever one does. They have been full of ill-will, crooked, engaged in evil acts. They find their satisfaction in troubling others. As soon as they see others, they get hot with anger. Vengefulness is their inborn nature. They don't easily give up their animosity against anyone. They blame the innocent, create unrest among

those who are contented, they speak ill of respectable people and disrupt good work.

Even by mistake they do not wish to savour the good feeling of noble work. They are lost in sensuality, they cultivate passions. [230] These clouds are carriers of dead matter namely water, thereby becoming dull-brained and supercilious.

Though clouds are also called payodhar – holders of water – they only rain poison in the rainy season. Why, otherwise, are they dark as beetles? It is a different matter that as soon as they unite with the earth, the poison becomes nectar. The question also arises – why are the autumn clouds, which follow the rainy season, diamond-white?



The purification before the way to holiness

These clouds make a threatening war of words on the sun.

The availability of a remedy is not enough to achieve your object. It is essential that the obstructions are removed. And this does not happen automatically, you have to exert yourself.

Keeping in mind this scheme of cause and effect, the party of clouds first quickly dashes against the sun which comes in their way. Drunk with pride, [231] they thunder loudly, “Why do you side with the earth? Why does the sea irritate you?

“You donkey, listen. You may be termed the jewel of the sky, you may be the lord-planet of the solar system, you may be the foremost among the planets, but you seem extremely perturbed. O fiercest of the fierce, you have assumed a body in vain. Where is your resthouse? That's why all day you wander from door to door like a poor wretch. How dare you enter into a struggle against the sea?

“You wretch, at least now take the side of the sea and be kind to yourself. Earn happiness, peace and a good name. This is your opportunity, encash it. Now use your head, give up your perversity. [232] Otherwise we shall soon arrange for an eclipse. Ill-fame results from stubbornness and a stubborn person has always been consigned to jail.”



A humble effort to shift the Lord Parshwanath Idol, a symbol of Divine Faith

The sea counter-argues robustly and expresses his determination to do the enemy in.

The ten directions were deafened to hear this hard, harsh and bitter barrage of words. The sky dimmed, sinking into the cluster of clouds scattered all over the place. That into which others sink was itself sunk.

The halo of the sun was somewhat dulled and it said, “You cheats, you who dupe others and laugh! You who live a fragmented life, you who side with hypocrites and fly! It will take some time for you to understand this mystery.

“A devotee and not a sinful person is scared of this dreadful and hollow world. A sighted person and not a blind one is scared of deep dense darkness. [233] To slay violence is to worship nonviolence and adore it. To slay a violent person or to worship him regularly is to slay nonviolence... which is heinous. The earth has fortitude because she goes by her intellect, her discretion. The sea is cowardly because he is engrossed in his body.

The sun offered soft flowers in worship to the earth's intelligence and rewarded the sea's baseness with hard thorns of rebuke – dealing with each according to their deserts. Then the sun felt an access of self-respect and all of its intense heat rose to the surface. His eyebrows became tense. They were as if drenched in blood and looked frightful. The tongue leapt out and seemed to drip with thick drops of fire. He roared, “No, no, I shall spare no one.” [234] He conflagrated like a forest-fire. One doesn't understand this properly.

In both his fully open eyes, is there lava rising? It is an illusion! The volcano is glaring outward, being the primary source of the fire element and the powerhouse of the world.

The fire-principle is exported to all parts of the world only from here. In its absence, the traffic of the animate and the inanimate would come to a standstill. There would be total darkness all around.

On the path leading to Divine BLISS :
Sudhsagar-ji with
Abhaysagar-ji Maharaj
and other Munishri



The sea witnesses the war between the clouds and the sun and invokes the evil planet Raahu, bribes him heavily with jewels, and deposes him to eclipse the sun.

The sea, who is engaged in looking down upon others, sees how the sun tries to burn the mean parties of clouds. And he remembered the demon Raahu and spoke: "How long shall the sun behave thus arrogantly? Influenced by the earth and serving her, the sun is swallowing down the decency of the solar system. Aren't you acquainted with him? [235] Does the deer also act according to its own wishes before the king of the forest, the lion?

"Can the frog, too, play at the mouth of a venomous snake? Does it so happen that under the pretext of serving the earth, the sun is mocking at you? Whatever happens, and whatever you wish to have, you shall have. Your demands will be fulfilled with all respect. This immeasurable wealth is waiting for you.

"Doesn't the true fulfilment and proper use of wealth lie in this, that decent folk are fostered and fed, and the wicked are punished and liquidated?"

Raahu saw the wealth coming his way along his passage and he went astray. Alas, it is a pity that Raahu has changed his way. This sin went on secretly in broad daylight – export from the sea to the solar sphere. [236] Airplane loads of countless shimmering jewels, looking like white laughter, enchanting diamonds, authentic stones of varied kinds, pearls, corals, rubies, slabs of yellow topaz, sapphires and silver sticks – all these were transported.

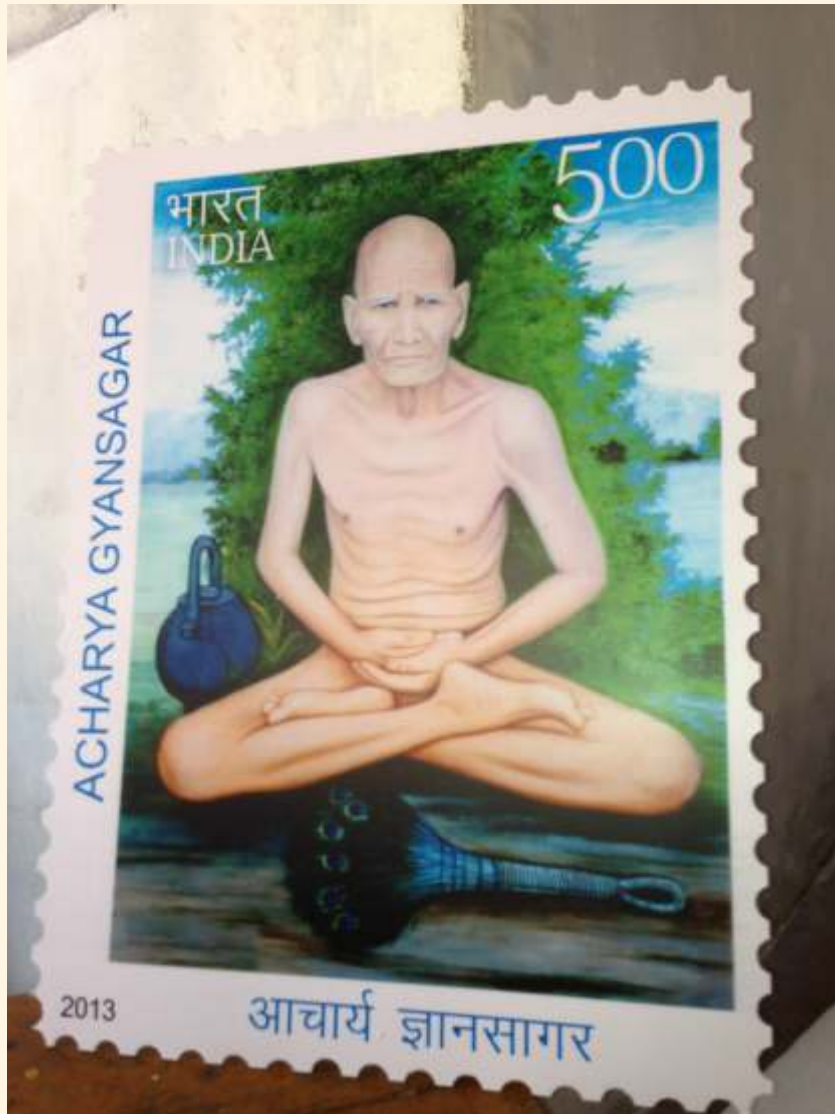
Raahu consented to the sea's proposal and accepted the presents. Gone was the sea's weakness, his side gained strength. When Raahu's house was filled with immeasurable wealth of the unearned kind, his head was filled with poisonous sinful thoughts.

Having touched untouchable wealth, Raahu became so black a house of sin, he became near-invisible. His merit was at the lowest low. None could see him, none could touch him.

Look, with similar thoughts, two powers joined hands. The ivy of gurvel is bitter by itself. When it climbs on the bitter-gourd plant what can one say of its bitterness?

[237] A happy outcome or a sad one lies in the lap of the future, turning from side to side. Even then, where do the two have peace of mind? Their anxieties have multiplied.

By day or by night, in light or in darkness, they see a cataclysm with closed eyes. They feed on thoughts of a cataclysm, it is their *raison d'être*.



The image of the postal stamp on Guru Gyansagar-ji Maharaj, released by the Postal Deptt., Govt. of India

Raahu virulently engulfs the sun, robbing the natural world on the earth – animals and vegetation – of their usual liveliness and cheer.

If the earth is submerged, how will anyone find a home and a livelihood? If the earth wins, who will not find a sanctuary and the incomparable wealth that life is.

We, you and they, anyone who wishes for it, will find it. But alas, where does the evil duo know the ramifications of this thought? The one who had the gait of a sly serpent, cheeks terrifying like death itself, devoid of the blessings of saints, acquired the strength of arms. [238] Raahu, the traveller on the path of the swine, lacking the discrimination between good and evil, and cruel by nature, lost its temper. In fact he became furious, and noiselessly, without breaking the powerful sun into morsels, swallowed him whole. Like a drip in an ocean, like a child in its mother's ample lap, the sun merged into Raahu's mouth. As the sun disappeared, it looked like the end of the day. The day looked poor and miserable – a poor householder surrounded by hard times.

Is it evening or the advent of untimely death? Where is the joy of the courtyard of lady sky, like the vermilion mark that women wear on their forehead? The state of the directions changed and they looked like the body of one suffering from chronic illness. The sun, a lotus-friend, could not be seen and as a result the cluster of lotuses bloomed with lesser charm – an untimely happening. The life of forests and gardens appeared to be wiped out. [239] The elixir of the wind appeared to be scattered off. Fire, as you know, is a friend to the wind, and the sun is the fountainhead of fire.

Although the wind is a nonstop and untiring traveller, today his feet stop upon seeing his friend lose his livelihood.

Flocks of languorous birds give up their panoramic views and quickly go and sit in their nests, deeply anxious about the future. These are the birds who are images of innocent lovingkindness, they fly unrestricted with minds of their own, they live by music, restrain their impulses, and are free from all attachments. Their sole companion is their body, they serve their society, and their hearts are flush with motherly tenderness. They are destroyers of baseness and of the passionate tendency, they are pure, their labour is their wealth, they shun animosity towards

anyone, and know the Vedas. They now wonder if this is evening, are alarmed by the sudden happening, and their wings are tired.

Every moment they are trembling with compassion, so their bodies shiver.
[240] Because of their deep fear, the moist particles within come out as tears.

These are the same ears that we had yesterday, but where is yesterday's chirping? Even the cuckoo's throat is choked. Forests, gardens and lovely parks are all filled with pathetic cries.

And what is the condition of animals and vegetation? Crows, cuckoos, pigeons, kites, sparrows, pied cuckoos, tigers, sheep, hawks, herons, antelopes, deer, lions, rabbits, donkeys, rogues; lovely sky creepers; highest mountain peaks; grown-up trees and plants; leaves, fruits and flowers – are all filled with the sorrow of separation that is hard to look at even for a moment. The flocks of birds resolve that they would give up food and water till the calamitous eclipse got over. They would give up entertainment of themselves and others and all sorts of pleasures, too.



*108 Acharya Vidyasagar-ji offering the blessed Acharya Bhakti
with the group of Faithfuls the 'Muni Sangh' at Ramtek*

Dust particles rise to the occasion to save the earth.

[241] When the clouds saw the lament of creatures of the sky and earth, and noted that the sun was writhing in Raahu's mouth, they felt greatly empowered.

When your enemy faces defeat, this is what always happens. But it ought not to happen. When your own side loses, you get a heart attack. This is out of the foolishness of the world. Now who can stop the clouds? The stage is set for the clouds to send down cataclysmic rains. So says the atmosphere.

The earth thinks, "When the winds don't work, medicine works. When medicines also don't work, prayers work. And when prayers also don't work, what remains? Who gives support? Listen, then. This firm, eternal, self-controlled consciousness works all by itself."

All particles of dust humbly request the earth: [242] "May the mother be duly honoured. We belong to the race of Raghu, Lord Ram. We admire dexterity, but are destroyers of proud races.

"The family in which saints and supreme saints were born, are born, and will be born should not be forgotten. Allow us to serve the family tradition. May that which has deserved labour only be the subject of discussion.

"Today, instead of juicy talk, insipid food appears to be more delicious and healthful."

They place their heads respectfully at the holy feet of him who wishes the whole world's welfare. She blesses them thus: "Attack sin and hypocrisy. Accept the path of goodness and merit."



Chief Minister Hon. Mr. Raman Singh (of Chattisgarh) seeking blessing of Acharyashri-ji

The dust particles clash with the falling water-drops and absorb them in midair. The king of gods Indra rallies, too, and shines a rainbow in the sky.

The innumerable particles – capable like a strong-willed ascetic, ready for the job and imbued with boundless zeal – fly into the limitless void. They look like warriors – dignified, devoted to their motherland and red-eyed – who jump into the battlefield when they hear the battle call. Like the sparks that fly off when red-hot iron is struck with a sledge-hammer, these red particles of dust absorb water-drops from moment to moment. A single particle absorbs several drops of water. The water-drops exert themselves fully but cannot penetrate the dust particles, cannot reach the earth. [244] The downward-moving water-drops and the upward-flying dust particles clash mightily. As a result, every single drop of water is violently scattered into tiny droplets. There is tumult all round and a smoky atmosphere is seen in the boundless solar system.

The clouds are in trouble. Dust particles, though solid, are free from sin. But how can the drops falling from the clouds be sinless? Loaded with a hundred kinds of sin, they run away terrified. The dust particles hunger for them, and deadly like death, chase the water-drops. At this moment, the king of gods, Indra, also appeared. He descended secretly. He was not seen himself, only his bow – the rainbow – is seen.

[245] Great souls don't come to light, nor do they want to. They are happy enough shedding light. It is a different matter that light necessarily illumines all – its friends and strangers – all who can be illumined. Then, where is there a thing which has no existence? Further, how is it possible that a thing exists and cannot be seen? Like Indra, I desire the same.

I want to be a reporter of facts, not a source of agony. I want to be a giver of shape, not a storyteller. This pen feels the same: “May the work survive, may culture survive for eternity – wakeful, alive, unconquered. The works should reflect in captivating shapes the beauty of spontaneous nature. The doer should never appear before the world [246] with the rumble of pride, full of the deformities of the salty world. The welfare of one's self and others is surely shapeless.”

Indra shoots arrows at the clouds, and the sea in response sends a reinforcement of more evil clouds. Hails rain on the earth.

Today, Indra's prowess touches a peak. He draws the bow-string with his right hand all the way to the right ear and continuously shoots sharp arrows to prick and pierce the bodies of clusters of clouds, making them all deformed and torn.

They become pitiable like wild marble. One feels like crying.

Wherever the eye goes, one sees only dust particles – only a few water-drops remain. That is why the sea sends more of water-saturated clouds with instructions as to what they should do. [247] As instructed, the clouds produce lightnings. Angry lightnings flashed, dazzling everybody's eyes. All eyes got clamped as if stuck with gum. What to speak of others, even Indra, who is blinkless by nature, instantly started blinking. His eyelids started batting again and again. Now Indra got enraged and hurled his failsafe missile vajra at the clouds. Struck by vajra, the clouds groaned with an “Ah”, which deafened the solar system.

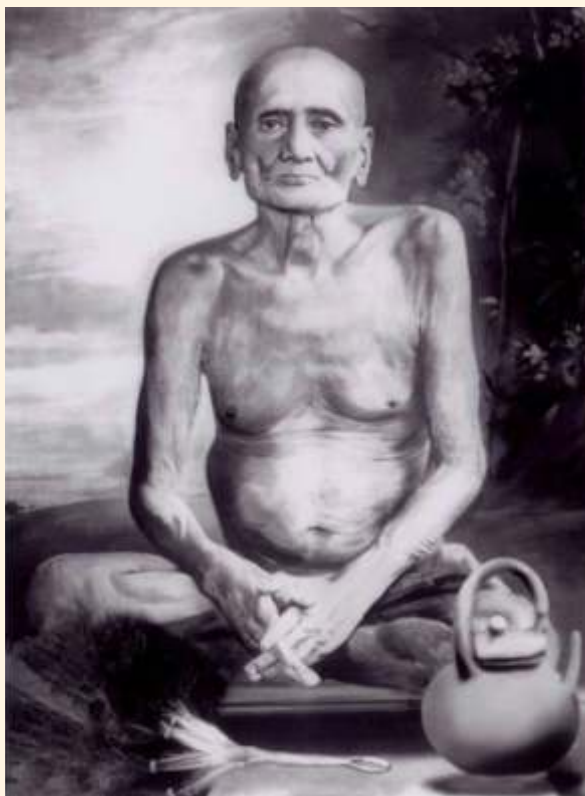
This Raavan-like lament of clouds proved to be inauspicious for the sea. A large amount of dust particles invaded the fire-spitting eyes of the lightning, causing her unbearable pain. In this adversity, even the lightning started trembling. That must be the reason why [248] the lightning is a moving thing, unstable and evanescent. As this mishap occurs, the scared clouds get the signal from the sea that if Indra has used the vajra, they should use Raam's arrow – Raam-baan – the unfailing remedy.

The sea encourages the clouds, “Don't talk of retreating. Give tit for tat. Make no delay in raining hails, launch a hailstorm. The clouds felt a surge of enthusiasm and their pride awoke. They started manufacturing hails. It appeared more of an inauguration and unveiling of endless stores rather than their manufacture.

The hails came in many shapes and forms – small and large, microscopic and giant, triangular, quadrangular, pentangular, of different shapes and weights, round and well-proportioned... What to say and what to hear? The solar system was filled with hails. [249] This pen sets out to compare the solar system with the earthly world. In the solar system, nuclear energy works while on the earth human

power works. Above, a machine is rolling; below, a mantra is being chanted. The first is a killer, the second a saviour. One lives by logic, the other by faith, careless of a livelihood. One is hanging in space with no foothold, the other is sheltered by the earth. That's why the solar system has brains but no feet. Maybe white ants have eaten away its feet. The earthly world can walk as well as climb up, as the occasion demands. The world above may lose its temper and then it follows the course of destruction and fall.

This, too, is known to all: a question-mark is always suspended above, [250] while a full-stop always rests below. The answer to a question is always below, not above. In the answer is rest and peace without end. A question is always restless, but after the answer there is no room for a question. A question ends its life as a drop merges into the ocean.



*Munishri Shantisagar-ji,
a Life dedicated to spread the goodness of the FAITH to all the Faithfulls*

A violent war flares up between the hails and dust particles in which the dust particles outclass the hails.

In this comparison made by the pen, the countless hails felt belittled and they unleashed their fury on the dust particles. The particles countered by giving them a taste of their strength. They clashed with the hails head-on and flung them far away into the space, beyond the earth's gravitational pull, the way satellites such as Aryabhata and Rohini have been launched.

During this clash, some hails were shattered instantly into numerous bits. The scene appeared [251] as if the fragrant coral flower was scattering its petals and they slowly descended to the earth with happy smiles. They appeared to be rained by the gods from heaven to felicitate the earth.

As if wanting to avoid pain to some hails, dust particles flew holding them on their head. This looks as if the Monkey-god Hanuman is flying with the Himalaya on his head. This kind of attack and counter-attack went on or hours on end. The currently much talked-about Star Wars fades into insignificance before this.

The gathering of pitchers is also watching the drama in the sky with open eyes. Our pitcher, though, feels no tremors of fear because of it. He watches like a mere disinterested witness, registering everything – the simple and the poisonous, the whole as well as the part. [252] Yet the wonder is that not a single hailstone can come down to break the pitcher. Talking of victory and defeat, the dust-particles have won and the clouds and hailstones don a garland of defeat – devoid of fragrance, faded and lifeless.

Even then, new clouds keep coming, new hailstones are produced, lightnings flash from time to time. The struggle intensifies, the dispute, the tug-of-war, the deception go on. The sea keeps sending its cruel signals. And so it goes. All this results from the inflammation caused by defeat. Anger does not easily accept its defeat.



Coins in Ancient India

The craftsman prays ardently for a happy resolution of the drama in the sky. Days go by, and the rose plant wishes to aid the potter's cause.

Even in this adversity, unique is the courage, sacrifice and penance of the dust particles. The honour of motherland, the glory of Mother Earth cannot be upheld except with unflinching faith. The honour and glory would have been lost long ago.

[253] The craftsman calls to mind these things and is immersed in the worship of his deity. He does not ask for anything.

This does not mean that he feels no pain, no privation. Yes, the want of money is no want. To ask God for money is vain, isn't it?

What should you ask for that which you don't have and don't wish to keep? But O lord, the want of spiritual wealth has become unbearable. When will this want be removed?

When an adolescent is for some reason overcome with sorrow and exhausted, and goes to sleep with the help of the death pose of hathayoga – shavaasan - the mother senses the odour of solidified sorrow in his least little sobbing. She can hear the movement of his respiratory system, the incoming and outgoing breath. (253)

Just because he is not tearing the clothes on his body, not beating about his limbs on the ground, not contorting his face and wailing aloud, if one infers that he has no sorrow, the inference cannot be held as correct.

Here, only the outward expression of sorrow is missing but the inner sky is overcast with sorrow. If even God, who is immanent in all beings, cannot see it, then whose are the eyes that can see it and console him sympathetically? May the honour of Mother Earth be upheld, God. May the pride of water be subdued. There is a limit to testing anyone. Too much of testing deflects a traveller from his path and he/she feels less attraction for the journey's provision. Frequent deep breathing shakes the wall of courage and tends to cause a crack. [255] Ugh! Would our life be lost prematurely?

Days passed. Several days passed. Only then was the reason known why the

craftsman – his soft, loving smile, his affectionate words – were missing. The rose plant remembered the gentle caresses of his hands and the cool, affectionate watering to the accompaniment of music, the memorable moments of the past.

The plant cast a glance far away, where the craftsman was sitting in the yard. He is tired of sensuous enjoyment and immersed in yoga and devotions. His mind is a handmaiden at God's feet. His face reflects a little bit of sadness.

Looking at his master in a state of dilemma about his true duty, the rose plant spoke up: “May this calamity end soon. [256] God, when we remember you, the direst calamities vanish in no time. When I find you the nearest near in my heart, why this delay in the work of the master – the arya?”



*Munishri Shantisagar-ji, the seeker of DIVINE FAITH, and
the Giver of the Blessed HOPE to the needy*

Rose thorns also rise to act on behalf of the potter, but the flowers quiet down their enthusiasm. The roses summon up their friend the wind.

At this moment, that is to say in response to the current calamity, the rose thorns also chatter their teeth and speak these bitter words: “O calamity, what a heartless and deceiving fellow you are! Don't spread like thorns in the path of sinless, blameless, pure-hearted, passion-free travellers.

“Give up your stubbornness. It is high time you went away far somewhere. Otherwise, don't you know that a thorn removes a thorn. Take care, within a few moments there won't be any trace of you.”

In the meantime the flower dangling from the branch gets active on the same subject. [257] He neither contradicts the thorns nor scolds them. He speaks some pertinent words to cool down the thorns' heat and excitement.

When a needle is enough, why should anyone strike with a sword? When a flower is enough, why should anyone use thorny words? If you can pluck fruit standing on the ground, then climbing to the tree-top is not only a waste of time and energy, it shows your poor judgement. Thus the fragrant rose demonstrates to his fast friend the use of right policy, and displays his abundant stores of love in action. He spreads his fragrance in every atom, in every particle far and wide. He thus remembers the fragrance-bearing wind.

A few moments pass and the wind arrives. And what is he like? He resembles nature in that he is polite, loyal and thoughtful like her. He wanders among graves and gardens, [258] equally busy in spring, rainy season and summer. He radiates a friendly feeling every moment of life and greets with a paternal feeling. Such a wind has arrived.

It is about such personalities that saints have pronounced: “He whose allegiance to duty touches the limit, has his standing in society cross all bounds.”



108 Muni Mahasagar-ji, during his one of the discourses to spread Faith & Sunshine at Rehali, Patnaganj (Atishay Shetra)

The wind arrives and launches an attack on the clouds.

The rose was overjoyed that a mere memory had brought about a meeting with his friend. With a glad face, he swung on the branch, thus offering a spontaneous welcome to his friend.

The flower bathed the wind in his love, and in return the wind shook down the flower.

[259] They remain silent for a while. Then the wind courteously asked, "You've remembered me, so I wish to know the purpose so that I may perform my due and earn heaps of merit, sanctify myself. I have nothing else in mind. And yes. The sentiment that I should help and assist is merely a pretext.

"Through the agency of others I advance towards equanimity of mind. This is the easiest path, and a catharsis of the negative feelings towards others that choke the mind." When the wind spoke thus, the flower said no word in reply but only gazed solemnly at the earth. Then, overcome with a feeling of charity, he cast a compassionate glance at the distant craftsman, [260] who does not gaze even at his own body – what to talk of others' bodies?

A few moments slid by and the flower's face flushed with anger. His petal-lips trembled with emotion. With a red-sandal glow in eyes, he looks up at the clouds – the ungrateful, quarrelsome clouds. They are a calamity incarnate and display anger at the detached way of life. Their terrible fate resembles the ruin of good feelings.

The flower saw different characters and their varied expressions and rejected some while greeting others respectfully. The change in its behaviour was enough for the wind. Yes, indeed. The unspoken also certainly gets known to one who strives. In disciplined devotion, will anyone be perturbed by things that are unexpressed?

[261] All will be revealed to him/her in no time.

The wind, as soon as he comes to know the duty of the moment, braces himself at once. Expressing his gratitude to the earth, he assumes a formidable form and thunders angrily: "You misguided clouds, use your powers for good purposes, don't take delight in torturing others. Your crooked ways will not solve any problem. Whatever you do or not do, the end of your party is dissolution – and it is near, very near."

The clouds and hails are routed and collapse into the sea.

The wind reaches the sky with the speed of thought and ropes in the arch-sinners among the clouds. He then turns towards the source of the inanimate principle, the sea.

Then mustering all his strength he pushed them.

[262] He lifts both his arms a little and plants one foot firmly on earth. The wind looks on like a child who kicks a ball with his heel, drawing one's legs backward.

What to say now! Along with the cloud party, innumerable hailstones all at once fall into the sea head-first. It looks as if the leaders of the wicked, bound by their sins and terribly sad, are falling into hell whirling.



The Master and the Disciple - in perfect communion - all PEACE ('SHANTI')

After several days of unquiet, under a clear blue sky, everything on the earth experiences a renewal.

Here, after several days one could see a cloudless, clear sky. The wind felt glad and the solar sphere zealously and joyfully spoke: “May the honour of the earth be preserved and may we all have deep faith in her. That's all.”

[263] The buds opened up and mingled with the wind's laughter in the lanes of the sky with a new enthusiasm, new spirit, with a wave of energy in their limbs. A new dawn brought fresh warmth. There was a new décor for the new festival. One saw with new eyes and had a new appreciation. There was fresh watering and fresh thinking, a new refuge and a new choice, a new diet and a new devotion. New feet walked a new path, new tools fashioned a new product. There reigned a new music, a new pollen. There was a new awakening and there was no running away. There were new gestures and a new satisfaction, new feelings and a new grace, a new joy and new laughter. These new things had great import in them.

There was a new goodness and a new sunrise, a new forest and new soil, a new date and a new mind, a new consciousness and new striving, a new state and a new direction. The falsehood being given up, there is new success. There is a new hunger and new thirst, a new nectar and sin-free food. [264] This is new yoga and a new experiment: these are new policies. The greenery has decked itself up with new art. This new wealth is excellent. New eyelids enjoy a new thrill. A new yearning has a new look. The new house has new sensations, and they in turn have new inspirations.



Paad Prakshalan of Acharyashri-ji - The worshipful ritual of the holy feet ('paad')of Acharya Vidyasagar-ji

The craftsman is unmoved by the fragrant wind that seeks to delight him. He is situated in equanimity and feels neither joyous excitement nor depression in anything.

Thus did a newness come about. But where is there an effect of this on the craftsman, who sits still? The mild fragrant wind blows and blows, to no effect . Where is there a thrill in the craftsman's body? When could the beyond-touch be affected by touch? The rosy perfume reached the craftsman's nose but could not stir him. These sense objects have never satiated those immersed in enjoying them. And here they are inviting a yogi, trying to enchant him to come out of himself.

[265] Even the chirping of the bird-flocks, which had flown out of their nests to watch the blooming forest, could not touch the dispassionate craftsman. The sound of their voices dissolved in space. In other words the craftsman's ears ignored the melodious chirping.

In this unusual situation, the dustless sun, even though situated far away, spreads thousands of hands. With the gentle fingers of his rays he caresses the craftsman's eyelids the way he caresses the closed petals of the lotus.

In this caress, the craftsman senses the gentle touch of motherly love. His eyes opened wide and he viewed the sun, a bundle of immense capabilities, and a storehouse of light. Even with a distant view of the sun, the craftsman's eyes rained tears of joy. And here, the particles of dust grew restless to find the purification and peace that lies in the white particles of devotion.

[266] Thus the whole atmosphere was immersed in touch, sight, glee and yearning.



*The blessed is that Follower, who is immersed in Happiness,
due to the personal blessings received from Acharyashri-ji*

The pitcher shows its awareness of a hard destiny ahead, and the potter, surprised at his precocity, cautions him of the adversities to come.

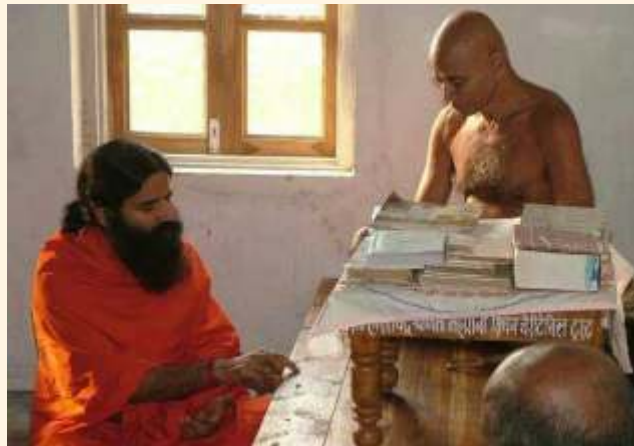
Seeing the potter return to good health, the pitcher said, "Without trials and calamities, no one has found heaven and liberation, nor one can. This is a timeless truth."

The potter was amazed at the raw pitcher's maturity that bespoke his secret saadhanaa. He said, "I'd never thought that you'd succeed so well in such a short time. Here I have seen major seekers panting and coming to their knees in the course of hard penance.

"Now I feel assured that you will earn all success in future too. Even then, be aware that your journey [267] is yet passing through the early valleys. There is a series of valleys to traverse still. And listen, you have to cross the river of fire without a boat. You have to swim with your own arms. You cannot find the other shore unless you swim across."

The pitcher responds, "In a seeker's inner eyes, water does not differ from fire that burns. In continuous saadhanaa, the seeker advances from the differentiated reality to the undifferentiated, from the known to the unknown – and thus, indeed, he must advance. Otherwise it's a journey only in the name, the real journey hasn't yet begun."

These words of the pitcher proved to be very lively and effective.



Yoga Guru Ramdevbaba having a spiritual dialogue with Acharyashri-ji