

November 2011

Price: ₹ 12/-

Dada Bhagwan Parivar's

# AKRAM Express



## Selfless Service





Dear friends,

Since childhood, we have been given the cultural values to serve our parents and elders. In our homes, we also see our parents serving our grandparents.

In this issue, Param Pujya Dadashri has given us the wonderful understanding to answer questions such as, "Why has so much importance been placed on selfless service? What could its results be? From where should one begin to serve others? What counts as a true service?"

So, let us understand the importance of selfless service and heartily serve our parents, teachers, and elders.

- Dimple Mehta

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Vol.: 3, Issue : 4

Conti. Issue No.: 28

November 2011

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Printed, Published and Owned by :

Dimple Mehta on behalf of

Mahavideh Foundation

5, Mamtapark Society,

Bh. Navgujarat College,

Usmanpura, Ahmedabad-14.

Published at Mahavideh Foundation

5, Mamtapark Society,

Bh. Navgujarat College,

Usmanpura, Ahmedabad-14.

Printing Press:-

Amba Offset

Basement, Parshvanath

Chambers, Nr.RBI,

Usmanpura, Ahmedabad-14.

Subscription (English)

Yearly Subscription

India:125 Ruppes

U.S.A.:15 Dollars

U.K.:10 Pounds

5 years Subscription

India:550 Ruppes

U.S.A.:60 Dollars

U.K.:40 Pounds

Send D.D./M.o.in the name of 'Mahavideh Foundation'.





# Dadaji Says

Decide on the intent to give selfless service ('seva'), the intent to give selfless service to any and every human being. Our intention should be to use whatever skill/ability we have to provide selfless service. For example, if you know how to read and write, then you should help illiterate people to read or write letters. One should serve humans, because God resides in every human being.

In this world, the first and foremost service worth giving is to parents. Will you serve them?

Questioner: Yes, I currently serve them. I help in household chores.

Dadashri: What is considered service selfless 'seva'? If your parents are suffering in pain, if their legs are aching and you massage their legs, that kind of service is considered 'seva'.

Questioner: Yes, I already do that!

Dadashri: The world is such that if one gives pure 'seva' to their parents, their peace will not be disturbed. It is one's duty/religion to serve their parents; and our inner happiness increases as we abide by our duties. Happiness also arises when we serve our elders. Those who make their parents happy, are never unhappy. If someone tells me, "I am unhappy." then I would say that, "If you serve your parents very well, then no worldly problems will affect you."

First, serve your parents, who have given birth to you. Then, serve your teacher. One should definitely do this much.

Questioner: What are the consequences for those who are not serving their parents at present? What life form will they get?

Dadashri: Those who do not serve their parents will not be happy and content in this birth. What is the obvious example that you have served your parents? It is when a person. Faces no troubles throughout his lifetime. By serving your parents, difficulties do not arise!

Our spiritual knowledge blossoms by serving elders. Even I served my mother. Serve others, heartily. You will not get such opportunities now and again.



# Silent Selfless Service

For many years, Prabhudas yearned to go on a pilgrimage, but every year for some reason or other, he could not go. Fortunately, this year all the circumstances were favourable. Arrangements for money had also been made. With a lot of devotion and enthusiasm, he set off with his fellow villagers on pilgrimage.

This story dates back many years. In that era, there were no facilities of buses or trains. People used to travel on foot, in horsecarts or by boat, so it would take many days to reach the pilgrimage site. On route to the pilgrimage sit, Prabhudas and his companions would take rest in the nearby villages and then proceed gradually.

After walking for several miles, all the pilgrims reached a village that had been struck by famine and there was severe shortage of food. Prabhudas was extremely exhausted. They were supposed to bypass this village and spend the night at the bigger village further up. But, Prabhudas could not walk a step further. He sat under a tree. Seeing this, his companion said, "Prabhudas, if you rest here, how will we reach the outskirts of the bigger village before sunset?"

"Brother, I am extremely thirsty. You all go ahead. I will join you in a short while. See that hut over there. I will go and ask for some water." Prabhudas said, pointing towards the hut.





“We don’t have anything to offer you.”



“As you wish, brother,” Saying this, the others went off ahead. Prabhudas entered the hut’s courtyard. “Is anybody there? May I please have some water?” Prabhudas asked, with a loud voice.

Receiving no reply, Prabhudas was about to turn back, when he heard someone moaning in pain.

He opened the door, thinking, “Someone seems to be inside.” He saw an elderly woman sleeping on a bed and an old man sitting in a corner, holding his head in despair.

“We don’t have anything to offer you,” said the old man.

Seeing the dire condition of these elderly people, Prabhudas immediately fished out whatever bits of food he could find from his bag and gave it to the hungry couple. This was the elderly couple’s first meal in many days.

“Brother, my mouth is dry. Will you please bring some water from the well?” The old lady whispered. Prabhudas immediately ran to get some water from the well.

There was not even a single grain of food in the house. The old woman seemed to be in a critical condition, due to prolonged hunger for many days. Prabhudas forgot all about his fatigue, upon seeing the elderly woman’s condition. He went to the market and bought some wheat, rice and oil. He saw a small axe in the house, which he used to cut some wood from outside and lit the stove. He cooked for the elderly couple with lots of love. The old woman had barely had one or two morsels of food before she fell unconscious on the bed. When he felt her forehead, he realized that she had high fever. Prabhudas immediately started to apply cold compresses on her forehead and only after continuing to do so for four to five hours did





“ Pilgrims  
are always  
welcome in  
our house ”

her condition improve.

Soon it was dark, so Prabhudas decided to spend the night there. While settling down to sleep outside in the courtyard, he thought, “can far behind my companions. I will leave early tomorrow morning and join them.” But, after a while his mind wavered, “How can I leave the elderly couple in such a condition and go on pilgrimage? If I leave them in this condition to go and pray to God, even God will not be happy with me.” Thinking thus, he cancelled his plan of joining the group and stayed back to serve the elderly couple. He served them with a lot of devotion, day and night, without thinking about anything. Many days passed by in this way. One day, when he felt satisfied that the elders had recovered completely, he ensured that there were sufficient rations to eat and drink in the hut, and left without informing anyone.

Unfortunately, now Prabhudas had neither enough time nor money to continue his pilgrimage. So, he returned home. His family members were surprised to see him return early. They were eager to know why he had returned early, what happened on the way? Even the villagers were surprised that a sensible person like Prabhudas, who had left to go on pilgrimage returned without visiting any of the sacred places of God!

The only reply Prabhudas gave everyone was that he had become separated from the group and therefore he had returned.

Meanwhile, en route from the pilgrimage, Trilokchand, Prabhudas’s friend, rested in the same hut where Prabhudas had served the elderly couple.

The old man welcomed Trilokchand saying, “Pilgrims are

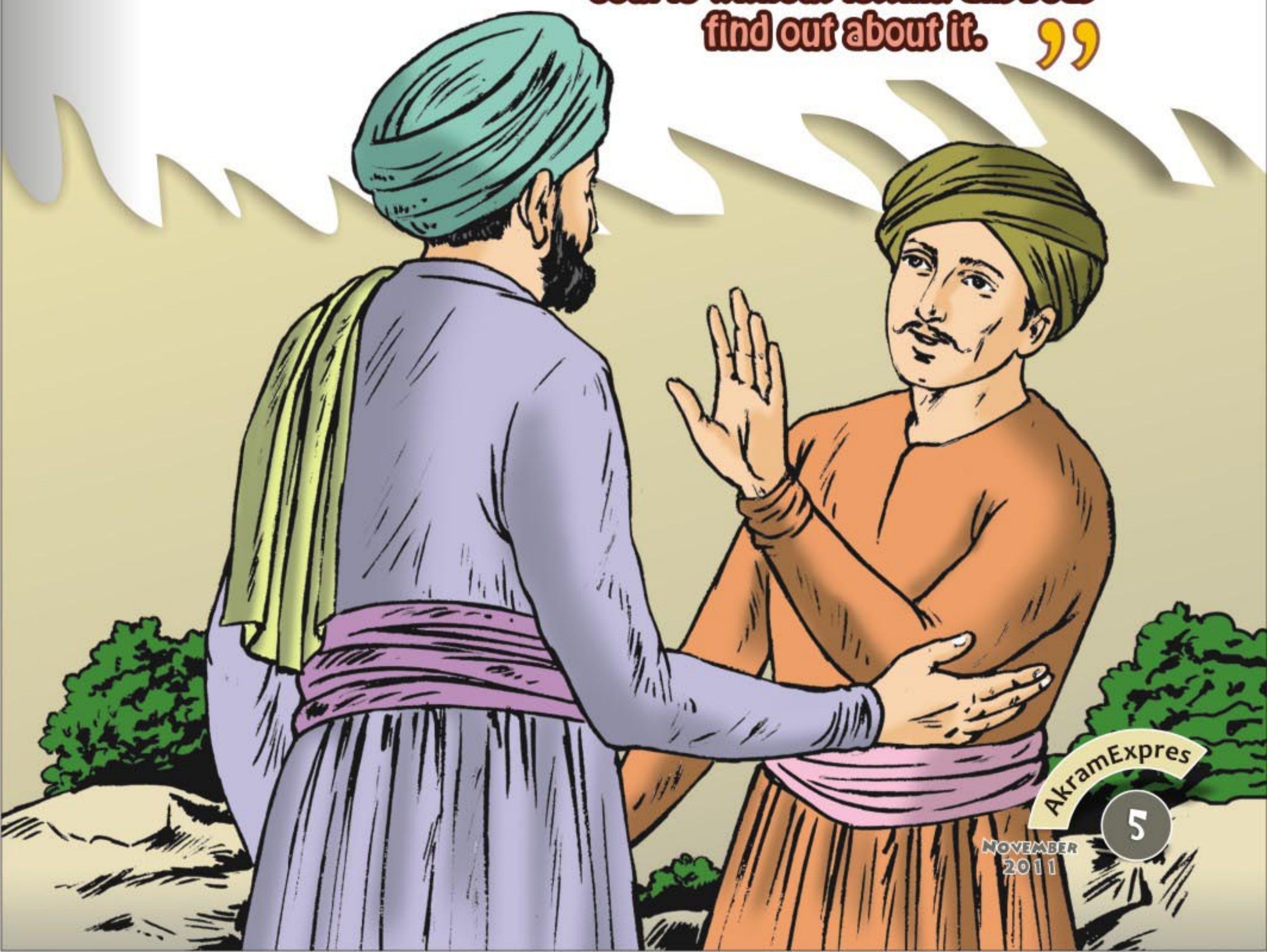


always welcome in our house. Just a few days back, a pilgrim like you or rather I should say an angel sent by God, visited us and served us heartily, saving us from the jaws of death.” Trilokchand understood that the elders were talking about Prabhudas. Prabhudas had come to this hut in search of water and thereafter was not seen anywhere on the pilgrimage.

When Trilokchand returned to his village, he went to visit Prabhudas. “On the way back from the pilgrimage, I visited the same hut where you...” Prabhudas stopped him mid sentence and said, “Hey, tell me, how was the pilgrimage? Did you manage to visit all the places? Let’s chat over some tea.”

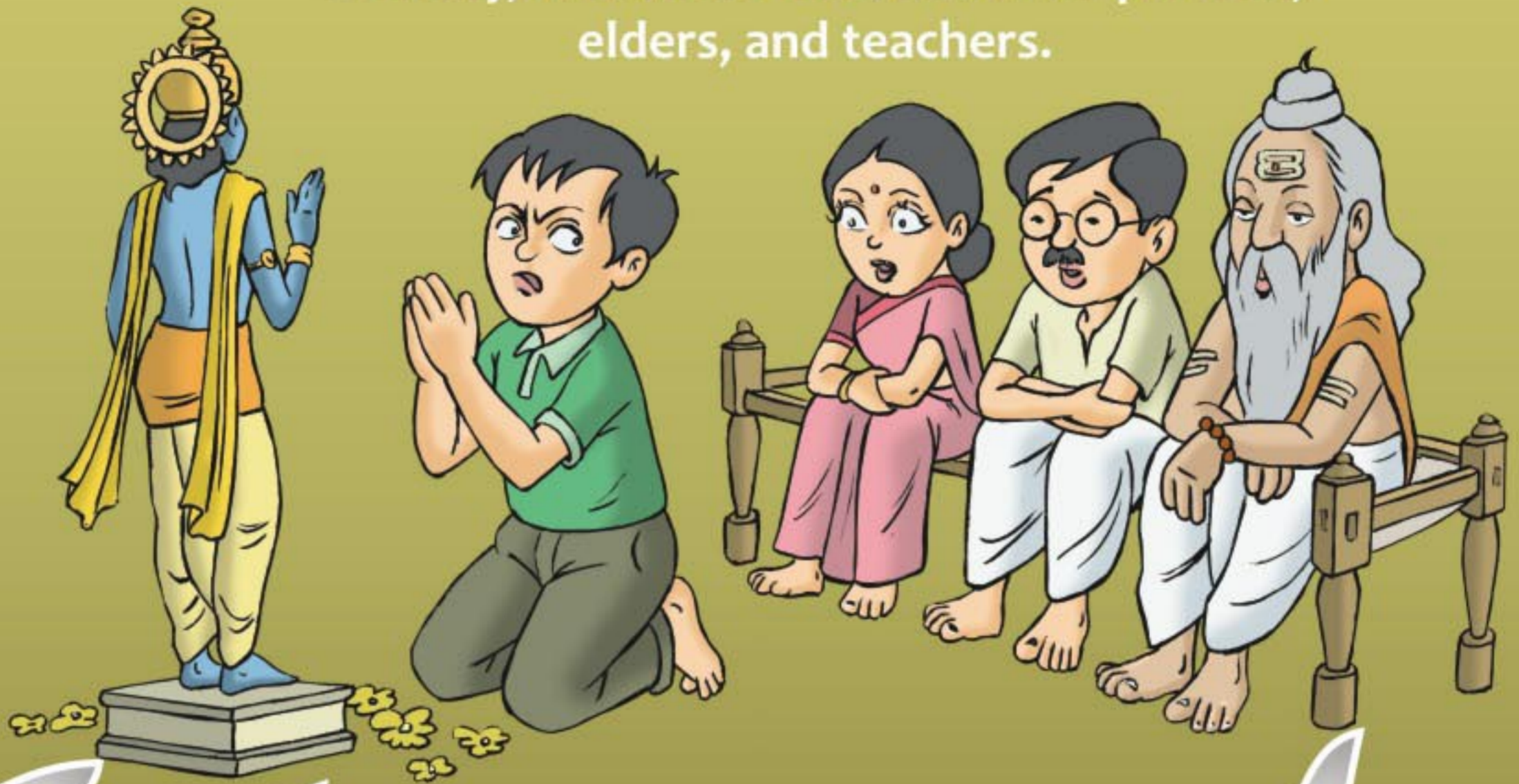
Trilokchand did not ask him anything further but thought, “Blessed is Prabhudas for he selflessly served the elderly couple without letting anybody find out about it. He has actually done a true pilgrimage.” He bowed his head with feelings of utmost respect for Prabhudas.

**“ Blessed is Prabhudas for he selflessly served the elderly couple without letting anybody find out about it. ”**



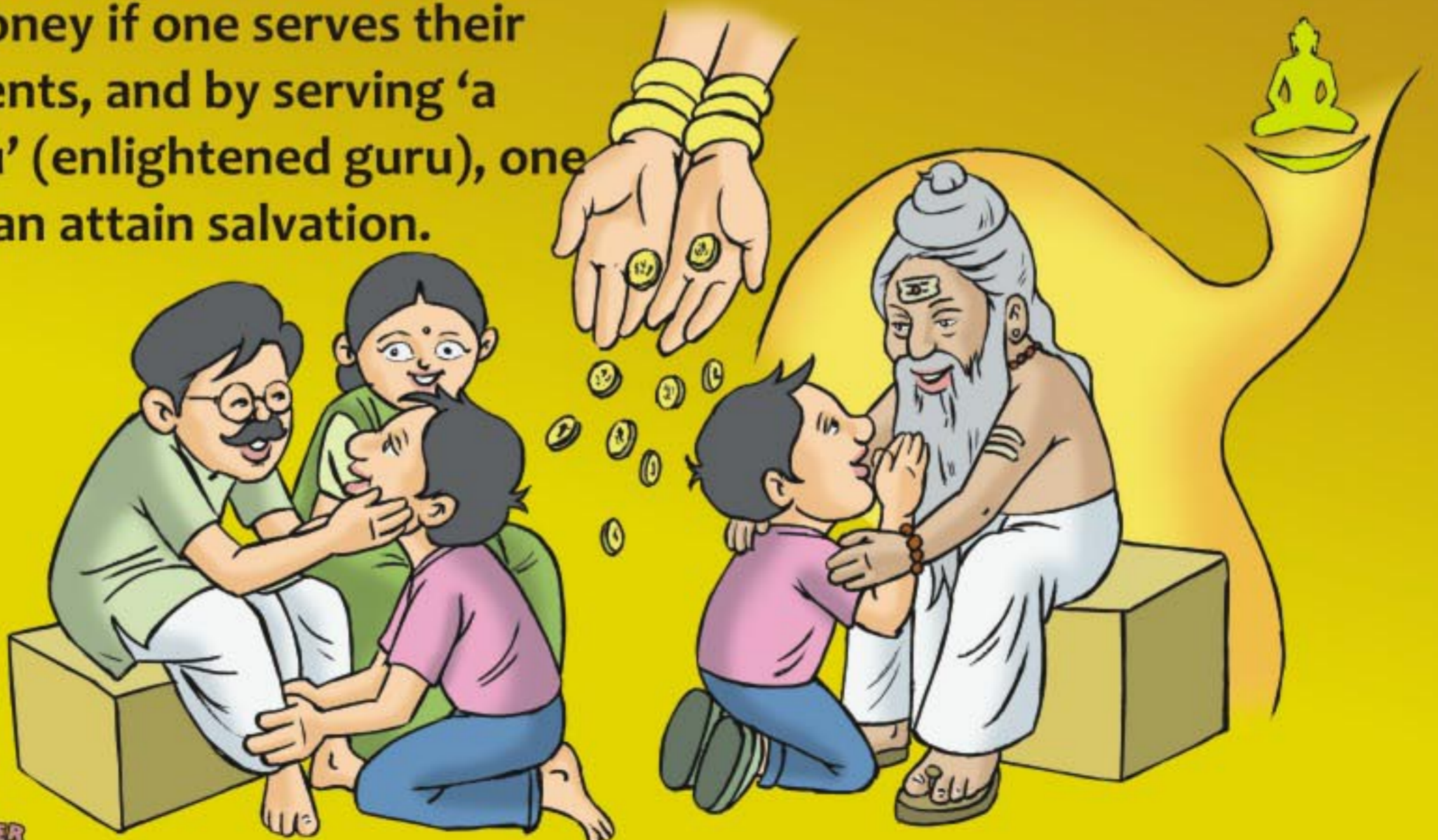


Can we serve idols? Do the legs of idols ache?  
Actually, we should first serve our parents,  
elders, and teachers.

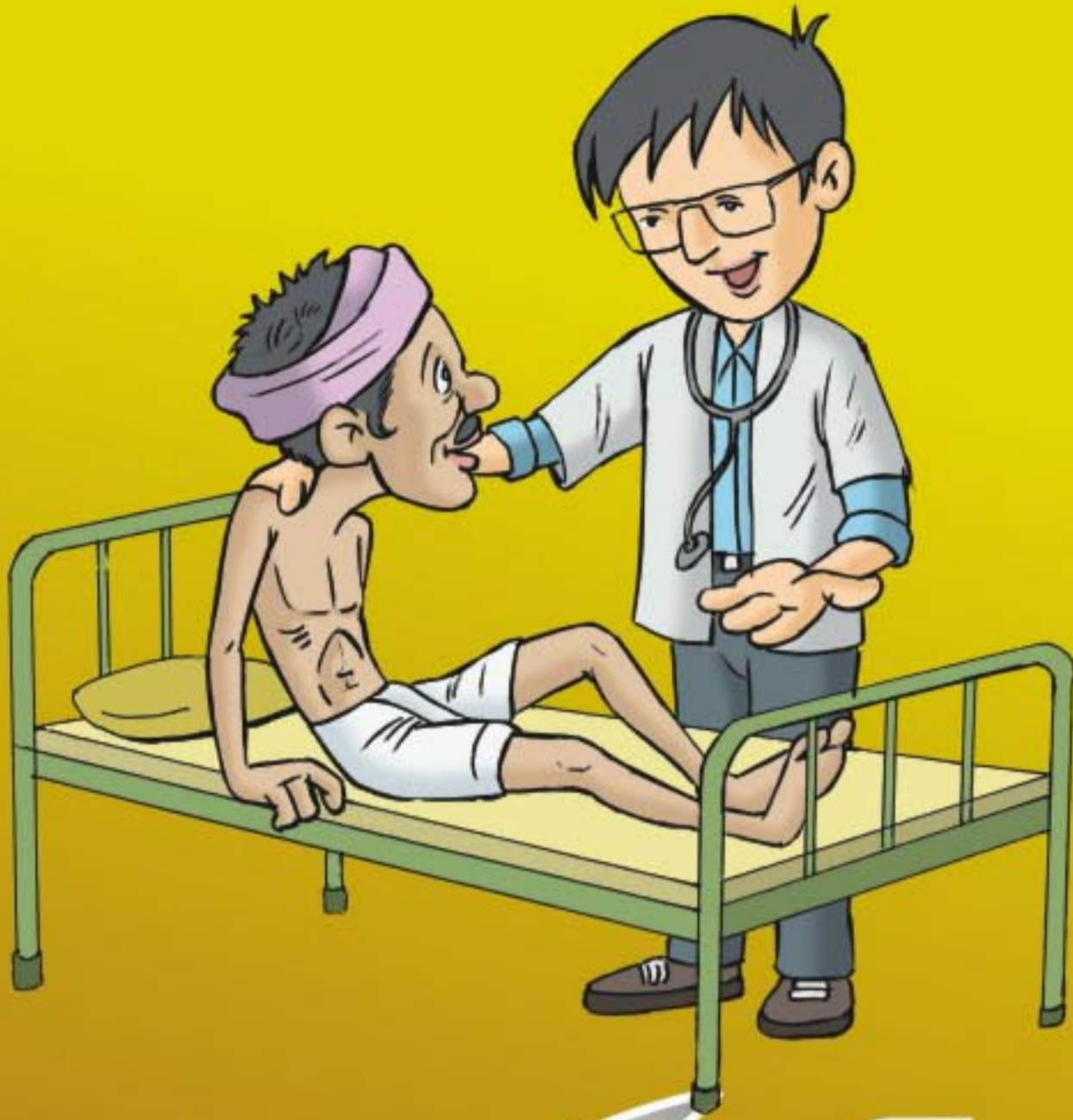


# Absolutely New

One will never have any shortage  
of money if one serves their  
parents, and by serving 'a  
Sadguru' (enlightened guru), one  
can attain salvation.







Serving others with good intentions binds merit karma. For example, if a doctor decides that his goal is to ensure that his patients get well soon and remain happy, and then does this work with the intention of 'seva' (selfless service), then he would get bind merit karma.

# and Different!

True 'seva' is when I would not even know that you are doing that work. That is 'seva'. 'Seva' should be silent. If people know about it then it is not 'seva'.





# Selfless Service should begin from home



Diya, Anjali and Nitya came together and created a 'Service Club', whose objective was to help serve the orphans and the needy. After school, they would devote a certain amount of time to this activity.

Anjali, please send an email to 'Vishranti Foundation' and inform them of the donation amount. Nitya, please write an article detailing the services our club provides.

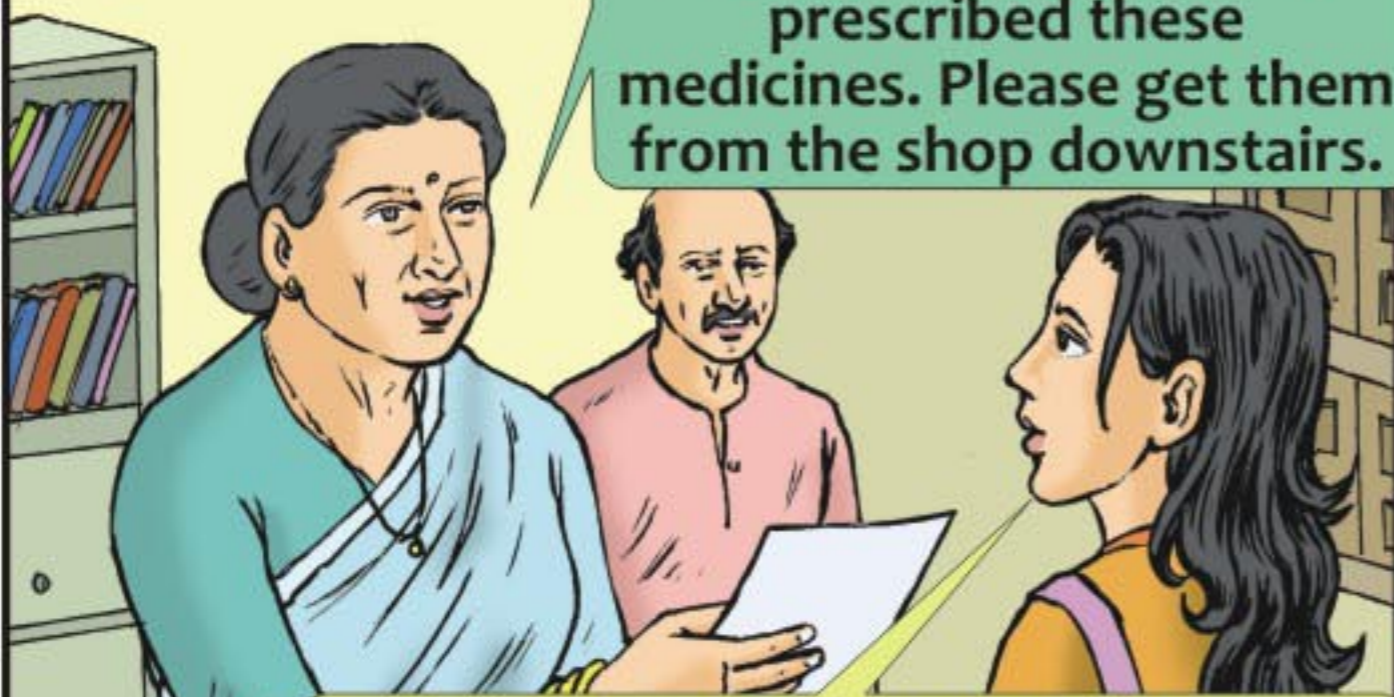


Dear Diya, it's good that you have come home early. I have had a high fever since afternoon. Will you please cook some Khichdi?



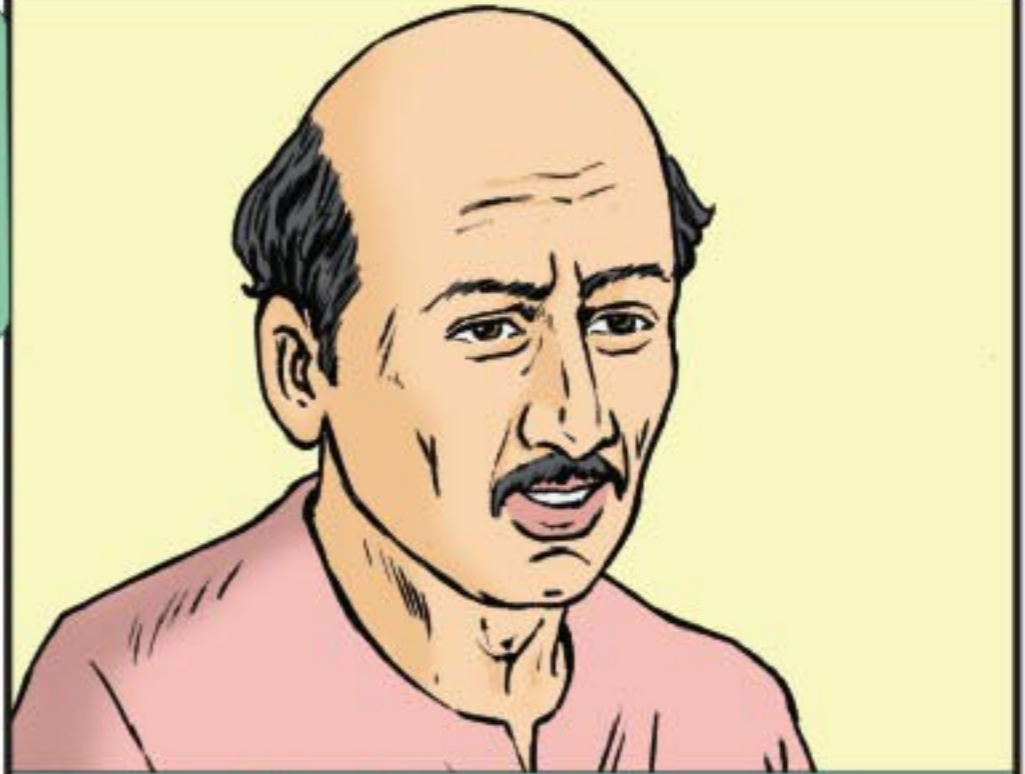
Oh Mummy, I am very tired. Please ask grandma.

The next morning,



Diya, your mother is still feverish. The doctor has prescribed these medicines. Please get them from the shop downstairs.

Grandma, I really don't have any time. We have a Service Club's meeting before school. We have to meet at Nitya's place.



On one hand, you are working so hard to serve the poor and needy through your club and on the other hand, you are not even paying any attention to serve your own mother! Does that suit you?



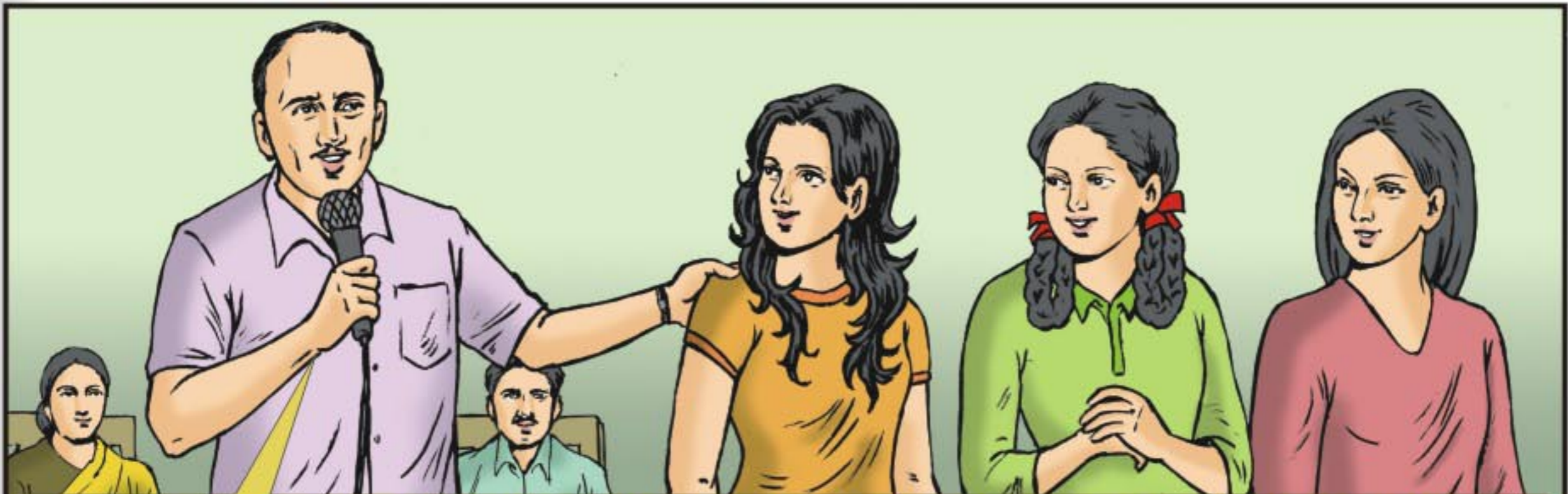
Serving your parents is the greatest religion. Service should begin at home. First, your parents, and then everyone else.

At Nitya's house,

But today's meeting is extremely important. It cannot be cancelled.

Saying this, she ran off...

I have good news! The Vishranti Foundation has really liked our work. The foundation's chairman has spoken to our principal about our work and today, they are coming to school to give us a service award.



Diya, Nitya and Anjali have made the school proud. They have really earned the blessings of the poor and orphans by serving them. On behalf of the entire faculty, parents and students, I heartily congratulate these service-oriented students and honour them with this service award.

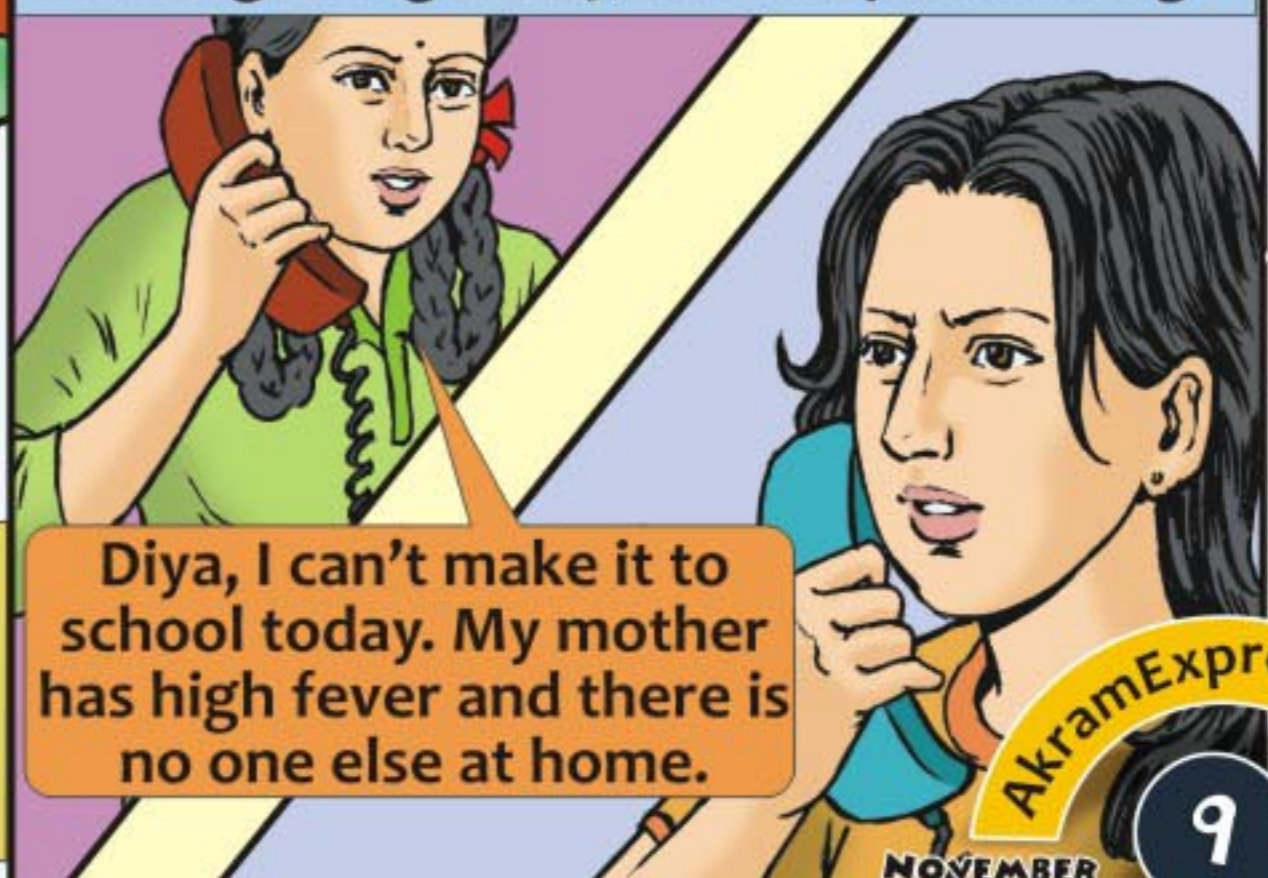


Congratulations!

Congratulations!

And there's good news. Tomorrow, a newspaper reporter is visiting our school to take their photographs and they will also publish an article on the Service Club in the paper.

Today, Diya was very excited to go to school. Just as she was leaving for school, after getting ready, the telephone rang.



Diya, I can't make it to school today. My mother has high fever and there is no one else at home.





But today the newspaper reporter is coming. We need to publish our photos in the newspaper. How can you miss such an opportunity?



How can I also miss the opportunity of serving my mother? You people can give all the information about the club. And it does not matter to me if my photo is not featured. Serving my mother is much more important to me than having a photo featured in a newspaper.

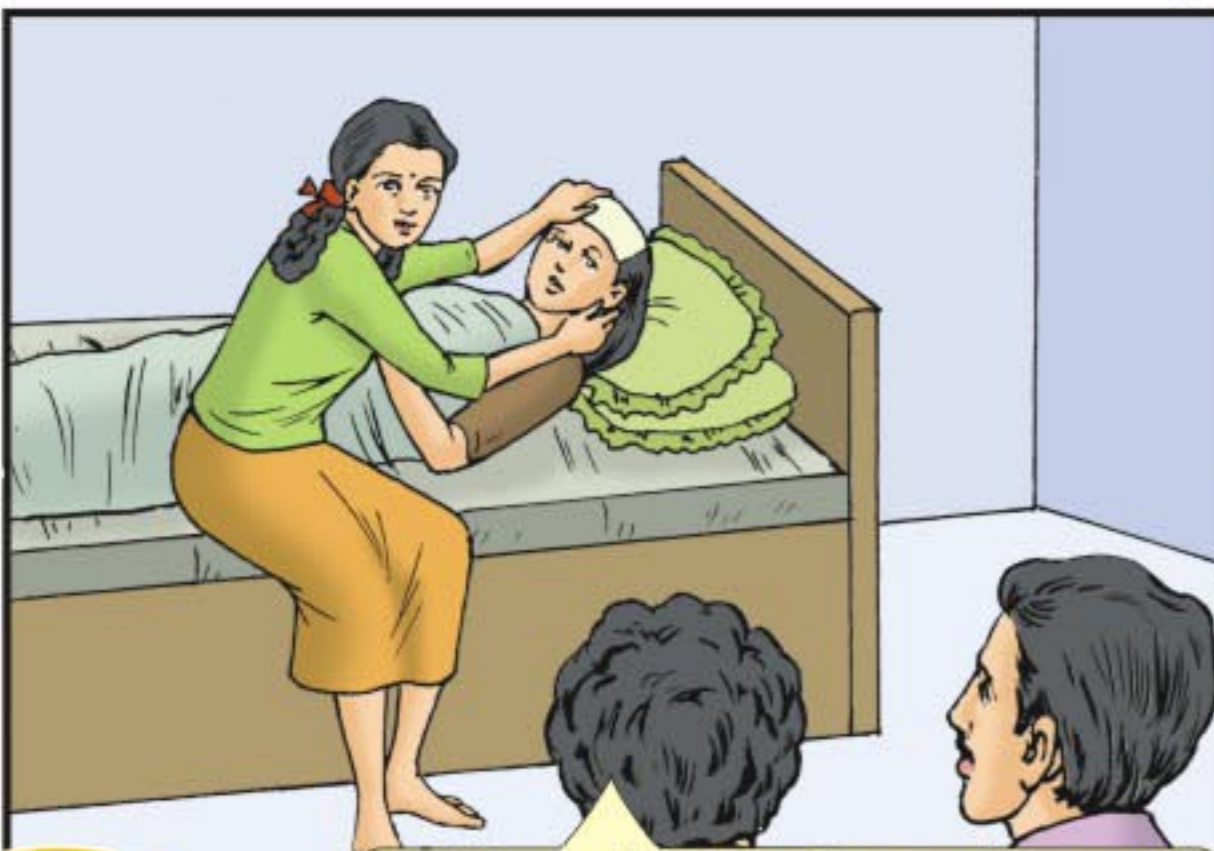
In school, posing for the photograph in front of the newspaper reporter,



Where is your third friend?

Her mother has fever and hence, she could not come.

Oh! So, at the moment, she is taking care of her mother. That photograph is definitely worth capturing. People will get the message that selfless service always begins at home. Come on, let's visit her place.



Anjli, truly, daughters like you, who help both their family and the society, are an ideal example for the society.

Hearing this, Diya was filled with remorse for her mistake.



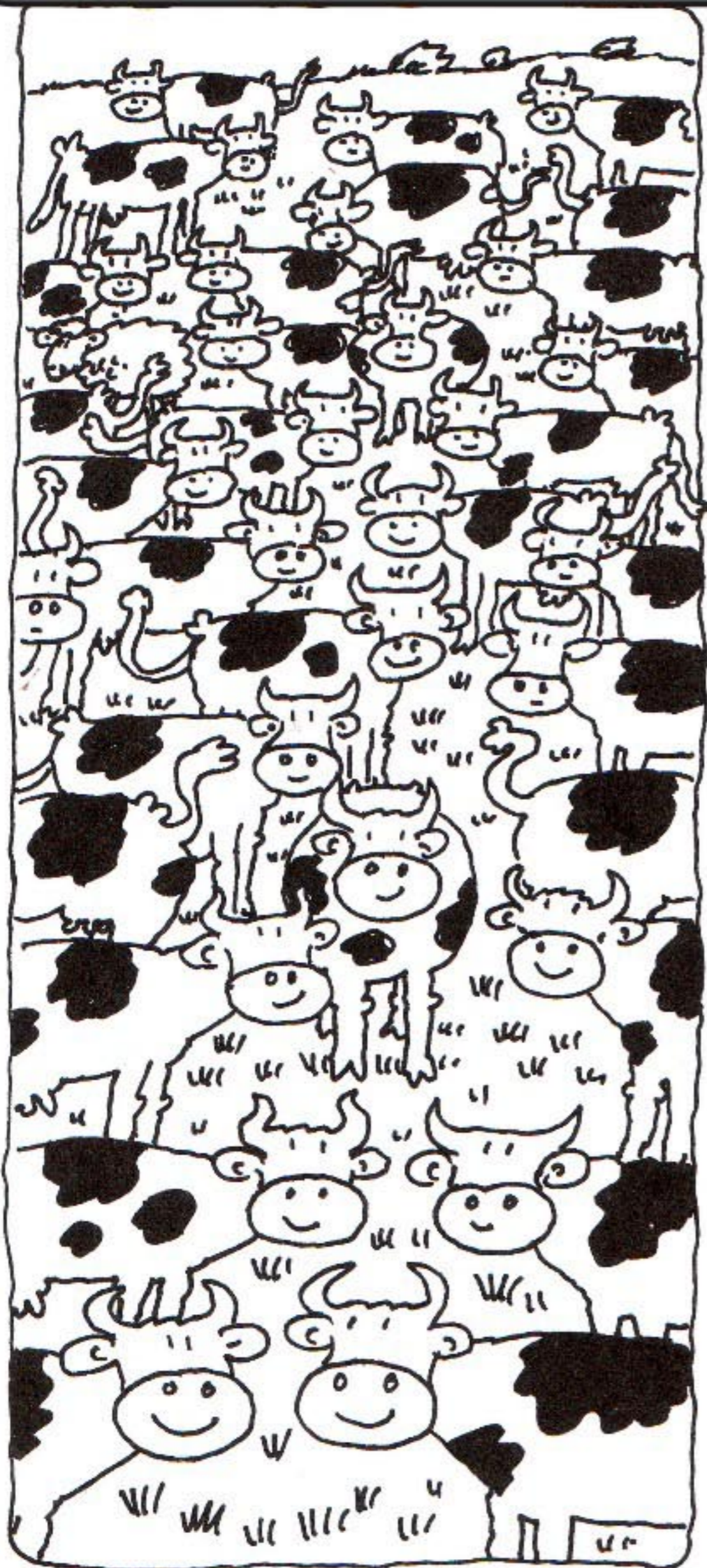
I served people only with the expectation of appreciation from others, but Anjli has given true service. Grandpa rightly said, "Selfless service should begin at home."



# Let's Play

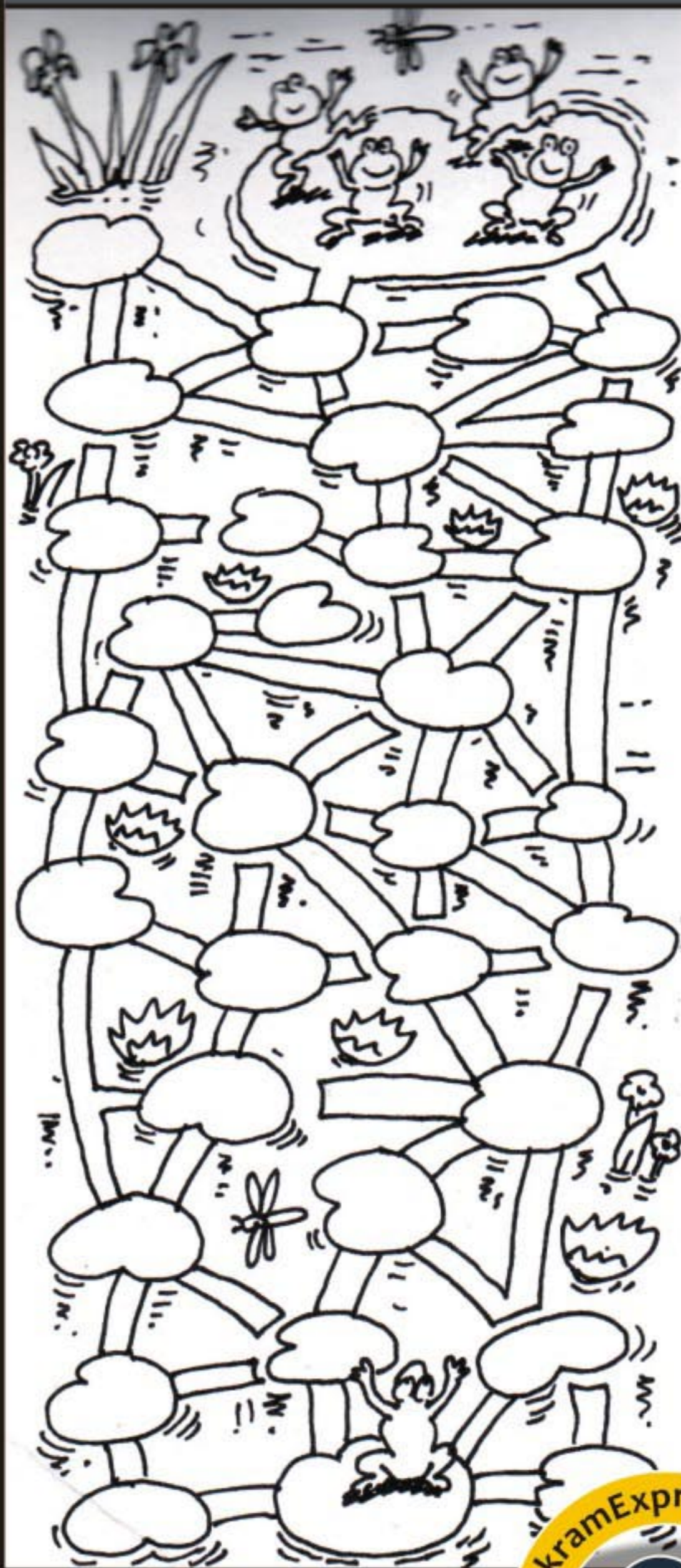
# 1

THERE IS A SHEEP HIDDEN IN THIS FIELD FULL OF COWS. FIND IT.



# 2

ONE OF THE FROG'S IS LEFT BELOW. HELP HIM FIND HIS WAY UP.



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## Sweet Memories

This event dates back to when Niruma used to stay at Dada Darshan. The lady, who helped serve Niruma also worked an office job. Every evening when she used to return from the office, she would be very hungry, but she would eat only after feeding Niruma. Niruma would have her meal later, so the lady thought if she ate a little, then it would last her until after Niruma finishes her meal. Therefore, every evening, after returning from the office, she would have a few bites while standing in the kitchen. This became a routine for her.

One day, as usual, she went directly into the kitchen to eat after returning from the office. Co-incidentally at that time, Niruma also walked into the kitchen and saw what the lady was doing. So Niruma asked, “Why are you standing and eating?” The lady replied, “It’s nothing, Niruma, I was a little hungry so I am having a snack.”

Niruma, immediately held the lady’s hand and said, “Come, sit next to me and we will have dinner together.”

With Reservation the lady replied, “No Niruma, It will not go down my throat. I will eat later. You have your dinner first. The lady was hesitating to sit for a meal with Niruma.

Niruma took two plates and started serving and made the lady sit with her to eat. Niruma used to pamper everyone in this way. Niruma always used to take a round in the kitchen after having her dinner. If she saw that there was nothing left or it was too little for the people who still had to eat, then she would immediately say, “Come on, today I will stir fry some rice and feed you.”

Other times, Niruma would walk into the kitchen when the food was being prepared. At that time, she would not only observe how the cook is cooking, but would also lovingly offer tips on how to cook, how to do the ‘vaghar’. The opposite person would also find the interaction to be very loving.

What we get to learn from this is that the vision of gnanis is so indifferent and humble, that they can come down to the same level as the opposite person, almost as if the Gnani is their friend!



**Questioner:** What should I do if I become angry with my brother?

**Deepakbhai:** Do you like getting angry with your brother?

**Questioner:** No

**Deepakbhai:** Then, why do you get angry with your brother? Is your brother older or younger than you?

**Questioner:** Younger.

**Deepakbhai:** Oh! So, by being older, you harass your younger brother! Is that acceptable? Who has better understanding, your brother, or you?

**Questioner:** I have.

**Deepakbhai:** Well, then should the one with better understanding make an adjustment or should he trouble the younger one? Never mind! From now on, if you happen to hurt anyone, then decide firmly that, "I don't want hurt anyone," and then ask for forgiveness, "oh Dada Bhagwan, I harassed my brother in this manner, I got angry, I am asking for forgiveness for that. Please forgive me. Give me strength not to repeat such a mistake again." This is called Pratikraman. For example, if we make a mistake while writing, then we can erase it with an eraser, right? This erasing is called Pratikraman. Writing incorrectly is called "atikraman" and writing correctly is called "kraman." Won't you have to erase it if you write incorrectly? So, now erase your mistakes.

---

**Questioner:** What should I do if I want to attain liberation?

**Deepakbhai:** If you want to attain liberation, then you need to decide, "I want to be free from the worldly life and attain liberation. I want to gain the knowledge of the Self." In order to gain this knowledge, you need to go to a person who has realized their soul. If you want to learn Math, you have to go to a Math teacher; similarly, if you want to attain salvation then you have to go to a person who is knowledgeable about Salvation. Come and take 'gyan' (the knowledge of the Self) when you grow up.

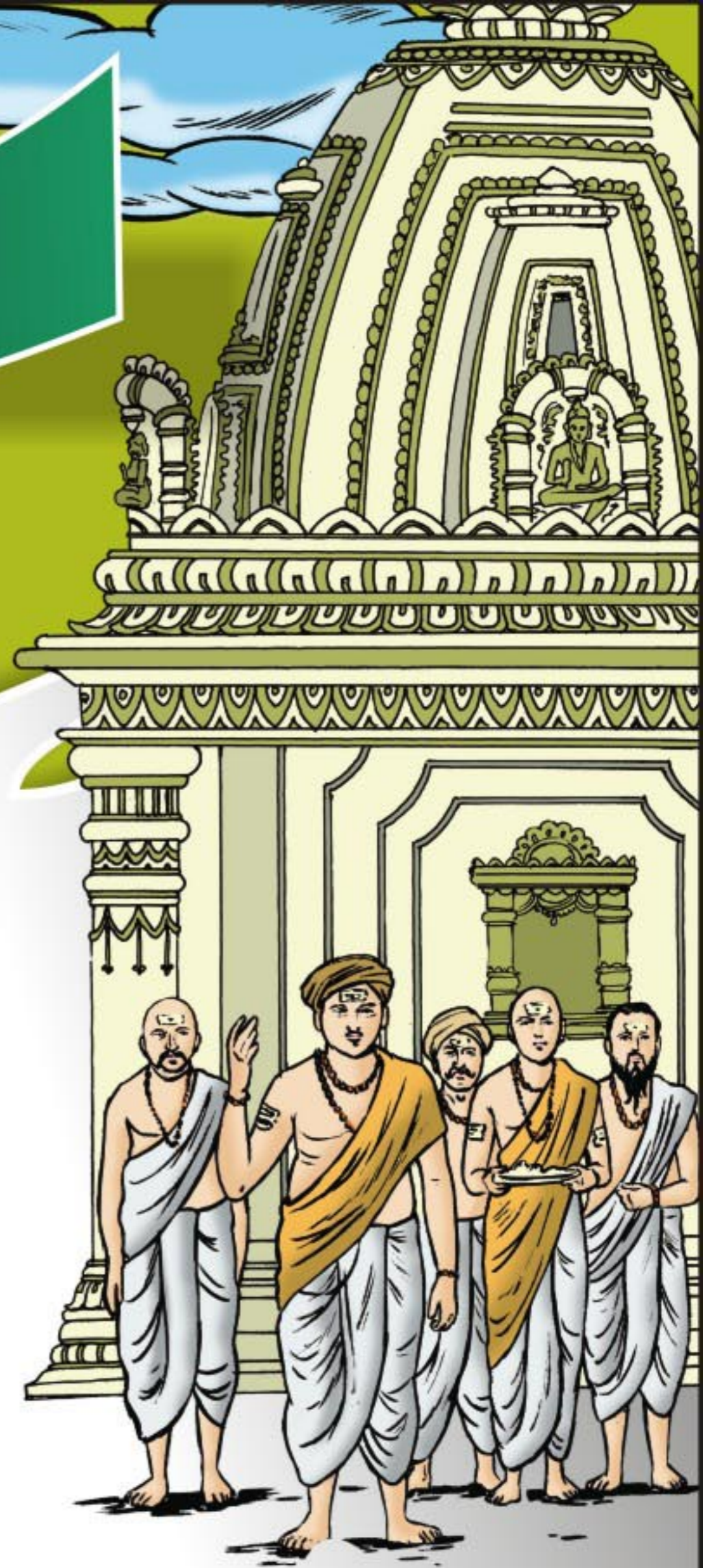
**Questioner:** Yes, OK.



# Mythological Stories

In the previous issue, we read about the occasion of 'pran pratishtha' (instilling of life in the idol of God) ceremony of a temple in Palitana. People had come from various villages to attend the occasion. On this auspicious occasion, everyone was donating some money. In those days, it was a ritual to place a nameplate on the temple door, which was dedicated to the person who gave the largest donation on the day of the temple's pratishtha. A poor labourer called Lakha hesitantly yet with a lot of devotion donated his earnings of 4 cents. Now let's read on...

It was evening then. Everyone was eager to know whose name was going to be on the name plate. All the donors were boasting about their donations. Just then, the temple's priest





“After a lot of thought, we feel that the nameplate should bear the name of the labourer, Lakha...!”



came out of the temple and silenced the crowd, saying, “Devotees... I heartily thank you all for actively participating in this great festival. Now the time has come to announce whose name the plate will bear and...” Saying this, in a very hushed tone, he stopped to have a short discussion with the other priests and continued his sentence, “After a lot of thought, we feel that the nameplate should bear the name of the labourer, Lakha...!” Hearing this, it was as if the lines on Lakha’s face changed! He could not understand what the priest was trying to say. The devotees gave Lakha a warm welcome by applauding. On the other hand, the state of the Dhana sheth and Nagar sheth, was such that no blood would come out even if they were cut! They were not sure whether the priest was kidding or not? Had the priest gone crazy? Nagar sheth interrupted the priest, “Honorable priest, we all have a lot of respect for you, but this is a holy, pure and auspicious occasion. It’s not the time to joke. Therefore, it would be best if you would announce whose name should really be on the plate.” Other donors also agreed with the merchant.

The priest took a deep breath and said, “Dear devotees, I am telling the absolute truth that the labourer, Lakha’s name will appear on the nameplate.”

“But ... in comparison to our 5000-10000 gold coins or 108 maunds of ghee, what is the value of his 4 cents?” The bewildered Nagar sheth asked.

The priest smiled lightly and explained, “Tell me Nagar sheth, if you calculated all your wealth in coins, how much would it be worth?” The merchant, Nagar sheth replied with pride, “Around 10 lakhs gold coins.”

The priest questioned further, “And how much did you donate?” The merchant, Nagar replied, “12,500 coins.” The priest questioned further, “So, your highness, can you tell us what percentage of your



wealth you have donated?" The Nagarsheth, was very shrewd and so he immediately calculated and said, "around 1%."

"And what about you, merchant Dhanna?" the priest asked him. It was as if Dhanasheth was ready with the answer. He immediately replied, "Honourable priest, my status is not that high, but for God's work I donated 40,000 coins from my wealth of 22 lakh gold coins which amounts to 2% of my wealth." There was no end to the joy he felt as he spoke! The priest then also asked other people the same question and most of them replied that their donation was in the range of 1-2% of their wealth.

Then, the priest came to Lakha and asked, "Lakha, what is your net worth?" Lakha hesitantly replied, "Sir, I am a poor labourer. I toil hard every day, and with whatever 4-5 cents I earn, we buy food, which my wife and I eat. Then, what is left for wealth?"

The priest addressed Dhanasheth and Nagarsheth as he asked, "Sir, I am a little weak at Math, so please help me. If Lakha earns 4 cents today, then his wealth is 4 cents. If he donates all his 4 cents, then what percentage of his wealth has he donated?"

Dhanasheth, immediately started calculating. He stopped as quickly as he started, "Dear priest... this amounts to his total wealth! That is 100%! Lakha's donation is equal to 100% of his wealth!" The priest put his hand on Lakha's shoulder and said, "Oh devotees, now you all tell me, whose donation is the highest? Lakha's, Dhanasheth's or Nagarsheth's?" Everyone replied in chorus, "Lakha. Lakha is the true donor."

The priest addressed the donors who had donated with the intention of seeing their name on a nameplate and said only this, "Now have you all understood that true charity is independent, it is without any expectations." All the donors and devotees understood the priest's explanation and also realized their own mistake.

See friends...we should not judge a person from his behavior or his appearance, but from his thoughts and intents.

“If he donates all his 4 cents, then what percentage of his wealth has he donated?”





# Creative Writing Competition

Friends, Your holidays must have begun, right? Come on and join the Creative Writing Competition in Akram Express.

## Rules of the competition:

1. The narration and writing should be your own
2. The narration should not be more than 10 lines.

## Instructions

1. There are three age groups
2. Each age group has been assigned one picture. You have to narrate in about 10 lines what you can see in this picture

1) 7 to 9 Years



2) 10 to 12 Years



The first two winners from each group will be chosen. The prizes will be delivered to the winners address. We should receive to the winners address. We should receive your Creative writing by the fifteenth (15th) of December. The winning stories will be published in the January issue of Akram Express. Send your Creative writing along with your full name, address, age and photo to the address or e-mail given below.

Akram Express - Creative Writing Competition

Balvignan Department, Trimandir Sankul, Simandhar City, Ahmedabad kalol Highway, Main Post Office - Adalaj, Dist - Gandhinagar, 382421 e-mail: akramexpress@dadabhagwan.org



3) 13 to 15 Years

AkramExpress

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NOVEMBER  
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## Results of Rangoli Competition



1st Prize: Ruhi Shah

Results of the Rangoli Competition  
Winners of the Rangoli Competition  
held during the festival of Diwali in  
Simandhar City and ATPL



2nd Prize: Chayd Antala



3rd Prize: Chaydrika Patel

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Publisher, Printed & Editor - Mr. Dimple Mehta on behalf of Mahavideh Foundation  
Printed at **Amba offset**:- Parshwanath Chambers, Usmanpura, Ahmedabad-14 and  
published at Mahavideh Foundation, Simandhar City, Adalaj, Ta. & Dist. Gandhinagar.