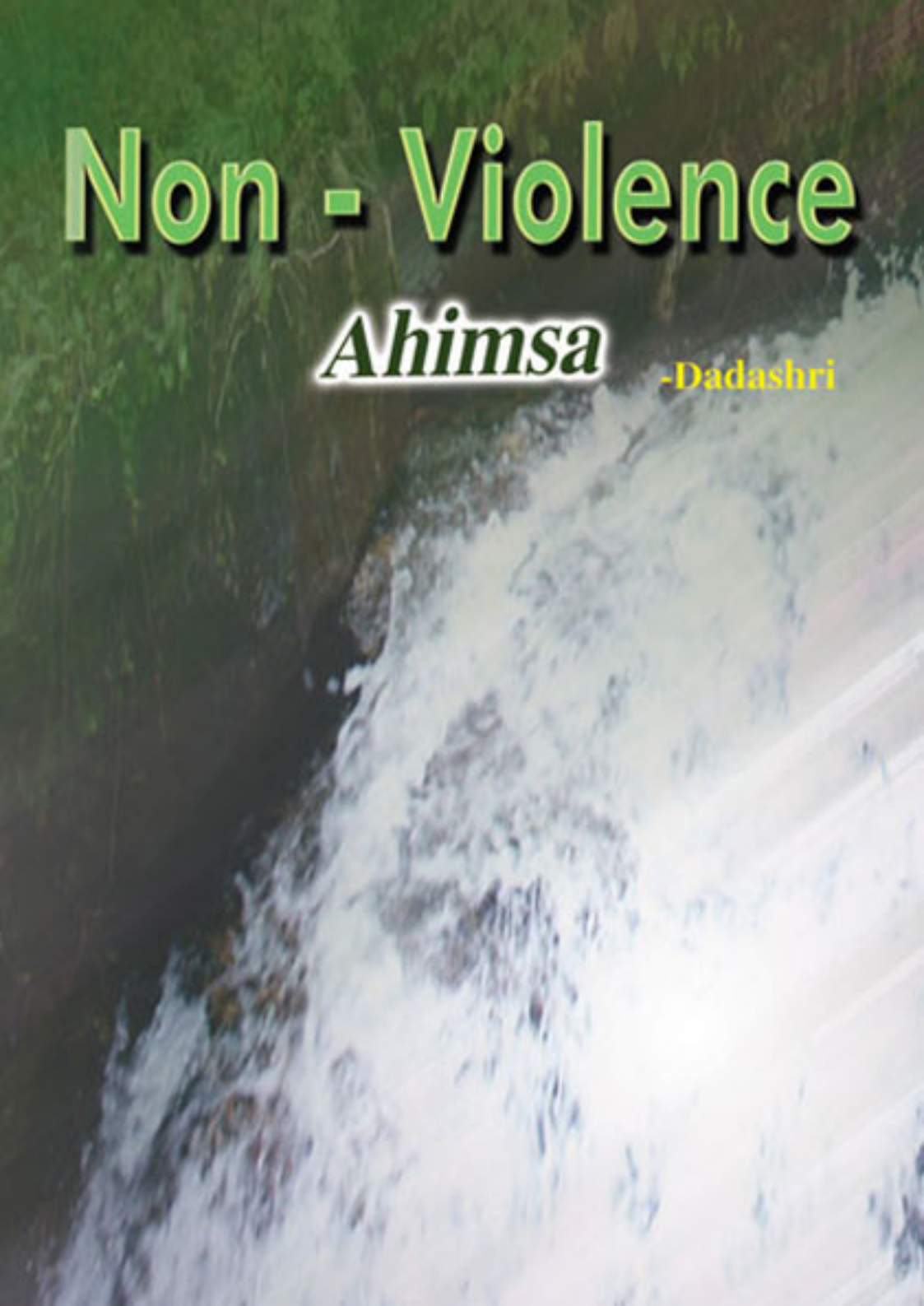


Non - Violence

Ahimsa

-Dadashri





Non-Violence

(Ahimsha)

As expounded by the
Gnani Purush Dada Bhagwan

Originally Compiled in Gujarati by :
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Publisher : Mr. Ajit C. Patel
Mahavideh Foundation
5, Mamatapark Society,
B/h. Navgujarat College,
Usmanpura, Ahmedabad-380014
Tel. : (079) 27540408, 27543979

© : All Rights Reserved - Dr. Niruben Amin
Trimandir, Simandhar City, Adalaj-382421,
Dist.:Gandhinagar, Gujarat, India

First Edition : 2000 copies, March 2004
Second Edition : 2000 copies, May 2005
Third Edition : 2000 copies, May 2009

Price : Ultimate Humility &
"I Don't Know Anything"
Rs. 25.00

Printer : Mahavideh Foundation (Printing Division),
Basement, Parshwanath Chambers,
Nr. R.B.I., Usmanpura,
Ahmedabad-380014, Gujarat, India.
Tel. : (079) 30004823, 27542964

Trimantra

(The Three Mantras)

Namo Arihantanam

I bow to the Lord who has annihilated all the inner enemies of anger, pride, attachment and greed.

Namo Siddhanam

I bow to all the Lord who have attained final liberation.

Namo Aayariyanam

I bow to all the Self-realized masters who unfold the path of liberation.

Namo Uvazzayanam

I bow to the Self-realized teachers of the path of liberation.

Namo Loye Savva Saahunam

I bow to all who have attained the Self and are progressing in this path in the universe.

Eso Pancha Namukkaro

These five salutations.

Saava Paavappanasano

Destroy all the sins.

Mangalanam cha Saavesim

Of all that is auspicious mantras.

Padhamam Havai Mangalam

This is the highest.

ॐ Namu Bhagavate Vasudevaya

I bow to the One who has become the Supreme Lord from a human being.

ॐ Namah Shivaaya

I bow to all auspicious beings of this universe who are the instruments of salvation of the world.

Jai Sat Chit Anand

The Awareness Of The Eternal Is Bliss



Note About This Translation

The Gnani Purush Ambalal M. Patel, also commonly known as Dadashri or Dada, had said that it would be impossible to translate his satsangs and the knowledge about the Science of Self-Realization verbatim into English because some of the meanings would be lost in the process. Therefore, in order to understand precisely the science of Akram Vignan and Self-Realization He stressed the importance of learning Gujarati.

Dadashri did however grant his blessings to translate his words into English and other languages so that spiritual seekers could benefit to a certain degree and later progress through their own efforts.

This is a humble attempt to present to the world, the essence of His Knowledge. This is not a literal translation but great care has been taken to preserve His original words and the essence of His message. For certain Gujarati words, several English words or even sentences are needed to convey the exact meaning; hence, many Gujarati words have been retained within the English text for better reading flow. At the first encounter, the Gujarati word will be italicized followed by an immediate explanation of its meaning in brackets. Thereafter the Gujarati word will be used in the text that follows. This serves as a two-fold benefit: firstly ease of translation and reading and secondly it will make the reader more familiar with the Gujarati words critical for a deeper understanding of this science. A glossary of all the Gujarati words is provided at the back of the book. For additional glossary, visit our website at :

www.dadabhagwan.org

Many people have worked diligently towards achieving this goal and we thank them all. Please note that any errors encountered in this translation are entirely those of the translators.

* * * * *

Introduction to The Gnani

One June evening, in 1958 at around six o'clock, Ambalal Muljibhai Patel, a family man, and a contractor by profession, was sitting on a bench on the busy platform number three at Surat's train station. Surat is a city in south Gujarat, a western state in India. What happened within the next forty-eight minutes was phenomenal. Spontaneous Self-Realization occurred within Ambalal M. Patel. During this event, his ego completely melted and from that moment onwards, he became completely detached from all of Ambalal's thoughts, speech, and actions. He became the Lord's living instrument for the salvation of humankind, through the path of knowledge. He called this Lord, 'Dada Bhagwan.' To everyone he met, he would say, "This Lord, Dada Bhagwan is fully manifested within me. He also resides within all living beings. The difference is that within me He is completely expressed and in you, he has yet to manifest."

Who are we? What is God? Who runs this world? What is karma? What is liberation? Etc. All the world's spiritual questions were answered during this event. Thus, nature offered absolute vision to the world through the medium of Shree Ambalal Muljibhai Patel.

Ambalal was born in Tarasali, a suburb of Baroda and was later raised in Bhadran, Gujarat. His wife's name was Hiraba. Although he was a contractor by profession, his life at home and his interactions with everyone around him were exemplary, even prior to his Self-Realization. After becoming Self-Realized and attaining the state of a Gnani, (The Awakened One, Jnani in Hindi), his body became a 'public charitable trust.'

Throughout his entire life, he lived by the principle that there should not be any commerce in religion, and in all commerce, there must be religion. He also never took money from anyone for his own use. He used the profits from his business to take his devotees for pilgrimages to various parts of India.

His words became the foundation for the new, direct, and step-less path to Self-Realization called Akram Vignan. Through his divine original scientific experiment (The Gnan Vidhi), he imparted this knowledge to others within two hours. Thousands have received his grace through this process and thousands continue to do so even now. ‘Akram’ means without steps; an elevator path or a shortcut, whereas ‘Kram’ means an orderly, step-by-step spiritual path. Akram is now recognized as a direct shortcut to the bliss of the Self.

Who is Dada Bhagwan?

When he explained to others who ‘Dada Bhagwan’ is, he would say :

“What you see here is not ‘Dada Bhagwan’. What you see is ‘A. M. Patel.’ I am a Gnani Purush and ‘He’ that is manifested within me, is ‘Dada Bhagwan’. He is the Lord within. He is within you and everyone else. He has not yet manifested within you, whereas within me he is fully manifested. I myself am not a Bhagwan. I too bow down to Dada Bhagwan within me.”

Current link for attaining the knowledge of Self-Realization (Atma Gnan)

“I am personally going to impart siddhis (special spiritual powers) to a few people. After I leave, will there not be a need for them? People of future generations will need this path, will they not?”
~ **Dadashri**

Param Pujya Dadashri used to go from town to town, and country to country, to give satsang and impart the knowledge of the Self as well as knowledge of harmonious worldly interaction to all who came to see him. During his final days, in the fall of 1987, he gave his blessing to Dr. Niruben Amin and bestowed his special siddhis upon her, to continue his work. “You will have to become a mother to this whole world, Niruben” He told her as he blessed her. There was no doubt in Dadashri’s mind that Niruben was destined to be just that. She had served him with utmost devotion day and night for over twenty years

Dadashri in turn had molded her and prepared her to take on this monumental task.

From the time of Pujya Dadashri's mortal departure on January 2 1988 to her own mortal departure on March 19th 2006, Pujya Niruma as she lovingly came to be called by thousands remained true to her promise to Dadashri to carry on his mission of the world's salvation. She became Dadashri's representative of Akram Vignan and became instrumental in spreading the knowledge of Akram Vignan throughout the world. She also became an exemplary of pure and unconditional love. Thousands of people from all walks of life and from all over the world have attained Self-Realization through her and are established in the experience of the pure Soul, while carrying out their worldly duties and obligations. They experience freedom here and now, while living their daily life.

The link of Akram Gnanis now continues with the current spiritual master Pujya Deepakbhai Desai whom Pujya Dadashri had also graced with special siddhis to continue to teach the world about Atma Gnan and Akram Vignan. He was further molded and trained by Pujya Niruma who blessed him to conduct Gnan Vidhi in 2003. Dadashri had said that Deepakbhai will become the decorum that will add splendor to the Lord's reign. Pujya Deepakbhai, in keeping with Dada's and Niruma's tradition travels extensively within India and abroad, giving satsangs and imparting the knowledge of the Self to all who come seeking.

Powerful words in scriptures help the seeker in increasing his desire for liberation. The knowledge of the Self is the final goal of all one's seeking. Without the knowledge of the Self there is no liberation. This knowledge of the Self (Atma Gnan) does not exist in books. It exists in the heart of a Gnani. Hence, the knowledge of the Self can only be acquired by meeting a Gnani. Through the scientific approach of Akram Vignan, even today one can attain Atma Gnan, but it can only occur by meeting a living Atma Gnani and receiving the Atma Gnan. Only a lit candle can light another candle.

PREFACE

In an ocean of violence there is always violence, but if one wants to practice absolute non-violence (*ahimsa*), it is only possible through the reading and contemplation of the words spoken by the Gnani Purush *Param Pujya Dadashri*. There are many people who practice overt, gross ahimsa, but it is extremely difficult to know and understand it at its most subtle levels. It is not easy to know these levels, so how can one even begin to talk about attaining them?

If one does not understand what constitutes the entire spectrum of ahimsa towards living beings, beginning with the visible to the subtlest, such as life-forms present in the air and water, and if one does not understand intent-violence (violence through inner intent which creates new karma) and intent-death (the ultimate of all violence: violence against the self), then whatever ahimsa one practices, will be in vain. One will be stuck at the level of mere words and gross mechanical actions.

Only the one, who is absolutely non-violent himself, can show others the true nature of violence. Such a being is eternally established as the Self. These are the *Tirthankaras* and the *Gnanis*.

In this book, you will find information about violence and non-violence, from the gross to the subtlest levels, as exposed by the Gnani Purush himself. He is absolutely non-violent in a world filled with violence. This book has been compiled with the intention that people of this time-cycle, suffering from violence from every direction, achieve salvation for this life and lives to come.

Who can escape 'effect' violence (visible acts of violence, intentional or otherwise; violence perceived by all the senses)? Even the Tirthankars themselves, at the time of their ultimate liberation, with their last breath, killed innumerable airborne life-

forms. If they were held responsible for such violence, they would be compelled to take birth again for the bad karma caused. Would liberation then ever be possible? So what was it that they attained, which gave them exclusive protection from the laws of karma and achieve liberation? These very mysteries are understood and can be explained only by the Gnani Purush himself, because within him manifests the exact same knowledge that resides in the hearts of all the Tirthankars. Dadashri has revealed this knowledge and has made it accessible to everyone. This book will, without doubt, serve as a very useful guide for those who practice ahimsa and desire liberation.

- Dr. Niruben Amin

Non-violence (Ahimsa)

The word violence generally conveys the idea of some form of physical aggression. The spiritual definition of violence is much broader. Any speech or thought that hurts others is also considered violence.

In this book, the words violence and non-violence have been replaced by himsa and ahimsa, respectively.

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* * *

Non-Violence

(Ahimsa)

Progress to the Peak of Religions through Non-Violence

Question: Can you please elaborate on the subject of ahimsa (non-violence) in one's religious and spiritual progress?

Dadashri: Ahimsa itself is a religion and ahimsa is also spiritual progress. The definition of ahimsa is: to maintain the awareness to not hurt any living being, even in the slightest degree, through your mind, speech and actions. You will make spiritual progress when this principle remains firm in your conviction and awareness.

Question: How do you benefit in life with the mantra '*Ahimsa Parmodharma*' (Ahimsa, the highest religion)?

Dadashri: Every morning before leaving home, you should recite the inner intent, 'I do not want to hurt any living being, even in the slightest degree, through my thoughts, speech and conduct'. Repeat this five times. Having done this, if you do end up hurting someone anyway, you must take note of it and repent for the mistake.

Questioner: How is it possible, in this day and age, to live life without hurting any living being?

Dadashri: All you have to do is to have and protect the intent

that you do not want to hurt any living being, and repent for the times you cannot maintain it.

Questioner: Is it really possible to live in this world filled with all kinds of living beings without hurting any one of them? Can we satisfy every living being that surrounds us in every circumstance?

Dadashri: Whoever desires to do so, can do it. If the goal of ahimsa is not attained in one lifetime, it will be attained in two or three lifetimes. If your goal and decision is firm and you maintain ahimsa in your awareness, then absolute ahimsa is inevitable.

Non-Violence Prevails Over Violence

Questioner: What should you do to stop violence?

Dadashri: The intent of non-violence must arise continuously from within. Lord Mahavir has left behind a very clear distinction between violence and non-violence. He knew that an era of violent times was approaching and so He said, “Face all violence with non-violence.” If someone uses the weapon of violence, you should use the ‘weapon’ of non-violence against him. Only this approach will lead to happiness. Violence only stops with non-violence.

Understanding Non-Violence

Questioner: People are frequently violent. How can they be changed to become non-violent?

Dadashri: You have to make them understand. You have to explain to them that, ‘the Lord resides in every living being. If you hurt any living being you will incur liability for the hurt and violence that you cause. As a result, your spiritual progress is hindered because the layers of ignorance will have multiplied. This leads to more misery and birth in a lower life-form.’ People will indeed understand this if you explain it to them in this way. Violence ruins the human intellect.

Questioner: I may feel strongly about practicing ahimsa, but what can I do when someone does not believe in it at all?

Dadashri: If you feel strongly about practicing ahimsa, you should practice it and explain it to others gently, whether they believe in it or not. If you approach it this way they will start to believe in it. If you make an effort, then one day you will succeed.

Questioner: What should we do if the person is not receptive even after you explain it to him calmly and affectionately? Should we let the violence continue, or should we forcefully try to stop it?

Dadashri: You should pray to whichever god you believe in and say: “Dear Lord, make everyone non-violent.” Pray this way; this should be your an inner intent.

The Problem of Bedbugs

Questioner: How do we deal with the growing numbers of bedbugs at home?

Dadashri: We had the same problem in our home, many years ago. I could not stand it when a bedbug bit me on the neck, so I would pick it up and put it on my leg, and let it bite me there. How could we send away the poor hungry insect without first letting it dine at this ‘restaurant’ of ours? It would not be right to let it starve. You may not have the same strength for non-violence, so I ask you to just catch it and put it outside. At least you will get some peace of mind knowing that it is not in your bed.

Nature’s law is such that even if you were to throw out a hundred thousand bedbugs, if tonight only seven of them were supposed to bite you, then the seven will not leave you without finishing their task. Even if you killed them, seven bedbugs would still bite you, whether you threw them far away from your home or you did nothing. They would still bite you despite what you do.

That is why I do not try to resist them. I let them bite me when I am awake, or else they will bite me in my sleep. At least they do not bring containers to carry away extra food with them. All they do is eat their share and go home. There is a sense of satisfaction that this body has fed so many other lives. These days it is hard to feed even two individuals.

Bedbug Killer, Are You the Creator of Bedbugs?

Questioner: What steps should we take to deal with all the bedbugs, mosquitoes and cockroaches in the house?

Dadashri: To prevent them from infesting the home, you should clean your house and keep it clean. You should catch the roaches, take them outside and throw them far away, but you should not kill them under any circumstances.

A prominent man once invited me to his home. He made a statement that one should kill bedbugs because they are parasites. I asked him where it was written that the bedbugs should be killed. I explained to him that a person has a right to kill a bedbug only if he can create one. The general rule is that you cannot destroy what you cannot create.

Questioner: So why do the bedbugs bite?

Dadashri: They bite you because you have a pending debt with them. Your body does not belong to you alone. It is not your property in the first place, you have 'stolen' it and so the bedbugs are stealing from you. When they bite you, your accounts are being settled and your debts are being paid off. So from now on, do not kill them.

One Cannot Steal from the Lord's Garden

Let us say there are mangos growing in your neighbor's garden, and some are hanging over the fence that separates your yards. Your neighbor's religious beliefs are different. He does not believe in ahimsa and so he is quick to punish and hit anyone who

picks from his fruit trees. People are afraid of him so they do not touch his fruits. Now if you can refrain from stealing from your neighbor's garden, why can you not refrain from killing the bedbug in the Lord's garden? Do you understand that you are stealing from the Lord's garden?

Suffer the Penance before You

Questioner: But what if the bedbug bites you badly?

Dadashri: Blood is food for the bedbug. Do you expect it to eat rice and *ghee*? Would it eat it even if you made it nice and creamy for it? No, because blood is its food.

Questioner: But is it fair to just let it go on biting?

Dadashri: Do you not occasionally fast as a means of penance? In that penance, do you not tolerate the pangs of hunger? Then why not accept the bedbug's bites as a form of penance? This penance presents itself directly to you. It is the basis for liberation - Moksha. Why must you create your own kind of penance? Why not suffer the penance that presents itself naturally? Naturally occurring penance is the cause of liberation, whereas self-created penance is the cause of worldly life.

Questioner: Yes! That is a very good point. Let the penance that presents itself, happen. Fasting is tough and requires a lot of effort.

Dadashri: Yes. In that you are creating circumstances for penance, whereas here penance occurs spontaneously without you having to invite it. So feed all the bedbugs that come to you. Treat them with kindness before you send them off.

Non-Violence: a Gift from My Mother

My mother, *Zaverba*, was thirty-six years older than I. One day I asked her if the bedbugs also bit her and she replied: "Naturally dear, they will bite. But the poor things eat their share

and are off again. They don't bring any containers; they simply eat their share and leave!" Blessed is this mother. Blessed too is the son!

Once I came home after a fight with someone at school. My mother took pity on the other child and told me that I should not have hurt him. She told me that the poor boy did not have a mother, so who would take care of his cuts and bruises? She even told me that I should not hurt anyone and that it was fine if someone hurt me, because I had a mother who would take care of me. Now tell me, is such a woman not worthy of being the mother of Mahavir?

Questioner: It is the other way around nowadays. Nowadays parents teach their children to fight back.

Dadashri: Not just nowadays, it has always been that way. It has nothing to do with the current times. This is the way of the world. There is a choice. One can become the disciple of Lord Mahavir and be free, or become a disciple of worldly gurus, and be bound. The latter creates further miseries. The Lord is *vitraag* (without attachments). He is absolutely non-violent. So it is better to be a disciple of Mahavir.

Maintain Cleanliness: Do Not Use Insecticides

Many people do not kill bedbugs. Instead they put their mattresses out in the sun to heat. In my household I would tell them not to do even that. Why trouble the poor bedbugs in the sun? People would still protest, wanting to be rid of them. It is a misconception to think that the population of bedbugs decreases by killing them. They may appear to decrease, but the same number will be found the following day.

We should simply keep everything clean and tidy. Maintaining cleanliness is the key to eliminating the bedbug problem. It is a crime to use insecticides and repellants on them. Besides, the chemicals do not destroy them; the insects just

reappear elsewhere. At certain times you will not see a single insect, while sometimes they seem to be abundant. This is because insects are seasonal. During such times, they will keep thriving no matter how much insecticide you use.

Pay Off Your Debts Fast

Questioner: Is it true that a bedbug only takes the portion that is owed to it from the overall account?

Dadashri: I have always paid off my debts to them, which is why I only come across a few now. Even now, if a bedbug were to visit me, it would instinctively recognize that it is not going to be harmed. They know me. They also know the nature of the individuals that are likely to hurt and kill them. They have the ability to know this because they too have a soul within.

Besides, there is no way out for you without paying off your debts. You will have to feed blood for taking blood from other beings in your past. You will have to repay whomever you have troubled. All your accounts will have to be paid off. Have you seen a blood bank where people donate blood? This here is such a ‘bedbug bank’ which acts like a ‘blood bank’, where a record of all your pending accounts are kept.

Drinking Blood or Settling Accounts?

So let the bedbug bite you and do not let it go hungry. How can the poor, hungry bedbug leave without being fed at such a noble household as yours?

If you cannot tolerate their bites, just take them outside, but if you do have the strength, let them feed off you and then let them go. In doing this, they are doing you a big favor. They liberate you from your sense of attachment to your body. The message the bedbug comes with is, “Why are you asleep (spiritually asleep)? Get your work done!” They are like the watchmen that stand guard to alert you.

The Law is Kept

Questioner: Mosquitoes are a nuisance! What can we do about them?

Dadashri: Understand that anything in this world that aggravates you does so within nature's prescribed limits. This law even binds your suffering. If you want to be free of these mosquitoes, sleep inside a mosquito net but do not kill them.

Questioner: So should we preserve their life and not kill them?

Dadashri: Yes.

Questioner: What if we utter '*Sri Rama*'s name as we kill them, would it mean that they would attain a higher life-form in their next life?

Dadashri: You will go to a lower life-form for inflicting suffering on the mosquito.

Questioner: Do mosquitoes bite saints?

Dadashri: They even bit the Lord. They used to bite Lord Mahavir a lot. They just would not leave without collecting on their debts.

Your Own Debts

Recognize that when a single mosquito even touches you, it is exact. It is meant to be. If you were to be bitten on your hand, it would not be able to bite you on your leg, even if it wanted to! How can this world be wrong when it has been arranged with such precision? This precise arrangement is the 'regulator of the world' and continuously keeps it in 'regulation'. I am making this statement based on my own vision.

'Hitlerism' Prohibited Everywhere

No one in this world is in a position to hurt or hinder you,

so if anything happens to you, do not blame the world: the fault is your own. Everything that you experience in your life is the echo of all the meddling you, yourself did in your previous life. You would not have such echoes if you had not been so meddling.

Not even a single mosquito can bite you unless you had previously interfered with it. Even if you were lying in a bed full of bedbugs, not a single bug will touch you, if you have not interfered in your past life. What is the law that governs this? People have thoughts like, 'Kill all these bugs, and get rid of them'. This is interference. Do they not use insecticides? This is 'Hitlerism' - gassing human beings to death. Yet the bugs say: 'You will not affect us much. We will not stop propagating.'

So all your accounts will be cleared when you cease to interfere. There will be no 'bites' of any kind without the causes of interference.

How can you tell if all the debts have been paid off? When in the midst of a swarm of mosquitoes, not a single mosquito bites you. Even the bedbugs will forget their natural tendency to bite. If a furious and violent man rushes in here suddenly, his anger and violence will vanish when he sets eyes on me. His thinking will change: Such is the power of ahimsa.

It is *vyavasthit* (Scientific Circumstantial Evidences) that arranges everything. The mosquito is not aware that it will bite Chandulal and Chandulal is not aware that he will be bitten, but *vyavasthit* unites the two. *Vyavasthit* determines the time of the event when the air pulls the mosquito to its location and it is also *vyavasthit* that pulls it away after the event. It is *vyavasthit* that frees them from their account so they both can go their separate ways. A mosquito can fly for miles to settle accounts with anyone who has interfered with it in the past.

No Difference between Thorns and Mosquitoes

When a mosquito bites, people blame the mosquito, but

when a thorn pricks them, what do they do? There is no difference between a thorn and a mosquito. They are both the same in the Lord's eyes. The soul within them does not bite. Everything that hurts you is merely a 'thorn'. Why do you not blame a thorn when it pricks you?

Questioner: Because we do not perceive it as being a living *nimit* (one instrumental in delivering a karmic account)?

Dadashri: The mosquito appears as a living entity and so the person assumes, 'this is what bit me.' Not knowing the reality, he is under the veil of illusion. So the world appears real to him. The real Self never does anything. It does not bite anybody. The world is simply an interaction of non-self elements, and it is there that the accounts are 'caused' and settled. The Self never punishes anyone. The world is constantly hurt by the sharp 'thorns'.

If a person is struck by a falling rock, he will look up to see who threw the rock at him. He says nothing because he does not see anyone, he stays quiet. But, if he caught someone throwing even a small pebble at him, he would be very angry. Why does he react differently in each situation? This is all because he has a false perception.

According to *Akram Vignan*, the thorn that pricks you and the person that hurts you are both *nimit*s (they become instrumental in the process when vyavasthit brings to you the results of your own past karma). The fault is really yours. If you stepped on a flower, it would not hurt you, but if you stepped on a thorn, it will prick you for sure. The same applies to people, so you must be careful when you interact with anyone. When a thorn pricks you or a scorpion stings you it is the result of your past karma. Whose past karma? -Your own past karma. Others are just instrumental in delivering the results of your own past deeds. Why is the 'instrument' (*nimit*) at fault?

So cautious. This is a very different kind of world

altogether. It is absolutely just and exact by nature. I have assessed the real nature of things and events throughout my life. I have arrived at a wonderful conclusion that will bring everlasting peace and harmony to the world.

The Right to Life for All Beings

Consider why a cat preys on mice and other rodents, but never touches a mole, even if it were hungry! Why?

The food that you receive without effort is the result of the *punyas* (good or meritorious deeds) from your previous life. A laborer, on the other hand, has to toil away to earn the money to buy food. So from now on make sure that you do not hurt any living being - human, animal or insect. On the one hand people pray to the Lord while on the other, they continue to hurt the very beings within which the Lord resides. How much courage does it take to kill animals or insects? People go around killing snakes and insects too readily, yet is it such a brave and noble thing to do? You can only destroy that which you are capable of creating.

From the relative viewpoint the bedbug is a bedbug, but it is a Pure Soul (*shuddhatma*) by the real viewpoint. Do you want to kill a Pure Soul? If you cannot tolerate it you should pick it up and put it outside. Man looks for his happiness through killing. Is it possible to kill and find happiness at the same time?

Questioner: What should we do if ants invade our house?

Dadashri: Just keep the door of that room shut. People find ants annoying, but in nature, such a nuisance only lasts a few days and in no time, the ants disappear. So just keep the room shut. If you pondered everything on your own you could even discover whether or not this nuisance is permanent or temporary.

Questioner: Most of the time the ants head for the kitchen, so how can we keep it closed?

Dadashri: That is just a false belief. Understand that you

must move away from wherever the nuisance is. Keep two separate cooking areas in your home if you can. Keep a spare stove in your home. Surely you can forego a cooked meal for just one day! Killing is a very serious matter.

Questioner: We only kill them if they get in our way. We do not go out of our way to kill them.

Dadashri: For those who want to kill insects, such a situation will present itself to them. Those who do not want to kill will come across circumstances that will accommodate their intent.

Your circumstances will change if you make an effort to not kill for a while. The practice of killing will not stop unless you understand the law that governs this world, and as a result you will not be able to break away from the habits of this worldly life. If you kill an insect by accident, do *pratikraman* (asking for forgiveness).

Questioner: Will the use of insecticides affect us?

Dadashri: A change occurs in the subtle subatomic particles within you the very moment you kill something. Innumerable living organisms within you die. The killing you do externally is proportionate to the killing that takes place internally. There is an entire cosmos within you just as there is on the outside. So kill as much as you want to, but understand that the same destruction is taking place within you, for there is as much within the body as there is in the universe.

You can never be safe because there are so many ‘thieves and pickpockets’ around. But if the thought of picking someone’s pocket or stealing from someone does not occur to you, then no one is going to steal from you. However, if instead of violence, you choose non-violence, you will not come across any circumstances of violence. That is the way of the world. If you could just understand this world- just once- your problems will be solved.

The Entity that Endorses is at Fault

Questioner: During the rainy season when there is an abundance of mosquitoes and flies, the municipal authorities tell us to spray our houses with insecticide. Is that a sin? But if we do not use the insecticides, there will be an outbreak of disease.

Dadashri: How is this different from what Hitler did with his bombs? This is ‘Hitler’ on a very small scale.

Questioner: But we are talking about the whole town here!! It is filthy in the rainy season and there are flies and swarms of mosquitoes everywhere. The local authorities are forced to use insecticides.

Dadashri: What difference does it make to you what the municipal authorities do? You should simply have the intent not to kill. Your only intent should be: “It would be better if things were not so.”

Questioner: So are those who carry out the work for the municipal authorities responsible?

Dadashri: No. It does not concern them.

Questioner: Then who is responsible?

Dadashri: The workers just carry out their orders, but it is the head officers, the ones who give the orders who are liable.

Questioner: But for whose benefit do the officers give the orders?

Dadashri: They are simply doing their duty. It is not for us.

Questioner: But we are the ones who complain that the mosquitoes are a nuisance.

Dadashri: Those who do not wish to hurt do not file the

complaint. Therefore they are not responsible. Those who complain are responsible. The liability therefore, falls on those who approve and endorse it.

Questioner: So does it depend on the individual's inner intent?

Dadashri: Yes, your inner intent determines the degree of liability you incur.

Questioner: If a mouse or a bird dies in a water tank, the tank will need to be cleaned out and disinfected. Will the use of the disinfectants kill all the living organisms in the tank? Who will be accountable for this sin? Is it the one who does the disinfecting or the one who makes others do it?

Dadashri: They are both responsible, but their intent of non-violence should stay. You should not have an opinion to kill.

Questioner: The inner intent is to prevent disease. If the water in the tank stays contaminated, the people who drink it will become ill.

Dadashri: Yes, but nevertheless, the wrongful deeds continue. If you take into account such wrongful deeds, then such deeds are constantly taking place in the world.

You have to take care of yourself and not worry about others. Each individual must look after himself. Every living being has brought with him, his life and time of death. That is why the Lord has said that no one can kill anyone. Such a statement cannot be uttered in public or else people may abuse it.

Who do you suppose will clean the contaminated water-tank in a household of ten people? It will be the person with the ego. He will say that he will clean out the tank because he is the right person for the job. All the liability without doubt will fall on that person - the one who takes on the 'doer-ship'.

Questioner: But he is doing it out of compassion.

Dadashri: Whatever it may be, he still commits a sin, which he will have to repay in the next life.

Questioner: Then what should you do? Drink the contaminated water?

Dadashri: You cannot alter the circumstances. The person with ego will not stop undertaking the doer-ship of cleaning up the tank. You will still continue to get clean water. You will always find someone with ego who will clean the water for you. Yes indeed, everything in this world is at your disposal, but it is your merit karma that falls short. The obstacles in your life will be proportionate to the amount of ego you exercise. When this ego is uprooted and its support is destroyed, the whole world will be yours. You will not lack anything. The ego is your only obstacle.

Violence in Education Institutions

Questioner: Agriculture students have to catch and kill butterflies to study them. If they do not carry out their assignments, they will be given a failing grade. So what should they do? Is what they are doing sinful?

Dadashri: Before starting their assignment, they should pray to the Lord for an hour and ask for forgiveness for having to face such a task. They should maintain the intent of non-violence and keep wishing that they did not have to carry it out. ‘Dear Lord, I ask for your forgiveness. Let my circumstances be free of all violence’.

Questioner: It’s really the instructors that give such assignments, so should *they* not be held liable for the sin?

Dadashri: Yes, the binding of karma gets distributed sixty to forty percent. Sixty percent of the liability goes to the instructor who instigates the deed and forty percent goes to the students, who carry out the deed.

Questioner: Does vyavasthit not control everything? These people are merely the instruments (nimit), so why do they end up binding demerit karma?

It's really the instructors that give such assignments, so should *they* not be held liable for the sin?

Dadashri: Such violence should not occur in your life, but it still does. This is the result of past karmas of demerit. If in your profession you had to slaughter goats, would it make you happy?

Questioner: I would not like that. But Dada, what if you absolutely had no choice?

Dadashri: If you have no choice, then you should carry out the deed with absolute repentance. You should repent everyday for one hour. Can you or any scientist for that matter create even one butterfly?

Questioner: No, it is not possible Dada.

Dadashri: Then how can you destroy what you cannot create?

All these people should pray to the Lord and repent. They should ask why they have to undertake such tasks. A farmer should ask why he became a farmer. There is a lot of violence in farming, but it is not as great as that of killing butterflies. Killing butterflies is outright violence.

Questioner: Not only do they kill the butterflies, but if they catch a good specimen, they also take pride in getting a better grade!

Dadashri: Whatever degree of pleasure they experience, they will have to experience the same degree of sorrow from the karma that will present as a result. They will have to suffer just as much misery and bitterness as the pride and happiness they derived from it.

A Separate Ledger for Sins

Questioner: If one man cuts grass, one chops down a tree, one kills a mosquito, one kills an elephant and another kills a human being, there is violence involved in each act, but are the consequences different in each case?

Dadashri: Yes, the consequences will be different. The blade of grass is not so significant.

Questioner: But is there not the presence of Soul in a blade of grass?

Dadashri: That is true. But the grass suffers in a state of dormancy.

Questioner: So the degree of the sin one binds is proportionate and directly related to the amount of suffering experienced by the entity transgressed upon?

Dadashri: Yes, the amount of sin one binds is based on the degree of suffering inflicted upon another living being.

Questioner: Many people have beautiful gardens surrounding their homes.

Dadashri: There is nothing wrong with that. The only reason for telling people not to keep gardens is because a lot of precious time is wasted in maintaining them and not because of the violence it involves.

Questioner: But are we not instrumental in causing this violence?

Dadashri: There is nothing wrong with being an instrument. The whole world is in an instrumental form. Everything just continues to happen in this way. You do not have to concern yourself with the single-sensory organisms, because you are not inflicting any pain on them. Some people needlessly become overly concerned with such forms of violence. Nevertheless, you should

not deliberately pick leaves from trees unnecessarily. You should not indulge yourself in meaningless things. If you need to break a twig, you must ask the tree for its permission.

Questioner: Is there not a difference between walking on grass and walking on a footpath?

Dadashri: Yes there is, but the difference is insignificant. People have been misled into making an issue out of small things while the important points have been overlooked altogether. You commit greater violence when you become annoyed and irritated with people because it hurts them.

The Role of Karma in Farming

Questioner: Does one bind sin (demerit karma) in farming?

Dadashri: There is sin everywhere. There is sin in farming and also in the business of selling grains. There are so many tiny organisms involved in this. When people sell grain they are also selling the insects in the grain. Money is taken for the insects. The insects are eaten with the grain.

Questioner: But is it a sin when a farmer nurtures one plant and kills the surrounding weeds?

Dadashri: Yes, indeed it is!

Questioner: Then how can he farm?

Dadashri: Merit karma and demerit karma are intrinsic in all work. The farmer kills some plants while he nurtures others. He will bind merit karma for the ones he nurtures and sin (demerit karma) for the ones he kills. There is twenty-five percent sin and seventy-five percent merit karma, so there is a fifty percent profit.

Questioner: So does the sin get deducted from the merit karma or vice-versa?

Dadashri: No, it does not work like that. Both the positive

and the negative are recorded. If the positives and negatives negated each other, you would not come across a single unhappy person. And if that were the case, no one would seek liberation, because everyone would be perfectly content here.

The whole world is binding both sin and merit karma. Merit karma takes place alongside sin. But the Lord has said that one should do the kind of business where the profits outweigh the losses.

Special Pratikraman for Farmers

Questioner: In your book we have read the prayer: “Let no one be hurt in the slightest degree, through the medium of my mind, speech and body.” But we are farmers. We grow tobacco and to get a good crop, we have to break off the tips of every plant. Thousands of plants are cut in this manner. How can we avoid this kind of sin?

Dadashri: In your mind you should be repenting. That is all you have to do. As you snap the tender leaves, you should repent from within as to why such a task has befallen upon you and why you are engaged in such an occupation. That is all.

Questioner: But will the sin not occur anyway?

Dadashri: That is true. But you do not have to worry about that. You do not have to worry about the sin that is occurring. From within you must repent and inquire how you ended up with such a profession involving violence. Maintain the inner intent of non-violence and be resolute in that.

Unless you have this understanding you will not be able to repent. On the contrary, you would happily throw away the cuttings without a second thought. Do you understand this? If you do your work the way I tell you, your liability becomes mine. There is no problem when you throw away the plants, but you should always repent for it.

Questioner: I understand. Compared to farmers, businessmen commit a greater sin, but even more than the businessmen, it is the people who sit at home that commit the greater sin. Sins are committed through the mind and not the body.

Dadashri: You have to understand this. Others do not have to understand it necessarily. Let them believe what they want to; whatever their belief it is correct for them. But for your purpose, you have to understand what I am saying.

Questioner: What should we do when we have to spray the cotton crop with insecticide? Is there not violence in it?

Dadashri: Any work that is unavoidable must be done with the contingent of pratikraman (apology coupled with remorse for any wrongdoing).

You do not know how to conduct yourself in this worldly life, but once I show you the way, you will stop binding new sin.

If you are a farmer, when you plough land and harvest crops you are bound to bind sin because you destroy countless lives. For this very reason, I am showing you how this sin can be reduced. I am giving you the medicine to wash away your sin and if you use it, you will incur a lesser liability and will be able to enjoy worldly happiness.

All farmers incur a liability from the violence involved in the nature of their work, which is why every farmer must pray to the Lord for forgiveness and do pratikraman for ten minutes each day for committing such violence.

Merit Karma and Sin Do Not Affect the Self-Realized

Questioner: Is it not a sin to use insecticides in farming? Is the manufacturing of insecticides a sin?

Dadashri: Yes it is, because it is made with the intention of

killing lives. One buys and uses the insecticide with the intention of killing. So that is all sin.

Questioner: But the aim is to produce better crops.

Dadashri: I know what makes the crops grow; what supports the farmers and their farming. I know and understand the real foundation of everything that takes place in this world. People do not have this knowledge of the real doer and that is why they assume doer-ship of their acts. They believe that the crops grow because of their efforts and actions. Farmers believe that their crops grow better because they use pesticides. It is a very grave sin to support one's deeds with this belief. Once this wrong belief is taken away, there is no support for that action, and so there are no consequences.

Questioner: So then what happens to the individual's independent effort (*purushaarth*)?

Dadashri: The true definition of *purushaarth* (highest endeavor) is to observe and know the events that are occurring. Nothing else. Moreover, the thoughts that arise in your mind are your 'files' (Dadashri's word for anything or anyone that you have a karmic account with). These too, you must simply observe and not interfere with.

Questioner: Then should one farm or not?

Dadashri: There is nothing wrong in farming.

Questioner: What about the liability of sin in farming?

Dadashri: After Self-Realization (The awareness of your Real Self which Dadashri imparts in *The Gnan Viddhi*), sin does not touch you. You are Pure Soul; you are no longer 'Chandubhai' (The reader should substitute his or her own name). As long as you believe that you are Chandubhai, you will bind sin. Do you *believe* that you are Chandubhai?

Questioner: No.

Dadashri: So then how can sin touch you? There is no more charging of karma. Whatever farming you have to do, is your 'file', which you have to deal with, with equanimity.

And if you continuously maintain the awareness of 'I am Pure Soul' - as I have given you- then no amount of insecticide you use will cause you to bind demerit karma. This is because 'You' are Pure Soul and 'Chandubhai' is the one who uses the insecticide. If you feel sympathy or remorse, then you become Chandubhai.

Questioner: Do you bind karma when you make, sell or use insecticides?

Dadashri: No. When the manufacturers of insecticides ask me what will happen to them, I tell them that nothing will happen to them, as long as they follow my instructions.

Questioner: So does it mean that as long as a person says, 'I am Pure Soul' he can continue to do violence?

Dadashri: It is not a question of doing violence. There is no violence in 'I am Pure Soul'. There is no 'doer-ship' or anything to be done in the state of the Pure Soul.

Questioner: So from the worldly perspective of one's general conduct or behavior, is it not considered a wrongful deed?

Dadashri: From the worldly perspective it is sin. But it only when one becomes 'Chandubhai' does it become a sin. After this Gnan, you are no longer Chandubhai. You have become the Pure Soul and you are constantly aware of it. This awareness is called *shukla dhyān* (pure meditation) and to have the awareness of 'I am Chandubhai' is *ahankari dhyān* (egotistical meditation).

So many people have taken this Gnan, but never once have they misused it. On the contrary they ask me whether they should

stop or change their occupation. I tell them that if it happens naturally then they may, otherwise they should continue with it.

Occupations Involving Violence

Questioner: My friend does not understand why it is wrong to manufacture pesticides when such an occupation falls upon a person as a result of his past karmas. How can the butcher be blamed for selling meat when he is only doing what his karma dictates? He is paying his dues according to his karmas.

Dadashri: Yes and your friend would continue to assume this if he did not question it. But because of his merit karma, he is now questioning this. This is tremendous merit karma unfolding. If one does not question such things, the violence would continue causing him much harm (internal dullness) because of the violence against the living beings within him, whereas the external ahimsa is inconsequential. Continued *himsa* results in a decline of spiritual awareness. A person becomes blunt and insensitive. The external violence is insignificant because in reality it does not reduce the number of insects killed. It is the subtle life-forms within oneself that are killed and as a result makes a person insensitive.

Questioner: Whenever I meet my old friends, I tell them that they should quit their occupations and I give them examples of many successful people whose lives have been ruined as a result of the work they did, but they do not take my advice. After much suffering, many have left their professions.

Dadashri: One comes to do business involving so much violence as a result of tremendous sin. It would be best if you freed yourself from such occupations. There are so many other ways to make a living. A man once told me that of all his businesses, his grocery business was the most lucrative. When I asked him what he did if his grain became infested with bugs, he told me that he would do everything possible to get rid of the insects, but he could not eliminate them completely. I assured him that there was

nothing wrong in what he was doing, but in selling the grains, he was also charging for the weight of the insects that remained in the grain and so he was selling lives for profit.

Jewelry-The Best Business

Dadashri: People with a lot of merit karma from their past life acquire professions with the least amount of violence. The business of selling diamonds and precious gems would be one such profession. There is no scope of selling adulterated goods here. But nowadays even in this profession people have learned to do business dishonestly. Nothing prevents a person from doing business honestly if he wants to. In this profession no living beings are killed, but other kinds of violence can occur. Second to that would be the gold and silver business. The butcher's business involves the highest amount of violence. The potter comes next because when he fires his wares he does a lot of hinsa. It is all violence.

Questioner: Is a person still held accountable regardless of the kind of violence he does, whether it is charge violence (violent intent) or discharge violence (violence in action)?

Dadashri: Can you not see people suffering? They are constantly suffering the results of violence. There is nothing but suffering...

People in occupations that involve violence do not have any radiance on their faces and they appear unhappy. A farm hand is never happy because of the effects of the violence from his past life. His landlord appears happy because he does not have to toil and is enjoying the fruits of his merit karma. This has been the law of life, the law of karma all along. The process behind which a person acquires the kind of work he does is a natural one. He could not run away from such an occupation even if he wanted to. We would not have a defense force if all the parents of our nation thought, 'We do not want to send our son to the armed forces because he might get killed'. Yet all nations have a defense

force. This is the natural law. Nature is at work here and nature brings forth the results, so do not be concerned without cause.

Hoarding is Violence

Questioner: Businessmen make excessive profit. Many of them make money without putting in any effort. Some do not even compensate their workers adequately. Is such behavior not violence?

Dadashri: That is all violent behavior.

Questioner: What kind of himsa is it when a person gives money towards a religious cause, obtained through devious and violent means?

Dadashri: If that money is donated for a charitable cause, his liability will be reduced by whatever amount he sacrifices. For example, if he earned a hundred thousand rupees and donated eighty thousand to build a hospital, then his liability will be reduced by whatever he donates. He will still be liable for the remaining twenty thousand rupees. So it is good that he spends it for a worthy cause. There is nothing wrong with it.

Questioner: Is it not himsa to hoard money?

Dadashri: That is himsa. Any kind of hoarding is violence because it deprives others of the use of money.

Questioner: People accumulate money by mass killing of other human beings so that they can live lavishly. What is that called?

Dadashri: That too is wrong! One will be punished according to the amount of liability one incurs. The best way to live is to keep as little as possible.

Confront in Peace

Questioner: You say that one should not steal or commit

any violence. But if a person steals from us or cheats us, should we confront him or not?

Dadashri: You have to confront him. Do it in such a way that it does not affect your internal peace. Very calmly and deliberately ask, 'Brother, what wrong have I done to you that you are stealing from me and hurting me?' If he has stolen something worth a hundred rupees do not confront him in anger. If you do you will sustain five times worth of spiritual loss. You will incur a greater loss by becoming angry with him.

Violence Ceases Through Opposition

Questioner: Is it considered subtle violence to cheat a person, to torment him, to steal from him or betray his trust?

Dadashri: It is all violence. In fact, it is a greater violence than the visible violence and its consequences are also greater. To cause someone mental distress, to hurt him, cheat, betray or steal from him is all *raudradhyan* (adverse internal meditation that hurts others), the consequence of which will be a life in hell.

Questioner: Is it right to give more importance to subtle violence, as opposed to gross overt violence such as cruelty to helpless animals, their slaughter and violent exploitation? And is it an appropriate approach to remain neutral?

Dadashri: No. That is not right. One should always oppose any form of violence. By not opposing it, you are condoning it. If you are not doing one you are doing the other. Therefore whoever it is, be it an ordinary person or a Gnani, he must be opposed to it, or else it would be the same as encouraging it!

Questioner: Can we become instrumental in stopping violence against humans, animals and other living entity when suffering has come as a result of their own karma?

Dadashri: Regardless of the consequences of their karma, if you do not try to stop violence, it is the same as encouraging it.

So try to stop it.

If you see a wounded person, you should stop to help him. Do whatever you can to help him. Although he is suffering because of his past karma, you should still maintain your intent of non-violence. If on the other hand, you do not stop to help him, you will bind karma because of his negative intent towards you. This world will not liberate you. You have to liberate yourself.

Questioner: How important is it for those interested in making spiritual progress to make an effort towards stopping violence? If so, how can that be achieved?

Dadashri: If one is desirous of spiritual progress but makes no effort to stop violence, then it is the same as encouraging violence. All spiritual aspirations must be coupled with efforts to stop violence.

Questioner: Why is there no awareness to prevent gross visible violence under such circumstances?

Dadashri: It is absolutely necessary to prevent all such violence. You have to make every effort to do this. If necessary, you should organize groups and elect people to represent your cause to the government. This will yield stronger results. Everyone should have strong feelings against violence. These feelings have to be strengthened and encouraged.

Questioner: But Dada, ultimately are these not all accounts and consequences of past karma?

Dadashri: Yes, they are, but you can only say that after the fact. If you dismiss them as karmic accounts beforehand, things are likely to be ruined. If a so-called 'ascetic' were to come to your village to abduct your children, you must try to stop him. You would be grieved if your child were kidnapped. Likewise, you should feel deep sorrow for the slaughtering of animals and you should oppose it. How else will you accomplish the task?

You cannot remain apathetic and do nothing. You can regard it as the consequence of past accounts, but even the Lord was opposed to such violence. Therefore you should collectively show your opposition towards it and unite against it. In doing so, you are not really opposing violence, but you are expressing your non-violent intent.

A Safe-Haven for Cows Established by Lord Krishna

Many domestic animals were being slaughtered during Lord Krishna's time. What did Lord Krishna do to stop this? People say that he raised the *Govardhan* Mountain on his fingertip. *Govardhan* means to increase the population of cows. This is a metaphor for what he really did, which was to single-handedly save the cows from being slaughtered. People in India depend on domestic animals for their livelihood. Lord Krishna's aim was to protect these animals and increase their population and so he established shelters for cows, which in turn led to an increase in dairy production. He did this single-handedly, hence the symbolism. It is not necessary to protect animals that are violent, like cats, dogs and carnivorous animals. No one uses them for food. Cows need protection because they provide food for humans. Therefore, the protection and propagation of cows is a worthwhile cause.

For the time being, more than protecting the cows, it is very important for you to focus on how to increase their population. The benefits derived from their milk and dairy production is invaluable. Instead of forcing people, if you were to explain to them and ask them to volunteer to help establish a custom of keeping cattle in all the villages, then the population would increase. All one needs to worry about is protecting the cows and educating people about the benefits of increased dairy production. At the moment there is no increase in the population of cows and yet the slaughtering continues. We may hesitate in speaking up against the violence, but at the same time it is a sin to remain silent. We

are not doing anything wrong; we are trying to prevent violence.

Questioner: We are not asking that the cows be set free from the clutches of the butcher, but we are trying to prevent new cows from reaching them.

Dadashri: Yes do try to save the new ones from reaching the slaughterhouse. You should explain to the real owner that he should not do such things. For the time being you just need to concern yourself with protecting the cows and trying to increase their population. Everything else is secondary. Once these rules are established, then you can go on to do other things.

Questioner: ‘Govardhan’. This is a completely new meaning for this word.

Dadashri: Yes, these are all just various events, which took place, but they can only be beneficial if they are interpreted correctly. People turn them into mere folklore and scientists dismiss such stories as myths. Naturally they will question how a person can hold up a mountain on his fingertip! And if Lord Krishna did carry it on his fingertip, why then did he not carry the Himalayas? And if he could perform such incredible feats, why then did he get shot with an arrow and die? But in reality it is not like this.

He enforced Govardhan - the propagation of cows- in a wonderful way, because during that time, tremendous violence was occurring. It is not just the Moslems who commit violence, but some Hindus do also.

One should not have any violent intent. Man should be non-violent in intent. One is considered to have non-violent intent when one dedicates one’s life towards the cause of non-violence.

Is There Sin in Picking Flowers for Worship?

Questioner: Is there sin in offering flowers when we pray at the temples?

Dadashri: It is a sin to pluck flowers and it is also a sin to buy flowers, but when it comes to offering flowers in worship, one has to look at it in a different light.

When one offers flowers devotionally, one derives benefits. Many believe that it is a great sin to pick flowers and yet so many others use them in their worship. This spiritual path is that of the *Vitraag* (beyond attachment and abhorrence) Lords, which takes into account benefits over non-benefits. There is violence in picking flowers, but when those flowers are offered to the Lord or even to the Gnani Purush, it is thought of as worship visible to all. There is benefit in such worship. After all, the person is not using the flower for his own benefit. For example he incurs a five percent liability from the violence in picking flowers, but when he offers the flowers to a Gnani, he earns a benefit of thirty percent or when he offers it to the Lord, he earns a benefit of forty percent. So overall he has gained from this act. You should conduct yourself in such a way that your benefits are greater than your losses, but you should stop if your losses are greater than your gains. If however, you do not pick any flowers, then there is no gain or loss.

Suffering Inflicted on Flowering Plants

Questioner: Have I not bound sins for all the flowers that I have picked so far?

Dadashri: The sin that you incur from picking flowers for thousands of years is still lesser than the sin you bind from just a single lifetime worth of *kashayas* (anger, pride, attachment and greed) you create with those near you. That is why the Lord has said that the first thing man needs to do is to stop arguments and bickering. Picking flowers is not a problem, but it should not be done unnecessarily for one's own vanity and pleasure. You can pick flowers as an offering to the Lord.

Questioner: But there is a saying: "Where even a flower

petal is harmed, one has transgressed the principles of the *Jinas* (the Enlightened Ones)”.

Dadashri: Those are the words of the Tirthankars that *Krupadudev* had written. But where is this dictum applicable? It is for the one who has reached a spiritual level where one is free from all desires. But for you, you still have to wear these fancy clothes, do you not?

Questioner: Yes, and they have to be ironed too!

Dadashri: Yes ironed ones at that too! The worldly people have a need for many things. That is why it is said that one should offer the flowers to the Lord. Have you not seen people offer flowers to the idols of Tirthankars?

Religious rituals are done to reduce difficulties in life. The Lord has said that the ascetics should do intent *puja* (internalized offering to the Lord as opposed to *dravya puja* which utilizes material objects for external offering). The Jains do *dravya puja*. Their worldly obstacles are removed through *dravya puja*. So I am saying is that if you have difficulties in life, you should offer flowers to the Gnani Purush. Those that do not have any difficulties need not do anything at all. But as far as the Gnani Purush is concerned, he remains detached.

Yet despite all this, some people still strictly adhere to this quote and become obsessive about the hurt caused by picking even flower petals. I tell them that when they do this, they are mixing both the college and elementary levels of understanding. They would do better to heed what *Krupadudev* has said when they reach a higher spiritual level. I gave them Lord Mahavir’s example to illustrate the point.

I told them that in His final incarnation, Lord Mahavir was married and also had a daughter. He led a worldly life until the age of thirty and despite this He attained full liberation. What knowledge allowed Him to achieve liberation despite living a

married life? It is at this level of spiritual development where this quote is relevant.

So understand that flowers can be offered to the deities. People are needlessly cautious about violence towards flowers while they have no reservations about their *kashayas* and hurting people around them. They do not inflict pain on the flowers but they inflict gross pain on people. The one who truly does not hurt even a flower petal is non-violent in all respects. He would even walk very carefully so as not to disturb a sleeping dog.

This matter of not hurting even a flower petal is only applicable in the last fifteen years of one's final life before liberation. Such subtle non-violence commences with the renunciation of married life and happens naturally. Everything comes naturally when a person reaches that level. So until then do not interfere with the social customs.

The Universe of a Single-Sensory Organism

Questioner: What exactly are the *jalkaya*, *teookaya*, *proothvikaya*, *vaayukaya* and *vanaspatikaya* (organisms found in water, fire, earth, wind and vegetation respectively)?

Dadashri: These are all embodied souls with a single-sensory function.

Questioner: We know for sure that there are subtle life-forms in water, which is why we boil water before we drink it.

Dadashri: What you know about the organisms found in water is based on what you have been told, but in reality the facts are very difficult and too subtle for you to understand. Even if you were given a clear explanation, it would still elude you. Not even scientists can understand this. Only the Gnanis understand it. Of the five, only the organisms in vegetation can be understood, the others require a more profoundly developed spiritual level.

Questioner: That is what the scientists are researching.

Dadashri: They will not be able to understand it even then. They only understand the vegetation, but even that knowledge is limited.

Let me explain this to you in the Lord's language: There is life in all the vegetation that you see around you. Life is also present in the air, the dirt and the rocks. The rocks also contain living organisms known as *proothvikaya*. Flames of a fire are really a collection of organisms called *teookaya*. The water we drink is composed of *jalkaya*, the organisms whose very bodies are in a glass of water. Water is composed entirely of animate beings. Everything around you, water, food, air, earth and fire is living.

The Spiritual Power of Non-Violence

Questioner: So how can one attain absolute ahimsa?

Dadashri: Ahimsa? My goodness! If one attained absolute ahimsa, one would become the Lord. In the meantime however, do you at least practice some ahimsa?

Questioner: Some, not a lot.

Dadashri: Very well then, why don't you make a decision to practice at least some ahimsa? Talking about absolute ahimsa is futile. Such ahimsa when achieved makes man the Lord.

Questioner: Show us how to practice ahimsa.

Dadashri: Most important of all, you must not hurt or inflict pain on any living being that fears your mere presence. Animals and insects instinctively flee from you in fear, and so you must not harm them. It is fine for you to eat grains such as wheat, millet, oats and rice etc., because although they contain life, that life is in an unconscious state and does not perceive fear, whereas insects will flee from you when they sense danger. You must not harm any life-forms starting at the level of two-sensory organisms such as fish, which move around, all the way to five-sensory organisms, including insects. Even a bedbug is terrified when you catch it, so

you must not kill it. Do you understand this?

Questioner: Yes, I understand.

Dadashri: Secondly, do not eat after sunset.

Thirdly, in practicing ahimsa, you must exercise control over your speech. How do you feel when someone tells you that you are worthless?

Questioner: I feel very hurt.

Dadashri: So in the same way you must realize that others too feel hurt if you said such things to them. Hurting people is violence, so you should not utter such words. If you want to practice ahimsa then you should be very conscious about violence in speech. You cannot say to others anything that hurts you yourself.

You should not have bad thoughts either. Nor should you entertain thoughts about cheating someone of his possessions or taking things from people without compensating them. Even thoughts about accumulating or hoarding money are considered violence, because it deprives others of their share. You should not have any such thoughts or intentions.

Questioner: Are these the only three things I need to observe for ahimsa?

Dadashri: No, there are still some more points. You should never eat meat or eggs. Nor should you eat potatoes, onions and garlic, even when you have no choice. Onions and garlic are considered *hinsak* foods because they contain properties that incite anger in a person, which in turn hurts others. Any other vegetable is acceptable.

Try to Save Larger Life-Forms First

The Lord tells you to first take care of human beings. Here is a guideline: Be aware to not hurt any human being, even in the

slightest degree, through your mind, speech and actions.

The five-sensory living beings such as cows, chickens, goats etc., come next. You do not have to worry about these as much as you should about humans, nevertheless you should be careful and not harm them in any way.

The two or more sensory living organisms are next. Any food that comprises one-sensory organisms is the best kind of food to eat. Those who desire liberation should not eat foods composed of two or more sensory life-forms. The more senses in the life-forms in your food, the more your merit karma is used up. You should not take on the liability for violence against lives with two or more senses.

We humans must eat to survive, but when we consume food, we incur a liability because the food we eat is made up of at least one-sensory life-forms. When we eat this food, we are responsible for the violence that arises in the act of eating. But the Lord has allowed us the freedom to eat because of our high merit karma balance. In the act of eating these life-forms, although you incur a liability, the benefits you gain are much greater. The nourishment sustains you and keeps you alive and because you do good deeds, you earn merit karma. For example, if you earn hundred points from your good deeds, in destroying these life-forms, you lose ten points. The ten points you lose is credited to the life-forms you kill, which will earn them a higher birth. This progression into higher life-forms is a natural process in the universe. They will progress from a single-sensory organism to a two-sensory organism and so on. This is how the evolutionary process takes place. In providing benefits to humans, these life-forms also reap benefits for themselves. But people do not understand this science.

So, you must not interfere with the violence that occurs as a result of eating single-sensory life-forms. To do so involves ego. The single-sensory life-forms do not run away from you in fear,

so you should not have any qualms about whether or not to eat them. This is the way of life. You cannot survive without eating and drinking.

The entire world is composed of life-forms. Actually, the whole world is a collection of life-forms. The basis of life is at least single-sensory. You cannot eat anything that does not contain life; moreover there is nothing in this world that is devoid of life. You can only eat food that contains life because that is the only way you can nourish and sustain your body. Everything we eat is at least one-sensory, if not more. The Lord does not forbid the consumption of single-sensory organisms, because they do not contain blood, pus or meat. There will be no end to it if you start worrying about the single-sensory life-forms. In fact you are not to worry about them at all. People on the other hand have become overly concerned with insignificant things and have dismissed things of greater importance. You should not worry about the violence that occurs at the minuscule level.

What is the Best Food?

Questioner: Why are certain foods forbidden in the *kramik* (traditional step by step path towards liberation) path?

Dadashri: There are different categories of food. Human flesh is the worst and most harmful. Then comes animal meat. In this category however, it is better to consume the flesh of the species whose population increases rapidly, such as chicken, fish or duck, as opposed to eating beef and the meat of such animals whose population does not increase rapidly. Eating eggs is better than eating meat. But those who want to further their spiritual progress should consume only edible roots e.g. carrots and potatoes. And to those who want to progress even further, I say avoid even these and consume only foods such as breads, whole-grain, sweetmeats and ghee. And spiritual progress beyond this would require avoidance of any foods containing unrefined sugar, ghee, butter, honey, yogurt and cream. In this case, people should

eat only rice, lentils and vegetables, which is the ideal diet.

Foods are categorized in this manner and anyone can choose the category of his preference. The descriptions of the different categories are given to enhance one's knowledge and not for the purpose of enforcement. The Lord had made these distinctions to break the veils of ignorance obscuring the Soul.

The Evening Meal: Before or After Sunset?

Questioner: In Jainism it is forbidden to eat after dark. Can you tell us more about this?

Dadashri: As far as the timing of food intake is concerned, it is best not to eat after dark. This is the best approach, but it has nothing to do with religion. It became incorporated into religion because one makes greater religious progress as one's body becomes healthier. As far as religion is concerned not eating after dark serves to cleanse the body, but it is not mandatory.

Questioner: So is it for the health of the body or the sin involved, that the Vitraags advocated not eating after dark?

Dadashri: It is meant for the health of the body, as well as for the practice of ahimsa.

Questioner: But why shouldn't we eat after dark?

Dadashri: According to the principles of Jainism and Vedanta, evening meals should always be eaten while the sun is still present. The Vedanta view holds that your internal organs are more receptive during the daytime allowing the process of digestion to occur. The Jain view, based on what the Tirthankars have said, maintains that all living beings return home when the sun sets.

At times, because of the clouds it may be difficult to see whether or not the sun has set, but the embodied souls have an internal power that allows them to sense the day's end. One can tell that the day has ended when the life-forms return home. Even

the subtlest of life-forms, which are not perceptible under a microscope, return home. They settle on the food and remain unseen because they are camouflaged as the color of the food.

This is why you should not eat after dark. People are not aware of the harm eating after dark causes. Not to eat after dark is considered a *mahavrat* (highest religious vow). This can be considered the sixth mahavrat (the five vows given by Lord Mahavir are ahimsa, adherence to truth, non-stealing, non-possessiveness, and *brahmacharya* (celibacy)).

Questioner: If a person has no choice but to eat after dark, will he be binding karma?

Dadashri: No. Karmas are not bound like that. Why do you have to break that rule? Someone must have taught you to observe it, right?

Questioner: Being Jain I have been brought up that way.

Dadashri: In that case you should do pratikraman in the name of Lord Mahavir. It is the Lord's instruction, so you must abide by it and if you cannot follow it, you must ask for forgiveness. If you want to practice ahimsa and keep your body healthy, it is best that you eat before sunset. Do you normally eat early?

Questioner: I have started that recently.

Dadashri: Who made you do it?

Questioner: I started doing it on my own because I wanted to.

Dadashri: But from now on you should do it with the understanding that you are practicing this for the sake of ahimsa, as explained by Dadashri. It is useless if it is done without a purpose and a goal. For example if you want to travel abroad, you must pay your agent for the ticket, only then will you get the ticket, but

if you did not give him any instructions, how else would he know what the money is for?

Edible Roots: An Abundance of Subtle Life-Forms

Questioner: Is it wrong to eat root crops?

Dadashri: Yes, very wrong, but to eat after dark is even worse.

Questioner: Aren't there infinite life-forms in onions and potatoes?

Dadashri: Yes, there are infinite life-forms.

Questioner: Then do you advise eating such vegetables?

Dadashri: The Lord has forbidden it, and this should remain in your belief. However, if you still end up eating them, then it is as a result of your past karmas. In spite of this, it should not affect your belief about what the Lord says.

Questioner: Why is it forbidden?

Dadashri: The root crops prevent the brain from becoming alert.

Questioner: Is it because of the violence against the one-sensory life-forms?

Dadashri: People think that it is for the sake of protecting the life-forms within the roots, and that is why root crops are forbidden, but if you like potatoes, do not become overly concerned about this. Nowadays people do not like the taste of other allowed foods. What would happen if they stopped eating even potatoes?

Questioner: But they say that there is sin in eating potatoes.

Dadashri: You bind sin whenever you hurt any life-form, whether it is your husband, wife, child or neighbor. But eating

potatoes dulls your mind and intellect. This is because there are infinite subtle life-forms in root vegetables. In fact, root crops are nothing but a storehouse of life-forms, which is why when they are eaten, there is violence against these life-forms, and as a result dullness and laziness sets in. This lack of awareness results in an increase in one's *kashayas* (anger, false pride, greed and illusion). It is better if you do not eat these vegetables because they dull your awareness. That awareness is especially needed after you acquire the Lord's path and if your awareness becomes dull, how will you achieve liberation?

Whatever the Lord has said is true. If you cannot abide by His teachings, do not worry, but just do your best. It is good if you are able to follow the Lord's teachings.

Kashaya: The Ultimate Violence

People have ruined everything. On the one hand they are obsessive about observing ahimsa towards life-forms in the root crops and yet at the same time they do kashayas. This is like making a profit of three rupees on the one hand and a loss of ten million rupees on the other! People are adamant about trivial issues, but they commit endless violence through their kashayas. The greatest violence in the world is kashaya. There is more sin in kashayas than in killing a life-form.

Understand This...

Whatever the Lord has said is intended for your understanding and not to be followed dogmatically. Do the best you can. The Lord does not tell you to exceed your limits.

The Gnanis, the Enlightened Ones, do not tell you to be rigid in practicing your beliefs. Only the ignorant people will tell you to be uncompromising. The Gnani will tell you to look objectively from the perspective of overall profit and loss. If eating onions has a twenty-five percent benefit and a loss of five percent for the subtle violence, there is a net gain of twenty percent. This

is how the Gnanis assess a situation, whereas nowadays people ignore this and preach that it is wrong to eat onions and potatoes. For heaven's sakes! Why? What do you have against potatoes and onions? On the contrary, when a person is forced to sacrifice the things he enjoys, he will constantly think about them, instead of thinking about the Lord!

I Too Observed These Rules

Although I was not born a Jain, I too observed the rules of not eating root crops, practicing *choviyar* (not eating after dark) and I always drinking boiled water, whether I was at home or away. My business partner and I would always carry a flask of boiled water wherever we went. We observed the Lord's prescribed rules. This is what I practiced even before the Enlightenment.

If someone finds these practices too rigid and difficult, I would tell him that he is not obligated to follow them, but if he did, he would indeed benefit from it. The Lord has given us these rules so that we may recognize their benefits and not so that we become dogmatic about them.

The Gnani Purush does not need to renounce or acquire anything. Even then I observe *choviyar* because occasionally someone will tell me that it upsets him to know that I do not stick to the timings. When you reach the level of a Gnani, sacrifices and renunciation are no longer significant. People interpret and practice these rules according to their level of understanding. The Gnani Purush does not lack anything. The Lord calls the Gnani Purush, the non-violent One in an ocean of violence. From the very beginning I have observed *choviyar*, but nowadays because of my satsang schedule, I can only do it on certain days. My intention is to observe it completely, and that is what counts!

Boiled Water, Drinking Water

Questioner: Why are we told to drink boiled water?

Dadashri: There are infinite life-forms even in just one drop of water. Boiling water kills these life-forms. By drinking boiled water, your body stays healthy, and when the body is healthy, your awareness increases. People however, have completely misunderstood this concept.

The Lord has shown us all the different ways to stay healthy and drinking boiled water is one of them. Drinking water that is not boiled is violence towards the infinite living organisms in the water. Yet people insist on not boiling the water (in order to prevent himsa) at the expense of their own health. Instead, the Lord has told you to boil the drinking water so that you keep your body healthy. But you must drink this water within eight hours, because after this time the life-forms will start to grow in it again.

So it is more for the sake of health and not so much because of the violence, that people are told to boil their drinking water. Drinking boiled water prevents the accumulation of other organisms in the stomach. This is helpful in increasing your awareness. By boiling the water, the larger organisms are destroyed.

Questioner: So does that constitute violence?

Dadashri: This kind of violence does not have much significance because it contributes to the health of your body. With a healthy body you can practice religion. In this world there is nothing but violence. When you eat or drink, you consume nothing but life-forms.

The Lord does not put an emphasis on the violence against one-sensory life-forms. People have misconstrued all this. If The Lord had intended for us to worry about such matters, He would have advocated drinking only cold water, since so many life-forms are destroyed when water is boiled. How many life-forms do you think die in boiling water?

Questioner: Countless.

Dadashri: You cannot see the life-forms but they themselves make up the physical composition of water. Now tell me how can people see them when water itself is the body formed of the aggregate of all these life-forms? Water is the manifest form of these life-forms. Now tell me how can you deal with something like this?

A Misconception About Vegetables

Questioner: Why do they tell you not to eat green vegetables in the rainy season?

Dadashri: People have also misunderstood this. The Lord tells us not to eat fresh greens, not because it causes violence but because there are subtle life-forms on the greenery, which enter the stomach and cause disease affecting the overall health of the person and thereby preventing him from practicing religion effectively. When people misinterpret the instructions, it is like swallowing medicine, which was meant only for external use. How can the medicine work if it is not taken correctly?

Violence Caused by Antibiotics

Questioner: What about the medications we take to reduce fever or infections in the body?

Dadashri: You need not worry about the violence to such life-forms.

Questioner: An infant would surely die if we did not give him the medicine to kill parasites in his stomach.

Dadashri: You have to treat the child. Give the child whatever medications he needs to kill all the parasites.

Questioner: I understand that the body must be kept healthy for the attainment of Self-Realization, but if many life-forms are destroyed in the process, should we continue to keep it healthy?

Dadashri: If your main goal is the intent of health then your

practice towards Self-Realization will be hindered. True spiritual practice towards the Self happens when the aspirant's primary focus is not in achieving a healthy body. Your body has brought with it everything for its preservation so you need not interfere. You should completely immerse yourself in your spiritual goal. Everything else is as it should be. That is why I am telling you to stay in the present, because the past is gone forever and the future is in the hands of *vyavasthit*.

Think of your body-through which you have met a Gnani Purush- as a friend. Even if the medicine prescribed causes violence, you must still take it, and care for the body. Everything in life is based on a process of profit and loss. If this body were to live two more years, you could accomplish a lot within this time, because it is through this body that you have come to meet the Gnani Purush. You will incur some loss through violence, but your benefits will be twenty times greater! Your benefits will far outweigh your losses; it is all a business of profit and loss.

In this world there is nothing but life-forms. Countless life-forms are destroyed in just one breath, so does it mean that you should stop breathing? If this were possible, the problem would be solved, because as it is people have made absolute madness of this. There is nothing here that needs to be analyzed critically. The only thing you need to be cautious about is that you must not harm those life-forms that flee away in fear from you.

One's Diet is Based On One's Level of Spiritual Development

In foreign countries they believe that God created this world, and so he created man. He made goats, chickens and fish etc. for human consumption. If animals were made for such a purpose, then why do humans not eat dogs, cats or tigers? If animals were made for eating, then God would have made them all equal. If God made your food, he would make everything edible. If God were the creator of everything, why would he make such things

as opium, tobacco and other drugs harmful to man? Why would these things be necessary? He would just make things for the happiness of human beings. To believe that God created everything is the greatest contradiction.

Westerners do not believe in reincarnation and so they believe that everything is made for their consumption. If they believed in reincarnation, they would think about what would happen to them in the next life. But such thoughts do not occur to them.

Annoyance with Non-Vegetarians?

Dadashri: Which do you prefer, vegetarian or non-vegetarian food?

Questioner: I have never eaten non-vegetarian food.

Dadashri: But have you ever admitted that it is a good thing?

Questioner: No. I am a vegetarian. But that does not mean that non-vegetarian food is bad.

Dadashri: That is true. I do not say that it is bad. Once when I was traveling on an airplane, a wealthy businessman who was Muslim sat next to me. He asked me if it bothered me that he ate meat. I told him that eating with him did not bother me, except that I would not share the same food. I told him that whatever he did was fine and that it did not concern me. He asked me if I felt negatively towards him because of his diet. I told him that he should dismiss such a notion and that it was appropriate for him to eat non-vegetarian food because he was born to a mother who also was a non-vegetarian; it was in his blood. Nobody can refute that. Only those who have been weaned on the milk of a vegetarian mother are told not to eat meat. I told him that when Muslims eat meat, they do not think about the advantages and disadvantages of it.

So meat-eaters should not annoy you. It is merely your prejudice. You should not have any problem with those for whom such a diet is natural.

Willingness to Kill and then Eat?

Questioner: But nowadays because of social trend, people do eat non-vegetarian food.

Dadashri: It is all a trend and people do it for their pleasure. Eating meat forever is not a problem if your mother was on such a diet when she breastfed you.

Questioner: And what if the mother herself does not eat meat?

Dadashri: Then how can you eat it? How will you be able to digest it if it is not in your blood? You may think that you are able to digest it, but ultimately it is detrimental to you. Today you may not realize this, so it is best for you not to eat it. If you cannot stop eating it, you should at least have the inner intent that it is wrong to eat it and that the best thing for you is to stop.

Cows, horses and buffaloes will never eat meat. Even if you fed them meat when they were starving, they would not touch it. Some animals in the animal kingdom are like that. Nowadays, even the children of Jain and Hindu parents who do not eat meat, have begun to do it. I tell these young people that I do not have a problem with them eating meat as long as they kill the animals themselves. If they wish to eat the chicken, they should kill it themselves. They want to eat meat even though they shiver at the mere sight of blood. Eating meat is only for those who can tolerate the sight of blood; it is for the people of the warrior caste who have 'played' with blood on the battlefields. Do they become uncomfortable at the sight of blood? How does the sight of blood affect people?

Questioner: It makes them uneasy.

Dadashri: So then, how can they even consider eating meat? Someone else kills the animal and you eat it. This is meaningless. If you heard the agonizing cry of a chicken while it is being slaughtered, you would be overcome with despondency for the world for the rest of your life. I have heard that cry and it was then that I realized the excruciating pain the poor bird suffers.

The Importance of a Vegetarian Diet

Questioner: Do vegetarians and meat-eaters face any problems in their worship of the Lord? What is your opinion?

Dadashri: There is no problem for the meat-eater as long as eating meat is 'in his blood'. For such people, eating meat does not create an obstacle in their worship to the Lord. The problem occurs when one who is born to a vegetarian mother, becomes non-vegetarian. But otherwise neither vegetarianism nor non-vegetarianism presents an obstacle in one's worship to the Lord.

Questioner: So can you worship without being pure vegetarian?

Dadashri: No, it is not possible, but in this day and age, what can one do? Pure vegetarian food is difficult to get nowadays, and besides, very few people have not succumbed to the influences of the current time cycle. People nowadays generally fall into the company of others who lead them astray in a non-spiritual direction.

Questioner: If someone unknowingly eats non-vegetarian food, how does it affect him?

Dadashri: Everyone does it unknowingly anyway, but even then there are repercussions. What if you unknowingly stuck your hand in fire? Even a child would get burnt, will it not? Everyone is rewarded the same regardless of whether it is done knowingly or unknowingly. The only difference is in the way one suffers the

consequences. The consequences of actions carried out unknowingly will be suffered unknowingly. The consequences of those actions done with knowledge will have to be endured in a state of awareness. That is the only difference.

Questioner: So is it certain that food does have an effect on the mind?

Dadashri: Everything is the effect of food. Food once eaten turns into “brandy” (that which produces a deleterious effect on a person’s awareness) in the body. These effects are directly linked with spiritual awareness. Heavy or excessive food decreases spiritual and mental awareness. Even pure vegetarian food has this effect but to a lesser degree. Rich and sweet foods are not considered good foods, because they increase these harmful effects. But people turn these principles around for their own convenience.

Questioner: Does eating meat affect one’s spiritual thinking?

Dadashri: Of course! Non-vegetarian food is *sthoor* (gross, heavy, coarse), and does not allow the development of one’s spiritual intellect. If you want to progress spiritually you must eat vegetarian food, which is light and does not create intoxication. It also helps increase awareness. In general people have no awareness whatsoever!

Foreign scientists cannot understand what I am saying and it is difficult for them to believe it, although they do say that it merits consideration. I tell them that it will take a long time for them to understand it, because they have consumed so many chickens and other meats. Eating meat creates a dense covering over the Soul. For one to understand this Gnan, a pure vegetarian diet is required, because the coverings from the vegetarian diet are comparatively thin, so one is able to maintain a higher awareness.

Does Eating Meat Lead to a Birth in Hell?

Questioner: It is said that by eating non-vegetarian food, one is born in hell.

Dadashri: That is absolutely true. Why must you slaughter animals when there are plenty of other edible things? Do you think that the chicken does not suffer when it is being slaughtered? What about the chickens' parents? Do they not suffer also? What would you do if someone ate your children? A meat-eater does not even think about all this. It is nothing but primitive animalistic behavior; a state of thoughtlessness. We as humans are supposed to be thinking beings. Just one day of eating meat can destroy the human mind and turn it into a bestial one. If you want to keep your mind clear, you must stop eating all non-vegetarian food, including eggs.

In eating meat, you are taking on the liability for the taking of a life, but even greater liability is incurred from the increasing veils shrouding your Soul. There is a liability for the taking of a life, but it falls primarily on the person involved in the meat business i.e. the butcher, the owner of the slaughterhouse etc. The consumer of meat is accountable to a lesser degree, but by eating meat, his internal awareness is diminished, and it compromises his 'grasping power', which in turn becomes an obstruction to his ability to comprehend this Gnan.

One's Life-Form is Dependent on One's Karmic Account

Questioner: Can a *himsak* (violent) person be conceived in the womb of an *ahimsak* (non-violent) mother and vice-versa?

Dadashri: Yes, quite easily! You can be non-violent in this life and be violent in your next life. If you are born to parents who are violent, the environment around you will make you violent.

Questioner: Why is that?

Dadashri: If you are non-violent and you are to reincarnate in the animal kingdom, you will be born a cow or a buffalo (vegetarian animal). If you are violent in this life you will be born as a tiger, a cat or any other carnivorous animal. Even if you are non-violent as a human, you can still take birth in a violent family where your upbringing will be fraught with violence. This all has to do with your karmic accounts. This is all related to your likes and dislikes, your attachment and abhorrence. When a person does *raag* (attachment) or *dwesh* (abhorrence) towards others, he becomes bound and as a result will be born in close proximity with people who do the same.

Nothing Affects the Non-Violent One

Questioner: What is the karmic connection when a dog bites you?

Dadashri: Without a karmic connection, not even a single mustard seed will enter your mouth!

Questioner: Does it mean that we have a karmic tie with that dog?

Dadashri: No. You have not bound karma specifically with the dog that bites you. For that matter, even people ‘bite’ each other, do they not? One man told me that his wife was like a serpent because she kept biting him at night. What he really meant was that she had a sharp tongue and would say vicious things to him. The consequence of interacting with someone in such a way would be a ‘dog-bite’, or ‘bites’ from others. Everything in nature is ready to deliver the consequences of your own actions. Nature is prepared to deliver the effects of whatever karma you have bound.

So if you want to be free from all the suffering in this world, you must not strike back at the people who hurt you. If you hurt someone even slightly, then in your next life, the effect of the karma you cause will not leave without taking revenge against you. The

revenge may come in countless ways. A snake may even bite you. You cannot afford to create any vengeance whatsoever with anyone in this world. And whatever suffering you experience is the result of your own past wrongdoings, where you have hurt others. Otherwise, there would be no suffering in this world.

Questioner: So is life a perpetual conflict?

Dadashri: Yes, but if you create an atmosphere of ahimsa, nothing can harm you. Not even a snake or a tiger will harm you. Even if someone threw a snake at you, the poor creature would leave you unharmed. You cannot imagine the tremendous power of ahimsa. The power of ahimsa is unparalleled. There is no greater weakness than that of violence. Violence is behind all the suffering in this world. Tremendous violence.

Not a single living being has the power to hurt you, and the one that does, does so because of your own karmic account. So settle all your accounts. If someone hurts you or something bites you and you develop bitter feelings of revenge, you will be binding new accounts. If a dog bites you and if you hold the belief that, ‘all dogs should be killed’: you have created a new karmic account. No matter what the circumstances are, you should handle the situation with equanimity, without any attachment or abhorrence. You should not feel any negativity from within.

Questioner: But in these situations, our awareness fails us and we are unable to maintain our inner equanimity.

Dadashri: It is very difficult to cross the ocean of this worldly life and that is why I give you this *Akram Vignan* (the shortcut path to Self-Realization).

Who is at Fault –The Butcher or the Meat-Eater?

Questioner: What happens to a butcher who takes this Gnan but continues his work as a butcher and wants to keep doing it?

Dadashri: But what is wrong with the occupation of a butcher? Is he at fault? If you asked a butcher why he chooses his profession, he would tell you that his forefathers were in the same business, and that is why he is doing it too. He will tell you that he does it for his livelihood and to provide for his family. If asked whether he enjoys his work, he would say that he does not. A person who eats the meat is more at fault than the butcher. As far as the poor butcher is concerned it is his occupation. If he came to me, I would give him Gnan. And there is nothing wrong if he takes Gnan. The Lord does not object to this.

Pigeons – Pure Vegetarians

In India, people keep pigeon-houses, but why are there no crow-houses, parrot-houses or houses for sparrows? It is because only pigeons are pure vegetarians; they will not touch anything non-vegetarian, including decayed grains. A decaying grain will contain subtle five-sensed life- forms. People worry about what pigeons will eat in the rainy season, so they keep pigeonholes to feed them grains. The pigeons are completely non-violent. They do not cross this boundary, while man on the other hand has. Pigeons have the warmest blood and a tremendous understanding capacity simply because they are pure vegetarians.

Humans are not the only ones to consume fruit. Even cows, donkeys and buffaloes eat fruit. These animals would not touch meat even if they were experiencing hunger pangs, so that makes them even purer vegetarians than man. There is no need for people to boast about being pure vegetarian. People cannot compare themselves to these animals when at times they succumb to eating eggs, while these animals would not even touch eggs. One should not take pride in being pure vegetarian nor should one criticize those who are not.

Eggs: Vegetarian or Non-vegetarian?

Questioner: Some people even argue that there are two

types of eggs: Eggs with life and eggs without life. So can we eat the eggs that do not contain life?

Dadashri: Yes, they argue that there are eggs, which are lifeless, so technically it is non-violent to consume them. I tell them that it is impossible to eat anything that is non-living. You cannot eat anything that is lifeless. If eggs did not contain life, they would be considered inanimate and therefore inedible. Only living things can be eaten as long as they are not spoiled. Even vegetables will rot and become inedible a few days after being freshly picked. One can only eat living things. There is no truth in the statement that an egg has no life in it. It is a wonder that people have created such a concept. Anything that is non-living cannot be eaten.

Questioner: But these ‘vegetarian eggs’ do not develop into a chick.

Dadashri: That is a different matter, but there is indeed life in them.

People are being misinformed. This issue has become a difficult one for Jain children to accept. So many of them argue with me about this and I simply tell them that they should give this more thought. There is no problem if there is no life in it, but you cannot eat anything that is lifeless. If you are eating an egg with the idea that it does not contain life, then you should also stop eating grains and only eat food that does not contain any life. Food that does not contain life may satisfy hunger but it does not have any nutritional value and it will not nourish and sustain the body. The children accepted this and agreed to stop eating eggs altogether. People will listen if one takes the time to explain things to them; otherwise there is so much misinformation out there to lead a person’s intellect astray.

All foods contain life, but the Lord tells humans to consume only certain foods. He has drawn limits about which foods are

allowed and which are forbidden. You must not harm or eat things that flee from you for their life.

Questioner: An egg does not run away from us in fear, so are we allowed to eat it?

Dadashri: The egg does not run away, but the life contained within the egg is in a dormant state of unconsciousness. Will you not discover the life within when it begins to hatch?

Questioner: Yes, we will see that immediately. But what if it does not hatch?

Dadashri: That is because the life within it is in a dormant state. Whether or not it hatches into a chicken is a different matter. Even the human fetus at four or five weeks, is in the same state as the egg, so you must not harm the egg. We humans know what happens to the egg after it hatches.

Milk: Vegetarian or Non-Vegetarian?

Questioner: Just as one should not eat the ‘vegetarian’ egg, one should not drink the milk of a cow.

Dadashri: You cannot eat eggs but you can drink cows’ milk, eat yogurt and some can even eat butter made from that milk. There are no restrictions.

The Lord had forbidden some people to eat butter, but that was for specific people and for a different reason. You can make puddings and sweets from that milk. Even if some scriptures forbid this, I will tell you that those scriptures are wrong and that there are no restrictions. Go ahead and enjoy them but take care not to overindulge.

Questioner: But nature had intended the milk for the calves and not for us.

Dadashri: That is completely false. Only the calves of the wild cows and buffaloes drink all their mother’s milk. People

however, feed and nurture cows so that both the calves and the humans can benefit from the cows' milk. This has been the practice from time immemorial. If you feed a cow well, it can produce up to fifteen liters of milk a day. If you feed it well it will produce more than the normal amount of milk so you would not be depriving the calf of its share and letting it go hungry.

Killing a Carnivore

Questioner: There is violence in killing any animal, but is it also considered violent when you go around killing animals that hurt and kill others?

Dadashri: Your intention should be not to do violence against any living entity. Even if you do not kill a snake, there will always be someone else who will. You may not have the strength to kill it but many will, so do not spoil your good intentions. There is no advantage in violence of any kind; it only harms you.

Survival of the Fittest

Questioner: Humans live by using their intellect, so they should not hurt other living things. Some animals prey on others. The difference between animals and humans is that only humans have intellect. What about violence taking place within the animal kingdom?

Dadashri: You are not responsible for violence amongst animals. Violence is constantly occurring in the vast oceans, because no farms or grain-stores are found there. The larger fish sit around with their mouths gaping wide open and the smaller fish just swim into them. That is the law of nature, and no one is responsible for it. In the world, the larger life forms prey on the smaller ones and the smaller ones prey on the smallest. That is how the world operates. Everything is allowed until one acquires birth as a human being with discriminating intellect. No one in the animal world tries to rescue the smaller life forms, while some humans attempt to save animals.

No Harm for the Absolute Non-Violent One

Questioner: But even people who are non-violent are being shot.

Dadashri: A true non-violent person can never be harmed. Even if he were shot at from every direction, he would remain unscathed. Only *hinsak* people will be affected. Such is the inherent nature of everything.

If only ahimsa was there in this world, people would take advantage of the situation. In this era peoples' minds have become ruined. The people of this era have many bad habits and there is no telling what they are capable of doing. The very presence of guns acts as a deterrent to violence and promotes ahimsa.

The current era is changing everything around us, and a better time is approaching. You will witness this yourself.

Questioner: You just said that a non-violent person can never be hurt, so then why was one of the saints murdered even though he was practicing ahimsa?

Dadashri: Whom can we call a true non-violent person? A true non-violent person does not interfere with anything or anyone. Such a person never takes sides, because if he stands up for one party, the other will feel hurt and this too would be a form of violence. One should not get involved in anything like this; one must not try to practice justice. A non-violent person never passes judgment. Violence occurs where judgment is made.

If you practiced absolute non-violence, it would be impossible for anyone to attack you. Such a non-violent individual would not utter even a single word of partiality. If he were pushed, he would utter words that would cause the least harm. When you take sides between two parties, you will undoubtedly cause violence against one of them.

Sacrifice of Life-Forms in Religion

Questioner: In many temples, people offer animal sacrifices to deities. Is that a sin or virtue?

Dadashri: If you asked the person making the sacrifice, he would declare that he is carrying out merit karma. But he is a murderer according to the animal being sacrificed. The deity would tell you that he does not accept anything for itself, nor can he refuse the offering to be blessed laid at his feet. So leave the issue of sin and virtue, merit karma and non-merit karma alone! The liability of everything you do falls on your shoulders, so think before you act. You can make whatever offerings you want, but understand that you are whole and sole responsible for all your actions.

Prayer Filled with Non-Violent Intent: Ahimsa

From now on, your deep inner intent and prayer should be to promote non-violence towards helpless animals and to spread this belief as much as you can. If a person's religion allows him to eat meat, while yours does not, there should not be any friction or conflict over the issue. With such intent from within, your prayers will produce a non-violent society. This intent should remain within you day and night.

Does your deep intent for salvation of the entire world not remain with you at all times? Likewise you should have the same intent for non-violence.

Questioner: We can at least pray for that, can we not?

Dadashri: Yes, yes, do all the prayers you can, keep the intent and encourage others to do the same. It is important that you make others understand this. Violence is not something new, it has been occurring all along.

Having heard about the reputation of the saint Kabir, the sage Tulsidas, who was a Brahmin, set off to visit him in Delhi.

Kabir's hut was situated in an area where there were many butchers and meat vendors. On his way there, Tulsidas witnessed the slaughtering of fowls and saw goat carcasses hanging in the shops. He had never been in such an environment before and he kept spitting as he walked along, barely able to watch what was going on around him. Tulsidas was not accustomed to such gross and foul-smelling surroundings, and so he felt trapped. He was so perturbed, that when he reached Kabir's hut he poured out his emotions to the saint. Tulsidas asked Kabir why such an elevated soul as he should choose to live amongst butchers. Kabir who was quick-witted and renowned for his ability to compose spontaneous verse replied:

“Kabir's home is in the market, near the throat-cutters.

The 'doer' will suffer the consequences, why are you so sad?”

Tulsidas immediately realized that all his spiritual knowledge until now had been in vain and this humbled him.

One should learn to face the world like Kabir. Every form of violence is rampant all around us and has been occurring from time immemorial. Even Lord Ramachandra's servants ate meat; they were all Kshatriyas and eating meat was a natural practice for them. Our intent must remain non-violent.

You should maintain this intent of non-violence and not be swayed by the mentality of violent people, because they make conflict on account of misunderstanding. That is why nothing gets resolved and more harm is done. One can only enforce ahimsa against animals if one's ruler or government has the same view and decrees that people observe vegetarianism on certain days. At the present time you do not have any power over the matter and besides, no one is asking you to actively enforce ahimsa. In the eyes of the Lord no one dies. You should just go about minding your own business and encourage non-violence. Do not harbor any negative feelings.

The Highest Ahimsa

Instead of worrying about saving lives, you should just keep the inner intent not to hurt any living being in the slightest extent. You should not hurt others through the mind, through the speech and through any acts. There is no greater ahimsa than this. With such an intent and awareness, should you accidentally hurt any life-form, it is vyavasthit (scientific circumstantial evidence) - naturally ordained.

Protecting All Life-Forms From Fear (*Abhaydaan*)

Questioner: We stopped eating root crops ten years ago to protect life-forms so that they would not fear us (*abhaydaan*).

Dadashri: Protection from fear should be given to life-forms that move, discern fear and flee for their safety. Otherwise what can it mean to those that do not understand fear? One should give protection to life-forms that experience fear, such as ants that sense fear when they are obstructed with a finger. Grain does not sense fear so how can you give it protection from fear?

Questioner: That's very true.

Dadashri: People have so far practiced ahimsa without understanding it. It's like swallowing medicine that was intended for external use. People then say that Lord Mahavir's medicine does not work and so they blame Him and the religion, instead of their own foolishness. They do not use the medicine the way the Lord prescribed it. Religion is never wrong.

Questioner: We did not understand all this before.

Dadashri: Yes, you did not have a clear understanding of the prescribed methods. Life-forms that sense and feel fear are the ones that flee from you (*traaskaay*). The Lord has spoken about these life-forms because they perceive fear. These are the ones that need protection from violence. Elsewhere, He has said not to waste water unnecessarily. You are free to use water to

take baths, drink it and wash clothes etc.

Protecting Life-Forms from Fear - The Highest Charity

Questioner: So why is there such a great emphasis on protecting life-forms from fear?

Dadashri: Many who understand non-violence have emphasized the need to protect life-forms from fear. The main thing is to protect life-forms from fear. What does this mean? An example of this would be to be careful not to disturb any birds if they were sitting here, by walking very quietly. Another example would be to remove your shoes and tiptoe past a sleeping dog. How can you be considered humane if you instill fear in others? One should not even startle stray dogs. Understand that you have failed to protect a dog from fear if it is stirred from its sleep as you are walking by. Protecting living things from fear means that no living entity fears your presence. Have you ever seen anyone with such a quality? Protecting life from fear is the highest charity of all.

When I was twenty-two years old, I used to be very cautious so as not to startle any sleeping dogs. I am constantly protecting all life from fear and if a person learns to do the same, he would attain liberation. Generally people are inclined to instill fear in others and threaten them. Everybody has learnt how to donate fear. No one has learnt how to donate protection from fear.

Questioner: Is making an effort to save these life-forms not considered protecting them from fear?

Dadashri: There is a tremendous liability for anyone that does this, because it is nothing but egoism. The Lord has only said that one should practice kindness towards one's own self. The scriptures mention just this much and no other forms of kindness. And if you take on the task of practicing any other forms of kindness unnecessarily, you will incur a liability.

That is the Egoism of Saving Lives

People here believe that it is because of their efforts that they save lives. Let me tell you what our people are like. At home they swear abuses at their mothers, while on the outside they try to save an insect's life. What kind of people are these anyway?

These people should be deposited in the ocean! What would people of such negative intellect do there when every life in the ocean is either prey or predator? The smaller fish are prey to the bigger fish, which in turn are prey to even bigger ones. Such is the oceanic food chain. Now how would they use their intellect in such an environment? Whom will they save?

People believe they are saving lives by promoting vegetarianism, but in the process they feel hatred for butchers. If you asked a butcher why he chose such an ignoble profession, he would say that his profession was his heritage and wonder why you belittled it. He would brand you as lacking intelligence.

People who eat meat do not use their ego to claim to do the killing. Those who make false claims about saving lives, on the other hand, are the most egotistical of all. They brag and flaunt their ability to save lives by saying, 'we are saving cows and goats'. If you are really saving lives then why not save your ninety-five-year-old father's? Can anyone do that?

Question: No, no one can do that.

Dadashri: It is not under anyone's control; so then why do they boast about saving lives? Not even the butcher has the independent power to take a life; moreover there is no human being who has any such power. The butcher who brags about the number of animals he has slaughtered is guilty of egoism. Likewise the person, who states that he has saved so many cows, is also guilty of egoism. What then is the reality? According to nature, neither the one taking lives, nor the one saving lives, will attain liberation because they are both guilty of egoism (doer-ship). This

may be acceptable in the relative world, but not in reality.

The Two Types of Ego

According to the laws of liberation the Lord has given us, egotistical people cannot attain liberation. Some people have an ego about not drinking alcohol while some have an ego about drinking it. Neither will achieve liberation.

People who boast about not drinking alcohol are more egoistic than those who drink it. The latter at least, admit their weakness. They will confess to being unworthy when they are drunk and immediately come to their senses when a bucket of water is thrown on them. The same does not apply to those intoxicated with the illusion of this world. Their intoxication will remain with them through countless lives. Such people become conceited and say, 'I am something, I am something.'

Once there was a Jain merchant who had two sons: a three-year-old and a year-old infant. When a plague hit their village, the merchant and his wife died, leaving the children behind. The villagers held a meeting to determine the fate of the boys. A goldsmith adopted the older boy, but no one was ready to adopt the younger one. A man from a lower caste came forward and offered to take the infant. Some of the villagers protested, saying that it was wrong for a Jain child to go into a family of a lower caste, but they ultimately conceded. When the older child became an adult, he strongly opposed eating meat and drinking alcohol. The younger boy on the other hand insisted that one should drink alcohol and eat meat. How can the thinking of these two brothers differ so much?

Questioner: It was because of their upbringing.

Dadashri: Yes, their upbringing. The villagers asked a sage how it was possible that two brothers should have such contrary beliefs and wanted to know which one of them would attain liberation. The sage told them that liberation was a completely

different matter, which could not be applied to either of the boys because they were both egotistical. One had an ego about not drinking alcohol or eating meat while the other had an ego about doing both. To attain liberation one has to be without ego.

Exclusively for Those Who Revere Non-Violence

What people nowadays believe is not what the Lord has proclaimed as the truth. The Lord is very wise. He said that not a single being exists in this world that can kill another being, because everything is governed by *vyavasthit* (scientific circumstantial evidences). How can one person kill another, when in order for a person to die, so many circumstances must prevail together? But at the same time, He also said that this fact should be kept absolutely secret. Some found this statement contradictory with regards to non-violence. They would say, ‘You teach us not to harm even a single living being and now you are saying this?’ The Lord said that this information is only meant for those who revere non-violence. It is not for those who practice violence. Such individuals would misuse the Lord’s statement and feel that they have a license to kill. They would create misery all around by developing an inner intent of violence. Therefore this matter can only be discussed with those who revere ahimsa.

The Lord has said that one should not have the ego for either committing or practicing violence or non-violence. If you kill, you are really killing all reverence for your own soul. You are committing violence against yourself. The soul does not die, but you are committing violence against yourself, which is why the Lord has forbidden it. On the other hand, if you try to save lives, you will be doing it with ego, which is also violence against your soul. In both instances, one is doing something wrong. Why not stay out of this predicament?

In reality no living being can kill another living being, but if the Lord had openly stated the fact that no living being is able to kill another, the people with ego will claim that they can kill. No

one has the strength to do this, but nevertheless people have a false notion (*vikalp*) about it, which is why they are forever caught in the cycle of birth and death. All the Gnanis have witnessed the way the world functions. People have so many false beliefs, so how can they be free from them?

No single living entity can take the life of another. Despite this, the Lord tells us to abandon our violent ways and practice ahimsa. What He really means for us to do is abandon the ego of killing; nothing else, for it is truly a false ego. In reality nothing ever dies so why then do you claim to kill? You incur a tremendous liability because of your ego and that ego will lead you into an abyss of endless suffering.

Let the life-form die at the hands of its own *nimit* (the entity instrumental in the death of that life-form). It is going to die anyway so why must you have the unnecessary ego of killing? It is to put a stop to this very kind of ego that the Lord has encouraged ahimsa. The Lord gave ahimsa to people so that they would stop exercising the ego of killing.

Questioner: Is this not too much knowledge for the average person to comprehend?

Dadashri: Yes it is a lot, which is why it has not been disclosed. On the contrary, the Lord emphasizes that everyone should save lives and if not, they would die for sure.

The Science behind Protecting and Killing

The killing, protecting and saving of lives only pertains to the relative world and not to reality. In reality, no single living being can ever kill another life-form. No man can independently kill of his own volition. Killing only occurs when all the scientific circumstantial evidences come together. None of these evidences are under anyone's control. No human being is independently capable of protecting another life-form either. Only if the scientific circumstantial evidences are present, can lives be saved, but people

are being egoistic about saving lives. The Lord also says that one must eliminate any inner intent of wanting to hurt or kill another living being, because this intent is one of the evidences. It is when the evidence of intent comes together with all the other evidences that an event materializes. So intent is one of the many evidences. But people however, take on the responsibility for all the other evidences when they claim with ego that the event occurred entirely because of them.

Death Occurs Only at Its Designated Time

I am disclosing a very subtle fact here, that no living entity can ever be killed unless the time of its death is precise. For example, if a man has seven lambs and he has to sell two of them, only the two for whom the time of death is near, will be sold. Why have only these two been chosen, when he is equally fond of them all? The lambs too will merrily go along with the butcher. It is because their time of death has arrived. At the slaughterhouse when the lambs are branded with paint, they are joyful because they think they are being decorated for a festival. This is the way of this world. It is worth understanding all this.

Hence, no one dies without his or her appointed time of death. But if you have intent to kill, you are actually committing violence against your own self. A life-form will only die when the time for its death is right and when all the circumstances come together to produce the actual event. So many evidences that are not visible to the eye come together and only then will that life cease to be. A person might feel responsible if he accidentally steps on an insect, but how can he be held liable when he did not have the intention to kill it in the first place? He will insist that he killed the insect because he stepped on it, and I would then ask him to whom does the foot that crushed the insect belong? It does not belong to the Soul, his Real Self and thus he is not responsible. Even if the foot became paralyzed, it would not affect the Soul. Only the Gnani Purush can clarify what is real and what is relative.

The time of death is not in anyone's hands, but the Lord has not revealed that there are other causes behind any death. There are some types of knowledge that are not disclosed. Had the Lord stated these aspects of life and death clearly, many would have been able to understand it and benefit from it. He has spoken about it, but people do not understand it. This is because the Lord has given all the answers and they can be found in the sacred texts, but one has to read countless volumes to derive the essence that I give you here. The Lord's spoken words were pure gold, which *Gautam Swami* (Lord Mahavir's leading disciple) embellished and elaborated upon. Only when someone like Gautam Swami is around can this 'gold' be extracted from the scriptures. Only when such a person can extract the pure essence of the Lord's spoken words, will our work be done!

Make a Firm Resolution Never to Kill

Some people make a strong resolve not to cause even the slightest violence to any living being. With such a resolve, no living entity will be hurt at the hands of such people. Even if such a person trampled on an insect it would survive. If however, a person is intent on killing insects, then all the insects that are meant to die will come his way.

The Lord has clearly stated that no single living entity can kill another. When people witness life-forms killing each other they question this. The explanation for this is that the killing only takes place because the time of death has come for the life-form, and the one that kills it had made the intent to kill. So when the time of death and the intent to kill as two of the many other evidences come together, the killing occurs. Only when it is time for the life-form to die will it encounter the person who has made the intent to kill. This person will be instrumental in its death.

This is a very subtle fact. If only the world would understand this!

Questioner: What about people crushed to death in a train accident? How can a train have an intent to kill?

Dadashri: The train does not need any intent, but it is the intent of those who die, which is at play here. In the past, these people had made the intent that they did not care how they died. When people have such intent, their death will occur in such a way. It is because their intent becomes their karma. But they cannot die before their appointed time of death.

Now the point you need to understand is that unless the time of death approaches for any life-form, it cannot be killed. Besides, the timing of death is not in anyone's control.

Violent Intent: Very Prevalent in India

Questioner: Will it not take a long time to spread the correct knowledge and understanding of ahimsa?

Dadashri: Even if it takes a long time, because of the nature of this world one cannot explain it completely. This world is completely immersed in violence. There is nothing but an inclination towards violence, which is why this could not be achieved. There is however, some readiness to practice ahimsa, but not everyone understands it.

Questioner: But is there not a subtle intent of non-violence behind one's efforts to try and save life-forms?

Dadashri: Saving life-forms is not subtle, but overt non-violence. Subtle ahimsa is not easily understood. How can one understand it, when one cannot even understand overt ahimsa? People practice overt ahimsa naturally, because they are born into it as a result of their past lives. They practice ahimsa against the smaller life-forms, but at home these very people, without exception, do nothing but violence.

Questioner: In the western world there is violence in almost everything they do, in eating, in drinking, in all acts. They kill flies

and mosquitoes and use pesticides on their lawns and farms. How will these people attain liberation?

Dadashri: Alas! Indian people commit even greater violence. All day long they commit violence against the self by their kashayas: anger, false pride, greed and illusion. This is called intent-violence (*bhaav himsa*). This is subtle himsa.

Questioner: But the people in India are doing violence only against their own Self, whereas in other countries they are doing violence against other life-forms.

Dadashri: No. Indians do violence against everyone, violence against whomever they come into contact with. Their ways are devious and crooked. People in other countries are happier. Westerners never have thoughts about hurting others; they are very gracious and always willing to help whereas Indian people are opportunistic; they will first analyze a situation to see how they can benefit from it, and will only help others if there is something in it for them.

All of India is guilty of intent-violence (*bhaav-hinsa*), which in the eyes of the Lord is the gravest violence of all.

Questioner: But in India there is so much emphasis on ahimsa.

Dadashri: Even so, Indians are the most violent, because they bicker and quarrel all the time. Why is this? It is because they have a greater awareness of the relative world. Their children on the other hand do not have as much intent-violence because they have started to eat meat. A non-vegetarian diet decreases awareness and consequently does not cause as much intent-violence. People with increased awareness commit tremendous intent-violence. They bicker over very trivial things.

Intent is Independent: The Result is Not

Questioner: Nevertheless, these foreigners are doing

violence all the same.

Dadashri: Intent-violence is independent, whereas effect-violence is not. The result of intent violence, which one experiences in the next life, is not under anyone's control. People who practice non-violence today, is the result of their past life's intent. What they do today is not their real effort.

This type of ahimsa is directed towards only those life-forms that are visible to the eye. It is not wrong. The Lord has said that if one practiced ahimsa outwardly, it should be directed towards both the gross and the subtle life-forms alike. More importantly, one should ensure that one does not commit intent-violence towards one's own Self. People are constantly committing intent-violence; they even talk about it and yet they do not understand what it is.

Intent-violence is subtle and people cannot perceive it, whereas effect violence is visible to all. All the violence that is perceived through one's thoughts, speech and acts is an effect.

First Save Yourself from Intent-Violence

The Lord has said that the ultimate non-violence is that which does not hurt the Soul. This means absence of all *kashaya*. Any form of *kashaya* hurts the soul. He also said that you must make sure that no intent-violence is occurring within you. Nowadays, however, just the opposite is happening and that is why one must first stop the intent-violence. Effect violence is not under anyone's control, but we cannot say this overtly. In fact, this can only be discussed with people who revere ahimsa. That is why the Lord did not disclose everything. If people were told this, they would ruin their future lives, because then they would get a license to proceed with violence. They would proclaim that since effect violence is not in anyone's hands, there is nothing wrong with killing. This very intent violence is what needs to be stopped! The Lords displayed tremendous wisdom in not disclosing all this; they

did not mention a word of this. What wisdom! What purity! Their purity sanctified the grounds they walked on.

Intent-violence can only be contained when effect violence is stopped, but of the two, intent-violence is the more important. The Lord had said for us not to be preoccupied with the violence-non-violence of the life-forms. He said that one could become truly non-violent only when one stops intent-violence.

Defining Intent Violence

According to the Lord, what is the highest violence? The Lord says, ‘we do not consider the actual killing, violence. But the intent to kill made by the person is violence.’ This is indeed the ultimate violence. People on the other hand only blame the person instrumental in the act of killing, but they do not consider the internal intent of the person; whether he intended to kill or whether he acted against his wishes. The actual act of killing is an effect carried out by vyavasthit. People are completely unaware of his intent violence. The most important thing of all is not the act of killing but the intent within. It is ‘vyavasthit’ that kills the life. A person is merely being egotistical when he claims that he did the killing. The person who does the intent to kill is really the guilty one and in making this intent, he becomes the real killer.

All you have to do is have the intent: ‘Let no living being be hurt through the medium of my thoughts, speech and actions’. And after that you are not held liable should any violence occur. You should however, sincerely repent and ask for forgiveness so that you do not incur any liability.

People are incapable of understanding the subtlety of this point, but from where will they acquire such an understanding? It would be disastrous if someone discussed these facts outside this satsang. I cannot tell this to the public at large; one can never say such things in public, do you understand?

Intent non-violence means that one will never have the intent

that he wants to hurt or harm another living being. You are only required to have such an intent; an intent whereby you do not want to hurt any living being in the slightest, through the medium of your mind, speech and actions. Only the intent is important here and not the act or the deed. Besides, how can a person save lives through his actions? Even the mere act of breathing, destroys innumerable lives! Countless life-forms die as they collide with the hand or even a single movement of the body.

Kashaya: The Greatest Violence Against the Self

One commits self-violence when one does kashaya (when one has anger, false pride, attachment and greed), whereas the other violence is against external life-forms. Intent-violence is the violence against one's Self. Such violence through kashayas creates bondage for the Self and it is for this Self that you must have compassion. The Lord has said that one must first have intent non-violence towards one's own Self and then towards others.

The killing of animals, insects and smaller life-forms is called effect violence. And to inflict mental anguish on others or to become angry with others is intent-violence. No matter how hard one tries, it is not easy to practice non-violence. In fact the real violence is anger, false pride, attachment and greed. Effect violence continues according to the laws of nature and no one has any control over it.

Kashaya is the ultimate violence and that is why the Lord has said that first and foremost, one should not have any kashaya. This type of violence is called self-violence or intent-violence. If effect violence occurs, let it happen, but one must not allow intent-violence to occur at any cost. Instead, people try to stop effect-violence and continue to do intent-violence.

If a person were to resolve in his mind that under no circumstances does he want to kill any life-form, then he will not

be instrumental in causing the death of any life-form. There are those who take a firm stand to stop the effect-violence. They may be able to stop killing insects overtly. However if they use their intellect to take advantage of others in their business dealings, they through their greed are continuing intent-violence. This is all violence!

You should conduct yourself in such a way that no living entity should run away from you in fear for its life. There should not be any act of aggression towards any living entity nor should it be made to suffer even in the slightest degree. And as far as human beings are concerned, you should not have a single negative opinion about anyone, because it is violence. Even a negative opinion against an enemy is great violence. This violence is much worse than the violence in slaughtering a lamb. When you get angry with the people at home, it is worse than killing a lamb: It is detrimental for the Self.

To speak maliciously or gossip about someone is also violence. To utter anything negative about a person in his absence is considered violence.

There is also violence in partiality or discrimination. People go around proudly proclaiming that they belong to a non-violent group of people. This partiality in itself is the first violence. If people understood even this much, it would be more than enough. One has to understand what the Lord has said.

Destruction of the Self in Every Moment

Aarta-dhyana (internal worries) and *raudra-dhyana* (thoughts or desire to hurt other people) is constantly occurring within human beings. These do not require any effort, they occur on their own and because they cause Self-violence, they are considered the greatest forms of violence in the world. Violence against insects and life-forms is called effect-violence. Which is better?

Questioner: Neither violence is good, but Self-violence is worse.

Dadashri: While all these people are cautious about physical violence (effect-violence), Self-violence is continually occurring within. The scriptures say that self-violence is really intent-violence. After acquiring this Gnan, your intent-violence ceases. That is why you experience so much inner peace.

Questioner: *Krupaludev* has called intent-violence (*bhaav himsa*), ‘intent-death’ (*bhaav maran* - death of the Self), has he not? *Krupaludev* had asked, “From moment to moment, why are you involved in such terrible intent-death?” Is there really intent death in every moment?

Dadashri: Yes, each and every moment dreadful intent-death is occurring. What does he mean by this? Actually, intent-death is taking place not from moment to moment, but continually in the smallest unit of time. He has given a gross description of the frequency of intent-death, which in reality occurs all the time. The belief ‘I am Chandulal’, is intent-death. In any situation, to believe ‘it is happening to me’, is intent-death. People are immersed in this belief all the time. They say and believe that they are the ones who are fasting and meditating or practicing austerities.

Questioner: So instead of intent-death, how can we have intent-life?

Dadashri: Intent is not living; it is non-living. Intent-death is the same as intent-sleep (a state of unawareness of the Real Self.). In Akram Vignan there is no basis for intent (*bhaav*) and therefore there is no intent-death taking place, because intent has been separated from the Self. People in the kramic path are perpetually in a state of intent-death.

Krupaludev, being a Gnani Purush, was the only one who understood intent-death, and so he had to constantly be on the

alert because he could see that everyone around him was in a state of intent-death.

What does intent-death mean? It signifies the death of the Self, and the birth of the non-self (the worldly self). In any event or situation, the sense of 'I am this or that' is the birth of the non-self and 'I am the observer of this event' is the birth of the Self.

Those who commit violence against the physical bodies may find redemption, but there is no hope for those who commit violence against the Self. No one ever explains the subtler facts, only the gross issues.

Ahimsa Increases the Intellect

Everyone including Muslims, Christians and Hindus are in *aarta-dhyan* (adverse internal meditation) and *raudra-dhyan* (adverse internal and external meditation). What is the difference between them? Indians experience more of these adverse meditations because they practice non-violence against life-forms at various levels. This is because their intellect increases with such a practice. In this era, an increasing intellect increases sin and the sinful binding of karma. People with an increased intellect take advantage of those with lesser intellect and that is violence.

People of other countries do not use their intellect to hurt others, whereas people of India do. It is only in this time-cycle that such a nuisance has arisen. Intellect is required to hurt. Who are the people with such intellect? They are the people who practice non-violence, those who do not eat edible roots and those who worship the Tirthankars. But what good is such an intellect?

Questioner: You do injustice to these people.

Dadashri: I do them no injustice. It is this increased intellect that harms them and I have written this in my book. If I do not say things exactly as they are, people will move further away from the truth. It is very dangerous to use your intellect to take advantage

of others. Should intellect be abused in this way? Besides those with less intellect have less kashaya.

Those who practice ahimsa from birth believe that it is wrong to hurt any life-form. This is ingrained in their belief and their spiritual vision. People with such awareness have sharper intellects.

Questioner: Are they considered gentler because they practice ahimsa from birth?

Dadashri: They are not considered gentle. The fact that they practice ahimsa in this life is really the result of their past karma. Their increased intellect is also a result, but they use this intellect to hurt and exploit others. If you committed a murder, it would cost you perhaps one more lifetime, but when you use your intellect to hurt others, you will be doomed and you will destroy numerous lives to come.

Greater Violence: Fighting or Kashaya?

In bygone days, it was the wealthy businessman of the village who had the most intellect. If a conflict arose amongst the villagers, he would invite both parties to his home and help solve their dispute in an amicable manner. For example if the dispute was over money, and the villager who owed the money did not have the full amount to repay his loan, the businessman would loan him the difference. He would then invite both of them to have a meal with him and then let them part happily. He would not take advantage of the situation. This does not happen nowadays. Anymore, people would exploit such situations.

I am not accusing anyone. In fact I see the entire world as being innocent and flawless. I would look upon a person as flawless even if he beat or insulted me. I am talking about the worldly life. If you do not understand how to work in the relative world, how will you solve your problems? And unless you acquire that understanding from the Gnani Purush, nothing will help you.

Questioner: Even a small child in our group practices non-violence. Is it because of the values instilled in him from his previous lives?

Dadashri: Yes, without a doubt. They have these values today because of the merit karma and values that had been instilled in them in their previous life. But if they were to abuse what they have today, do you know where they are headed?

Questioner: They are only practicing ahimsa, how are they abusing it?

Dadashri: How can you call this ahimsa? There is no greater violence than the kashaya done against other human beings. Show me anyone that does not do this. Those who do no kashaya at home practice true ahimsa. To do kashaya all the time and simultaneously claim to practice ahimsa carries with it a great liability. People with a lot of awareness do the most kashaya. Compared to Indians, people in other countries do lesser kashaya. You would think that those with less awareness do more kashaya. It is not so. Do you not think kashaya is wrong?

Questioner: Yes, absolutely.

Dadashri: Yes, there is no violence worse than kashaya. Kashaya itself is violence. The ahimsa that people practice is really something they are born with because they had made such an intent in their previous life, which has now come into effect in this life. It is only when one's anger, false pride, attachment and greed cease that one really stops violence.

Questioner: That's right. I understand. It is written so in the scriptures. The emperors in India did much violence when they fought battles, but they were not bound by kashayas, which would bind them for infinite lives. It is only when one follows the wrong guru, the wrong religion and the wrong saint that one becomes bound by kashayas for infinite lives.

Dadashri: Yes, there is nothing else that binds one endlessly. This is well known in the scriptures.

Abuse of Intellect: 'Hard' Adverse Meditation (*Raudra Dhyana*)

Questioner: But are there not different types of karma in all this?

Dadashri: Yes, but is this difficult to understand? Even a small child can understand this. For example if you were walking in the dark with a lantern and someone else is walking with a small oil lamp. Since the poor man cannot see very clearly, would you not offer to share the light of your lantern with him? The intellect is such a light. Should you not share it with those who have less of it by guiding them and giving them helpful suggestions? Instead the people in this era are just waiting to pounce on their prey at every opportunity. This is why I have stressed and warned people against such adverse meditation. This level of adverse meditation never occurred in previous time-cycles, but it is occurring in this one. People are abusing their intellect. Everywhere, merchants, businessmen and affluent people are cheating others with lesser intellect.

Merchants with more intelligence cheat their customers. The Lord has said that to cheat someone with lesser intellect is serious adverse meditation and the result of such acts will lead to a birth in hell. Under no circumstances should one abuse his intellect.

The intellect is a light. Would you charge someone for sharing this light with him? People are guilty of adverse meditation when they abuse their intellect. They will not attain liberation. They will pave their way into hell. Such grave adverse meditation has never occurred before; we only see it in this present fifth era of the current time-cycle. It is a terrible crime to hurt someone with your intellect.

There is still time to correct this situation through sincere

repentance and a resolve never to repeat such deeds. Otherwise there is no hope for such a person.

Just This Much Will Make You Non-Violent

You should not have any violent intent in your mind. Your intent not to cause harm to any being should be constant, within you. Each morning before you begin your day, you must ask for the strength to not hurt anyone through the medium of your mind, your speech and your actions. This will ensure a lesser liability for you. If you were to accidentally step on an insect, you are not responsible, because today your intent is not to kill. The Lord is concerned with your intent and not your deed. According to the laws of nature, the intent is the most important. The world however, only considers the deeds of a person. The deeds will remain here but it is the intent that will help you progress further. So keep a constant vigil on your intent.

Recite the following prayer five times each morning:

‘Dear Lord, give me the strength not to hurt even in the slightest degree, any living being with my thoughts, my speech and my actions.’

In doing this you become non-violent. With such intent, even if you quarrel with someone, you would still remain non-violent; because you have already made a strong resolve not to hurt anyone. If you do hurt someone during the day, you should reinforce your resolve by recalling all the transgressions, repenting for them and resolving never to repeat them. Doing this much will absolve you from any liability.

Such intent not to hurt any living being is equivalent to having accomplished the supreme vow of ahimsa (one of the five major vows called *mahavrats*). You have to make a decision that you want to maintain this intent and then you should remain sincere to it at all costs. When you do not adhere to your decision, it is called *anuvrat*.

Beware! There is Violence in Sex

If the Lord were to describe the violence associated with sex, it would kill a person. The general belief is that there is no violence involved in the sexual act. I do not chastise anyone about this. In the sexual act, violence combines with attraction and this leads to the violation of all the five supreme vows and the resultant commitment of tremendous sin. Although one does not want to commit any violence, millions of life-forms are destroyed in the sexual act combined with adverse meditation process.

Sex is the cause of this worldly life. Other forms of pleasure are not harmful, when the sexual inclination is conquered. Nothing else creates such an obstacle. If a person became indifferent to sex, he may reincarnate as a celestial being. Having conquered the sexual weakness, one can proceed to conquer all other weaknesses. Sexual indulgence leads to birth in a lower life-form such as the animal kingdom.

As long as a person engages in the relative world, and is sexually active, he continues to remain violent. A man who has a sexual relationship with a woman other than his own wife will have to face grave consequences. Adultery leads one to a birth in hell and such a person has no hope for another human birth. The same applies to a woman.

Should people not practice some sexual discipline even in their homes? Sex with one's own spouse is not improper, but one should also understand that countless life-forms are destroyed in a single act of sex. This violence should not be taken lightly. Here also, sexual activity must not occur without a purpose. Countless life-forms in the form of human seed exist in the semen, so one needs to be very cautious in this matter. I am being very brief about this, because there is no end to it otherwise.

Violence Beyond the Mind!

Ahimsa means to not have a single negative thought about

anyone, not even for one's own enemies. A non-violent person will even think about the physical well-being and salvation of his own enemy. What good is any other kind of non-violence? The *prakruti* (complex of the mind, speech, body and its attributes) is inclined to have bad thoughts, but to turn this around is one's own *purusharth* (independent highest endeavor).

If a non-violent person shot an arrow at someone, his victim would not bleed. In contrast, a violent man would cause the person to bleed, even if he threw a flower at him. Neither the arrow nor the flower is itself 'effective', but it is the intent behind the act that is 'effective'. This is why my constant intent is that no one should be hurt in the slightest manner by my speech, my thoughts and my conduct. And my words and speech flows from this very intent. It is not the arrow, nor the flower, nor anything else for that matter that yields an effect, it is the intent that yields an effect.

Akram Vignan states that a person should not even use his thoughts as a weapon. So how can anyone use any other weapons? How can I wield any weapon against other life-forms when I have never once resorted to using even my thoughts as a weapon against the smallest of life-forms? Sometimes I tend to speak a little harshly, but such harshness is like the subtle difference between raw and refined silk. Such speech comes out only rarely. I have never used my speech as a weapon nor have I ever used my thoughts in that way.

I have never used my mind as a weapon against even the smallest of life-forms. Even if I was stung by a scorpion, I would not raise any weapon against it. By stinging me, the scorpion would be fulfilling its obligation, without which there would be no liberation for me. I can assure you that I have not used my mind as a weapon against any living being. Although it is the nature of the mind to retaliate, I assure you that I have not used it in this way.

Questioner: You must have realized that the mind is useless as a weapon.

Dadashri: Yes. A weapon is of no use at all. The thought that I would need a weapon has never crossed my mind. Since the day I laid down the ‘sword’, I have not picked it up again. I would not pick it up even if my opponent had a sword. This is the path one will ultimately have to come to. Those who find this world cumbersome and want to break free from it, will have to travel this very path: no other paths are available.

One simply has to master ahimsa in order to accomplish everything else. The power of ahimsa is such that even a lion and a lamb will stand side by side at the waterhole.

Questioner: Was it like that during the time of the Tirthankaras?

Dadashri: Yes. One cannot even describe what it was like then. If the world understood even a single sentence of these Tirthankaras, it would have sanctified it and put it into practice. Unfortunately, the world did not comprehend the message behind those words, and moreover, no one is around to explain.

Questioner: Dada, but you are here.

Dadashri: How much sound will my little flute create?

The Power of the Gnani’s Ahimsa

How does the Gnani Purush deal with the world? He is so non-violent in his worldly dealings that even the most ferocious tiger would be pacified and shy away from him. Such is the power of ahimsa. The world has already witnessed the effects of violence through people like Hitler and Stalin. Just look at the outcome, everything came to an end; nothing lasted.

There is No Violence Where there is Ahimsa

Questioner: Is there violence where there is non-violence?

Dadashri: There can never be any violence where there is complete non-violence; otherwise it is called partial non-violence.

When you cut a papaya into many slices, all the slices will have the same sweetness, not a single slice will be bitter. Similarly, there is no violence where there is complete non-violence. Partial non-violence and partial violence is a different matter altogether.

Questioner: Is partial ahimsa considered kindness?

Dadashri: Yes, that is called kindness. Kindness is the root of religion. Where there is absolute kindness, there is absolute religion.

Beyond Violence and Non-Violence

Questioner: Where there is kindness, there is also cruelty. Does this apply to violence and non-violence?

Dadashri: Yes. Non-violence exists because there is violence and vice-versa. However, one will have to stop violence and embrace non-violence, and then go beyond even non-violence. One has to go beyond this duality. Ultimately one will have to go even beyond non-violence.

Questioner: Beyond ahimsa? What sort of a state would that be?

Dadashri: The very state that I am in right now. I am beyond violence and non-violence. Ahimsa is based on the ego and I am without any ego. To say 'I am practicing ahimsa or violence' is the ego. I am the observer of the entity that practices violence and non-violence. I simply observe the ego. One can only be considered a Gnani if one is beyond all dualities. Most of these ascetics and priests are very kind, but they can also be merciless. Because there is kindness within them, there is also cruelty within them. If they have eighty percent kindness they will also have twenty percent cruelty. If they have ninety-six percent kindness, there will be four percent cruelty.

Questioner: Is that the same with ahimsa? If there is ninety-six percent ahimsa, will there be four percent violence?

Dadashri: The final total will always be there and it will always speak for itself. If there is ninety-six percent ahimsa there would be four percent violence

Questioner: So what would be the nature of such violence?

Dadashri: It is the violence of the ultimate stage. At that stage, the person will know how much himsa is left and will quickly dispense with it and become liberated.

The Gnani: the Non-Violent One in the Ocean of Violence

People ask me why I travel by cars although I am a Gnani. In their minds they hold that traveling by car involves much violence to small life-forms like insects etc. They also ask who is held accountable for the violence that this entails. Now how can a Gnani be called a Gnani if he is not absolutely non-violent? Absolute non-violence here means totally non-violent in an ocean of violence!

People tell me that they have read my books and they find them appealing and without any contradictions, but they also tell me that my behavior contradicts my message of ahimsa. I explain to them what the Lord has said in the scriptures that the Self-Realized Gnani has no ownership of his body and because of this he is not liable for the body's actions. Secondly the Gnani does not renounce nor take up anything. They did not understand the meaning of 'not having ownership of the body', so I asked them why they thought that I commit violence in such acts. One person asked whether it would constitute violence if he were to crush an insect under his foot. I told him that it is violence because he believes that it is his foot that steps on the insect. I told him that I have no ownership over this body and hence there is no doer ship in the act.

He wanted me to give him examples and define what a person owns and what he does not. I gave him the following

example: There is a vacant plot surrounded by shops in an affluent area of a town. Someone has informed the police about hidden excise goods buried there. The site is overgrown with vegetation after the rainfall. The police start to dig and they unearth the goods. They arrest Laxmichand who they were told was the owner of the land. Laxmichand tells them that he was no longer the owner and that he had sold the land two weeks ago. When the new owner is interrogated, he protests to being accused and tells the police that he had only bought the land a fortnight ago, while the goods must have been buried before the rainy season, since the area was now overgrown with vegetation. The police, however, are only concerned about the present-day ownership of the land and although the new owner purchased it only fifteen days ago, he is still held responsible because he is the owner now. The problem is with the ownership. If one were to look at the facts, it was obvious that the goods were buried before the rain. Past ownership has no value or responsibility. The current owner bears all the responsibility.

“I am Chandulal” is being owner of the body and hence you are responsible for all his actions. “I am Pure Soul” is the State of the Gnani; where there is no ownership at all and hence no liability of violence.

You will only find a resolution when you understand everything from such detailed perspective. How else can this puzzle be solved?

“It is a puzzle. The world is the puzzle itself. How can one solve this puzzle? There are two viewpoints to solving this puzzle: One ‘relative’ viewpoint, one ‘real’ viewpoint.”

If one does not solve this puzzle, then one will become dissolved in it, like everyone else in this world.

Questioner: By saying ‘I am not the owner of this body’ will people not exploit situations and do as they please?

Dadashri: No, people would not admit to this openly. Would a person not immediately become an owner of his body if someone were to slap him? Even if someone insulted him, would he not immediately assume ownership and retaliate? Would his reactions not prove that he becomes the owner? One cannot accomplish anything by merely saying it. One would have to have the experience of it.

Questioner: But is it not a sin to travel by car because of the violence involved?

Dadashri: The world is full of sin. It is only when one ceases to be the owner of one's body, that one becomes sinless. Otherwise as long as a person is the owner of the body, everything that he does is a sin.

Many life-forms are killed during respiration. And when we speak we send thousands of life-forms colliding to their deaths. Even the movement of one's hand causes death to so many life-forms. Although they are invisible, they are still being killed. And therefore it is all sin.

The ownership over one's body ceases with the realization of 'I am not this body' and one becomes free from all sin. As for myself, I have not had ownership over this mind, this speech or this body for the past twenty-six years. There is no responsibility left, since the 'ownership documents' have been destroyed, which is why I am completely and absolutely non-violent. I perpetually live as the Self, the 'home department'. I am absolutely non-violent in the ocean of violence.

Questioner: Does one become non-violent after taking this Gnan?

Dadashri: In giving you this Gnan, I have made you Self-Realized. Now, violence will not touch you provided that you follow my *Agnas* (Five cardinal instructions to live by following

Self-Realization in order to maintain the liberated state). If you make a strong decision to follow my Agnas, you will reap tremendous benefits. This will lead to final enlightenment. How can violence touch someone who is non-violent?

Questioner: Violence does not affect those who experience the *Nine Kalams* (Dada's prayer of nine principles) in their everyday lives.

Dadashri: Violence does affect them, but if they recite the Nine Kalams, the violence that they have done up until this moment, is erased. However, if a person follows the five Agnas, violence does not touch him at all. When he abides by my Agnas, he is completely separate from the physical body, even while immersed in the ocean of violence. The body, because it is solid matter becomes an instrument of hurt for many life-forms. Even a single movement of one's hand destroys so many life-forms, whereas the Soul, which is extremely subtle, cannot harm any living being. In my books it is written that although I live in the 'ocean of violence', I am completely non-violent. There is no violence in my mind. At certain times my speech is a little harsh and therefore violent, but then speech is merely a 'tape-record playing'. Although I am not the owner of this speech, but because the 'tape-record' is 'mine', I am at fault to an extent and for this I do pratikraman.

Questioner: Through the medium of your non-violent words, we all mahatmas (Dadashri's Self-realized followers) are becoming non-violent.

Dadashri: You are non-violent if you follow my Agnas. If you find this too difficult, tell me so, so that I can change them for you.

The Keval Gnani (The Fully Enlightened Being) Manifests Where There Is Absolute Non-Violence

The highest religion is the one where a person is able to acquire the knowledge of the subtlest understanding of non-

violence. Absolute non-violence in itself is Keval Gnan. When you encounter a religion where violence ceases, be assured that such a religion is right.

The world is not devoid of violence at all. The world itself is full of violence. When you become non-violent, the world will become non-violent too. Without the reign of absolute non-violence, one's awareness would not be complete and Keval Gnan is not possible. There should be absolutely no violence in this world. The Supreme Divine Lord resides in every living entity, so whom will you hurt? Who will you harm?

The Science Behind The Ultimate Ahimsa

As long as you believe that, 'I am picking this flower and I am committing violence' then the laws of violence will bind you. The same laws also bind the people who do not have this awareness. It is only when you attain the realization of your real Self that violence will not affect you under any circumstance.

Emperor Bharat, in spite of engaging in wars and having thirteen thousand wives, was able to remain in his enlightened state. How did he manage to do that? What spiritual knowledge did he possess? Nowadays a man with just one wife becomes frustrated.

Emperor Bharat expresses to Lord Rushabdev, 'Lord, I am fighting this war in which so many lives are destroyed. What is worse is that I am taking human lives. I can understand violence against the smaller lives, but here I am killing human beings. And it is all as a result of fighting war.'

Lord Rushabdev replies, 'This is all a result of your past karma, which you will have to settle.'

'But I too want liberation. I do not want to sit around and wait.' the emperor beseeches.

To this, Lord Rushabdev says, 'I am giving you this Akram

Vignan. This science will take you to liberation. Despite living with your queens and engaging in wars, nothing will affect you. You will be able to remain absolutely untouched and separate.’ Such is the Gnan I am giving you.’

Suspicion Perpetuates Mistakes

After this Gnan, one becomes a Pure Soul. When one understands the nature of the Self, all negative karma or violence that occur, is not part of the Self. Such an individual has complete awareness of the Pure Soul.

But as long as one has doubts and feels responsible for the acts of violence, one should ask ‘Chandubhai’ one’s relative self to recite the following prayer five times each morning: ‘I do not want to hurt any living being with my mind, my speech or my body. This is my absolute resolve’. When you recite this with Dada Bhagwan as your witness, all the responsibility will then be His.

Those of you who have no doubts need not worry. I have no doubts, but it is natural for you to have them because this Gnan has been given to you. There is a tremendous difference in the way a man relates to his world when he has gone through life earning and laboring for money and another whose money has been handed to him.

In reality the Soul that the Gnani Purush has come to know, can never hurt anyone, nor can it be hurt by anyone. And that is the nature of the Real Self.

Suffering, Non-suffering and the Self

A man once asked me what he should do to be able to tolerate mosquitoes. I told him to sit and meditate and just observe the mosquitoes if they bite him. He insisted that he could not do that, so then I told him that whenever a mosquito landed on him, he should say, “I am beyond suffering; suffering is not my nature” In this way, he would gradually come nearer to his ‘home

department' (the Real Self). And after going through the experience of mosquito biting a hundred or two hundred times, he will attain the non-suffering state.

What does it mean to be a non-sufferer? It means to know that the mosquito has bitten the body, and where it has bitten. He does not have any suffering. In reality, the Real Self does not experience any suffering, but whatever apparent suffering he endures, is because of his previous habit of saying that the mosquito has bitten him.

You need to understand completely the state of the Pure Soul. This will happen by constantly remaining in this satsang. For now, you can get by with just repeating that you are Pure Soul. Doing this will stop the binding of karma. When you become free from the false belief that you are the body, you cease to bind karma.

Questioner: So, when a mosquito bites me, should I simply say, "I am not the sufferer?"

Dadashri: Yes. If a mosquito lands on your arm while you are sitting here, your initial experience will be the knowledge that it has landed; you will become aware of this. At this precise moment are you in the state of awareness or are you in the state of suffering? What do you think?

Questioner: When it sits on my arm, I am aware of it.

Dadashri: Yes and that same state of knowledge is also there when it bites you. But when you say, 'the mosquito bit me!' you become the sufferer. In reality, you are not the sufferer. You are only the knower. When the mosquito bites you, say 'I am not the sufferer' and when it bites you more, repeat, 'I am not the sufferer.'

Questioner: You have talked about the non-sufferer, but then you have also mentioned eternal bliss of the Self.

Dadashri: You cannot use the word ‘the bliss of the Self’. It refers to a very high state of being, the ultimate state. For now, you should simply use the word ‘the non-sufferer’. By using this word, your suffering will decrease. It will not cease immediately. Bliss of the Self means Gnan: Knowledge itself. One is purely in the ‘knowing’ state. The sting may hurt intensely but the Real Self is merely the Knower of the event and does not experience any suffering at all. That is called the Bliss of the Real Self.

Questioner: Is the reaction of, ‘the mosquito bit me’, that follows the mosquito bite, the same reaction that is acknowledged in the bliss of the Self?

Dadashri: Yes. He is the Knower of that too. He is the knower of the one who says, ‘the mosquito bit me.’

Questioner: You have told us to repeat, ‘I am not suffering, I am not suffering’, but then people around would think that the suffering is gone.

Dadashri: No, that is not so. He is the Knower of the suffering as well, but people do not have the capacity to remain in the ‘knowing’ state when they experience suffering. But if he were to utter, ‘I am not the sufferer’ the suffering would not affect him. The inherent nature of the Soul is that it has no suffering, so that when one says, ‘I am not the sufferer’, he truly remains unaffected. The state of the Bliss of the Self is much higher. As one begins to remain in the state of awareness, one moves towards this state. In that state, not only does one have the knowledge of the sting, but also the knowledge of when the stinging stops and the departure of the mosquito from the site of the sting. In the state of no suffering, one is able to tolerate the sting without the suffering.

Questioner: Can one come to know The Self through the bliss of Self?

Dadashri: The Soul is bliss eternal. You have ‘taken’ this

Gnan, but the old ego and attachment that you have brought from your previous life do not leave easily.

Questioner: The One who is Bliss Incarnate, is his vision complete and absolute?

Dadashri: Yes it is complete and absolute, but that state cannot be attained in this time- cycle. The Bliss of the Self falls short in this era. A complete vision of three hundred and sixty degrees only occurs in full enlightenment, Keval Gnan. This state of bliss is not attainable in this era.

Can Mud Taint Light?

Are you aware of the light of the Self? If the headlights from a car fall on the sewage, would the light rays be affected by the stench? Will the light take on the color of the sewage?

Questioner: No.

Dadashri: So then can this light become tainted with mud?

Questioner: No.

Dadashri: The light can touch the mud, but the mud can never touch the light. Even when the headlight of a car has such properties, what would the light of the Soul be like? It can never be smothered or tainted at all. That is why the Soul is eternally unaffected, uncontaminated, and pure and remains separate. Nothing touches it and nothing sticks to it: That is what the Soul is like!

The Self is in the form of light, but not this kind of light. I have seen that light. It is indeed a light. A wall can obstruct the light from the headlights of a car, whereas nothing can obstruct the light of the Self. Even walls and mountains cannot obstruct it. Only the living body is capable of obstructing the Self.

Questioner: Why does the body obstruct it?

Dadashri: Because the living body is a mixture of matter

and the Self. If there were only pure matter in the body, it could not be obstructed.

Questioner: Your example of the light and sewage was very pertinent.

Dadashri: Yes, but I only give it occasionally. Generally I do not use that analogy with everyone because it may be misconstrued and lead people astray.

The Self-Realized One is Absolutely Non-Violent

Dadashri: Now if moonlight illuminated the roads, would a person drive his car without turning on his headlights?

Questioner: Yes, he would.

Dadashri: And when he turns the lights on, he would see a myriad insects whirring around in the beam, bashing against the vehicle and being killed, but until then he was not aware of the insects being killed. With the lights turned on he is filled with the doubt that, 'I am being violent. I am killing insects.'

So many people do not have the 'light' at all, which is why they do not see the insects or question the fact that violence is taking place. People see by whatever 'light' they have. As the light increases, they will see that many insects are being killed. In the same way, as one's awareness increases, one is able to see more and more of one's own faults, otherwise one is oblivious to them. The Soul is the light. When it touches the life-forms, it does not harm them because it passes through them effortlessly. This is because the insects are gross and the Soul is extremely subtle. The Self is absolutely non-violent. If you were to remain as the Self, then you would also be absolutely non-violent. But if you become the owner of the physical body, then you enter the world of violence. When you have this realization, how can you be held liable for any violence? That is why after becoming the Pure Self, karma can never bind you.

Questioner: So then even after committing violence of life-forms, karmas cannot bind us!

Dadashri: Violence cannot occur at all. When one become the Self, violence is impossible.

The person who attains Self-Realization is beyond all applicable laws. The laws of the world are applicable as long as one identifies with the body, and hence liable to bind karma. No law of any scripture, no karma of any kind, and no violence of any kind touches the one who is Self-Realized.

Questioner: What is the religion of ahimsa? Does it arise spontaneously?

Dadashri: No it does not arise spontaneously. Non-violence is the nature of the Self, and violence is not. But non-violence is not the innate property of the Self; it is not a quality that remains with the Soul forever. Like all other dualities it becomes evident in the one who has attained the Self.

It is extremely important that you understand all this. This is 'Akram Vignan', the science of all the Vitraags, the twenty-four Tirthankaras! Because you have not heard of it, you will ask if such a thing is really possible. If you have any doubts about its validity, then you will fail to accomplish your goal. Your goal will only be accomplished in the absence of doubts and questions.

The nature of the Self is so subtle that it can penetrate fire and yet be unaffected. So tell me how can any violence affect it? Violence affects those who identify with the physical body and believe that the physical body is their real Self. If violence affected the Soul, there would be no liberation for anyone. But everything is beautifully arranged for liberation. You may not understand this from where you stand, but when you attain Self-Realization, this entire science will open up to you!!

Jai Sat Chit Anand

Pratah Vidhi (Morning Prayer)

- ◆ I bow to Shri Simandhar Swami.(5)
- ◆ I bow to Dada Bhagwan who is pure love.(5)
- ◆ Let no living being in this world be hurt, even in the slightest degree, through this mind, speech or body.(5)
- ◆ Except for the experience of the pure Self, I do not want any temporary things of this world.(5)
- ◆ May I acquire infinite inner strength to remain continuously in the Agnas of the Gnani Purush Dada Bhagwan.(5)
- ◆ May absolute knowledge, absolute vision and absolute conduct manifest, exactly and completely, as seen by the Gnani Purush in his Science of the Vitarag.(5)

Pratikraman Vidhi

Process of Divine Apology

This is a 3-part process:

1. Alochana: Heart-felt inner confession of one's mistakes
2. Pratikraman: Process of apology coupled with remorse for any wrongdoing.
3. Pratyakhyan: Sincere pledge to never repeat the mistakes.

In the live presence and witness of Dada Bhagwan, Oh pure Soul who is totally separate from the mind, speech, body, causal, effect and neutral karmas of [the name of the person who has been hurt by you].

1. I confess my mistakes. [Recall the mistakes you committed with this person.]
2. I apologize and ask for forgiveness for these mistakes.
3. I resolve firmly never to repeat these mistakes. Dearest Dada Bhagwan, grant me the absolute energy not to repeat these mistakes.

Books of Akram Vignan of Dada Bhagwan

1. Adjust Everywhere
2. Anger
3. Aptavani 1
4. Aptavani 2
5. Aptavani 6
6. Aptavani 9
7. Autobiography of Gnani Purush A.M.Patel
8. Avoid Clashes
9. Brahmacharya : Celibacy Attained With Understanding
10. Death : Before, During & After...
11. Flawless Vision
12. Generation Gap
13. Harmony In Marriage
14. Life Without Conflict
15. Money
16. Noble Use of Money
17. Non-Violence : Ahimsa
18. Pratikraman : The master key that resolves all conflicts
19. Pure Love
20. Right Understanding to Help Others
21. Science of Karma
22. Science of Speech
23. Shree Simandhar Swami : The Living God
24. The Essence Of All Religion
25. The Fault Is Of the Sufferer
26. The Guru and The Disciple
27. Tri Mantra : The mantra that removes all worldly obstacles
28. Whatever Happened is Justice
29. Who Am I ?
30. Worries

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Absolute Knowledge, Total Liberation Is Synonymous With Absolute Non-Violence

Ahimsa (Non-Violence) itself is religion and ahimsa is spiritual progress. The definition of Ahimsa is: to maintain the awareness of not hurting any living being, even in the slightest degree, through your mind, speech and actions. When this principle remains firm in your conviction and awareness then progress will occur in spirituality.

Violence exists everywhere in this world. The entire world is filled with violence. When you become truly non-violent, the world will cease to be violent for you. Without the authority of the force of non-violence, total liberation, defined as absolute knowledge (keval gnan), is not possible. The level of awakened awareness necessary for absolute enlightenment is not possible to attain without total non-violence: non-violence in thoughts, speech and action.

Who will you direct your violence towards? All that is in front of you is
The manifestation of
the Lord within all
living beings.
They are all
really the
Supreme
Lord. Who
will you
hurt?

-Dadashri



ISBN 81-89725-12-2



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