

Discourses on
Badi Sadhu Vandana □

(Descriptive discourses on *Badi Sadhu Vandana* composed by
Ek Bhavavātari Pujya Acharya Samrat Sri Jaymalji Maharaj Saheb)

Volume I

Discourses given by *Agam Vivechak, Pandit ratna Upadhyaya Pravar
Sri Parshvachandraji Maharaj Saheb's* near & dear
Dr Sri Padamchandraji Maharaj Saheb, inspirer of
twelve-fold vratas and *Anupeha Meditation* in *Mahila Bagh, Jodhpur*
during the historical *Chatūrmās*.



Discourses by

Dr. Sri Padamchandraji Maharaj Saheb
Disciple of Sri Lalchandraji Maharaj Saheb,
the tenth *Pontiff* of *Jaygaccha*



Publishers

Sri Jaymal Jain Parshva-Padmodaya Foundation, Chennai

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- ***Badi Sadhu Vandana* (Volume I)**
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- ***Blessed by :***
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- ***Inspired by :***
Aḡam Vivechak Panditratna Upadhya Pravar Sri Parshvachandraji M. S.
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DEDICATION

*Dedicated with immense faith
and devotion to
the fond memory of the great saint
Charcha Chakravarty, Bishma Pratijnadhari,
Yugpradhan, Ekbhavavatari Acharya Samrat
Pujya Sri Jaymalji Maharaj Saheb,
an embodiment of knowledge, faith,
conduct and austerity and his able successors
Acharya Sri Rayachandraji M.S.,
Acharya Sri Aaskaranji M.S.,
Acharya Sri Sabaldasji M.S.,
Acharya Sri Hirachandraji M.S.,
Acharya Sri Kasturchandraji M.S.,
Acharya Sri Bhikamchandji M.S.,
Acharya Sri Kanmalji M.S.,
Acharya Sri Jeetmalji M.S.
and the tenth pontiff
Acharya Sri Lalchandraji M.S.*

Humbly devoted by
Dr. Muni Padamchandra

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A Note from the Publishers

The *Badi Sadhu Vandana* is a great composition of *Ek Bhavaṅātari*, *Bhishma Pratijnadhari*, *Charcha Chakravarty*, *Pujya Gurudev Acharya Samrat Sri Jaymalji Maharaj Saheb* composed nearly two hundred and fifty years ago. It is a great source of *Bhakti* (devotion), not of ordinary gods and goddesses but of the perfected divine *Vitarāga Parmatmans* who are the ideals of all spiritual aspirants seeking liberation from the transmigratory ocean of births and deaths. It is a beautiful, devotional piece of poetry, one of its kinds, written in one hundred and eleven couplets. When it is sung, the aspirant is filled with devotion and admiration for the worthy souls who have set an example in their own way facing the ups and downs of life.

The eleventh successor (*pattadhar*) of *Acharya Sri Jaymalji Maharaj Saheb* is His Holiness *Acharya Sri Shubhchandraji Maharaj Saheb*. His disciples the present *Upadhyaya Sri Parshvachandraji Maharaj Saheb* and *Dr. Sri Padamchandraji Maharaj Saheb*, spent their four month *Chatūrmās* period of 1996 at *Mahila Bagh*, Jodhpur. During the *Chatūrmās* period *Dr. Padamchandraji Maharaj Saheb* gave discourses on *Badi Sadhu Vandana*. The discourses were informative and very well received and appreciated by one and all. People from far and near flocked to hear him and benefited from his powerful and thought-provoking discourses which not only revealed the essence of the *Aḡamas* but at the same time gave exhaustive details of the same. The senior *Shravakas* and *Shravikas* commented that they had been reading the *Badi Sadhu Vandana* everyday over so many years but never knew its details;

but now after hearing the discourses on the same, they enjoyed reading it all the more. They all expressed their desire that the discourses on the sacred *Badi Sadhu Vandana* ought to be recorded and published so that more number of people could benefit from such eloquent discourses. Hence keeping the above facts in mind, Sri Shwetambar Sthanakvasi Jaymal Jain Shravak Sangh, Jodhpur entrusted the task of documenting the discourses to Sri Pukhrajji Mohanoth of Jodhpur. The latter devotedly and industriously compiled the discourses and later on edited them. Utmost care was taken by the annotator Muni Sri Dr. Padamchandraji and compiler Pukhrajji that nothing against the Agamic tradition was spelt and recorded.

The other Jaymal Jain Shravak Sanghs of Mahamandir, Pipad and Siyat contributed their best towards the compilation of the discourses. The first edition of the five volume series of *Badi Sadhu Vandana – Pravachan* was published by Sri Jaymal Jain Memorial Trust, Chennai in 1998 and was sold out in a very short span. It was very well received by the ascetic community of monk and nuns of all sects of Jainism as well as by the elite scholars and laity. Hence the second and third editions were reprinted by Sri Jaymal Jain Parshva Padmodaya Foundation, Chennai in 2003 and 2006 respectively. The illustrations and the printing of all the five volumes was entrusted to Sri Sanjay Surana, the young and energetic son of the illustrious Srichand Surana, Agra and the Trust is thankful to him for the same.

Volume I carries twenty one discourses and there are twenty nine discourses in Volume II. Volume III covers discourses fifty one to sixty including the *Paryushan Parva Pravachan on Antagaddasa Sutra*. Discourses sixty-one to seventy-two feature in Volume IV and discourses seventy-three to eighty-five in Volume V.

Dr. Priyadarshana, M.A., M.Phil, Ph.D, Lecturer, Department of Jainology, University of Madras who has been practising and teaching Jain values for the past two decades in Chennai and is a scholar of Prakrit and Jainology studies, has been entrusted the task of translating the entire five volumes. She has devotedly accomplished the task and the English translations of the Hindi discourses are in your hands. The Trust is thankful to Dr. Priyadarshana for the translation and all others who have assisted her in the publication. We hope that maximum number of people benefit from the five volume series of ‘Discourses on *Badi Sadhu Vandana*’ and realize their spiritual purpose of self-realization, purification and enlightenment.

—*Gyanchand Munoth,*

President,

Sri Jaymal Jain Parshva Padmodaya Foundation, Chennai.

Preface

Of all the different literary styles of writing, poetry is the most attractive and impressive style of presenting one's thoughts and ideas as it appeals to all groups of people, be it the educated elite or the innocent illiterate. A beautiful piece of poetry written in proper meters can be hummed or sung, is melodious, pleasing to the listener and at the same time thought-provoking and inspiring.

An inspiring piece of poetry can fill one with different emotions be it romance, passion, courage, disgust or even compassion. There are 'Nava-rasas' like *Shringar Ras*, *Veer Ras*, *Vibhatsa Ras*, *Karun Ras*, etc. *Karun Ras* is also called as *Shant Ras* or *Bhakti Ras* and it is said to be the best of all the *Rasas*. It enables a person to experience peace and serenity in an atmosphere full of excitement and conflict. It has the power to enable man to tap his latent spiritual potential and experience Godhood here and now. *Bhakti* is the bridge which enables the conditioned to experience the joy of being un-conditioned, it enables one to break all fetters and soar in the skies of enlightenment and also to experience infinite bliss in this ephemeral life. Devotional literature is indeed immortal as it inspires the devotee to seek and realize immortality.

The *Badi Sadhu Vandana* is a great work of devotion and is a unique piece of devotional literature, one of its kinds. Aspirants from all walks of life given in any place and time can draw inspiration from it and benefit spiritually, religiously, socially, materially. Both Acharya Jaymalji and his greatest literary composition – *Badi Sadhu Vandana* are immortal in Jaina spiritual, religious and literary circles. People of almost all sects of Jainism devotedly sing this *Badi Sadhu Vandana*. It is beyond

sectarianism i.e., appeals to all irrespective of the sectarian divisions. In the Jaina literary circle it is a ‘*Kalājayi*’ composition. Whosoever sings it or listens to it, purifies his inner self and is able to overcome his inner enemies like passions, desires, greed and the like. One is inspired of his spiritual duty and is filled with the spirit of renunciation, compassion and other virtues. The composer has composed this work rising above all isms and defilements. Inspired by the enigma and charisma of the pure soul and pure personalities, the poet has composed this unique work; hence each word and couplet of the text is a ‘*mantra*’ in itself. This composition sings glory of those great personalities who have become perfect in the past and will be so in the future; and by singing their glory one effortlessly escalates to their level and shines in life. Just as a dumb person cannot express his spiritual and material experiences orally, a devotee is unable to express the joy and bliss he experiences while singing this great composition. While singing, reading or reflecting on this beautiful piece of poetry one is filled with devotion, inspiration, self-realization and spiritual awareness. Due to its contents-the composer, the place of composition, the readers and listeners, all become immortal

Listeners – all become immortal

Saint poet Tulsidas immortalized Rama through his *Ramayana*, Surdas immortalized Sri Krishna in his *Sursagar*. The *Ramayana* and *Sursagar* are two great works of devotional literature in Hindi, likewise Saint Poet Jaymalji Maharaj Saheb has immortalized the pure, divine and great *Vitaraga* souls called *Tirthankars*, *Arihantas*, *Siddhas*, *Jinas*, *Kevalins* etc. Indeed the *Badi Sadhu Vandana* is a unique and immortal work of devotion in Jaina tradition sung almost in every Jain household worldwide not only by the *Sthanakvasi* Jains but even by *Murtipujak* and *Terapanthi* Jains. It is also popularly known as ‘*Anant Chaubisi*’.

The multi-dimensional personality of Acharya Sri Jaymalji Maharaj Saheb

Since time immemorial India has been the cradle for towering spiritual and religious personalities of the world. Whenever ignorance, injustice, social and religious disorder disrupted the peace of the society, some great soul is born to restore justice, order and peace by kindling the beacon light of right knowledge, wisdom and spirituality. Sri Rama destroyed the evil demons and Ravana, Sri Krishna crushed the evil Kansa and Jarasandh, Mahavira tried to removed the evil custom of slavery by retrieving Chandanbala besides uplifting the souls of Arjunmali, Chandakaushik and many others.

During the second half of the eighteenth century of *Vikram Era*, Indian society witnessed a lot of turmoil and social upheaval. The rulers indulged in extravagant lifestyles, exploited the innocent people and oppressed the civilians and made them impoverished. The incessant invaders, the unconcerned and arrogant rulers, the never ending battles and many other forces caused the downfall of the Indian society. Around three centuries ago, Jaina ascetics too became Yatis and forgot their austere religious practices and led a life of luxury and comfort. They misled people and propagated false beliefs and practices.

At such a crucial hour Jaymalji Maharaj Saheb was born to *Kamdar* Mohandasji Mehta and Mahima Devi in Lambiya village in Merta Pargana, Jodhpur, Rajasthan on *Bhadra Shukla Trayodashi* in *Vikram Era* 1765. His father had won over a dacoit gang just after his birth and so the child was named *Jai* meaning victory.

In his childhood itself he exhibited immense talent, radiance and brilliance and this attracted one and all to him. His soft-hearted nature, disciplined character, compassionate and caring attitude, simplicity, gentleness and other virtues contributed to his charishma and made him loving and respectable. He was extra-ordinary in his studies and his intelligence surpassed everything and everybody.

At the age of twenty two he was married to Lakshmi Devi, daughter of Shivkaranji Mutha of Riyan. But as the *Muklava/Gauna* (a ceremony conducted post-marriage and before the daughter leaves for her husband's home) had not been conducted, she stayed at her mother's place. Six months after marriage Jaymalji went to Merta for business along with his friends. As it was *Kartik Shukla Chaumasi* (the day the *Chatūrmās* gets over) all the markets were closed and all the people had gone to hear the discourses of Jain Acharya Bhudharji Maharaj Saheb. Jaymalji too went there to hear the discourses along with his friends. The great Acharya narrated the life history of the charismatic Seth Sudarshan who remained firm in his character inspite of the allurements of Queen Abhaya and Kapila Dasī; the king sentenced him to death but due to his noble character the crucifixion turned out to be a celebration. All this and more on the significance of celibacy inspired Jaymalji to a great extent and he was determined to take up the great vow of celibacy throughout his life. The young lad was exuberant and high-spirited and his face radiated unprecedented spiritual brilliance and firmness. He further astonished everybody by expressing his desire to renounce the world and lead a life of self-restraint.

When his parents, relatives and in-laws came to know of this shocking news, they all reached Merta and tried to persuade Jaymalji to reconsider and give up his decision but all in vain. Ultimately they all had to consent to the firm decision of Jaymalji and grant him the permission to renounce the world. Standing on one leg, he memorized the '*Pratikramana Sutra*', (a pre-requisite for taking up the ascetic order) within three hours and eventually renounced the world on *Margashirsh Krishna Dvitiya* in *Vikram Era* 1788 at Merta and was ordained in the holy order by Acharya Sri Budharji Maharaj Saheb in Merta itself.

The purpose of his accepting initiation was to break the karmic fetters and free himself from the cycle of births and deaths; to give up the

fleeting pleasures and seek eternal bliss of *Moksha*. In order to achieve this sublime purpose, he resolved to remain steadfast in observing ‘right-faith-knowledge-conduct and austerity’. The newly initiated Jaymalji Maharaj Saheb confined himself strictly to the restrained monastic life. As soon as he was ordained he started the ‘*Ekantar Tapasya*’ (complete fasting on alternate days) and observed the same for sixteen long years. In the *Paṛāna* (day of breaking fast) on the five *tithis* he gave up the five *Vigayas* (on the day of breaking the fast, if it happened to be one of the five auspicious days, he gave up milk, curd, oil, ghee and sweets). In his austere life Jaymalji observed the following penances-16 years of two day fasting, 2 years of three day fasting, 3 years of five day fasting, 20 one-month long fasting, 10 two-month fasting, 40 eight-day fasting, 90 days fasting with *Abhigraha* once, four-month fasting-once and six-month fasting-once and *VardhamanĀyambil Tapas*. He led an ‘*apramatt*’ life and took to rigorous austerities only to purify his soul.

Along with the austerities he never failed to serve his Gurus. He was steadfastly involved in scriptural study and also meditated for long hours; in other words he took to external as well as internal austerities with the same spiritual zeal. He debated with the opponent Yatis and propagated the right religion, after defeating them in philosophical debates. PipadĀ, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Nagaur, Jaisalmer, Sanchor, Barmer, Jalore – all these place were hitherto closed for the true ascetics, but now after the sincere efforts of Jaymalji the ascetics could visit the above places and propagate the true faith.

Aĉhārġya Jaymalji was extremely talented and far-sighted. He was sincere, hard-working, dedicated, devoted and steadfast in his practices. During his first *Chatġrmas* itself he memorized eleven *Agġamas* and five of them within three hours. Within a span of three years he memorized the rest of the sacred canons and knew the thirty two *Agġamas* by heart.

He also mastered the *Vedas, Shrutis, Pittakas* and philosophical texts of other schools. He was a rare combination of right knowledge and right conduct.

After the sad demise of *Acharya* Sri Bhudharji, the great Muni Jaymal resolved never to lie down and sleep. He observed this difficult vow for fifty long years till his death i.e., from *Vikram Era* 1804-1853. He initiated seven hundred worthy souls in the holy order. Such was the towering personality of His Holiness *Acharya* Jaymalji, that whosoever came in contact with him was undoubtedly influenced and inspired by this charismatic saint. He inspired many Kings, Rulers, Nawabs, Thakurs and Jagirdars to give up all debaucheries i.e, addictions (*vyasanas*) like hunting, meat-eating, taking to intoxicating drinks, visiting prostitutes, etc. He voiced his views against animal sacrifices, slavery, custom of sati and many other social ills which had paralyzed the society at that time.

His discourses used to be thought-provoking and inspiring. Kings, chiefs, chieftans and many others flocked to hear this great saint of India. Among them Maharaj Abhaysingh of Jodhpur, Maharaj Gajsingh of Bikaner, Maharaj Mansingh of Sirohi, Ahalyadevi of Holkar (Indore), Maharaj Bakhatsingh of Nagaur, Maharaj Madhavsingh-I of Jaipur, Akhesingh of Jaisalmer and last but not the least the Mughal prince, son of the Mughal Emperor Muhammad Shah were some of the many rulers who were completely devoted to this great saint.

On *Vaishakh Shukla Tritiya* in *Vikram Era* 1805 he was conferred the *Acharyahood* and that very day he established the *Akhil Bharatiya Jaymal Jain Shravak Sangh*. His tradition came to be known as *Jaygaccha*. He roamed barefoot and inspired people of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Mewad, Malwa and Delhi. From *Vikram Era* 1841 to 1853, due to oldage and failing health he spent his last years in Nagaur, Rajasthan. He gave up his *Acharyahood* during his life time itself in order to pursue

his spiritual practices. He conferred the same title on his worthy successor *Yuvacharya* Sri Raychandraji Maharaj Saheb. Thus on *Jyestha Shukla Dvitiya* in *Vikram Era* 1851, the latter was made the pontiff (*Acharya*) by the four- fold Jaina congregation of Nagaur, Rajasthan. Thus the great *Acharya* spent every moment of his life in pursuing spiritual practices to annihilate the karmas in order to purify his self.

Anticipating his end to be near Jaymalji Maharaj Saheb called *Acharya* Rayachandraji from Bikaner and expressed his desire to take the last great vow of *Sallekhana*. He observed eleven days of alternate fasting and two-day fasting. On the eve of Mahavir Jayanti he did not break his fasting and on *Chaitra Shukla Purnima* in *Vikram Era* 1853 he took the vow of *Sallekhana-Santhara*. The above news spread like wild fire and people from all quarters including many chiefs, chieftans and wealthy landlords flocked to Nagaur to pay homage to the great saint. His ascetic disciples too came from far off places and served him in his last days. Sri Gajoji Swami, Sri Ghasiramji Maharaj Saheb and other forty-nine munis devotedly served him during his *Sallekhana* period.

On the 16th day of *Santhara*, Pujya Sri Rayachandraji Maharaj Saheb was reciting the *Santhara-Painna*, other ascetics too were reciting other scriptures. Saint Jaymalji remained absorbed in deep spiritual contemplation, listening to the sacred canons. All of a sudden a divine light filled up the prayer hall (*upashraya*). All the monks seated there saw that two divine figures approached Jaymalji Maharaj Saheb, circumambulated him thrice and venerated before him. When enquired by *Acharya* Rayachandraji Maharaj Saheb they said that they were Uday and Keshav.

Sri Rayachandraji Maharaj Saheb understood that the two were the disciples of *Acharya* Sri Jaymalji who had expired some time ago. Sri Rayachandraji recollected that these two divine figures were the two saints who had taken the *Santhara* in the valley of Siriyari. On one side was the

Pipli Ghat and on the other was the Siriyari ghat and there was a narrow passage leading to Mewad, surrounded by beautiful hills and valleys. It was a very dreadful passage full of thick bushes visited by wild animals and dacoits. But the saints led by *Acharya* Sri Jaymalji M.S. treaded the path fearlessly. And then *Acharya* Jaymalji Maharaj Saheb told Uday and Keshav munis to lead the others and go in the front as they walked extremely fast. The two humble and devoted ascetics obeyed the orders and took the lead. As they headed the path they saw a beautiful rock surrounded by greenery and were overwhelmed by the breath taking beauty of the place. Uday Muni felt like taking *Samadhi* in that place for the *Acharya* had ordered them to progress steadily. Uday Muni saw a dry leaf fall from the tree and he did not want to fall from the place he had just reached spiritually and physically. He conveyed his feelings to Keshav Muni who replied that he too would like to be a partner in this spiritual intention. Both Uday Muni and Keshav Muni became spiritually absorbed and wanted to take *Samadhi* then and there itself.

When Pujya *Acharya* Jaymalji and other ascetics reached there, they enquired from the spiritually delighted ascetics as to what the matter was. To everybody's surprise the two ascetics expressed their earnest desire to take *Samadhi* in that place. All the co-ascetics carefully observed the beautiful place and understood the inclination of the two ascetics. *Acharya* Jaymalji tested their steadfastness and apprehending the seriousness of the ascetics granted them permission. He asked some monks to remain along with himself in their service and sent the other to Siriyari to pass on the message.

The two monks took the vow of *Sallekhana* and *Pujyasri* began to do *Svadhyaaya* for the devoted ascetics. People from Siriyari, Pipli and nearby places began to pour in day after day in large numbers. Everybody witnessed that death could be a celebration for the wise but a cause of sorrow for the ignorant. Keshav Muni had a nine day *Santhara* and

Uday Muni had eleven day *Santharā* after which they left the ephemeral body and ascended to heaven.

Sri Rayachandraji understood that these divine figures were the same ascetics who had been reborn as celestial gods. When enquired from which heaven they had come they said that they had come from the first *Kalpa* to venerate before their Guru. When they enquired about the future birth of *Acharya* Jaymalji, the divine beings remained silent for a while, then got the answer from Sri Simandhar Swami and replied that he would be reborn as Jayadev in the first *Kalpa* and in his next birth be reborn in the *Pushkalavati Vijay* in Mahavideh Kshetra and be liberated from there. Thus the celestial beings announced that Pujya Sri Jaymalji *Maharaj Saheb* was *Ek Bhavavātari*. Saying thus they departed for their heavenly abode after repeatedly venerating to their *Pujya Guru Bhagavant*. Suddenly the place became dark but the devoted ascetics and householders became all the more devoted in thought, word and deed.

Pujya Sri Aṣkaranji Maharaj Saheb recorded the above incident in a poem (*dhal*) during the *Santharā* period itself. Forty nine Sadhus and two hundred and fifty Sadhavis were present during this pious occasion. Of the forty-nine Sadhus, sixteen monks served the great *Acharya* by thought, word and deed and they too had the good fortune of observing month-long *Santharā* in their last days. *Acharya Samrat* Jaymalji had a *Santharā* of thirty-one days and this is a record in itself that no *Acharya* in five hundred years has been so fortunate. Three of his successors (*pattadharas*) had one-month *Santharās* and ten of his successors too had *Santharās*.

Thus the great saint led an ideal, austere, self-restrained, pious, inspiring and revolutionary life and ultimately died like a spiritual hero, detached, self-realized and enlightened. He left the ephemeral body and ascended to heaven. His body perished but his soul become immortal.

Pujya Sri Jaymalji Maharaj Saheb was a committed and devoted saint full of spiritual zeal and vigour. He was a great spiritual saint par excellence, having extra-ordinary memory, besides learning, teaching, managing and poetic skills. He has to his credit more than two hundred and fifty poetic works. He hardly slept during the nights and remained absorbed either in contemplation or composing beautiful devotional and inspirational poetry to be documented in the day.

On one such occasion, filled with devotion and worship he composed the *Badi Sadhu Vandana*, through which he has worshipped and venerated the infinite *Chaubisis*, *Vitaraga Paramatman Jineshwaras* of the past, present and future. The twenty four Tirthankaras, twenty Viharmanas, one-thousand-four hundred and fifty-two Ganadharas of the twenty-four Tirthankars, sixteen great women (*Mahaśātis*) and a galaxy of *Shramans* and *Shramanis* are worshipfully venerated and praised. This composition occupies a unique place in the *Shwetambar Sthānakvasi* Jaina tradition.

I have been reciting the *Badi Sadhu Vandana* for quite some years now and doing its *svādhyāya* regularly. Whenever I do so I become ecstatic and am filled with devotion and admiration for the great spiritual personages. The joy and bliss I experience cannot be expressed in words. I firmly believe that many spiritual aspirants be it the renunciates or the lay householders, experience the same way as I do and for this reason it is devotedly sung and recited on a regular basis in many Jain households even today. Faithful and steady recitation of *Badi Sadhu Vandana* works wonders in the life of an aspirant as he realizes the eternal values and meaning of life. He plunges deep into reality and stops craving for the ephemeral aspects of things. He leads a disciplined and worthy life thereby tapping the latent potential of the self and realizing its beauty and pure nature.

Many householders repeatedly expressed their heartfelt desire to understand the meaning and essence of *Badi Sadhu Vandana* in depth and detail as they were unaware of the historical, ethical and metaphysical details of the *Badi Sadhu Vandana*. For quite some time I too had been pondering over the idea of interpreting and elucidating this great devotional work for the benefit of all concerned. Thus in 1996 began the discourses on *Badi Sadhu Vandana* in Jodhpur, Rajasthan. Right from day one the idea and the efforts were appreciated and people from all walks of life enjoyed the discourses and drew inspiration from the elucidation of *Badi Sadhu Vandana*.

I have been fortunate to have been guided, inspired and blessed by my *Pujya Gurudev Agam vivechak, Panditratna, Upadhyaya Pravar Sri Parshvachandraji Maharaj Saheb* who has been not only my strength but my friend, philosopher and guide. I offer my humble salutations at his lotus feet for having blessed me to successfully accomplish all my spiritual, religious and literary tasks to date and I seek his further guidance and support in all my future endeavours. But for him these discourses would not have taken the form of these five volumes titled '*Badi Sadhu Vandana Pravachan*' in Hindi which have run into three editions in just a span of eight years. And now the Gujarati and English translations of the above five volumes of '*discourses on Badi Sadhu Vandana*' would definitely inspire the non-Hindi speaking aspirants living in India and abroad. I hope one and all will benefit from this great devotional work of all times for it gives an insight into Jainism as well as one's inner self.

Date : 16.08.2012

—*Muni Dr. Padamchandra*

**Glimpse of the life of a
young and energetic Jain saint
Dr. Sri Padamchandraji Maharaj Saheb
(a powerful orator, annotator, preacher
and inspirer of Jain values)**

The five volume series of discourses on *Badi Saḍhu Vandana* by the young and energetic Jain saint, the famous orator, annotator, preacher of Anuppeha [Dhyaṅ], inspirer of *Svaḍhyaya* and twelve fold vratas, His Holiness Dr. Sri Padamchandraji Maharaj Saheb, has created great ripples of inspiration and appreciation among the *Saḍhus*, *Saḍhvis*, *Shravakas* and *Shravikas* and scores of readers all over India. This unique work of Dr. Padamchandraji Maharaj Saheb has been well received in the Jain *Svaḍhyaya* circle and his efforts have been acclaimed by one and all, be it the young or the old, men or women, educated or the not so well-read.

All have seen for themselves the impressive discourses on the one and only beautiful *Badi Saḍhu Vandana*, but few people know about the personality who has created this five volume series of discourses on the *Kaljayi Badi Saḍhu Vandana*. As are the inspiring discourses so is the magnetic personality of the young and energetic annotator of this work. One should see to believe the young ascetic preach so impressively and profoundly amidst thousands of people at such a young age. His discourses are spiritual in essence, revolutionary in inspiring the masses, practical to the core and pleasing to the ears. They kindle the light of knowledge, the spirit of renunciation and the beauty of the pure soul all in one go.

Dr. Padamchandraji Maharaj Saheb is a rare combination of child-like innocence, youthful zeal and profound indepth knowledge of an experienced sage. His pursuit of knowledge, austere ascetic practices,

teaching skills, leadership qualities go to making a dynamic young Jain saint. He undoubtedly inspires people from all walks of life and of all age groups.

This young and dynamic personality was born on 27th July, 1964 in the famous sun-city Jodhpur in Rajasthan. *He was named Gautam but his people fondly called him Raju.* His family members were religious and traditional and used to regularly visit Jain *Sadhus* and *Sadhvis*. On one such occasion he went with his mother to his native village named Harsolav to have the *darshan* of Mahasati Saubhagya Kanwarji Maharaj Saheb. She happened to see the child's feet which he had playfully spread it across and she observed a '*Padma-Rekha*' in his feet and called him Padmachandra and from then on he was called by the name Padamchandra. His father was Sri Mishrimalji Kankaria, a businessman running the seventy year old reputed firm 'Fakirchand Naharmal Jain' in Mandor Mandi, Jodhpur. His father was a highly religious person right from his childhood and loved to serve the *Sadhus*, *Sadhvis* and the *Sadharmik* brothers and sisters. His mother is Mohinidevi (Mohankanwar) and she too is a highly religious lady very famous for her rigorous occasional penances like *Masakshamana*, *Atthai*, etc. She has observed nearly 40 *Atthais* (eight-day long fasting) and even today she aspires to observe an *Atthai* every year. Dr. Padamchandraji Maharaj Saheb in his '*Sansarik Paksha*' has five brothers and they all are well-settled and devoted to the Jaina faith.

Born with a silver spoon, he had his primary and secondary education in Jodhpur. In 1984 he graduated with a B.Com degree, in 1986 he did his post-graduation in Philosophy and in 1987 he registered for his Ph.D in the Rajasthan University and in 1988 after much hard work he submitted his doctoral thesis titled '*Bharatiya Darshano mein Anekant Darshan-Ek Vishleshan*' (A study of Anekanta in Indian Philosophy).

Inspite of the highest degree and the best education he could not imbibe much on the religious front like his parents did. He felt a void in his life and wanted to master the art of right living and put his education

to some practical use. He contacted the like-minded youth of his city and took up many social service projects, there by enhancing his leadership qualities and acquiring unprecedented confidence and fame.

His spiritual journey began in 1983 from the spiritual and religious camp conducted by *Jaygaccha* in Mahamandir, Jodhpur under the guidance of the legendary Achariyas of Jaygaccha of the calibre of late Sri Jeetmalji Maharaj Saheb, Lalchandrajji Maharaj Saheb and the present Achariya Sri Shubhchandrajji Maharaj Saheb and the present Upadhyaya Sri Parshvachandrajji Maharaj Saheb. The spiritual and religious camp ushered a new life in the young and dynamic youth Padamchandra so much so that it rocked the religious, cultural and academic scenario of the sun city for a decade.

From 1983 to 1988 he initiated a cultural and religious revolution in the Jain society of Jodhpur city. He inspired the youth to channelize their energy in the right direction in a constructive way. He inspired them to take up socio-religio-cultural activities for the betterment of the society. He began the *Pathashala* (Sunday schools) in Shrutacharya Chauth Bhavan, Mahila Bagh, Jodhpur. It was conducted and managed so well that it grew in strength day after day. Seeing its popularity and success, Padamchandra was inspired by the members of the society to start such religious schools in Asop, Nagaur, Raipur, Sojat and many other places. He established contacts with the members of the respective regions and administered proper functioning of the *Pathashalas*.

Besides the above he established the Jay Jain Gym (*vyayamshala*), Jay Jain library, Jay Jeet Tailoring Institute and Jay Jain Mahaveer Coaching Centre and personally monitored their administration and function. On Mahaveer Jayanti and other Jain festivals and religious events, he took the initiative and led the religious processions and events from the front. Most of the times, the models be made for the above processions got the first prize.

In 1984 he worked tirelessly to prepare the first ever Jain calendar in the world and publish it. The calendar and its contents on the back page

were of so much value that within two years it became a priceless possession of scores of households throughout the country. Today it is published as 'Padmodaya Jain calendar' and nearly one lakh copies of it are printed and distributed every year. This speaks volumes about the exemplary talent, far-sightedness and industrious nature of Sri Padamchandra. He was also a member of the 'Joints International Group' of Jodhpur and he actively participated and conducted various camps under its auspices and contributed to the reputation of the group by taking part in many other programs and events. He ran an institute by name 'Kankaria Typewriting Centre'. Even in the business field his polite behaviours, able leadership and hardwork paid rich dividends and it progressed manifold.

What led to the *Vairagya* of this young and dynamic youth? What inspired him to renounce the world? Buddha saw a diseased man, an old man and a dead man only once and he was inspired to search the truth, but we mortals see everyday but never reflect on the facts of life and continue to exist instead of living a meaningful life. Very rarely we come across people who are truly awakened and live a meaningful life and inspire others to do the same. I am reminded of an incident of his childhood which Dr. Sri Padamchandraji Maharaj Saheb himself narrated during his *Chaturmas* discourses in the year 2002 at 'Jay Parisar', Vepery, Chennai. He said that when he was a small boy of eight-nine years of age, his mother once observed eleven-day fasting and was eagerly waiting for some renunciates to come to her place for *Gochari*, so that she could offer food to them and then break her eleven-day penance. His father sent him to the Jain prayer and community hall of Simhapol to get the pious ascetics. He reached there and requested them to come and he saw to it that they came with him to his house as desired by his mother. The monks collected the alms offered by the devoted family and left for the community hall. However the saints forgot one *Patra* (wooden bowl) in the house. After the departure of the monks Sri Mishrimalji saw the bowl and told Padamchandra to go and inform the saints about their missing

bowl. When the ascetics came to collect the *patra*, his father pointed out sarcastically to the ascetics and said that if they forgot their *patras* at the place of the householders like this, what would they go and show to the *Gurudev* ! To this the ascetic replied that they were never careless and said that this incident indicated a future happening. They said that somebody in that house was destined to hold the *patras* in future, i.e., someone was bound to renounce the world in the near future. There were mixed reactions from the family members. The father laughed away the matter but his mother said that only the fortunate can take the *patras* and lead an austere life for the welfare of all. The young boy Padamchandra listened to all the reactions and became thoughtful. He told to himself that he desired to take the *Patras*, i.e., he wanted to renounce the world and that the humble ascetic was not wrong!

He whispered the same to one of the family members and the latter replied that to become a *Sadhu*, one has to study the voluminous religious and philosophical texts, master languages like Sanskrit, Prakrit and become well-versed in different branches of learning. The latter advised the child to first enhance his knowledge and then talk of becoming a renunciate. The child heard carefully and at the tender age of 8-9 years became determined to pursue the religious and philosophical studies seriously. Thus the seed of renunciation (*vairagya*) was sown in the mind of child Padamchandra. It began to grow slowly and steadily but he never had the courage to express it until his graduation. He tried but courage failed him. He was very apprehensive about the whole idea and kept it buried, but watered it by becoming proficient in learning and mastering the sacred scriptures. His multifarious activities from 1983 to 1988 is indicative of the above fact. From then on he tried to express his desire of renunciation but all his near and dear ones discouraged him in all possible ways. Padamchandra realized that due to delusion (*Moha*) and attachment it was indeed difficult for his own people to understand and respect his noble feelings. The wise say that so is the case of all ignorant and deluded souls.

At the time in 1986 Aĉarĳya Sri Jeetmalji Maharaj Saheb and other seven *sadhus* camped in *Shrutaĉarĳya* Chowth Bhavan, Mahila Bagh, Jodhpur for the *Chatųrmas*. During the *Chatųrmas* Sri Nutanmuniji Maharaj Saheb expired at a very young age and after some days Aĉarĳya Sri Jeetmalji Maharaj Saheb too left for the heavenly abode. These two incidents reinforced the decision to renounce the world in Padamchandra and he was fully determined to tread on the holy path of the Jinas and become a self-conqueror like them and get rid of the miseries of birth and death. Puja Sri Lalchandraji Maharaj Saheb was conferred the title of the tenth *Pattadhar* of *Jaygacch* by the four-fold angregation. As a Pontiff, during his only *Chatųrmas* in 1987 at Pipad, Rajasthan, which is just 55-60 kms from Jodhpur, Padamchandraji Kankaria used to visit the pious saints once in three days or a week, listen to their discourses and nurture his idea of renunciation. At the same time he attended to the family business with a detached spirit and as mentioned earlier he actively took part in all kinds of religious-cultural and social activities and inspired others to take life seriously and contribute their share for the welfare of the society and nation at large.

After the *Chatųrmas* wherever Aĉarĳya Sri Lalchandraji Maharaj Saheb went Padamchandra travelled there to Khangta, Aųop, Pali and other places and served him with devotion. Finally when they reached Jodhpur he visited them regularly and served the then Aĉarĳya Sri Lalchandraji, the present Aĉarĳya Sri Shubchandraji, the present Upadhyaya Sri Parshvachandraji, Gunvantchandraji and others. Then came the Akshya Tritiya celebration in Bhagat Ki Kothi in which Padamchandra took active part and after the celebrations His Holiness Aĉarĳya Sri Lalchandraji Maharaj Saheb asked him as to why did he delay in embracing the holy order of complete renunciation! To this he replied to *Gurudev* that he did not wish to delay any longer and was determined to execute his earnest desire. He heard the *Mangalik* and returned home.

As soon as he reached home he got the news that *Gurudev* had become serious and had taken the vow of *Sallekhana-Santhara* and

after Padamchandra and thousand of others reached there they saw the *Gurudev* in *Samadhi* after which within two hours he breathed his last. The mortal body was taken to Mahila Bagh from Bhagat ki Kothi and it was sunset by then. Padamchandra and many others remained there throughout the night. Everybody felt lost due to the sudden demise of *Gurudev* but Padamchandra felt the most miserable for he remained deprived of being ordained by *Gurudev* and also he could not fulfil the last wish of *Gurudev*. He could not sleep through the night and remained disturbed.

The next day the last rites were performed by the members of the four-fold Jain communitis. The mortal remains of *Gurudev* were burning and at the same time th heart of Padam Chandra was also burning with reposition. Padamchandra was now fully determined to seek the permission of his family members for renunciation inspite of their resistance. One fine day when the discourse of *Acharya* Sri Shubhchandraji Maharaj Saheb and Upadhyaya Sri Parshvachandraji Maharaj Saheb, was in progress in Mahila Bagh, Jodhpur, Padamchandraji stood up and boldly announced the day of his initiation as 25th June, 1988 and requested the pious saints to initiate him on that day. He added that his parents were not giving him the permission and so he sought the permission of the *Shree Sangh*. The very same day he resolved to observe complete fast of three days (*Chauvihar Tela*) and informed everybody that if he did not get the permission for initiation he intends to continue his fasting.

Finally the Kankaria family had to give in and on 25th June, 1988, he was initiated by the great *Acharya* His Holiness Sri Shubhchandraji Maharaj Saheb and Upadhyaya Sri Parshvachandraji Maharaj Saheb in the presence of other *Sadhus* and nearly ten thousand people in Sardar Higher Secondary Vidhyalaya, Jodhpur. He was ordained as the disciple of late *Acharya* Sri Lalchandraji Maharaj Saheb.

The very same day after his initiation he made an excellent and impressive speech on the principles of Jaina philosophy and its relevance

in modern times and all the people present there realized the potential of this energetic saint and were convinced that the *Jaygacch* has got a very talented young saint who would carry on the mission of *Jaygacch* to promote the Jain values and principles of Lord Mahavira and the late Sri Jaymalji Maharaj Saheb. From that day began the sanyami journey of Padamchandraji Maharaj Saheb and he has successfully completed more than two decades of observance of non-violence, self-restraint and multifarious austerities. He has been tiring day and night to work for the welfare of one and all and travels by foot across the length and breadth of India to promote the great Jain values of Lord Mahavira and the tradition of *Jaygacch* initiated by the late Achariya Sri Jaymalji Maharaj Saheb. N.A In 1996, he meditated for fifteen days observing the *Ayambil Tapas* in the cave of Achalgadh in the famous hill station of Mt. Abu in Rajasthan and did the *Sadhana* of ‘*Anuppeha-Dhyana*’ in accordance with the sacred *Agamic* tradition. His devotees observed a sea change in the personality of Muni Padamchandraji. This *Sadhana* and *Aradhana* i.e., his spiritual accomplishment and devotion enabled him to manifest some divine powers and the same is reflected in his life and works. Today his powerful and thought provoking discourses draw people from all walks of life. During his 1996 *Chatuimas* in Jodhpur he gave excellent and out of the world discourses on the *Badi Sadhu Vandana* composed by Pujya Sri Jaymalji Maharaj Saheb and the same have been compiled and edited by Shri Pukhraj Mohanoth and published initially by Jaymal Jain Memorial Trust, Chennai and then by Sri Jaymal Jain Parshva Padmodaya Foundation, Chennai. The five volume series of discourses were so well received by the ardent ascetic and lay followers of Jainism across India that within a span of eight years three Hindi editions have been published.

His discourses on the compositions of Jaymalji Maharaj Saheb like *Shalya Chattisi*, *Dharma Mahima*, *Chausath Sati Vandana* given in Raichur, Chennai and Bangalore respectively have gone a long way to inspire the common man to pursue a spiritual and noble life. Another

attraction is the *Anuppeha DhyañSadhana* taught in the annual All India Spiritual and Religious Camps in different cities and also at the camps conducted for children, youth and adults during the *Chaturmas*. Previously around 200 candidates used to participate in the annual religious camps but over the years nearly 2000 candidates started participating in the annual All India Socio-Cultural-Religious-Spiritual Camps.

Inspired by the magnetic and thought-provoking discourses of Muni Shri Padam Chandraji in South India alone within a short span of nearly three years, fifteen thousand to twenty thousand lay householders have taken to the parital vows of a householder (*Shravaka Vratas*) and nearly two hundred couples have taken the vow of celibacy. Following the *Anuppeha Dhyañ* technique thousands of people have benefited and got relief from stress in the fast-paced life of today. Such is the inspiration and influence of the young and dynamic Dr. Padamchandraji Maharaj Saheb who is blessed and ably guided by his *Gurudev* and devotedly assisted by his group of ascetics and scores of lay devotees.

His discourses have brought to light the hidden pearls of Jain wisdom spread in the vast *Agamic* literature and commentary literature. They kindle the hearts of people of all age groups and hence his discourses have been widely acclaimed by members of different Jain sects as well as non-Jains. He simplifies the profound teachings and presents it in a very impressive way, thus making an impact on all concerned. We humbly salute and venerate to this young and dynamic spiritual saint of India whose vision is to propagate the Jain values through the vast literature revealed by Lord Mahavira and through the works of Pujya Sri Jaymalji Maharaj Saheb.

—*Pukhraj Mohanoth, Jodhpur*
Dr. Priyadrshana, Chennai

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Chamatkari Jay Jap

Pujya Jaymalji Hua Avatari, Jynara Nam Tani Mahima Bhari,
Kast Tale Mite Tav Tapo, Pujya Jaymalji Ro Jap Japo.
Pujya Name Sab Kast Tale, Vali Bhooth-Preth Pin NaYe Chale,
Mile Na ChorHuve Gup-Chupo, Pujya Jaymalji Ro Jap Japo.
Lakshmi Din-Din Badh Jave, Vali Dukh Nedo to Nahi Nahi Aave,
Vyapa Main Hove Bahuth Napho, Pujya Jaymalji Ro Jap Japo.
Adiyo Kam to Hoya Jave, Vali Bigdiya Kam Bhi Ban Jave,
Bul-Chuk Nahi Khaya Dapho, Pujya Jaymalji Ro Jap Japo.
Raj Kaj Mein ej Rahe, Vali Khama Khama Sab Lok Kahe,
Aachi Jaga Jaya Rupo, Pujya Jaymalji Ro Jap Japo.
Pujya Nam Tano Jo Liya Otto, Jynare Kade Nahi Aave Toto,
Ghar-Ghar Barbne Kaya Tapo, Pujya Jaymalji Ro Jap Japo.
Ek Mala Nit Nem Rakho, Knini Bat Tano Nahi Hoye Dhakho,
Khali Viman Aru Taleji Sapo, Pujya Jaymalji Ro Jap Japo.
Svabhakth Tani Pratipal Kare, Muni Ram Sada Tum Dhyan Dhare,
Koi Partikh Bat Mati Uthapo, Pujya Jaymalji Ro Jap Japo.
Pujya Nam Pratap Iso Jab Jabro, Dukh Kast Rog Jave Sagro
Keyi Bhavara Kaam Khapo, Pujya Jaymalji Ro Jap Japo.

Note : Recitation of this magical Jay Jap concretizes Samyakithav

Badi Sadhu Vandanā—Discourse

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