Only for absent examinees: Cut only this front page with the 'bar code' from the answer book and return with form A and form B.

A few of the questions in this Pre-Test Paper will be asked in the Final Examination to be held on Sunday, 6 March 2016. Use the latest editions of the exam books.

BOCHASANWASI SHRI AKSHAR PURUSHOTTAM SWAMINARAYAN SANSTHA

SATSANG EXAMINATIONS

PRE-TEST: SATSANG PRAVESH : PAPER - 1

JANUARY 2016 **Time: 9.00 to 11.15 am** **Total Marks: 75**

स्वामिनारायण
BAPS

For absent examinees, please return this sheet only.

☞ **Please do not damage in any way the 'bar code' printed above.**

☞ **Compulsory: To be filled by Examinee only** ☜

Answer books without the signature of the Class Supervisor will not be considered valid.

Birthdate of Examinee D D M M Y Y Y Y

Education of Examinee .....

Class Supervisor should only sign after checking the printed personal details and the compulsory written details above.

Signature of Class Supervisor .....

☞ **Please follow the instructions written on the back side.**

Paper Checker's Signature .....

Paper Checker's Note:

For Moderation Dept.	Question No. (Marks)	Marks Obtained
	1 (9)	
	2 (6)	
	3 (5)	
	4 (5)	
	5 (4)	
	6 (4)	
Section-1, Total Marks (33)		

For Moderation Dept.	Question No. (Marks)	Marks Obtained
	7 (9)	
	8 (4)	
	9 (5)	
	10 (4)	
	11(6)	
	12 (4)	
Section-2, Total Marks (32)		

For Moderation Dept.	Question No. (Marks)	Marks Obtained
Section-3, Total Marks		
	13 (10)	

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શબ્દોમાં .....

ચેકરનું નામ

☞ Important Instructions For Satsang Exam Students ☜

1. Students can appear for the Satsang Exams from Prarambh to Pragna - 3 after passing each exam.
2. Satsang exam is only valid for use by the candidate identified on the top sheet, and only at the designated center, in the specified medium (Gujarati, Hindi, English) and for the exam level (e.g. Prarambha, Pravesh, Parichay, etc.) indicated. **Any difference will not be allowed and considered as disqualify.**
3. The medium (Gujarati, English, Hindi) and the exam level in which candidates take **the Pre-Test** will be the medium in which they must take the Final Exam. Answer books bearing details of candidates different from the Final List **will not be accepted for marking.**
4. On the day of the Final Satsang Examinations, all examinees should obtain the signature of the class supervisor on the top sheet of answer book bearing their own personal details only. Answer books without the signature of the Class Supervisor will **not** be accepted for marking**.**
5. Write your answers with either a blue or black pen only. Answers written in pencil, or with a red, green or any other coloured pen will **not be considered valid.** Answers written in more than one coloured ink will not be considered valid.
6. Follow the instructions while answering. Answers crossed out will not be considered valid. Answers will not be considered valid if they are not written in legible handwriting. Please write clearly and legibly. **Answer papers with more than one type of handwriting will not be accepted and considered as disqualify.**
7. Examinations taken at **unauthorized locations** or in which the exam rules have been violated will not be considered valid.
8. Without the prior permission of the Satsang Exam Division in India, answer papers written by substitute writers in place of the original candidate will **not be accepted for marking.**
9. Candidates who wish to change the center at which they will sit the Final Exam **must inform and take prior permission** of the Satsang Exam Division in India. Otherwise there answer sheet **not be accepted for marking**.
10. Candidates who have registered for both papers of Satsang Pragna Exam and candidates sitting the Satsang Pravesh, Parichay and Pravin exams should give both papers. **Presence in only one paper will not be accepted for marking**.
11. **In the Final Examination answers written on extra pages will not be accepted for marking.**
12. Candidates will not be allowed to keep any electronic items, such as, mobile phones, tablets, laptops, etc. in the examination room.
13. **Before filling the Application Form for the Pragna Exam, Please note the following points:**

- Students according to their choice can appear for both the Question Papers in the same year or appear for the 1st paper in the first and the 2nd paper in the following year for any of the Pragna Exams. **One can only appear for the 2nd Paper after passing the 1st Paper.** Candidates opting to sit only one of the two papers for any of the Pragna examinations must score 45 Marks to pass.
- Student should make his/her choice while registration. Pragna candidate can choice first paper or Both papers. **Select the first paper if the student wishes to appear for the first paper and if he/she wishes to appear for both papers select both papers.** Candidates who have registered for both papers of Satsang Pragna Exam should give both papers. **Presence in only one paper will considered as disqualify.** Candidates who appear for both papers in the same year must score a combined minimum of 90 Marks to pass.
- After passing the 1st paper, one can **postpone** appearing for the 2nd paper for a **maximum of 1 Year.**
- If two students are eligible for a prize then the one who has appeared for **both exams together** will be **rewarded with 10% marks** and thus become a candidate for the prize.
- **Note : Now all students who have passed the India Pravin Exams can appear for the Pragna - 1 Exam.**

14. **No valid registration!!! No result.**

SECTION 1: NILKANTH CHARITRA - 6th Edition, December 2010

Q.1. In the sentences below, state who is speaking to whom and when. [9]

1. "Though a mere child, he attempts to embrace the universe."

   Who is speaking? ..... To whom? .....

   When? .....

   .....

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2. "Sage Vashishtha used to sit on a high seat, while Bhagwan Ramchandra sat down beside him."
3. "Brother, who are you? And what do you have in your bag?"

Q.2. Give reasons for the following (two to three lines each). [6]

1. The priest of Badrinath mandir offered his services to Nilkanth.

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2. Jaidev broke off the engagement of his daughter to the son of Mukunddev.
3. The householder-bawa brought Nilkanth Varni to the Krishna Mandir.

Q.3. Write short notes on any <u>ONE</u> of the following. (In 15 lines.) [5]

1. Nilkanth in Vanshipur. 2. Meeting with Himalaya.
3. Gives darshan to Veniram and revives Raghunandan.

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Q.4. Answer ALL of the following, using one sentence (not just one word) for each answer. [5]

1. Whom did all the saints and devotees think should be appointed as head of the Satsang?

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2. When did Ramanand Swami initiate diksha to Nilkanth Varni? (Samvat, Month, Tithi)
3. Where did Lalji Suthar live?
4. How many questions did a Nagar Brahmin ask Nilkanth Varni at Hatkeshwar Mahadev?
5. Where did Lakhubai live?

Q.5. From the given options, place a tick (✔) in the box next to the correct ones. [4]

Note: One or more of the options may be correct. Full marks will be awarded only if all the correct options are chosen, otherwise no marks will be awarded.

1. Nilkanth Varni's intense austerities at Pulhashram:
   (1) ☐ Nar-Narayan Dev appeared in the sky on either side protecting him.
   (2) ☐ Perhaps Brahama himself has come to perform such severe penance.
   (3) ☐ "O God! Please bestow upon us the virtues of jnan and austerities."
   (4) ☐ Brahma's son Pulaha had performed austerities.
2. Bawas were killed:
   (1) ☐ Janakpur (2) ☐ Venkatadri
   (3) ☐ Manaspur (4) ☐ Kanchipuram

Q.6. Fill in the blanks. [4]

1. In the village of ....., ... Swami came to draw water from the nearby step-well.
2. The village Patidar, ... had told Kandas in advance about the arrival of .....
3. Nilkanth Varni stayed for ..... months with King ..... of Butolnagar.
4. In the month of ....., Samvat ....., Ramanand Swami left his mortal body.

SECTION 2: SATSANG READER 1 - 6th Edition, April 2011

Q.7. In the sentences below, state who is speaking to whom and when. [9]

1. "Prepare for lunch and I will get better."

   Who is speaking? ..... To whom? .....

   When? .....

   .....

   .....
2. "His boon will bear fruit, without a doubt."
3. "Go call Shukmuni. I want to write a letter."

Q.8. Give reasons for the following (two to three lines each). [4]

1. Maharaj stayed secretly in Abhel Khachar's darbar.

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2. Ashabhai took vartman from Sadhu Dharmanandandas.

Q. 9. Write short notes on 'Shriji Maharaj at Bapujibhai's home in Vartal' **(In 15 lines).** **[5]**

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Q.10. Answer <u>ALL</u> of the following, using one sentence (not just one word) for each answer. **[4]**

1. By whose wish did Swamishri decide to build the Gadhada mandir entirely out of marble?

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2. Who was Devanand Swami's student?
3. Which two devotees established Satsang in Africa?
4. Who lifted Jhinabhai's bier?

Q.11 Select the <u>SIX</u> correct sentences from below and write them in the correct story sequence in the boxes. **[6]**

Topic: Scriptural Debate with Khaiyo Khatri

1. Each sadhu was to be given a piece of jute measuring four hands. **2.** Khaiyo Khatri challenged Maharaj to a scriptural debate. **3.** Instead of a one-pinnacled mandir he built a five-pinnacled mandir. **4.** Khaiyo was taken aback and wondered which of the two was the real Swaminarayan. **5.** In Vartal mandir the murtis of Nar-Narayan Dev were consecrated. **6.** This younger sadhu sitting on the ground is God. The sadhu sitting on the seat is a fake! **7.** Maharaj consecrated his own murti called 'Ghanshyam'. **8.** In Mandvi, Brahmanand Swami sat on Maharaj's seat. **9.** There is no choice but for me to go from here with you. **10.** This disciple of mine will reply. **11.** He met Governor Malcolm and obtained a deed for the land. **12.** Brahmanand Swami at once got up and had Maharaj sit on the high seat.

(1)	**Write the correct sentence numbers**						
(2)	**Correct sequence of sentences**						

Note: (1) 3 marks will be awarded in the correct sentence number only if all the six sentence numbers are correct and (2) 3 marks will be awarded only if all the sequence of sentence numbers is correct. Otherwise no marks will be given.

Q.12. Rewrite the incorrect sentences below in relation to the sentence heading. [4]

Note: Marks will be awarded only if a sentence is written completely correct. Otherwise no marks will be awarded.

Example: **Swami Yagnapriyadasji:** While wandering on the farm, Motibhai's son, Jethabhai, was bit by a scorpion and Jethabhai soon passed away. Then he came with Shriji Maharaj and said "Narayan" to Motibhai.

Ans. **Swami Yagnapriyadasji: While** working in the pasture**,** Ashabhai**'s son,** Desaibhai**, was bit by a** snake **and** Desaibhai **soon passed away. Then he came with** Bhagatji Maharaj **and said "**Jai Swaminarayan**" to** Ashabhai**.**

1. **Sadguru Brahmanand Swami:** Born on Akhatrij, Samvat 1728, in the village of Samarkha in the Anand region. Here, he stayed as a guest of the Rao, of Jamnagar.

A. .....

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2. **Sadguru Shukanand Swami:** Also known as Muktamuni, Brahmanand Swami lived in a room opposite Shriji Maharaj's residence, Shriji Ordi. There he spent his time reading and editing scriptures.
3. **Bhaktaraj Shri Jhinabhai Darbar:** In order to be with Swami, he set up permanent residence in Junagadh. He would thus spend quarter of his time in Junagadh and the rest in Mangrol.
4. **Swami Yagnapriyadasji:** However, sixteen days after Patel had died, Pashabhai was once lying in bed at night, sitting. Suddenly, Patel appeared before him.

SECTION 3: ESSAY

Q.13. Write an essay on any ONE of the following. (In approximately 30 lines.) [10]

1. Nectar of guru's memories: Divine experience and affection of Guruhari.
   (Swaminarayan Prakash (Gujarati) December 2014, pp. 14 to 17)
2. Unique, capable and great personality: Shastriji Maharaj.
   (Swaminarayan Prakash (Gujarati) January 2015, pp. 27 to 29)
3. Pramukh Swami Maharaj: Ideal of World Peace.
   (Swaminarayan Prakash (Gujarati) August 2015, pp. 18 to 21)

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☞ **Matter of above three essays are shown in the following pages**

(One essay from the list of essays will be asked in the Final Examination of March-2016.)

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☞ **Important Note: Past Papers and their solutions can be downloaded and printed free from the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha's website - link : http://www.baps.org/Satsang-Exams.aspx**

Pravesh

Essay 1: Nectar of guru's memories: Divine experience and affection of Guruhari.

(This prasang is narrated by Pramukh Swami Maharaj)

Shastriji Maharaj gave me diksha in Gondal. Yogiji Maharaj was performing the mahapuja in the Akshar Deri. Shastriji Maharaj sat opposite me and gave diksha in the Akshar Deri.

After diksha, I ended up staying in Gondal. There, I and another sadhu, Aksharjivandas, studied Sanskrit under a shastri, as instructed by Shastriji Maharaj. Having stayed for studies, I naturally went with Kothari Aksharswarupdas to help in doing Thakorji's seva and puja. I prepared the arti and [filled the] shankh (conch shell) [with water], as well as washed the utensils. I did not know how to dress the murtis. I learnt it and daily served Ghanshyam Maharaj.

After about a month, rumours started that Shastriji Maharaj was coming. I was newly initiated and was naturally drawn towards Shastriji Maharaj, wishing for Swami's darshan and company.

I used to go to serve Ghanshyam Maharaj and perform mangala arti. So I would wake up early, bathe, do my puja and go. Sometimes I would bathe and go, and do puja later. One day, I woke up and bathed, and someone said that Shastriji Maharaj had come. So, to have his darshan I ran towards his room. When I got there, nobody was around. So, I thought that Swami may have gone up to the mandir for darshan. Hence, I went there for darshan.

In the mandir, I saw Ghanshyam Maharaj lying on a bed! He was awake and instantly sat upon the bed. I spontaneously asked, "Shastriji Maharaj has come here. Where is he?" He replied, "He's gone downstairs." So, I went down, but I did not see Swami anywhere. I thought that since it is time for mangala arti he may have gone up. So, again I went upstairs. There, Ghanshyam Maharaj was sitting on the edge of the bed with his legs dangling. I also had darshan of Shastriji Maharaj there. I touched his feet. Ghanshyam Maharaj placed his hand on my head and blessed me. Shastriji Maharaj blessed me and then suddenly he merged into the murti of Ghanshyam Maharaj. The two forms became one.

I wondered, "Where has Swami gone?" Because Swami had disappeared I went downstairs again. I asked everyone, "Shastriji Maharaj has come, but where is he?"

Everyone said, "Shastriji Maharaj has not come here. Who says he has come here?"I said, "I had his darshan. He has come. I met him upstairs with Ghanshyam Maharaj."

Everyone said, "He certainly has not come." So, I had had Ghanshyam Maharaj's darshan.

The sadhus said to me, "Because you have such affection for Swami, you had darshan of both Swami and Ghanshyam Maharaj."

Question: When you had darshan of Ghanshyam Maharaj in Gondal, why did you not stay to talk to him longer?

Pramukh Swami Maharaj: At the root, I had affection for Shastriji Maharaj and a keen desire to meet him since he had come. I wanted to speak to him and was focused on that so I wanted to know where he was. I had great feelings for Swami so I was drawn to him. Just as Gunatitanand Swami had said to Bhagatji Maharaj. "You've seen the sadhu form, so you'll see God."

Essentially, everything resides in the guru. And it is natural to have joy and affection for him. Hearing of his arrival, it is natural to rush to see him. There was no reason to talk more. So, I just asked about Swami and left.

<u>Essay 2</u>: Unique, capable and great personality: Shastriji Maharaj

Whenever Pramukh Swami Maharaj extols about

the divine personality of his guru, Shastriji Maharaj,

his profound faith in and love for him are evident.

How great was Shastriji Maharaj?

Let us read about it in Swamishri's own words.

Pujya Shastriji Maharaj was not ordinary. He was great and powerful. He was a profound scholar. He had deep knowledge about the shastras. He had also delved deeply into the texts of the Sampradaya. He had served and associated with the Sampradaya's great acharyas, kotharis and sadhus and personally consolidated the knowledge (of Akshar and Purushottam).

Shastriji Maharaj was great from his childhood. He was blessed by Aksharmurti Gunatitanand Swami. Shukanand Swami, the right hand of Shriji Maharaj, had also blessed him and prophesied that he would become a great sadhu and inspire thousands to worship God. So, during his childhood he had received the blessings of two great sadhus. They said he had come to do God's work, and the supreme mission of God's work would be realized.

We can see (God) in his life from his childhood years. During the rainy seasons the soil got wet, and so he made mandirs out of it and placed a flag atop its shikhar. Then he would install Thakorji inside the mandir and perform arti. He was firm about the truth of the knowledge of Akshar-Purushottam. He faced many obstacles, challenges and even attempts on his life, but he always wished that God do good to all. He never retaliated in any way. Whenever anyone came to tell him, "Someone says that so and so did something bad to you." Shastriji Maharaj simply replied, "Whatever God does it must be for our good." Shastriji Maharaj never filed a court case against anyone and neither did he react against his opponents. He maintained his sadhuta (saintliness).

When Swami renounced Vartal he had no means, sadhus and money, and there were only a few devotees with him. Despite this he raised an incredible organization. O how great he was! To inspire the knowledge of Akshar-Purushottam in others is not any ordinary task. Shastriji Maharaj had the power to create something from nothing. So from the effect one can gauge its cause.

Physically, he (Swami) appeared to be diminutive. Many even scorned that Shastriji was only a fistful of bones, so what could he do? But he performed such a colossal task that even his detractors praised him! The whole world saw what he did.

Shastriji Maharaj was like an iron man. He single-handedly established the Bochasanwasi Akshar-Purushottam Sanstha. He did it with God's inspiration and strength. No matter what others said about him, he kept his eye on his goal and accomplished it.

Shastriji Maharaj was born to spread the pure doctrine taught by Bhagwan Swaminarayan and to enable countless souls attain the divine abode of Bhagwan Swaminarayan. He was a divine person. His influence and charisma was immense. To accomplish such a great task cannot be the doing of an ordinary person. Today, it is difficult to start any work in spite of having money, people and everything. He possessed nothing, yet he built a three-storey lofty mandir (in Sarangpur). To think of such a thing at that time is indeed a great thing.

He made an impressive mandir in a small village like Sarangpur. No one could ever imagine building a mandir there. But it was the wish of Shriji Maharaj. Thus he made a grand mandir there. In

this way Swami developed the village (of Sarangpur). Presently, we find people migrating from their villages to settle in the cities. But Swami built a three-storey mandir in a village. Shastriji Maharaj's vision and work were very broad and insightful. One could never think of them under those conditions, but he was God- realized. Then only could such a task be fulfilled.

The uniqueness of Shastriji Maharaj was his courage. When something seemed impossible to do he would say it will be done. The marble stone mandir in Gadhada that we see today was accomplished by Shastriji Maharaj. No one welcomed him in Gadhada. When the state official of Bhavnagar refused to grant land to the BAPS, Swami stated determinedly, "I want to build a mandir on this hill [since it was Shriji Maharaj's wish]." I was in Swami's seva as an attendant. I had gone with him to Gadhada 10 to 15 times. Whenever we bathed in the river Ghela he would say, "I want to build a mandir on this hill." Then there was a change in government and Swami got the land, which did not seem possible. Shastriji Maharaj created everything from scratch. One is overwhelmed by thinking about his work. He progressed despite the difficulties (that came his way). He never thought of becoming God nor had any expectations of being worshipped (by his disciples). Whatever he did was for the sake of Akshar-Purushottam.

He never tired in talking to anyone about the Akshar-Purushottam doctrine. Even when someone did not understand it, he would still continue to talk to him. He persisted in repeating it umpteen times. Sometimes he spent the whole night to explain about it to one person.

He had encountered many obstacles while propagating the Akshar-Purushottam doctrine. Despite of them all he continued his task with patience and equanimity. He never harboured any prejudice for anyone who spoke scornful words. He tolerated pain and insults so that all could understand the path (of moksha) – such were his sentiments behind accomplishing his great work. If even only one person was eager to understand, Swami would go miles to explain to him. He perceived any devotee of Akshar-Purushottam in the highest glory.

Shastriji Maharaj and Yogiji Maharaj have not done anything for the happiness and comfort of their bodies for their entire lives. They built mandirs, dharmashalas and other things, but never did they enjoy any comforts for themselves. They travelled to and begged in villages to set up all facilities for us. They have tolerated hardships.

I have seen Shastriji Maharaj do housekeeping, smear cow dung on the floor and clean the kitchen floor. Shastriji Maharaj and Yogiji Maharaj carried stones on their head. They ground limestone (for construction work). They slept in a dingy room in front of the banyan tree in Gondal. There were two rooms in Gondal; one was used as a kitchen and the other as a storeroom. During winter, summer and monsoon they often slept out beneath the tree. There were no fans at that time. They persevered to please God.

Shastriji Maharaj's life was very simple. Despite him being the liberator of countless he wore old repaired dhotiyas. He wound his pagh in a haphazard way. He never harboured any motive to project himself and become great.

Some used to say that Shastriji Maharaj wanted to be Bhagwan, but he always gave prominence to Thakorji. If someone gave importance to him he chided him and said how could he exclude Shriji Maharaj. If anyone criticized the Vartal Sanstha he would rebuke him and advise him not say such things. He would not allow anyone to speak ill of the mandirs built by Shriji Maharaj, the acharyas and sadhus of those mandirs. He never wished ill of them despite being expelled by them. In fact, he told many devotees to give their annual tithes to the Vartal mandir, and offer prayers to and make pledges for the fulfilment of their wishes before the murti of Shri Harikrishna Maharaj in Vartal. Thus, after leaving Vartal, he never did, spoke about or fomented any activity that would blemish the glory of Vartal mandir. He firmly believed that one should never be disrespectful, critical and

loathsome about the work of Bhagwan Swaminarayan, and the devas and mandirs he had consecrated.

When a sadhu practices saintliness then everyone will revere him. When Shastriji Maharaj left (Vartal) he was firm in agna, upasana and saintliness. He wholly practiced the vows of renouncing money and women. He never lapsed in the panchvartmans of nishkam, nirlobh and others. He never uttered a word in retaliation amid the flurry of opposition. And neither had he written a word in reply or filed a case against his opponents. He tolerated everything. On leaving Vartal he prayed to Harikrishna Maharaj to be with him. Because of his faith in God and his obedience to the instructions of Shriji Maharaj the names of Akshar-Purushottam have spread and are being celebrated throughout the world.

When you degrade someone, you get relegated. By throwing sand towards the sun, it comes back to you. Swami never hurled sand on anyone. Yogiji Maharaj never found fault in even a foolish person. So, the reasons behind the progress of this Sanstha lies in saintliness and conviction of the knowledge (of Akshar-Purushottam).

Shastriji Maharaj built mandirs with its foundations grounded in the doctrine of Akshar-Purushottam as taught by Shriji Maharaj in the Vachanamrut. Shriji Maharaj has revealed that he had come from Akshardham with Akshar and the muktas, and that one should understand this and share it with others. It was a command of Bhagwan, and Shastriji Maharaj obeyed it absolutely. He did not manipulate that, nor did he have the motive to misguide anyone. Shriji Maharaj has explained that of what good would it be to him if he were to drown someone in a well and place a stone over it. He adds that by leading others on the wrong path, of what benefit would it be to him? Shastriji Maharaj continued with that style and tradition (of Shriji Maharaj). He had only one aim – to spread the principle that Shriji Maharaj had taught.

Whatever Shastriji Maharaj had accomplished, it was done with great thought and understanding, and for our liberation. In fact, he accomplished the work for which Shriji Maharaj had taken birth on earth.

Shastriji Maharaj used to say that the bells toll in a true and functioning mandir. A mandir without the murti of Thakorji is abandoned and isolated, hence there are no rituals of arti and puja. Shastriji Maharaj used to say the bells of victory shall toll throughout the world because our spiritual knowledge and principles are true. It is like one hears the sounds of arti, bells and puja rituals in a true mandir.

This is the work of Bhagwan and his Sadhu. Shastriji Maharaj, a powerful person, accomplished such a monumental task 100 years ago. In doing it he had thought not only of 100 years, but of 1,000 years into the future. Since he was a God-realized Sadhu he was omniscient. In mundane terms, he was very intelligent. He did every work with profound intelligence and insight.

We have to preserve this (Satsang) tradition. When we do so, Satsang will grow to greater proportions in the next 100 years. We have to strive so that Satsang will flourish for the next 100 years. Because Swami gave momentum to Satsang for the next 100 years we are reveling today in the knowledge he gave. Thus, we should live such a life that many thousands more would be inspired to follow.

<u>Essay 3</u>: Pramukh Swami Maharaj: Ideal of World Peace

(A transcription of Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam's speech to BAPS Youth and Sadhus)

20 June, 2015, Sarangpur

Friends, greetings to all of you. A few minutes back I was with Maha Pramukh Swamiji. I have written a book with Professor Arun Tiwari. When I gave the book, Pramukh Swamiji smiled. What does his smile mean? Everybody smiles, but when Pramukh Swamiji smiles it means something. I was in the company of Pramukh Swamiji for 15 minutes. At the end of 15 minutes I got a great message. You will repeat the message:

Where there is righteousness in the heart,

there is beauty in the character.

Where there is beauty in the character,

there is harmony in the home.

When there is harmony in the home,

there is order in the nation.

When there is order in the nation,

there is peace in the world.

By meeting Pramukh Swamiji I found righteousness in his heart; I saw peace in the world. Where there is a righteous heart there is peace in the world. And that's what I saw today. It is a situation of bliss.

Respected Swamijis, sadhus, devotees and students who are seated here. My greetings.

What do we need? The world needs prosperity without poverty, peace without fear of God and a happy place to live for all the citizens of the nation. This is what we need. And that is the message being transmitted from Pramukh Swamiji and this esteemed great place.

Friends, I have come to Sarangpur to meet Param Pujya Pramukh Swami Maharaj and present to him personally the book I have written with my friend Prof. Arun Tiwari, Transcendence: My Spiritual Experiences with Pramukh Swamiji. This was my very dear project of many years. I made a promise to Pramukh Swami on the inauguration day of Akshardham, New Delhi, that I will write a book on his great spiritual life. Today, I have fulfilled that promise.

Friends, yesterday, I was in the company of different people: one was a Jain Muni, a Haji who had returned from Mecca, and the third was a Swamiji. They saw the copy of Transcendence and all three asked me one question, what made me write this book? What incident inspired me? I said, Pramukh Swami inspired me from the day I met him on 30 June 2001. But one incident deeply touched me. On the next day of the terrorist attack at Akshardham, Gandhinagar, on 25 September 2002, there were many bodies of devotees and terrorists who were killed in the attack. Pramukh Swamiji came with Gangajal (holy water of River Ganga) in his kamandal and showered it on each body without any discrimination, be it a devotee, a security personnel or the attackers. He silently displayed to the world that every human life is sacred. Life comes from one God and returns to the only God. His magnanimity gave me the urge and strength to explore the spiritual life of Pramukh Swamiji and bring out this book with my friend Arun.

Friends, today I've thought of sharing about my spiritual journey. I have one question for all of you, "How to become a unique you?" So after my talk when you go out of this beautiful auditorium you'll go with the confidence that I can become unique.

UNIQUE YOU

Dear friends, look up. What do you see? The light, the electric bulbs. Immediately our thoughts go to the inventor, Thomas Alva Edison, for his unique contribution towards the invention of the electric bulb and his electrical lighting system. When he was a nine-year-old boy in New York he lived with his parents, and they used oil lamps or candle for light. He said he would electrify New York based on Faraday's Law. And he electrified the whole world. So he was a unique personality.

When you hear the sound of an airplane going over your house, whom do you think of? The Wright brothers proved that man could fly, though at a risk and cost. In 1885 Prof. Calvin said anything heavier than air cannot be flown. But the Wright brothers proved that it could be flown. So don't go near people who say that it's impossible. Everything is possible in science and technology.

Of whom does the telephone remind you? Of course, Alexander Graham Bell.

When everybody considered sea travel as a voyage, a unique person during his sea travel from United Kingdom to India was pondering on why the horizon where the sky and sea meet, looks blue? His nine-year research resulted in the phenomena of scattering of light and he was awarded the Nobel Prize. He was Sir C.V. Raman.

Friends, there was a great scientific lady, who is known for discovering radium. She won not one, but two Nobel Prizes: one for physics and another for chemistry. Who was she? She was Madam Curie. Madam Curie discovered radium and the effect of radiation on the human system. The same radiation, which she had discovered, affected her and she sacrificed her life for removing the [physical] pain in human life.

All these great personalities are unique. They dedicated their lives to science. What made them do that? What made them unique?

Friends, I have, so far, met more than 21 million youths in India and abroad in the last two decades. I learnt, "Every youth wants to be unique. But the world all around you is doing its best, day and night, to make you just like everybody else." The challenge, my young friends, is that you have to fight the hardest battle, which any human being can ever imagine to fight, and never stop fighting until you arrive at your destined place – that is a Unique You!

HOW TO BECOME UNIQUE YOU?

Life is a journey that must be travelled, no matter how bad the roads are. There are four proven steps I have studied about unique people:

The first step is to decide which road you want to take by having a great aim in life. Having a small aim is a crime. You must have a great aim.

The second step is to continuously acquire knowledge through great books, great human beings and great teachers.

The third is hard work. When everybody is sleeping there are lights burning in some people's places.

The fourth step is that when you do any work, whether spiritual, technical, scientific or political work, there will always be some problems. The problems should not become your captain; you should become the captain of the problems. Defeat the problems and succeed. This is called perseverance.

So, if you want to become unique, you have to have four qualities: great aim, continuously acquire knowledge, hard work and perseverance.

WINGS TO FLY

Now I want to tell you how to fly. Do you want to fly? Now repeat with me:

I am born with potential.

I am born with goodness and trust.

I am born with ideas and dreams.

I am born with greatness.

I am born with confidence.

I am born with courage.

So, I am not meant for crawling.

I have wings.

I will fly, I will fly and fly.

WORKING TOGETHER

Friends, while I was talking to the senior sadhus I told them a story. When I was a 10-year-old boy in Rameshwaram I was studying in an elementary school in 1941. At that time, it was British India. When I finished school everyday I used to come home at 8.00 p.m. The reason being I used to deliver newspapers from 6.00 to 8.00 p.m. I was a newspaper boy. Once, on coming home I saw three people: Lakshmana Shastrigal, the head priest of Rameshwaram Shiv temple, Rev. Father Bodal who built the first church in Rameshwaram and my father who was an Imam of the mosque. I saw them every Friday at my house. I was astonished because they had different attires. These three people would sit and discuss. There was a war going on in 1941. There was a famine on our island. So, they discussed about how to generate work, how to help when there were troubles, and how to help the healthcare and education systems. From them I learnt the beautiful lesson about how to work together.

GREAT LEADERSHIP

As a young engineer I worked with Dr Brahma Prakash. He taught me how tolerance of others' views and opinions is essential in building teams and accomplishing tasks that are beyond an individual's capacity. Certain works an individual can do, whereas for other works a team is required. He taught me that life is a precious gift, but it comes with responsibility. With this gift, we are expected to use our talents to make the world a better place. In 1978, I became a project director. I worked with Professor Satish Dhawan, who taught me that a good leader takes the responsibility for the failures of his team. When I failed in the first SLV 3 programme, Satish Dhawan, the chairman, took the failure upon himself. When I succeeded next year, Satish Dhawan told me to address the press conference to celebrate the success. This is great leadership, be it in spiritual, technical, media or political matters or in science. The leader should give the credit of success to his team. If there is failure the leader should absorb the failure. This is the great message I learned when I was working in ISRO.

Later, I met Jain muni Acharya Mahapragya, who made me realize the affirmation of a divine life upon earth and an immortal sense in mortal existence. I wrote with him a book called Family and the Nation.

GREAT MEETING WITH PRAMUKH SWAMIJI

It was an important spiritual day of my life when I first met Pramukh Swamiji. More than a decade ago, as the Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India, I visited Bhuj to review the rehabilitation work in the aftermath of the earthquake. There I met Sadhu Brahmaviharidas. He asked me: “After the detonation of the first atomic bomb, Robert Oppenheimer remembered the Gita: ‘Time I am the shatterer of the world.’ What came to your mind after you detonated India’s first atomic bomb?” I was puzzled by his question, and I said, “The energy of God does not shatter, but unifies minds,” to which he replied, “Our spiritual leader, Pramukh Swamiji is a great unifier. He has unified all our energies to regenerate and restore life from the rubble of damage.” I was moved and expressed my desire to meet such a Swamiji.

So friends, my best wishes to all the members assembled here and the BAPS in its mission of spreading compassion, love and understanding.

Now I would like to hear some questions from you.

QUESTION-ANSWER SESSION

Question: What was the first thing that came to your mind when you met Pramukh Swami today?

Answer: When I met him I remembered his life as a young boy. He’s a farmer’s son. And from a farmer’s son to the growth of BAPS for millions of people [is a great story]. Now this book, Transcendence, is about my experiences with Maha-Pramukh Swamiji – experiences of nearly two decades, from the birth of Akshardham till today. I have seen how he brings peace, happiness and prosperity.

Question: What is the reason for your tremendous energy and enthusiasm?

Answer: One thought I have is what can I give.

The opposite of it is what can I take – that is a very harmful ‘fellow’. What you all are learning in this campus is what can I give. If you give, you get all the happiness, if you give you get all the enthusiasm, and if you give you get all the prosperity. If you follow the opposite (of that), you become Satan.

OK friends, repeat with me: “An ignited mind of youths is the most powerful resource on the earth, above the earth and under the earth.”

May God bless you all.