

# SHRI MANIPRABH SAGARJI

In Barmer district of Rajasthan, there is a village called Mokalsar, which is inhabited by wealthy businessmen. On 12th March, 1960, Shri Paras Malji Lunkad and Rohini Devi were blessed with a son. Shri Paras Malji Lunkad - a highly respected social leader was a leading businessman, whose joy seemed no bound to have a son as his first child. The newborn son was named Meethalal. Everyone was looking forward to greater happiness in the family in times to come, but was destined to be otherwise. When Meethalal was an innocent toddler of only 4 years, cruel death snatched away Shri Paras Malji from their lives.



Orphaned by the untimely and sudden death of his father, Meethalal used to remain immersed in his own thoughts oblivious of his surroundings. But overcoming her grief and taking control of their lives, his mother Rohini Devi sent him to school for education. His intelligence, inquisitiveness and humble nature were revelation to his teachers and school-mates alike. By 13th Year, he had passed 9th standard and everyone in the family was looking forward and were confident about his higher studies and successful initiation in business.

In November 1972, his mother had gone to Nakodaji to participate in the Updhaan Tap held under the guidance of renowned Jain saint, Acharya Shri Jin Kanti Sagar Suri ji. Meethalal and his sister Vimla Kumari went to Nakodaji to meet their mother during Deepawali vacation and for the first time saw Acharya Shri Jin Kanti Sagar Suri ji there. The first glimpse of Acharya Shri Jin Kanti Sagar Suri ji had electrifying effect on brother sister duo.

During his interaction with him, he raised many queries and very satisfactory replies thereto made Meethalal determined to renounce this world and pursue the religio-philosophical questions for their answers and dedicated life for propagating the gospel teachings of Jain Teerthankars. He sought his mother's permission for initiation as Sadhu. But his mother and younger sister had already decided to renounce the world. All three of them – mother Rohini Devi, Meethalal and sister Vimla Kumari were initiated as Sadhu and Sadhvis by Acharya Shri Jin Kanti Sagar Suri ji at Palitana Teertha on 23rd. June, 1973 ( Asadh Krishna Saptami, S.V. 2030) and named as ' Sadhvi Ratnamala Sreeji, Sadhu Manibrabh Sagarji and Sadhvi Vidyut Prabha Sreeji respectively.

Thereafter under the watchful eyes of his Guru, Shri Manibrabh ji started the studies of Jain scriptures, canons, Grammar, Astrology etc. His sharp intelligence, inquisitiveness and dedicated concentration to learn resulted in his mastering the same within a short span of time. He would remain constantly at the back and call of his Gurudev and carry out his orders wholeheartedly.

During the course of vihar from Siwana to Jiwana, Gurudev, Shri Manibrabh Sagar ji and others reached Mandawala on 3.12.1985, where around 12.00 noon, Gurudev felt uneasiness and had fever. He had premonition of his death and called for Shri Manibrabh Sagarji. Giving him necessary advice and direction to take charge of the Sangh after his death, Gurudev declared him his heir apparent. Suddenly, at 9.16 A.M. on 4.12.1985, Gurudev breathed his last. On 5<sup>th</sup>. December, 1985, Gurudev's body was consigned to flames amidst thousands of his devotees and followers.

After lighting of pyres, people present there saw a miracle, when Gurudev's right hand in Ashirwad Mudra swayed in the atmosphere for around half an hour and this spectacular magical scene was recorded on tapes by photographers. Then and there, Shri Manibrabh Sagarji announced formation of 'Shri Jin Kantisagar Suri Smarak Trust' and declared that an unique temple, first of its kind in the world shall be constructed at Mandawala to perpetuate the memory of Gurudev. That commitment bore fruit, when on 30th January 1999 'Anjan Shalaka and Pratistha' of JAHAJ MANDIR was held at Mandawala. JAHAJ MANDIR is first of its kind temple in world built in spotless white marble in the shape of a ship.

Shri Manibrabh Sagar ji and Sadhvi Vidyut Prabha Shreeji has been relentlessly pursuing their studies of scripture, philosophy and authoring books in spite of their heavy pre occupations in connection with Vihar, Pratistha, Shilanyas, Updhaan Tap, Diksha Samaroh etc. In recognition of his invaluable services and leadership qualities, Jain Khartargachha Sangh had conferred the 'Gani' Padvi at Padru (Rajasthan) on 25.06.1988. Since then, he has been managing the affairs of Sangh with aplomb.

He has authored many books of poems, religious hymns, Mukhtaks as well as on various other subjects. They include ' Tasma Shree Gurve Namah' – a biography of his Gurudev, Acharya Shri Jin Kanti Sagar Suriiji, ' Mani Manthan',and Jagran – a collection of his discourses, ' Mayna Sundari Raas' and ' Rishidutta Raas' , ' Chintan Chakra', ' Vandana', ' Baj Uthi Bansuri', ' Samarpan', 'Sudharas' , " Pujan Sudha', Amijharana, ' Disha Bodh', ' Nakoda Teertha ka Itihaas', and many others.

Under his able guidance and advice, many ambitious projects have been started or near completion. They include ' Kushal Vatika' – a multipurpose, multi faceted socio religious project at Barmer, Kika Bhai Trust – Kesharia Vaas at Kesharia ji near Udaipur, etc.

Jain Khartargachha Sangh in recognition of his leadership qualities, positive and constructive contribution through his various socio- religious and literary activities and having future of Samaj in mind, conferred the 'Upadhyaya Padvi' on 26.01.2001 on the occasion of Pratistha Samaroh at Champavadi, Siwana in Rajasthan.