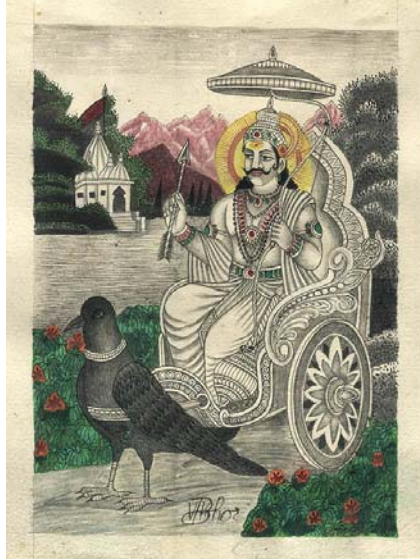


Lord Shani-Deva, His Effects, and Remedies for Sade Sathi (the seven and one half years of Saturn)



Om Ganapataye namah, Om Sarasvatyai namah, Om Durga Shivaya namah, Om Hanumate namah, Om Shanaish-charaaya namah.

Birth of Shani-Dev (Saturn)

Suryadeva was married to Samjna (she was the daughter of Vishvakarma - the architect of the universe). Samjna lived with her husband for many years, during which time she gave birth to the first three of her children: Vaivasvata Manu, Lord Yamaraja (the lord of death) and Yami. When Suryadeva's intense heat became unbearable for her she created a substitute wife, in her exact form, by awakening her own shadow (Chaya). She then proceeded to her father's house where she told him that she couldn't bear the heat of her husband. Her father requested her to go back to her husband, but she didn't instead she decided to go the Earth and changed her form into a mare and began performing severe penance, subsisting on dry grass alone, so that she might come to withstand her husband's effulgence. In the meanwhile Chaya, who was Samjna shadow

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brought to life, bore with Suryadeva three children Savarni (the next Manu after Vaivasvata Manu), Tapati (who became a river in India) and Saturn.

“Saturn is the son of the Sun (Suryadeva) and his wife’s shadow Chaya. As soon as Saturn was born, his gaze fell on his father and caused vitiligo (an acquired skin disease characterized by patches of unpigmented skin); his gaze next fell on the Sun’s charioteer; who fell and broke his thigh; and when that gaze lit upon the seven horses of the sun’s chariot they all went stone blind. The Sun tried a number of remedies to remove these infirmities but nothing worked. It was only when Saturn’s gaze left them that the Sun’s skin cleared, his charioteer’s femur healed, and the horses regained their sight.” “Although Saturn became a planet after performing penance in Benares and propitiating Lord Shiva, he did not even spare his benefactor. When Lord Shiva’s son Lord Ganesha was born, his mother Parvati wanted to show the boy to Shani deva. Saturn politely advised her not to do so, but when she insisted, he gazed at the child with only one eye. Instantly Lord Ganesha’s head was reduced to ashes. To prevent Parvati in her anger from destroying the world, Lord Vishnu flew north on His eagle Garuda and, finding a bull elephant exhausted from intercourse with this mate, cut off his head, returned with it, and joined it successfully to Lord Ganesha’s body.

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Importance of Shani-Dev (Saturn)

The Shani Mahatmya declares, “Saturn, who rules both longevity and prosperity, can make a king a pauper and vice versa. When Saturn is happy he causes good fortune to sweep through your life, and when angry he destroys everything. As long as you are unable to control your own nature, you are at Saturn’s mercy. If you can completely conquer what comes naturally to you Saturn can have no effect on you. But it’s not so easy to control your nature, and as long as it not perfectly controlled you will always be subjected to Saturn and his effects.”

Saturn often represents the worst that your Karmas (actions) have in store for you.

The most important thing Saturn teaches you endurance and humility.

When one is affected by Saturn one can expect the following symptoms: Pain (especially of the bones, muscles, ligaments and joints), timidity, anxiety, fear, bad dreams, poverty, instability, shame, delays, humiliation, inhibitions, loneliness, isolation, depression, mental or physical rigidity, disappointments, resignations, melancholy, lack of trust, suspicion, doubt and above all lots and lots of obstacles.

“The ultimate Tantric viewpoint in Indian astrology is to please Saturn, because of all the planets Saturn is the greatest.”

Saturn major periods are not necessarily damaging throughout, and Saturn transits can cause rises in status as well as problems.

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The most feared transit of Saturn is called "Sade Sati" or the seven and one half years of Saturn, which can destroy and reconfigure ones lives most dramatically. Our destiny is the sum of our past actions, and the Nine Planets see to it that we reap, without fail, what we sow, for they are the executive officers of the Law Of Karma, which is the Action and Reaction. Each planet acts on us according to their own unique job description.

How to Appease Shani-Dev (Saturn) and Remedies for Sade Sathi

In the eighth chapter of the Shani Mahatmya (the Greatness of Saturn), this story of "King Vikramaditya" is narrated. This story should be read every Saturday to appease Lord Saturn (Shani) who is the most important planet of all.

Story of "King Vikramaditya" in Shani Mahatmya

**NEELANJANAM SAMABHASAM RAVIPUTRAM YAMAGRAJAM
CHHAYAMARTANDASAMBHOOTAM TAM NAMAMI SHANAISHCHARAM**


I bow down to greet Shanaishchara, one who is slow in motion (Shaniah = slow, charah = move) (Saturn), the elder brother of Yama (the God of Death) and who is born from (who is the son of) Martanda (the Sun) and Chhaya and who is the son of Ravi (the Sun) . His complexion is blackish, like that of black eye ointment (used as an eye liner, made out of black soot mixed with clarified butter).


OM! First we pray to Gananayaka-Ekadanta-Varadayaka-Vinayaka and ask Him to bless us. **(1)** Then we will ask for the blessings from the goddess of speech, Saraswati who rides the swans and also has Veena in her other hand. **(2)** We also seek blessings from our Guru. We also pray to

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Panduranga. With the blessings of God, now I try to translate into English (line by line) about the importance of all the nine planets (Navagraha), which was first written in Gujarathi and then translated into Marathi in many verses long back. After listening to this narration with due concentration, all the obstacles in your path will be removed. (5)


Vikramaditya once ruled the city of Ujjayini. He was intellectual philanthropist and righteous and was ever anxious to relieve his subjects' miseries. He treated his citizens as his own children, and they in turn regarded him as their own father. Once, there were many learned and wise men in his court who had mastered the scriptures. King Vikramaditya started the discussion regarding which planet is superior among the group of the nine planets. (8)


 So all the learned men opened their books and scriptures and came forward to take part in the discussion by telling the audience about their favorite planet. (10) The first wise man started with the planet Sun. He said, 'The Sun is very important and the chief deity as all the rest of the planets move according to his command. He is called Suryanarayan as Sun god. Sun gives life to all the creatures. Sun is the brightest planet and the person who worships Sun gets every thing in life. One can get rid of pain due to illness and poverty just by thinking about Sun and those who worship Sun get all the desires fulfilled. Though all the nine planets are powerful, Sun has great strength and, we can actually see that with our own eyes.' (16)


 Then the second wise man stood in the front of the assembly and said, 'Moon is the best planet. Moon is a gardener and owns all the plants and trees. He gives the light at night like nectar to all the plants and trees and nourishes them to grow. He is the king of the night with huge body. He has sixteen phases. He is so cool and that's why Lord Shiva keeps the Moon on his forehead to soothe him. That's why he is the greatest of all.'

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Moon does not trouble any body and gives pleasure to all. Moon's mind is clear. So it is nice to worship Moon.' (20)

 Then the third wise man stood and said to the King, 'Mars is a goldsmith and is very powerful and very cruel. We do not know about his cruelty, which is like edge of a sword, and we don't know how it will swing. But, Mars will bless his worshipers and will be always happy with them and fulfill all the desires of their lives. And, those who do not worship him due to their pride will face the wrath of Mars. They will loose all the wealth and their descendants and ultimately ruin their lives.' (25)

 After this the fourth wise man started to say, 'Mercury is very powerful. Of all the planets Mercury has amazing valor. He is a merchant and is on the apex among the Nine-planets. If Mercury is pleased he will make you rich and make all the ways easy and all the projects without any shortcomings. Mercury is very wise. Remember that this is how he gives great favors. Mercury is wise and not cruel, who removes the worldly worries of everybody all the times.' (30)

 Then the fifth wise man said, 'Jupiter has amazing power. Jupiter is the first in the rank of gods including Indradev. Extent of Jupiter's knowledge is beyond comprehension. He is full of mercy to his devotees. He removes earthly pangs and crushes the bad results of your good and bad deeds. Just by looking at him, you will get rid of all the sorrows, pain and poverty. Jupiter is most desirable among the nine planets. Jupiter is Brahmin, the highest cast. All the gods respect him and listen to him. You don't have to look after other planets, if you serve Jupiter. If you worship Jupiter, all the other planets will be pleased. Even the Lord Shiva prays to Jupiter. This is how Jupiter is the first in the rank.' (37)


 Then the sixth wise man said, 'Venus is a very good planet. Venus is known as Shukra in Sanskrit. Shukra favored demons by using

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the Sanjivani Mantra for rejuvenating demons after their death. Shukra is also demons' Guru, spiritual master. All the three universes are under his command. So, he has boundless power. That's why he is the greatest of all. Shukra will destroy all the deeds, good or bad. Just by chanting his name all the obstacles are vanished. Those who worship Shukra, their courage become limitless. Shukra's body is bright and shining and he is one-eyed. Just by remembering his name, you can get rid of all the pains, illness and poverty. His greatness is described in the scriptures. So, he is the greatest of all the nine planets.' (43)

After listening about these six planets, the King Vikramaditya nodded his head and said, 'you did very excellent job to describe the greatness about the planets so we should all remember these planets all the time. And now, let us know if any other planets are left. And if so, let us know more about them as well.' (45)

Then some of the men said, '☾Rahu and ☾Ketu are two other planets. Both are very peculiar. They both come from the dynasty of demons and belong to Matang cast or tribe. Both of them are very cruel. The Moon and the Sun are scared and shudder just by looking at them. (47) Rahu troubles Chandra, the Moon. And Ketu troubles Surya, the Sun. We call this and see as an eclipse. They also trouble all humans as well as other creatures. But, after worshiping them the troubles are minimized. Oh King, both of them trouble all of us as per their nature just as both of them look alike. However, they are pleased with the worship so we should always worship them.' (51)

 Then the ninth wise man said, 'Shanidev, Saturn is the greatest of all and he has the most amazing strength. We do not know his style. (52) The person gets easy ways after getting Shanidev's blessings. And a person will have all the problems when Shanidev gets angry. That person's life is ruined for an endless period. Shanidev gets angry very quickly. He is

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undefeated in any battle whether the battle is with the gods or demons. He is the cause of all pains. But the wise and learned people respect Shanidev and worship him and thus, get the blessings from Shanidev. Shanidev is an oilman and his body is black. He walks lamely but he is handsome. He worships God of Time (Kalbhairav). (57) He crushes anybody merely by his looks or sometimes, he blesses and gives all the pleasures too.

Now listen the story about his wonderful eyesight. When Shanidev was born he looked at his father, the Sun god with his charioteer and horses. As soon as he looked at them, Sun god got inflected with terrible skin disease, the charioteer turned lame and the horses became blind. They all tried every other remedy but, without any success. When Shanidev looked at them again, Sun god with his charioteer and horses became normal and healthy. When King Vikramaditya listened to this talk, he laughed and said, 'It is useless to give birth to this kind of a son. This son is just like an enemy. Oh wise men, let me know, if this kind of son damages so much at just after the birth, how much more damage he might do later on. King Vikramaditya said this very loudly while clapping his hands in mockery. As King Vikramaditya finished saying, a very strange thing happened. Please listen vary carefully what happened next.

That time, Shanidev was flying in that vicinity in his plane and he heard what the King said. Immediately Shanidev descended his airplane down and came to the King's court. Then all the wise men saw Shanidev in his airplane and said that Shainidev was there. So, the King immediately stood up and bowed down at Shanidev's feet. But, Shanidev pushed him aside and said, 'You are an arrogant King and amazingly good in sarcasms and taunting. Now I will show you the wonder that you will never forget. **Because you talk too much sarcastically, I, the Saturn will move in the place of Virgo of your horoscope. Then you will see the amazing results of your (bad) luck.'**

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After saying this, Shanidev embarked in his plane. So King begged for the mercy and asked for forgiveness. But Shanidev refused and insisted that he would definitely show the bad results and swiftly flew away.

So the King was sad and started to think and said to the wise men that he made fun of Shanidev and hurt his feelings unnecessarily.

'Now, Shanidev will definitely trouble me. So, what shall I do? Is there any way? **However, whatever is going to happen will happen. But that's the way we think and act.'**

So the king became sadder about his fate. And then he adjourned the meeting of the wise men and went for retreat in his bedroom. Then one month passed and Shanidev moved to the twelfth house of his horoscope. This is supposed to be the worst and cruel situation that could happen in any body's horoscope.

Then the wise men said that King should worship Shanidev, as Shanidev would definitely rule over his horoscope for next seven and half years. Since the King made fun of Shani, Shani would trouble him as he could trouble all the three universes. The wise men then showed the method as how one could worship Shanidev. They said, 'Listen to this method very attentively. First take a shower with medicinal herbs. Then, take an iron shoe of a horse and make an idol of that iron shoe. Then install that idol in an earthen pot. By pouring mixture of oil and water on the idol, start worship. Then chant Shanidev's name for twenty three thousand times. After that, give gifts to the Brahmins as if they are Shanidev. When the Brahmins will be happy think, that Shanidev is happy. Then the King said, 'But, Shanidev would not be pleased with me. So let it happen what is going to happen.' Then he told the wise men to leave and go home. **(76)**

After few days, sometime in the afternoon, Shanidev came to Ujjayani as a horse trader. He had customers as well. King Vikramaditya also came there and inquired about the horse prices. Then Shanidev said, 'Try this horse for riding. Then you will know what the real worth of this

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horse is.' Then he brought a nice horse with a rider on the horse. The horse rider moved the horse in circles. The horse had a very good speed. Then he brought another beautiful horse. And he said, 'This horse is worth million rupees.' He immediately brought this horse in front of the King and asked him to ride the horse. The King mounted on the horse and used his whip. That made the horse to run at the speed of a wind. To calm down the horse the King whipped him again. But the horse started to run faster and faster as if the horse was flying. Soon, the horse took the king far away on other side of a river in a far away forest. When the horse stopped the king came down and noticed with surprise that the horse disappeared and also the river and the forest disappeared. He thought nobody knows how God acts so why should he bother about the horse or the river. Soon there was sunset while he kept on thinking what to do next. After that it was dark due to night and he could not see any path in the forest so, he just laid down to sleep. As the Sun rose in the morning, he walked slowly about eight miles (four Kosas) towards a city called Tamlinda. (106)

Now let us see what happened in the city of Ujjaini. Eight hours passed and still the King did not return, so all the citizens of Ujjaini waited and waited for the King. So Shanidev, disguised as a horse trader asked the Prime Minister either to pay the price of the horse or return the horse. So, the Prime Minister paid the full price of the horse. Then Shanidev, as the horse trader, went away. But the Prime Minister became very sad and he started to search for the King. All the citizens participated in the search all over the country. (114)

Now, let us see the condition of King Vikramaditya. As he entered the city called Tamlinda, he met a very rich merchant who was running a shop. His sale was always double. After seeing the King, the merchant thought about him as a very fine gentleman. So, the merchant welcomed the King with some calculated schemes. He asked the king to refresh himself by taking shower etc. And then, he inquired about him as a formality. So the king replied that he is a Kshatriya and came from a foreign land as he was

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in transit. So the merchant ordered nice meals of six flavors (six course meal) for the king. Then he told the king to have dinner with him, and stay for the night and then leave in the morning. (118)

After the dinner the merchant asked for more details about the king very frankly as he had some other intentions about the king.

It so happened that the merchant had a daughter of a marriageable age. Her name was Alolika. She could not find a suitable match for herself, nor could the merchant find one for her. So the merchant had an idea that this Kshatriya would be a good match for Alolika. So he said to Alolika, 'I found a very good match for you. Please marry him without any hesitation.'

But Alolika said, 'Let me talk to him and then I can judge from the way he talks whether this kshtriya is good match for me. You might have seen many good qualities in him, but still, let me judge him.' So she asked her father to send the kshatriya to the guest room, which was a studio for a painter.

Then soon there was sunset and the king went to the guest room, which was a studio for a painter. When the king reached there, he saw that there were many good paintings of the birds such as swans, peacocks etc, also, he saw the paintings of animals such as horses and elephants. The paintings were so realistic that one could feel that the birds and the animals were alive. He sat on the bed, which was decorated with jewels and beautiful colors and flowers. He also noticed that there were many lamps in every corner. On seeing this he was astonished and kept on marveling about the customs of that place. Then he thought about what to do and decided to face the next moments as they come. He also thought that, he would face whatever would happen next, as Shanidev who bothers all, must have planned this. With these thoughts, the King went to sleep, but, his mind was still alert. He had many different thoughts and so he could not sleep. As he could not get the sleep, he covered his head.

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Afterward, the daughter of the merchant entered in the hall where the king was sleeping. She brought with her all the paraphernalia as per the custom of the time such as five oil lamps in a plate with flowers etc. to greet the king. She did beautiful make up and wore pearl necklaces and used very aromatic perfumes. She also wore anklets, which were making a very pleasant sound. She had also diamond ornaments on her hands, which were shining very brightly. She was looking like a beautiful statue. And, she stood in front of the King. But, the King pretended to be fast asleep. As the King could not be awoken, Alolika, the daughter, thought for a while and sprinkled some water from a sandal wood jug. Even then the King did not wake up. Thus, about two hours passed. Alolika got tired and took off her pearl necklace and hung on the peg (hook) that was on the near by wall. And, she slept in a somewhat worried condition.

Then King uncovered his head and started to think, 'I am such a pious person and keen on being philanthropist and day and night I am afraid that I might commit any little bit of immoral doings. As such, I should treat this girl like a daughter and talk to her in that respect.'

Then he looked around and saw the paintings. And, as if it would be a miracle, the swan from one of the paintings came to life. The swan came down from the painting and approached near the pearl necklace that was hung on the peg (hook). Then he started to swallow the pearls necklace. The King was astonished to see this and thought that it would be wrong to snatch the pearl necklace from the swan's mouth as it would hurt the swan and it would be against his principle of not hurting any living being. So he let the swan swallow the entire necklace. Then he slept next to Alolika.

Then next morning Alolika woke up and thought 'This person is the greatest fool of all and not only that he does not have manliness.' She was very angry when she thought this way. She started to leave the room and looked for her necklace on the peg. But, she did not see the necklace there. So she asked the guest, the King Vikramaditya about the necklace and

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accused him that just like a seasoned great thief he stole the necklace foolishly without thinking. Then she ordered him to return the necklace immediately, as he would not get away with this theft. She also told him that after returning the necklace he should just get out, the way he came there. She also said that every one would discuss this incident and he would face defamation. (160)

So the King said that he did not take the necklace, and just because he slept there he was being accused.

So, Alolika became very angry and immediately told her father that the perfect match, he brought home was only a professional thief who stole her necklace. Then she told her father to get the necklace from the guest. (164)

Then, the merchant said to the guest, 'I gave you a (nice) place to rest, gave you nice dinner and on top of that I was about to offer you to marry my daughter. But, in spite of this you stole her necklace. How foolishly you behaved! And that's the way you are returning my favors! So, return the necklace immediately and go away back to where you came from.' (167)

The King said to the merchant that he did not take the necklace and as a result of his fate he was in trouble. On hearing this, the merchant got angrier and he ordered his servants to tie him as a thief and beat him mercilessly, otherwise the necklace would not be retrieved.

The servants did as ordered and beat the king mercilessly. The merchant kept on saying, 'Beat him! Beat him! Return the necklace immediately!' After getting so much beating, the King got fatigued and said to the merchant, 'I do not have the necklace. You are beating me unnecessarily.'

Then the merchant thought that this guest was a real seasoned (experienced) thief and he would not give the necklace. So being a very

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practical person he went to the court of King Chandrasen of Tamblinda city and told him every thing. Then King Chandrasen ordered to bring the thief in the court. So, a group of his servants rushed to tie and bring Vikramaditya in front of King Chandrasen. Vikramaditya bowed down to King Chandrasen and stood in front of him. Then the King said to Vikramaditya to return the necklace to the merchant to save his life. (179)

Then Vikramaditya said, 'I never spoke lies. I did not take the necklace. Unnecessarily you are all thinking of what really has not happened. The position of planets in my horoscope was not favorable to me. That gave me trouble, so what is the point of thinking about what happened. Whatever has to happen, happened. One should not rob. But, he should be forgiven. So, please have mercy!'

After listening to this, King Chandrasen was very furious and looked red like a red hot coal in the fire, and, said in roaring sound to the servants, 'Cut off his hands and feet and throw him out of the city and leave him without food and water.' It was Shanidev who spoke through King Chandrasen and hence Chandrasen was not thinking properly. (187)

Immediately the servants got ready and took King Vikramditya out of the city and cut off his hands and feet mercilessly. So, all the citizens wept for this disaster. Then the servants went to King Chandrasen. King Chandrasen said, 'There is no point to think whether he survived or died after cutting off the limbs, because he will surly die.' (191)

Now King Vikramditya was in great agony day and night due to severe body pain, hunger and thirst. He was twitching like a fish without water. Some people, who used to pass by, saw him and felt sorry for him. But, they were helpless, due to the fear that it would make King Chandrasen unhappy if they disobeyed the order of not to give food or water to Vikramaditya.

Vikramaditya also was weeping and was begging for mercy from Shanidev. So Shanidev became merciful and compassionate and thought

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that King Vikramditya is now pushed to the limit of agony. So he turned King Chandrasen merciful and so, King Chandrasen ordered, 'It is OK to give food and water to the limbless thief.' (200)

Then King Vikramditya got plenty of food and water. But being limbless he had great pain all the time and used to scream day and night due to agony. In this way two years passed! During this time he suffered from endless pain for every moment.

Now, it so happened that later on one day, one oilman's wife was going to her in-laws' place. In those days travel for some people was done by carrying the traveler by four strong men on a chair-lift. And she was being carried like that to her in laws' place. She was passing through the forest where Vikramaditya was lying in a limbless condition. She was originally from Ujjain and her in-laws stayed in the city of Tamblinda. (206)

Since it was on her way she saw King Vikramditya. She wondered why the king was there. So she got down and went close to the king and thought that without the limbs, the king must be in a horrible situation. Then King Vikramditya saw her and said, 'May you and your husband live for a very long time! And let me know any news from back home in detail.' Then she said, 'Everybody is OK and doing well back home. But, how did it happen to you to be in this condition.'

Then the King replied, 'This is the result of my fate. The position of the planets in my horoscope was not favorable. So the God put me in this condition.' Then he narrated the whole history about his condition.

So the lady said, 'So, that is the luck you have!' Then she told the other men (who carried her) to carry the King on the chair-lift and brought him to her in-law's house with great respect. When the oilman, her father-in-law, saw the limbless king, he was very frightened. The oilman thought that King Chandrasen would be angry if he knew that he was supporting this limbless person, being punished by the King. But his daughter-in-law said that this limbless person was indeed King Vikramditya of Ujjaini and it

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was their fortune that they could bring him to their home, she further said, that the King was like a jewel thrown in the hip of garbage!

So the oilman went to see King Chandrasen and told him that he wished to bring the condemned thief as he felt compassion for the limbless thief. The King allowed the oilman to bring the limbless thief home. (219)

Then Vikramaditya told him, 'Please do not disclose to anybody that I am Vikramditya, the king of Ujjaini.' So the oilman said, 'This is fine with me. You will stay here and I will provide you with food and clothes etc. and you help me to operate the grinder to extract oil from the peanuts and other nuts.'

Then King Vikramaditya said to him, 'You have done this favor to me very wisely and saved me from the disaster and I am really grateful to you.' With this kind of an arrangement (of hardship) the king stayed with the oilman for next seven years. (225)

One evening, King Vikramditya somehow started to sing while he was operating the grinder. The musical composition of Raga Deep is mostly sung or played in the evening by the artists. So the king was singing Raga Deep with extreme precision in the most melodious voice. It is said that if Raga Deep is sung with intense accuracy in the most melodious voice, the oil lamps are lit automatically! As such was the situation, thousands of oil lamps were lit automatically as soon as the King started singing. The whole city was illuminated as if the festival of Depavali started.

That time, princess Padmasena was sitting happily in her one pillared palace. When she saw the bright light outside, she called her maids and asked them, 'I am really surprised. There is no wedding ceremony nor it is the time for the festival of lights, so please find out quickly who is having the festival of lights?' (231)

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By this time, the King finished the musical composition of Raga Deep. Soon after that, the lights were turned off. But, then he started to sing the musical composition of Raga Shree. So Padmasena said to her maids, 'It is certain now that this singer is not an ordinary singer. He must be an expert in music. So, please find out where he lives and better yet, just bring him over here.'

So the four maids went to search the whereabouts of the singer and found him operating the grinder at the oilman's place. So they told Padmasena about the singer accordingly. They also told her that the singer looked like a clown, being a limbless person. But Padmasena insisted that they bring that singer to her palace so she could even marry him, even if her father, king Chandrasen, convicted him as a thief. Afterwards the maids agreed to bring the singer if she would take the responsibility to face her father, king Chandrasen. So, Padmasena assured them that she would tell her father everything.

Thereupon, the maids brought the singer, the thief, Vikramditya to her palace. Padmasena said to Vikramditya, 'Please continue your singing as I am very much eager to listen to the music.' So the king started to sing like an expert in a very melodious voice in the princess' palace. King Chandrasen could hear this singing in his palace. So he asked the maids. 'What is going on in the princess' palace as if there is festivity going on for day and night?' So the maids replied with a request, 'please go to the palace of the princess and see it for yourself!' But as the king was very sleepy then, he postponed visiting his daughter, the princess Padmasena.

(250)

King Vikramditya was sitting in the princess' palace with too many worries. Shanidev's curse for seven and half years was about to subside. So he was thinking when Shainidev would be pleased with him so he would return back to city of Ujjaini. While he was thinking in this way, Shanidev appeared happily in front of him. Shanidev said to him, 'It looks like you

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have not recognized me due to ignorance. Did you not experience enough of my wrath?’

So, the King tried to stand up, but being limbless, he laid down on the ground in a gesture of bowing down to Shanidev.

Then Shanidev said, 'I am pleased with you, King Vikramaditya ! So, ask for any blessing from me and I will fulfill your wish.'

So the King said, 'I only wish that you will have mercy and not give any more trouble to the mankind. I have suffered a lot but rest of the people cannot bear suffering the way I suffered. That's the only thing I am asking as a boon from you, Shanidev!

So, Shanidev restored his limbs and turned his body beautiful. Then the King bowed down to Shanidev and said again, 'You will have mercy and not give any more trouble to the mankind.' (262)

So Shanidev said, 'I may have troubled you a lot, but you should see how much more trouble I caused to Gurudev. As compared to Gurudev's trouble, your trouble will look insignificant. Listen also to the stories about how I troubled gods and the demons.'

One morning, I bowed down to Gurudev. Then I requested to him with my folded hands, 'Please accept me in your zodiac sign for next seven and half years.' So, Gurudev said, 'Please do not come into my zodiac sign at all.' Then I told him, 'You do not like me, and you want to avoid me. In fact, no body wants me! So please let me be with you for at least five years, or (perhaps) for at least two and half years' But Gurudev still refused me. So, I told him boldly, 'One should respect Gurudev and not trouble him, since Gurudev protects like a mother! Those who do not respect Gurudev will surely go to abyss (To the bottom). (271)

So, I bowed down to Gurudev and requested him, 'Ask me anything as I am pleased with you!' So Gurudev said to me again, 'I am asking you not to bother me!' So I was pleased with him and said, 'I will be in your

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zodiac sign for only fifteen hours (seven and half 'Prahars') and you cannot refuse me now!' So finely, Gurudev agreed that Shanidev could be in his zodiac sign for two and half hours. Gurudev thought and **boasted** that he would spend this period of two and half hours just by taking bath in the river and then praying the gods(This prayer is called "Sandhya" by The Marathi poet *Tatyaji Mahapati*) so Shanidev would be helpless and there would be no harm to him!

Then Shanidev knew what Gurudev was thinking. So Shanidev decided to show his miraculous power. As it was the right time, for Shani, Guru became eager to take a bath in the river Ganga. Guru was then under the shadow of Shani and Guru's appearance changed. Shanidev appeared as a monk and offered Guru two cantaloupe fruits.

Gurudev gladly accepted those two cantaloupe fruits, put them in his bag and gave the monk **two coins** in return. And, Gurudev kept on going forward towards a city.

It so happened that day, the prince and the minister's son of that city had gone for hunting and did not return home for lunch. More than two hours passed and still there was no trace of the prince and the minister's son. So, King Bhrgu sent his servants to search for them beyond the borders of the city. The servants saw Guru in the Brahmin's dress with the bag containing two cantaloupe fruits.

That time Shanidev turned those fruits into two human heads. The king's servants saw Guru, the Brahmin and asked him, 'What do you have in your bag?' So the Brahmin (Guru) said, 'I have two fruits that I will eat them later.' The servants said, 'But, there is blood dripping from your bag. So, we don't care whether you are a Brahmin or a low caste person. Show us immediately what is in your bag.' **(288)**

As soon as Guru saw that indeed there was blood on his bag, he was scared. The servants snatched the bag from the Brahmin and opened to see that there were two heads belonging to the missing prince and his

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friend. So they scolded the Brahmin, 'You do not have remorse in killing these two kids mercilessly like a cruel demon. You have committed this heinous act, unworthy for a Brahmin.'

So they shackled the Brahmin and while beating him brought in front of King Bhrgu. When King Bhrgu heard the news about his son, he fainted and said, 'Oh God! I lost my only son. This Brahmin who killed my son is like a death messenger. So he must be punished by the death penalty and must be executed by hanging him on the sharp pointed iron pillar out side the city limits immediately.'

There was lot of commotion when the news about the prince's death spread in the palace of King Bhrgu; the prince's wife decided to leap into fire out of grief as per the custom of those days. And she was prepared to do this self-immolation (*sati*, an act of self-sacrifice to burn in the pyre).

Mean while the servants took the Brahmin to the sharp pointed iron pillar for the execution. The Brahmin became restless and could not think any thing but his bad luck. He requested the servants, 'Please wait a while for the execution. I will give you ten thousand rupees if, you wait for couple of hours.' The servants felt compassion when they heard the Brahmin's plea and decided to wait for couple of hours. By this time the limit of two and half hours set by Shanidev was over. The prince and his companion came riding the horse where the execution was about to take place. They knew what might have happened so they ordered the servants not to execute the Brahmin and bring him back to the king. (304)

The Brahmin blessed the king and explained him everything (about the events). The king felt sorry and said, 'I would have committed a great crime by giving your execution order without knowing the full details. I would be the greatest sinner due to the **ignorance and the ego of my royal power (Rajmad)**. So please forgive me.' And he started to cry.

Then he honored Gurudev by giving him and other Brahmins feast with gifts of clothes and ornaments. So Guru said that this happened due

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to the curse of Shanidev. Then he opened his bag and indeed there were two cantaloupes.

Then Shanidev came near Gurudev and asked him how it went so far. So Guru replied, 'In just two and half hours, you have ruined me. I cannot imagine what would have happened if you had full seven and half years to ruin me! Though I am the highest-ranking planet, you have indeed obliged me. In fact, you are the greatest planet. However, whatever happened happened for good! So please do not trouble any body any more.'

So Shani said, '**One should not brag and blow his own horns. I will trouble the person who brags about himself.** Gurudev, **you boasted** and so I had to act like this. Please forgive me for my act.' (320)

Then Shani went to see Lord Shiva. Lord Shiva said to Shani, 'What is the purpose of your visit? First take my appointment and then only visit me.' While they were discussing like this, Shani suggested that he would visit Shiva on the following day. After listening this, Shiva was hiding in the Kailas Mountain for some time. Then he asked Shani, 'What did I do to you so you want to trouble me?' So, Shani said, 'Oh Lord Shiva, all the three universes are scared of you. And you are hiding from me out of fear. This is enough for me.' Then Shiva smiled and said to him, 'You are great and your brilliance is overwhelming.' Then he ordered him to leave.

Then Shani was at a critical position in Lord Shri Ram's horoscope thereby he had to live in the forest. And same thing happened in Sita's horoscope with the result that Ravana kidnapped her.

Ravan conquered all the nine planets and imprisoned them under his seat. So, sage Narada, commented me, 'You are proud to be the greatest planet. But your condition seems to be helpless. It seems that you can trouble only the weak! There is no bravery!' So, I said to Narada, 'I am helpless as Ravana had made my face down (and hence I can't see him). As soon as I can cast my eyes on Ravana, I will destroy him.'

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So Narada went to see Ravana and told him, 'It is not nice to walk on the back of the enemy. But, it is nicer to walk on the enemy's body with the face up to see your face. So, you should turn them face up.' So Ravana agreed and turned all the planets face up.' As soon as Shani could cast his eyes on Ravana, he ruined Ravana and his entire family within six months and ultimately killed him through Lord Rama.

Then Shani came to the cruelest position of the twelfth house of King Harishchandra's horoscope. And, the king lost his kingdom; he was in deep trouble, so much that he had to even sell his wife, Damayanti and sons. Not only that, he had to sell himself to a low cast person, called Dombari, an acrobat (so the acrobat could use him for acrobatic shows on the streets). Shani said, 'This is how I trouble the greatest of the kings!'

Indradev was under the spell of Shanidev. So he could not think properly and had an affair with the wife of Gautam rishi. As a result, Indradev got holes in his body.

When Shani was in Chandra's house, Chandra got blemishes after touching his Guru's wife with bad intention. (329)

When Shani was in the bad position of the horoscope that belonged to sage Vashishta, He lost his hundred sons! He also troubled Shara who under Shani's spell had an affair with a fisherwoman!

Due to Shani's spell, Pandavas lost every thing and had to live in the forest. Under Shani's spell, Kauravas lost every thing in just a moment. Same thing happened with Lord Krishna, and He was accused of stealing the Samyantak Jewel. You can read more about this incidence in the book, "Harivijay".

Then Lord Krishna Said, 'You are the greatest planet. All the gods and demons are scared of you.'

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Shani said to King Vikrama, 'This is how I troubled gods and demons. I troubled you just a little bit to demonstrate my extraordinary power.'

Then the king got up immediately and bowed down to Shanidev and said, 'I am surrendering to you for your mercy and please favor me by giving me the boon, that you will not trouble any body.'

So, Shani said to Vikram, 'You are also great, and you think of the pains of the other men and women. There is no parallel to your thoughts.' And, he was pleased with Vikramaditya.

He gave this boon to Vikramaditya, 'I will never trouble those who will read or listen or preserve this story. I will be pleased with them and will protect them day and night. I will bring wrath to those who will not read this story or ridicule this story. (350)

One should read this Shanimahtmya every day or at least every Saturday without eating any thing in a happy mood. If you cannot do this, you should at least listen to this story day and night. This will make me happy and I will not trouble them.'

Shanidev further said to Vikram, 'Such person will also have good fortune. And this is my promise to you.' Shanidev went to his abode after blessing the King.

When Shanidev met with King Vikramaditya in the princess Padmasena's palace, King Vikramditya's body became very radiant as if the Sun was shining! King Chandrasen was very stunned and speechless when he saw King Vikramaditya, because he was looking like a beautiful statue of Madan (Madan is a very handsome god of love according to Hindu scriptures similar to Cupid or Eros, the handsome god of love from the Greek mythology). Then Padmasena married to King Vikramaditya.

At this time, King Chandrasen asked King Vikramaditya, 'Sir, who are you?' Vikram said, 'I am your thief. So first of all, please call the merchant,

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Shripati.’ So the group of servants rushed to bring the merchant, Shripati who was resting on a bed. The servants said to him,’ The King has summoned you to his court. So please hurry.’

So, the merchant rushed to the King’s court and bowed down before the King. When the King asked the merchant, the merchant replied, pointing at King Vikramaditya, ‘This is the thief, indeed. So, please come to my house.’

When all of them reached at the artist’s studio they noticed that the lifeless swan from the picture took out the pearl necklace that was swallowed by him. Everybody was surprised to see this and said, ‘Though it is impossible, the lifeless swan, as a matter of fact, did swallow the pearl necklace. And, this great man was blamed.’

Then the merchant was very happy and gave his daughter away to Vikramaditya in marriage.

Then King Chandrasen asked Vikram, ‘From where did you come? Where is your family? Where were you born?’

Then Vikram said to Chandrasen, ‘My name is Vikram and I am the King of Ujjaini.’

When King Chandrasen heard this, he bowed down and said, ‘I have offended you very much and now please have mercy on me. Had I known this earlier, you would not have suffered. How this could be undone when I have acted unknowingly?’

Vikram said, ‘This happened due to the planets’ positions in my horoscope. Also, as I did not worship Shanidev, I had to suffer. **You think and act according to the planets’ positions in the horoscope.** Now, you are talking to me in this manner because the planets are in favorable position in my horoscope.’

Then King Chandrasen spent lot of wealth from his treasures to celebrate the occasion. He also spent lot of wealth on charity and pleased

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the beggars. Then he called the oilman (who hosted King Vikramaditya). Vikram bowed down to him and pleased him by giving lot of land.

Chandrasen was smiling on his endless good fortune as he had Vikram as his son-in-law. (374)

After about a month, Vikram told Chandrasen that he would now leave for Ujjaini. Chandrasen then, bid him farewell with all the etiquettes, such as, giving him gifts of servants, elephants, horses, army, land including cities. The merchant also gave many gifts such as expensive jewels when he gave away his daughter to Vikram.

Then King Vikramaditya came to Ujjaini with all the gifts. The happy citizens decorated the whole city. Then on a very auspicious time Vikram was enthroned. That time he gave gifts to the beggars to make them happy. Then he was free of worries. Then King Vikram followed the worship for Shanidev. There were no troubles due to the blessings from Shanidev.

Reference: Tatyaji Mahapati, who wrote this story from the Gujarathi version. And Translated into English by Anand Gupte.