

Book Translated in Hindi

1. Diva Swapna (Also in English)
Naya Shikshak Teacher Today,
Bikaner-334001
2. Bal Darshan
Translated by Shri Kashinath Trivedi
3. Prathamik Shalamen Bhasha Shikshan
Grambharti Ashram, Tanwalai (M. P.)

Published & Distributed by :-

Gujarati Samaj C/o Himmat Lal Pareekh
Kote Gate, Bikaner-334001

Printed at: Sankhla Printers, Sagan Niwas, Bikaner-334001

Arvind Gupta

Listen What Children Have to Say

**An English Translation of
Gijubhai's Child's Philosophy
(Bal Darshan)**

Published by :

Gujarati Samaj
C/o Himmat Lal Pareekh
Kote Gate, Bikaner-334001



Gijubhai

Birth : 15 November, 1885

Expired : 23 June, 1939

About the Author

Children as a class is the most neglected and exploited of all social groups. They don't have any choice to choose their parentage, their social and economic environment. More so, they have no options to develop their inherent capacities and talents but to fall in line with the accepted norms laid down by parents and teachers. This handicap ought to have placed greater responsibilities on parents, teachers and society at large to offer them the best the society has. Instead children are viewed as miniature adults and are adjudged purely by adult standards. Unfortunately inspite of numerous researches and inspite of long drawn battle by the defenders of children throughout the world the lot of children is yet to change for better.

A child's world is fantastic full of boundless energy, curiosity and activity. There have been great scholars who worked tirelessly to let the children enjoy their childhood. Montessorie, Frobel and many others are well known to the west-oriented educationists of our

country. But it will be a piece of great surprise for most that during the early decades of this century there lived a doyen of educational thinkers, who lived and enjoyed a child's life, laughing, singing, playing, reading, writing and in the process enriching his own experiences by closely watching different phases of a child's development.

Gijubhai, who was born on 15th, Nov. 1885 in a remote village near Bhavnagar (Gujarat), was that man, who during alien rule designed a novel format of children's education on purely indigenous structure. Though he was contemporary of Maria Montessorie, and in a way influenced by her methodology, he developed his own system of educating children. A lawyer by profession, he was disgusted to see how badly the children were treated by their parents and teachers. So, he left his practice and became teacher. His curriculum, pedagogical theories and teaching techniques developed not out of vacuum but through lively experiences he had while teaching children in real life situations. He recorded his experiences in one of his books 'Divaswapna' written in his native tongue Gujarati. Gijubhai could

not get due recognition during his lifetime. Even after freedom, the teaching community failed him miserably. But for the hazardous and tremendous job done by Sh. Kashinath Trivedi, who translated most of his books in Hindi, Gijubhai would have remained unknown to the world inspite of his pioneering work in the field of children's education.

Gijubhai believed religiously in children's right to freedom. He discarded physical punishment, coercion from classrooms in favour of love, sympathy and deep understanding for the children. He believed learning is possible only in the environment surcharged with love and sympathy. He, like Gandhi, dreamt of a society professing the creed of love and non-violence.

To the children, Gijubhai was more than their parents. They could freely repose confidence in him and they never hesitated to open up their heart before him. He was their '*Mother with moustache*'. This was how children fondly referred to him.

Gijubhai wrote over a hundred books for children and

many more for teachers and guardians. This booklet contains some of the maxims drawn from his different works. These small but crisp sentences tell us a lot about a child, his soul and his enchanting world. This book titled '*A Child's Philosophy*' originally written in Gujarati was translated by Sh. Kashinath Trivedi. It was later on translated into English and was published in a reputed English magazine '*Resurgence*'. Here it is reproduced verbatim for the benefit of English speaking world.

It is believed that the people, who are directly or remotely concerned with children and their education will go through it thoroughly so as to acquaint themselves with the philosophy of this renowned educator.

I. N. Mutha

Sr. Editor
Teacher Today
Bikaner-334 001

Translator's Note

In India where people approach whatever they do in a spirit of devotion. For the musician, the farmer, the teacher, their work is an offering to God. Thus what more obvious way for Gijubhai to express his attitude to children than in terms of the divine—let the child be your God.

The following prose poem was originally written in Gujarati by Gijubhai who was known as the *mother with a moustache*'. Kashinath Trivedi, a former educational minister, translated it into Hindi. I bumped into him unexpectedly in Wardha, Central India.

Since it was out of print and this was his last copy, he read it aloud to me. I listened and was greatly moved. Of course, there were no photocopiers for miles so he promised to copy it out by hand and send it to me. I have translated it into English.

S. K.

1. The Child

The child is the soul of the parents.
The child is the ornament of the home.
The child is the glory of the garden.
The child is the light of the family.
The child is the smiling bud in our life.

2. The gift of a Child

Who makes you forget your sorrow ?
Who removes your tiredness ?
Who saves you from your barrenness ?
Who fills your house with giggles ?
Who makes your laughter last forever ?
It is the child.
To find god worship the child.

3. Peace

Of all god's creation the child is unique and innocent.
Let us realise the pace of a child's progress.
Those who enable a child to be free set the whole of

humanity on the path to peace.

4. Tell me

Where shall I play ?
Where shall I jump ?
To whom shall I talk ?
When I talk my mummy feels interrupted,
When I play my daddy is irritated,
When I jump I am told to sit down,
When I sing I am told to be quiet,
Tell me, where shall I go, what shall I do ?

5. Let the Child Act

The child likes to do things.
Let him wash his own hanky,
Let her fill her own cup,
Let him arrange the flowers,
Let her clean the plate,
Let him pod the peas,
Let her serve the food,

Let the child act,
And act at her own pace,
And act at his own wish.

6. The Child Knows

Whether there is nectar or poison in our eyes,
Whether our speech is sweet or bitter,
Whether our touch is soft or harsh,
Whether our mind is respectful or disdainful,
The child senses it immediately,
The child knows it all.

7. The Enemy

'Go to bed otherwise an old man will take you away.'
'Eat otherwise thieves will catch you.'
'The tiger is coming.'
'The ghost is coming.'
'The police are coming.'
'Be quiet or else I'll lock you in the room.'
'Read your book or else I'll hit you hard.'

Those who frighten the child like this are the
enemies of the child.

8. Will we understand ?

The laughter of the child is life's laughter.
The cry of the child is life's tears.
A child's smile makes the flowers bloom.
A child's cry makes the flowers droop.
Instead of letting the sweet shehanai of a
child's laughter into our homes
Why do we let the War trumpet
of a child's crying be blown ?

9. Heaven on Earth

If we give the child his due respect
we can establish heaven on this earth.
Heaven lies in the happiness of a child.
Heaven lies in the health of a child.
Heaven lies in the well being of a child.
Heaven lies in the innocent and carefree nature

of the child.
Heaven lies in the humming and singing of a child.

10. **The Great Soul**
The child's body is small but it contains a great soul.
The child's body is growing,
The child's energies are growing,
But the child's soul is complete.
We should respect this great soul.
And we should not corrupt the child with our ways.

11. **Realisation**
A child is a complete person.
A child has intellect, emotions, mind and understanding.
A child has strengths and weakness.
A child has likes and dislikes.
Let us recognise the wishes of the child.
Let us understand the emotions of the child.
A child is small and innocent.

(10)

Because of our ego we must not reject the child.
Because of our pride we must not insult the child.

12. **Self reliant**
The child will eat don't feed her.
The child will bath don't force him.
The child will walk don't push her.
The child will sing don't make him sing.
The child will play don't interfere.
The child wants to be self reliant.

13. **Will you not do even this much ?**
Instead of going to your club, take the child to a park.
Instead of gossiping, show the child some animals.
Instead of being immersed in your newspaper,
listen to the child.
When the child goes to bed delight her with stories.
Take interest in the child.

14. **At the Mercy of Servants**
That is a beautiful home where parents live in love.

(11)

That is a beautiful home where rose-like children play around.

That is a beautiful home where parents care for the children as they care for their own souls.

That is a beautiful home where children receive respect from adults.

And where children do not live at the mercy of servants.

Yes, yes that is a beautiful home.

15. For the Self

Respect the child so that we can keep our self respect

Avoid shouting at a child so that we can rid ourselves of the bad habit of shouting.

Refrain from beating a child so that we can be free from violence and misconduct.

When we have reformed ourselves the child will naturally grow in goodness.

16. Threats and Bribes

Let parents and teachers realise that by threats and

bribes you cannot teach children good conduct. They will only be ruined.

By threats you make a child rough;

By bribes you make a child covetous;

Threats and bribes make a child shameless and pitiable.

17. Home is the true School

If parents think that they can do what they like and still train children in good conduct, they are making a great mistake.

Parents and the home are the greatest and most powerful schools.

A child ruined at home cannot be saved even by God.

18. Gifts of Nature

How can the child who is removed from nature know the secrets of nature ?

The shining moonlight, the flowing river, the soil in the field, the cottage on the farm,

the stones of the hills, fresh air and the colours
of the sky are the gifts of God and
Nature to the child.
Let children taste the joys of nature
until they are totally satisfied.

19. Dynamic

The child is progressing every minute.
The child has questioning eyes.
The child's heart is expressive.
The grammar of a child is made of questions
and exclamations.
It has no full stops, not even a comma.
A child is dynamism incarnate.

20. New Age

The age of worshipping the snake has gone.
The age of worshipping ghosts has past.
The age of worshipping stone statues is no more.
Now is the age of worshipping the child.

21. Quarrels

Quarrels between parents poison the home.
They cause great difficulties for children.
For the sake of children, adults must learn to live in
harmony.
Happiness at home is the great source of education.

22. My Debt

Children have honoured me with their love.
Children have given me new life.
While teaching children I have learnt much.
While reading to children I have read much.
As a teacher I have learnt that children
are the true teachers;
This is not poetry, this is experience.

23. Living Book

Those who find knowledge by reading books
become teachers.
Those who find knowledge through children

become wise.

For the wise every child is a unique and living book.

24. The Child God

You can bluff the world

But you cannot bluff a child.

You can fool everybody

But you cannot fool a child.

You can hide things from ordinary people

But you can hide nothing from a child.

She knows all, she is everywhere,

She is all pervading.

Be a devotee of the child god.

Be single minded in your devotion.

This is the key to true success.

25. Talking is useless

Is reading, thinking, writing about a child enough?

No, we have to erect new temples

and re-establish the goddess of knowledge and

(16)

wisdom in them.

The new age of the child has begun.

Just talking is not enough,

We must do something, we must act.

26. Hard work

Working with children is difficult.

Understanding the nature of a child, cultivating deep feelings,

and reverence for a child is demanding

Trusting and loving a child is hard work,

You have to sweat for it from head to toe.

27. Remember

Dust from a lane is more precious to a child than the dust of sandalwood.

A sweet breeze is sweeter for a child than even its mother's kiss.

Soft sun rays are softer for a child than a cuddle.

(17)

28. How can I rest

As long as the child is battered at home and
abused at school

How can I rest ?

As long as children have no playgrounds,
no gardens to work, no places to learn,
no homes to grow in freedom,

How can I rest ?

As long as children are not able to receive
love and reverence

How can I rest ?

29. All children are equal

There are all kinds of children :

Invalid and blind, bright and backward

Beautiful and ugly, dark and fair.

Also there are children clever, hefty,
naughty, mischevious and cunning.

In the eyes of a true teacher all children are equal.

They are all god's children.

30. Playgrounds

Will we let our millions of children

wander about in dirty and dangerous streets ?

No, we should provide them with good homes
where they can be creatively engaged,

And we should provide them with good
playgrounds at every street corner so that they can
develop body and soul.

Playgrounds are the best, easiest and cheapets
means for the true development of a child.

31. Do or Die

At every moment I want to have a glimpse of
the great soul within the little body of the child.
This is my inspiration.

I want to live to re-establish childrens rights
And I want to die doing it.

32. Religious Education

By talking about religion or by performing rituals

Or putting on the traditional costumes,
we will not be able to make children religious.
Religion is not in books or sermons.
Religion is not in dead dogmas.
Religion is in life itself.
If teachers and parents live a religious life
children will automatically get a religious
education.

33. Look at Yourself

You are not God, why do you act like God to
children ?
You are not all Knowing, why do you laugh at
children's ignorance ?
You are not almighty, why are you annoyed
by children's helplessness.
You are not complete, why are irritated
at children's shortcomings ?
Look at yourself first and then look at the child.

**Educational Books written by Gijubhai
All in Gujarati**

1. Diva - swapna 2. Ma-Bap Thaun Aakarun Chhe
3. Ma-Bapone 4. Aa te Shi Mathaphori 5. Monte-
ssorie Paddhati 6. Wartanun Shashtra 7. Shikshak
Ho To 8. Haltan - Chaltan 9. Prathmik Shalaman
Bhasha - Shikshan 10. Prathmik Shalaman Shikshan
Paddhati 11. Navi Kelwani 12. Bal - Kridanganon
13. Prasangik Manan 14. Munjhawatun Balak
15. Swatantra Bal - Shikshan 16. Shant Palonman.

Available at

1. Shri Dakshina - Murti Parkashan Mandir,
Bhavnagar.
2. Samskar Sahitya mandir,
Post Box No. 34,
Goga Gate, Bhavnagar