PREFACE

"Vaiṣṇava-Vallabha" A commentary on Vāsudeva Mahātmyam is considered to be one of the significant work as far as Swaminārāyaṇa sect is concerned. The Vaiṣṇava-Vallabha is a Sanskrit Commentary on the very famous Vāsudeva Mahātmyam of Vaiṣṇava Khaṇḍa of the Skanda Purāṇa which contains 32 chapters having 1415 stanzas.

Since nearly about 3 commentaries are written on Vāsudeva Mahātmyam by the devoted scholars of Lord Swaminārāyaṇa, it exhibits the importance Vāsudeva Mahātmyam in Swaminārāyaṇa Sect. All these commentaries are written in Gujarat only. The Vaiṣṇava-Vallabha chronologically comes first in the three commentaries on Vāsudeva Mahātmyam hence it is very significant to study the Vaiṣṇava-Vallabha from research point of view.

Śri Swaminārāyaṇa being the rising star in modern period, with hardly two-hundred year’s past history, is the most familiar in whole Gujarat, and also for his literatures like Śiksāpatrī, Vachnāmrutam, Satsangijīvanam etc. This sect is very popular all over the world as a progressive Hindu-movement working for social consolidation and human upliftment both morally and spiritually. Apart from his authentic scriptures Vāsudeva Mahātmyam of Skandapurāṇa is also very authentic in his sect. Under the inspiration of lord Swaminārāyaṇa, Śri Dinānāth Bhatt has written this sanskrit commentary on Vāsudeva Mahātmyam.

The present work mainly gives stress upon the subject matter of Vāsudeva as Nārāyaṇa, the highest reality. The Skanda Purāṇa belongs to the Śaiva Purāṇa according to its classification and hence some of the propounders of Vaiṣṇava philosophy of devotion have considered it as a Tāmasa Purāṇa except the portion of Vāsudeva Mahātmyam because there are many interpolations in it. The Vāsudeva Mahātmyam totally deals with the Vaiṣṇavite devotion And hence it is considered purely Sāttvika.

In present time it would be very interesting and of a great importance to present a study on Vaiṣṇava-Vallabha and focus a light on his commentator who was a versatile
scholar of many branches of Sanskrit literature in that era i.e. 1886, when the Swaminārāyaṇa sect and its popularity have attracted not only Indians but westerners also. There is no exaggeration in saying that the Swaminārāyaṇa sect has acquired much more popularity than any other Hindu sub-sect in foreign countries. It appears that it has become the synonym of Hinduism outside India.

The present study is presented in eight main chapters with five Appendices as follows:

**Chapter-I** is the introductory chapter. It begins with the importance of Purāṇas, its characteristics and also explains importance of Vāsudeva Mahātmīyam and Vaiṣṇava-Vallabhā and further discusses the date of Vaiṣṇava-Vallabhā. **Chapter - II** gives chapter wise Summanry and also contains the Sanskrit text of the Vaiṣṇava-Vallabhā. **Chapter- III.** This chapter mainly deals with the Life (Incidents), Date & Works of Sastri Dinǎnat Bhatt. **Chapter-IV** can be called the heart of the thesis since it deals with the several Important religious as well as Philosophical concepts of Vaiṣṇava philosophy and Swaminārāyaṇa Philosophy as found in Vaiṣṇava-Vallabhā. The different concepts like Ekāntika Bhakti, Aṣṭāṅga Yoga, Aksara Bhahman, Parabrahman, Avatārvāda, Karma, Vairāgya, Mokṣa etc. are also discussed. **Chapter-V** This chapter focuses light on the Ekāntika Dharma (disciplined way to life) with the social organization Varna-śrama and their Dhramās etc. **Chapter - VI** This Chapter named Cosmology & Geography in the Vaiṣṇava-Vallabhā describe some of the important characteristic features of Purāṇas viz Purusa, Prakriti, Kāla which are important factors for creation according to Vaiṣṇava-Vallabhā and Vāsudeva Mahātmīyam. And gives description of Śvetadvipa. **Chapter-VII** presents a brief literary study of Vaiṣṇava-Vallabhā. Some linguistic peculiarities of the commentary and study of the commentator are discussed in short in this chapter. **Chapter - VIII** is the last chapter of the thesis. The conclusion of entire study is presented in this chapter.
APPENDICES

(1) Appendix - 1
- Relevant pictures

(2) Appendix - 2
- A List of various references used in Vaiṣṇava-Vallabha.

(3) Appendix - 3
- Pāda Index of Vāsudeva Mahātmya

(4) Appendix - 4
- Bibliography.

(5) Appendix - 5
- Glossary

Here in this present work, the stress has been laid more upon the philosophy of Swaminārāyaṇa sect, in which, the theory of Avatārvāda is explained, the Lord Nārāyaṇa is also described as one of the Avatāra. And Vaiṣṇavism and Vaiṣṇava rituals, prevails the ample importance in Vaiṣṇava-Vallabha which bring out salient features of the philosophy of Lord Swaminārāyaṇa. The Philosophy of “Vaiṣṇava-Vallabha” generally reveals the most importance of Dharma i.e. Ekāntika Dharma, in which there are many rules and regulations for all Castes and Āśramās are laid down. Again “Vaiṣṇava-Vallabha” gives more stress on Ekāntika Bhakti which means one-ended Devotion to Lord Vāsudeva. These above mentioned principles of ‘Vaiṣṇava-Vallabha’ are also more essential principles of the Swaminārāyaṇa Sect.

The present work is purely based on Sanskrit commentary Vaiṣṇava-Vallabha of Pandit Dinānāth Bhatt, on Vāsudeva Mahātmya of Skanda Puraṇa (Published by
Rāmchandra Dinānāth Bhatt in 1893 in Gujarati) as well as other authoritative texts of Swāminārāyaṇa sect.

I have also presented the sanskrit text of Vaiṣṇava-Vallabhā because those who want to refer to the original text can easily refer.

I am aware of the fact that the extent and the depth of the literature of the Swāminārāyaṇa sect and the philosophical subtleties and metaphysical intricacies are so wide and varied that attempt made at this present work may appear to be insufficient for the scholars. Though I have tried my level best in this present work to contribute some high lights on metaphysical principles of Swāminārāyaṇa sect which was high lighted by Pandit Dinānāth Bhatt through this Vaiṣṇava-Vallabhā commentary by the order and direct consultation with Lord Swāminārāyaṇa. I have to put separately all references of Vaiṣṇava-Vallabhā which are used as a quotations by Pandit Dinānāth Bhatt. Some books like Śiksāpatrī, Vachanāmrut, Satsangijivanam, Nimittmātra etc. are more authentic for the comprehensive and comparative study of the Vaiṣṇava-Vallabhā.

The present work also brings out the contribution of Gujarat to the Sanskrit literature of Purānic genre, the complete study of the 'Vaiṣṇava-Vallabhā' on Vāsudeva Mahātyam and the contribution of the Commentator Sri Dinānāth Bhatt to the Sanskrit literature and especially to the philosophy of the Swāminārāyaṇa Sect. Thus above comparative and comprehensive study with other texts will contribute substantially to the contribution of Gujarat to the modern Sanskrit literature and also to the commentarial literature.

Looking to the time consumed I feel that thesis could not have been completed, had it not been for the help of many to whom I am indebted. First of all I pay my salutation to Lord Swāminārāyaṇa without his grace I could not have put step forward in this subject. I dedicate the present work to his holy feet. My second indebtedness to Śrī Dinānāth Bhatt the versatile scholar of Sanskrit and ardent devotee of Lord Swāminārāyaṇa, who has written a master piece commentary on the Vāsudeva Mahātyam, which I have accepted as the work for the present study.

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Baroda
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