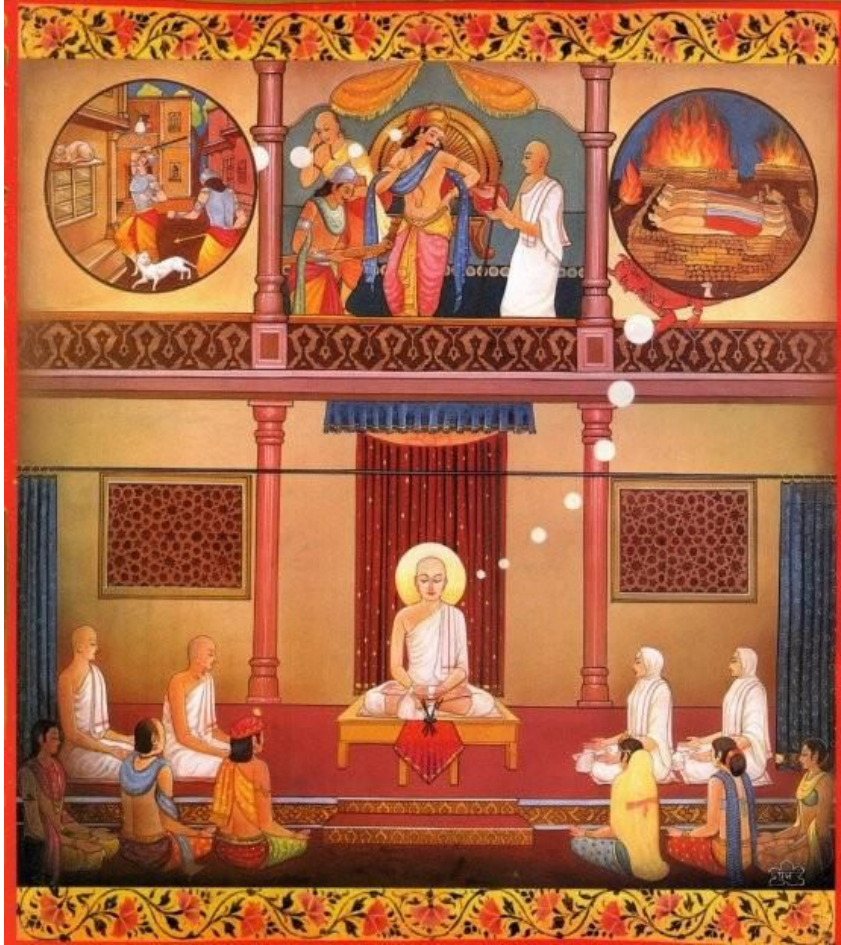


Bhadrabahu Swami Composed Uvasaggaharam Stotra To Give Relief From Plague



Shri Bhadrabahu Swami was born in Pratihthanpur. He and his brother Varahmihira both were expert scholars of 4 Vedas and 14 Vidyas. Their meeting with Shrutakevali Shri Yashobhadrashri resulted in their initiation. However, the Guru considered Bhadrabahu as a more deserving candidate for the learning of 14 purvas as also the acharyapada and so

the Guru appointed him as his successor. This decision irritated and enraged Varahmihira who ultimately renounced his initiation. About this time, a child was born to the King and Varahmihira made a forecast that the boy would live for one hundred years.

Incidentally, Bhadrabahu Swami staying in the same city did not go to the palace to bless the child and to congratulate the king. Seizing this opportunity Varahmihira instigated the King and the people against Bhadrabahu Swami. When Bhadrabahu Swami came to know all this, he said that he knew that on the seventh day the boy was to die because of a

cat and so he had decided to call on the King to console him. Though he had full faith in the forecast of Varahmihira, the King took all precautions and arranged to catch and drive away all the cats out of the town in the forest area.

The child was kept under strict surveillance. But as destined, the wooden bar at the door with a cat's figure on it fell on the child's head, killing him instantly. On this shocking and sorrowful occasion, Bhadrabahu Swami went to the king to convey his consolation. Greatly moved by this gesture, the King offered him unusual honor. Varahmihira had failed in his plan and steeped in his own anger and enmity.

It is said Varahmihira was born as 'Vyantardev' in his next birth and by means of knowledge, he came to recall his earlier birth and soon became jealous of Bhadrabahu Swami. He then managed for the spread of plague amongst the people as a result of which a number of people began to die suddenly and instantly. At such a difficult time the people approached Bhadrabahu Swami for help.

Moved by their plight, Bhadrabahu Swami wrote "Uvasaggaharam" – to pay respect to the 23rd Tirthankar Bhagwan Parshvanath and seek his help in making all Upsargs vanish. The impact of this stotra is so great that the strength of Vyantar got immensely diminished. The Stotra evoked demi-gods and they had to come to earth every time somebody read it with full concentration.

In its original form, it was very powerful. Soon people started using this Stotra excessively for smaller things and petty material desires. Fearing misuse of the same, one gatha of the Stotra was abolished. Today, though short of one stanza, it still occupies the place of pride and is considered more powerful than any other prayer.

Shrutakevali Shri Bhadrabahu Swami was the seventh in the line of pattadharas (chief disciple) of Bhagwan Mahavir. He was born in Vikram Samvat 94. As a disciple of Acharya Yashobhadra, Bharabahu Swami had the knowledge of 14 purvas. At the age of 45 years, he accepted the life of penance and restraint, in the presence of Acharya Sambhuta Vijayji. He was designated as Acharya. For over 14 years he ably managed the affairs of Jinshasan and added honor and glory to the post. He died at the age of 76 years and with him, the tradition of Shrutakevali came to an end.