

Vaioshnava Janato
(The man of God)

By
Narasi Mehta

Translated by
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One of the greatest Gujarati poet-saints, Narsi Mehta introduced philosophical poetry into the bhakti world of Gujarat. He composed about 740 songs. 'Vaishnava-janato', the prayer song popularized by Mahatma Gandhi, is a composition of Narsi Mehta's. This soul stirring poetry moves any theist. I have taken the liberty of translating this poem by substituting "Man of God" instead of "Vaishnava". I did this because I felt that, what the poet must have meant was that.

He and he alone is the man of God,
Who knows the pain and misery of others,
Who tries to help others in distress,
And who does not have pride in his mind.

He and he alone is the man of God,
Who respects and salutes all,
Who does not talk ill of others,
Who keeps his mind pure in words and action,
And whose mother is considered blessed by all.

He and he alone is the man of God,
Who views everybody as equal,
Who considers other women as his mother,
Who never tells lies all his life,
And who never yearns for other's wealth.

He and he alone is the man of God,
Who never has any attachments,
Who is strongly detached to worldly pleasures,
Who is addicted to remembering his God,
And in whose mind are all the holy places of the world.

He and he alone is the man of God,
Who has no greed and deceit in his mind,
Who has forsaken all pleasures and anger,
And whose sight is thirsted for by Narasi the poet,
For the entire family gets salvation on seeing him.

