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'Life is a bridge, enjoy while crossing but don't build
a castle on it' - Upanishad

Jay Swaminarayan

Ram Navami and Swaminarayan jayanti - Chaitra Sud 9

We will celebrate the birthdays of Lord Ram and Lord Swaminarayan on the twelfth of April this year. The main purpose of these incarnations is to show everyone the righteous path (*dharma*) to follow, resulting in happiness in life and salvation after death. Krishna tells Arjun, 'Whenever there is decline and decay of righteousness, O Bharata, then I manifest at that time.'

Lord Ram's divine acts (Leela) are written in Ramayan by Valmiki rushi, which is written in Sanskrit and in Ramcharit Manas by Tulsidas, which is written in a dialect of Hindi.

There are many important scriptures of Swaminarayan Sampraday. The main ones are:

❖ SHIKSHAPATRI

Lord Swaminarayan extracted the essence from many scriptures and wrote Shikshapatri, a code of conduct for everybody to follow, in 212 verses. It was originally written in Sanskrit and is translated in many languages.

❖ VACHANAMRUT

Vachanamrut is a divine scripture of collection of teachings, in the form of dialogues, by Lord Swaminarayan on spiritual and philosophical knowledge.

The great Saints Muktanand, Gopalanand, Nityanand, Brahmanand and Shukanand Swami compiled the original words of Lord Swaminarayan, who authenticated them.

❖ SATSANGIJIVAN

Shreemad Satsangijivan is the main divine scripture portraying the life, philosophy and message of Lord Swaminarayan.

It is written in Sanskrit by the saint Shatanand, who was given great powers by Lord Swaminarayan, which enabled him to write accurate accounts of the activities. It has 319 chapters and 17627 verses.

❖ SHREE HARI DIGVIJAY

Haridigvijay is written by the great saint Nityanand Swami in Sanskrit language and has 49 chapters. It describes the characteristics of Atman (soul), Parmatman and Maya in clear details.

❖ BHAKTACHINTAMANI

Bhaktachintamani is written by Nishkulanand Swami in poetic verses in Gujarati. It has 164 chapters which describe many of the lord's activities during his existence on this earth.

❖ OTHER SCRIPTURES

- Nishkulanand Kavya by Nishkulanand Swami
- Harikrushna Lilamrut By Mahanubhavanand Swami
- Shri Haricharitra By Akhandanand Varni
- Harilila Kalpataru By Achintyananad Varni
- Harililamrut By Acharya Shri Viswaviharilalji Maharaj
- Gitabhashya By Gopalanand Swami
- Satsangi Bhusan By Vasudevanand Varni

Following eight scriptures did not originate with in Swaminarayan Sampraday but Lord Swaminarayan recommends that we read them (Sikshapatri 93-95):

- The four vedas
- Vyas-Shutras
- Shrimad Bhagvat
- Vishnu Sahastranam
- Shri Bhagavat Gita
- Vidurniti
- Shri Vashudev Mahatmya
- Yagnyvalkyia Smriti



Happy Ram Navami



Nilkanth Varni (The incredible journey of Lord Swaminarayan)

Nilkanth advises the king



Nilkanth Varni came to the city of Devli while travelling in Nepal. The king of Devli had a terrible disease in his stomach and was dying. He used to command any holy men passing by to cure him, if they had any powers. Many had tried to cure the king, thinking of the rewards they may get, but instead the king had imprisoned many holy men because they had failed.

The people warned Nilkanth about the cruel king and told him to go away. The king invited Nilkanth to the palace and gave him good hospitality. Then the king told Nilkanth, 'You seem like a holy person who has lots of powers, you must cure me or else I will lock you up in jail.'

Nilkanth said, 'The disease you have is due to the bad deeds you have done in the past, you reap what you sow. Good deeds bring you happiness and bad deeds brings unhappiness. This is nothing to do with anyone else but you, who must do good deeds to bring about the happiness.'

The king was taken aback. No one had dared to talk to him in this manner before, but instead of getting angry, he was attracted by Nilkanth's teachings. Nilkanth was the first person the king had met, who did not tell lies for rewards and was not scared to tell him the truth. Even though Nilkanth was young, the king realised that this was no ordinary boy.

Nilkanth said, 'Death is not just death but it marks the day we give accounts of our deeds. Stop being sinful, carry out your prescribed duties and walk on the right path in your life.'

'I will act on your words and be a kind and just king. Please cure my illness', said the king.

Nilkanth made the king drink some water and eliminated all his illnesses. The king being very grateful said, 'You have given me life, please ask for anything you wish.'

I don't need anything but you can release all the holy men you have imprisoned, as you have promised to be a good king.'

The king released all the holy men and those who recognised Nilkanth's true identity who asked him, 'You have delivered us from our imprisonment, but please give us salvation after our death so that we are released from the cycle of life and birth.' Nilkanth said, 'If you carry out your devotion together with Dharma (correct duties) and detach yourselves from worldly desires, you will attain my abode (Dham) and be very happy.'

The king made Nilkanth his Guru, who showed him the correct path to salvation. 'Be kind to all life form, treat your subjects as your own children and you will achieve salvation,' Nilkanth said as he set off on his long journey into wilderness.

'There is no greater glory than love, nor any greater punishment than jealousy.'

- Lope de Vega

Vachanamrut of Lord Swaminarayan (Sarangpur 8)



Jealousy

Chaitanyanand Swami asked a question to Lord Swaminarayan, 'Maharaj, what is the nature of jealousy?'

Shriji Maharaj replied, 'Jealousy prevails from the pride that a person has within their heart. Anger and envy also arises from pride. The nature of jealousy is such that "when someone more respected than them gets admiration, they get envious". If someone has this kind of nature, then they have jealousy in their heart and cannot bear to see anyone else's greatness.'

e-Notice Board

www.swaminarayanwales.org.uk

Festivals and Holy days – April 2011



Ram Navmi/ Swaminarayan Jayanti – Tuesday 12th Apr 2011

Hanuman Jayanti – Monday 18th Apr 2011



Ekadashi

Kamda Ekadashi Fast

– Monday 14th Feb 2011

Varuthni Ekadashi Fast

– Monday 28th Feb 2011



If you have any interesting facts, stories, jokes, or feedback for our next issue of Satsang e-Letter, please email them to us at sstym@swaminarayanwales.org.uk

What would you do? – Enduring hardship in life



Question: You *have* no choice but to eat some lentil soup (dal), but because it is very very salty, you will suffer a lot. What would you do?

In our lives, we have to endure a lot of suffering and still carry on doing our duties. Break up of important attachments, such as death of a family member or friend will cause suffering and depression. Lack of wealth and enjoyment causes misery. Poverty is one of the worst sufferings.



Even though we sometimes have great miseries and illnesses, we must carry on with our lives, performing our duties for ourselves, our family and society.

It would be tempting to take an easy way out, such as stop playing the role that causes us misery, or even committing suicide, but it is not an option. Lots of marriages break up because people can not cope with the unhappiness they might endure because of various problems.

One of our goals as a human being is to achieve salvation for our soul and so committing suicide is strictly forbidden.

Lord Swaminarayan says that, '*Do not commit suicide even in a place of pilgrimage and not even due to anger or despair resulting from immoral acts. Do not commit suicide by eating poison, hanging your self, falling in a well, falling from a mountain or by any other means*' [Shikshapatri slok 14].

One of the great saviours in times of suffering and illness is Bhakti (devotion to God). The suffering will still be there but you will be able to bear and overcome it. There are nine types of Bhakti which would guide you through troubled times and enable you to forget your sorrows.

Tumhare bhajana Ram ko paavai

Janma janma ke dukha bisaravai [Hanuman Chalisa]

With your devotion Lord Ram is attainable which makes us forget the sorrows of many life cycles.

Bhakti will not get rid of our pains which we have to endure due to Karma, but will make it easy to live through them and makes us forget them.

You could say that to make the salty soup bearable, you could add more ingredients to it and make it a bit more pleasant. Similarly, we can make our lives more bearable and help us through our sorrows by increasing our Bhakti.

Ravji Patel, Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Cardiff

e-Fun

e-Knowledge

Right person for the right job



Once in a kingdom, a queen said to her king 'You have appointed a Pradhan Mantri (Prime Minister) and have given him five thousand rupees per month. My brother can do exactly the same job, why not just employ him and give him the money instead?'

The king replied, 'You are asking me to pay him but I don't even know if he has the qualities of a Pradhan Mantri.'

The queen argued 'Whatever that Pradhan Mantri can do, my brother can do just as well'. The king didn't argue and thought he would just wait and see if she was right.

One morning, the king called the queen's brother and said 'I couldn't sleep last night as there was loud noise all night. Can you find out what it was please?' He quickly went to have a look and came back saying 'It was a female dog giving birth to puppies and they were barking'.

The King then asked, 'How many puppies did she give birth to?'

He ran off again quickly to have a look and came back. 'There are seven puppies.'

The king then asked, 'What colour were they?'

He went to look again and came back saying, 'Three of them are brown and rest are black.'

Then the king asked, 'How many males and females are there?'

He left again and returned with the answer. 'Two are female and the rest are male.'

The queen was watching what was going on and thought her brother was very quick in doing his job and he was doing well.

The king then called the Pradhan Mantri and told him to find out the cause of the noise last night. The Pradhan Mantri went to have a look and came back straight away. 'It was a female dog, your highness. She had given birth to puppies and they were barking.'

The king then asked, 'How many puppies were there?'

The Pradhan Mantri instantly replied, 'Seven puppies altogether, your highness. Three of them were brown and the rest were black. Two puppies were female and other five males.'

The king turned to the queen and said, 'That is the difference between your brother and the Pradhan Mantri. Your brother took four trips to tell me the information that the Pradhan Mantri was able to tell me in one trip.'

The queen argued he should have told her brother beforehand and that it wasn't a fair judgement. So the king decided to give him another chance.

Soon, the king became ill and was in bed for a week. The king told the queen's brother to go and call a doctor. He remembered from last time that he should do everything in one trip. So after calling the doctor to see to the king, he went into town and told everybody that the king was very ill and might die today. He also went to the cemetery and told the workers to make preparations for the king's funeral, just in case he died.

The queen noticed a large gathering of people crying outside the palace and asked her brother what was going on. After he explained, she finally realised that he didn't have the competence for the job of a Pradhan Mantri.

Lord Swaminarayan says that, 'One must always entrust, after proper consideration, a person with work just befitting his aptitude and ability but shall not act otherwise.'
[Shikshapatri slok 66]

This has been written so that you can get the best results expected from your resources.

Jagdish Gorasia, Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Cardiff

My grandfather once told me that there are two kinds of people: those who work and those who take the credit. He told me to try to be in the first group; there was less competition there. - Shrimati Indira Gandhi