

(Under Shree Nar Narayan Dev  
Temple, Bhuj Kutch)



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'Aim at heaven and you will get earth thrown in.  
Aim at earth and you get neither' - C. S. Lewis

## Jay Swaminarayan

### Guru Purnima - Ashadh Sud 15



The day of the full moon in the Hindu month of Ashadh (usually falls in July or August) is known as Guru Purnima.

This day is of deep significance in the teacher-disciple relationship. Disciples traditionally pay homage to their gurus. It is important to remember all gurus or teachers on this day; from the teachers in primary school to our spiritual teachers.

The word *Guru* means 'remover of darkness.' *Guru Purnima*, celebrated on a full-moon day, is the day for eliminating ignorance and illuminating our lives with knowledge.



## Vachanamrut of Lord Swaminarayan (Gadhada PP 1)

### Vachanamrut 1 – Gadhada First chapter, First Sermon

**Q1** – Shreeji Maharaj (Lord Swaminarayan) himself asks the first question to the entire congregation of saints and devotees:

What is the hardest tool to achieve?

Shreeji Maharaj then answers his own question by stating that Akhand Vrutti (Constant Concentration) of God is the most difficult to achieve. There is no higher achievement than this.



In Shrimad Gita Chapter 6 Verse 34 it says:

"the mind is very unsteady, turbulent, tenacious and powerful; therefore I consider it as difficult to control as the wind"

The mind can make us stray from our path and yet can also help us to achieve our goal.

The question we should ask ourselves to start with is – 'Where is our mind during maansi pooja, mala and other devotional activities?' If our mind is wandering everywhere, then clearly we have a lot of work to do and need to practice the techniques of dhyaan (meditation).

Now, generally speaking, within educational books the easy topics are discussed first. In that case, why has Shreeji Maharaj jumped straight into the deep end and talked about the most difficult achievement?



One would suspect it may be due to setting a target or aim for the devotees.

We can see that Shreeji Maharaj has made it clear from the outset what we should be aiming for, because if the goal isn't clear then it is difficult to achieve.

As with most tasks, once the most difficult task is achieved then the remainder do not dishearten us.

This is an important lesson for us all and we should always set higher targets as directed by Lord Swaminarayan in the first vachanamrut.

*Pradyuman Halai, Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Cardiff*

## Nilkanth Varni (The incredible journey of Lord Swaminarayan)

### Nilkanth directs sadhus to the right path

On his travels, Nilkanth came to the kingdom of Sirpur. The king of Sirpur was religious and kind. He invited Nilkanth to stay in his palace but he declined and stayed in the garden instead. The king assigned a man called Gopaldas to serve and look after Nilkanth Varni. There were many other sadhus (holy men) staying at the royal gardens. They were not proper sadhus and were indulged in various kinds of addictions, including drugs. They practiced black magic and hypnotism to terrorise people. The king thought all sadhus were same and good but these sadhus deceived the king and took advantage of his hospitality.



One day there was very heavy rainfall and all the sadhus ran for shelter. The rain did not disturb Nilkanth who kept meditating in the cold rain. The king saw this and realised that Nilkanth was superior than the others and gave him more respect. The other sadhus got jealous and tried their black magic and hypnotism on Nilkanth Varni, but failed. So they made Gopaldas unconscious and challenged Nilkanth to make him better. Nilkanth chanted some mantras in Gopaldas' ear and Gopaldas woke up.

Nilkanth decided that he must teach the bad sadhus a lesson. He glared at their leader, who immediately fell to the ground, with blood coming out of his mouth. The others pleaded to Nilkanth to make their leader better, and Nilkanth relented and cured him, but only after they promised to be good sadhus and give up their addictions and practice of black magic. They all thanked Nilkanth and promised to be good from now on.

Nilkanth preached that the body is like a pot; it can break easily and go back to earth. The Jiva or soul goes alone from the body as lightning leaves the clouds. Earthly pleasures are like clouds and will disperse quickly. Nilkanth taught the sadhus how to follow their Dharma and do Bhakti, making them better and give up bad habits.



Nilkanth Varni stayed in Sirpur for some time.

### A Clever answer

Emperor Akbar was in the habit of asking riddles and puzzles to his courtiers for fun, just to test their wisdom. He often asked them questions which were strange, witty and difficult. Only a few wise men were able to answer them.

Once he asked a very strange question. The courtiers could not answer his question.

Akbar waited for his courtiers to answer but they could only scratch their heads and were unable to answer.

Just then, Birbal, who was very witty and wise, entered the court. Most of the courtiers were jealous of Birbal and did not like him because the emperor favoured him. They told the emperor to ask Birbal the question, thinking that Birbal would not be able to answer.

Akbar asked Birbal, 'How many crows are there in this city?'

Without even a moment's hesitation, Birbal replied 'Fifty thousand five hundred and eighty nine crows, my lord'.

'How can you be so sure?' asked Akbar.

Birbal said, 'have your men count them, my lord. If you find more crows it means some have come to visit their relatives here. If you find fewer crows then some must have gone to visit their relatives elsewhere'.

Akbar was very pleased by Birbal's answer and was impressed by his wit.



'I never knew how to worship until I knew how to love.'  
 - Henry Ward Beecher

Always aim at complete harmony of thought and word and deed. Always aim at purifying your thoughts and everything will be well. - Mahatma Gandhi

## True Vaishnava (Devotee)

Who is a true Vaishnav?



**Vaishnav:** A follower of the Vaishnav school of Hinduism and a devotee of Lord Vishnu.

In his Bhajan 'Vaishnav Jan To Tene Kahiye', Narshimha Mehta describes a vaishnav as someone possessing the following qualities of a devotee:

- Knows and understands the pain of others. Helps other people who are in misery and yet does not let pride enter his mind.
- Is humble to everyone in the whole world and does not criticise anyone.
- His words and actions are steady in his mind.
- Looks at everyone equally (without prejudice) and regards someone else's wife as his mother.
- Does not speak lies and does not hold (steal) other's wealth.
- He does not have attachments and illusions towards the world and in his mind, has renounced the worldly pleasures.
- Because he is addicted to chanting of Lord Ram's (God's) name, all the sites of pilgrimage reside in his body.
- He is not greedy and has no deceptions. He is without anger and has no attachments to the worldly lust and pleasure.

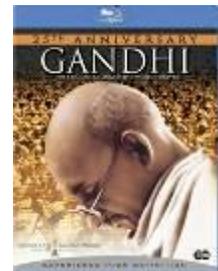


Narshimha Mehta says that by meeting such a person, seventy one generations of your family will gain salvation.



This bhajan was one of the favourites of Lord Swaminarayan, whose preaching included the virtues mentioned in this bhajan.

This bhajan was also a favourite of Gandhi Babu, and is featured in the Richard Attenborough's Oscar winning film Gandhi.



Mitesh Patel, Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Cardiff

## Love is blind

There was once a blind girl who hated herself because she could not enjoy life as others did. She disliked everyone, except a boy who talked to her over the phone. He lived in another town and she knew him from when he had dialled her number by mistake. When she talked to him, she felt happy and forgot her miseries. They soon became good friends. She told the boy that if she had eyes and could see him, she would marry him.

One day, she had a phone call from the hospital. They had a pair of eyes donated, ready for her eye transplant. After a successful operation, she could see everything. The boy came to visit her and asked her, 'Now that you can see the world, will you marry me?'

The girl was shocked when she saw that her friend was blind too and he did not look handsome without his eyes. She refused to marry him. Her boyfriend walked away crying, and later wrote a letter to her saying:

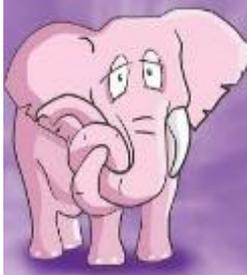
*'Please take care of my eyes. I could have given you just one eye, but I thought you would look more beautiful with both of them.'*

## A memory technique

### Improve your memory

When I was a student at Swaminarayan Vidhyarthi Bhuvan boarding school in Bhuj, I was taught a technique for relaxation and improving our memory by Swami Harivallabhasji.

In this procedure, when you go to bed at night just close your eyes, relax and place both your hands on your stomach and take five long and easy breaths.



Then start remembering and thinking about your activities for that whole day. Try to remember everything in as much detail as you can. For example, what you did and saw since you woke up in the morning. You could think of things, such as, when you opened the curtains what colour are they? When you brush your teeth, try to remember the colour of your toothbrush. What did you have for breakfast? What did you do in work or in school? Who did you meet during day? Which clothes did you have on and what colour were they etc. Try to remember as much in detail as you can. The more you go into detail, the more you will remember.

When you get to the end of the day's activities, think about any activity where you have hurt somebody mentally or physically. If you have hurt someone then make a mental note to apologise to that person and if that is not possible then pray to god for forgiveness, guidance and strength so that you don't do that again.



This is only 5 to 10 minute exercise which you can do before you go to sleep. Sometimes if you are tired you will fall asleep in middle of this exercise but don't worry, try again next day. Once you get more practice, it will become easier to achieve.

Jagdish Gorasia, *Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Cardiff*

## Don't give up hope

### Two frogs in the milk



Once there were two frogs who jumped in a bucket of milk to find food. They could not get out since the sides of the bucket were too slippery and they could not jump out from the milk. They kept swimming round and round in the bucket and were getting very tired.

The elder frog said, 'I'm getting tired and can't go on. There is no hope of us getting out so why don't we just stop swimming and drown? We will be out of our misery.'  
'No, don't stop. We must carry on. Don't give up hope.' urged the younger frog. But the elder frog stopped swimming and drowned.

The younger frog could not think of a way of getting out of the bucket but kept swimming. After a long while, the efforts of the young frog had turned some of the milk in to solid butter. He was able to jump out of the bucket and was saved.

'Do your duty to the best of your ability, O Arjuna, with your mind attached to the Lord, abandoning (worry and) attachment to the results, and remaining calm in both success and failure. The equanimity of mind is called Karma-yoga.' - Bhagwad Gita (2.48)



## e-Notice Board

[www.swaminarayanwales.org.uk](http://www.swaminarayanwales.org.uk)

### Festivals and Holy days – July 2011



**Guru Purnima** – Friday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2011

**Hindola Start** – Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2011



#### **Ekadashi**

Dev Shayani Ekadashi Fast – Monday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2011

Kamika Ekadashi Fast – Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> July 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](mailto:sstym@swaminarayanwales.org.uk)

### What would you become? – Enduring hardship in life

#### My Hero Sachin

Sachin Ramesh Tendulkar also known as the Little Master is undoubtedly one of the greatest cricket players the world has ever seen. He is the highest run scorer in both test and one day internationals. Sachin was currently part of the India cricket team that lifted the World Cup for the second time.

However, it hasn't always been plain sailing for him. His ODI debut was disappointing, where he was dismissed without scoring a run. It had taken 79 ODIs to score a century. At the age of 25 he was sacked as India's captain due to poor team performances. Tennis elbow surfaced in 2004, causing him to miss the Champions Trophy, the triangular in Sri Lanka, a tour of Zimbabwe and the Super Series in Australia.



Although, Sachin hasn't let these problems stand in the way of becoming one of the greatest batsmen in our times. He has the most centuries in tests, one day international and World Cup matches. He was also the first batsman to get 200 runs in a single innings in an ODI match. Captaining the Mumbai Indians is also proving successful.

Tendulkar has worked very hard in achieving all these landmarks. He did not let problems affect his career. We also face many challenges in modern day life be it at school, college, university or work. We shouldn't look at them as problems but as experiences. If you put your mind to it and work hard you will be able to overcome these challenges and reach your goal.

'Life is like a game of cards. The hand that is dealt you represents determinism; the way you play it is free will.' - *Jawaharal Nehru*

*Harsha Patel, Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Oldham*

#### A Sanskrit Quote



न चोरहार्यं न च राजहार्यं न भ्रातृभ्राज्यं न च भारकारि ।

व्यये कृते वर्धत एव नित्यं विद्याधनं सर्वधनप्रधानम् ॥

It cannot be stolen by a thief.

It cannot be taken away by a King.

It cannot be divided among brothers.

It does not cause load. It always increases when spent.

The wealth of knowledge is the greatest of all wealth.

**e-Fun e-Knowledge**

A human can be healthy without killing animals for food. Therefore if he eats meat, he participates in taking animal life merely for the sake of his appetite.

**Healthy living**

**FIT FOR LIFE**



Whether you are young or old, male or female, your health will benefit from some form of regular exercise. Exercise two or three times every week for twenty minute periods will keep you fit for life. Regular exercise will make your heart and lungs more efficient and your muscles' stronger, as well as improving your figure and posture and enhancing your overall sense of wellbeing. Keeping fit is one of the best preventative medicines available.

While some sports injuries are clearly unavoidable accidents, many can be prevented by taking simple precautions before starting exercise or by paying more attention to the appropriate safety guidelines:

- Do not exercise while you are still aching from a previous session.
- Do not take strenuous exercise if you have a condition such as high blood pressure or heart disease.
- Never exercise under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Since many sports injuries result from faulty technique, it is wise to seek basic professional coaching.

Always wear the right protective equipment for the sport you are playing. Find out what you need and buy the appropriate model for your requirements. For the best advice, consult a professional coach. While exercising, think of safety issues such as:

- Always using equipment that is the correct size. This applies to rackets and bats, not just pads and helmets.
- Taking off your jewellery before you participate in sport. Taping over rings if you do not want to remove them.



*Bupa*

**Funny but true**



**For safety's sake**



**Why wait?**



**One careful owner**



**Modern wife  
Modern life**

'Everything is funny as long as it is happening to somebody else.' - *Will Rogers*

'An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind.' - *Mohandas Gandhi*