

SHREE SWAMINARAYAN TEMPLE CARDIFF

(Under Shree Nar Narayan Dev
Temple, Bhuj Kutch)



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Swaminarayan Museum
Akhand Var
Eleven Niyams
Ghanshyam is fond of Ekadashi
Joke and Veg of the month
Upcoming Events and Recipe

p1-2
p2
p3
p4
p5
p6



You can find Vachanamrut articles on:
<http://www.swaminarayanwales.org.uk/YuvakMandal/>

The Swaminarayan Museum



The Swaminarayan Museum is based in the city of Ahmedabad in Gujarat. It holds many personal items of Lord Swaminarayan. It is a project undertaken to protect items of Prasadi (Items used or touched by God) so they can be viewed by all people.

This is the first ever project in the Swaminarayan Sampradaya to bring together Prasadi items from temples all over the world. The museum was opened on 8 March 2011 by the Chief Minister of Gujarat, Narendra Modi.

This museum is the dream and creation of the former Guru of the Swaminarayan Sampradaya, Acharya Shree Tejendraprasadji Maharaj who has spent years on completing this project. He has some personally donated Prasadi items to the Swaminarayan Museum.

During his time on earth Lord Swaminarayan went around village to village, on request from his followers he gave his belongings as Prasadi to people.

These Prasadi items have been passed from generation to generation, and are still owned by hundreds of families. Swaminarayan temples also have their own collections, but sometimes items are not kept in an organised manner or people who pass them have no historical information about these items.

As a result a museum was created where prasadi items of Lord Swaminarayan are kept with the information about each item displayed so people can have a greater understanding of the prasadi items. The museum also houses a well-equipped laboratory for preservation of the items.



The Swaminarayan Museum continued...

The most important exhibit and the very heart of this museum is the signature of Bhagwan Swaminarayan. Shree TejendraPrasadji Maharaj is himself its owner.



No other temple or person has his written signature. Another important item is the horoscope of Bhagwan Swaminarayan himself.

Other attractions would include Bhagwan Swaminarayan's personal belongings such as clothes, vessels, malas, footprints, a silver toothpick, fragments of His hair and nails, and so on.

Rainwater harvesting is done using an underground reservoir. Solar and wind energy power this air-conditioned museum which has been planned with a green cover of three hundred trees surrounding the building. The museum has been set up keeping in mind the environment.

Address: B/H A.E.C. Opp. Terf School, Naranpura, Ahmedabad, 380 013, India

Website: www.swaminarayanmuseum.com

Akhand Var (Eternal Husband) Continued from Issue 17



“Evi Januni Jivo re Gopichandni” The great saint Nishkulanand Swami says “Let mothers like Gopichand’s mother be born and long may they live.” Gopichand’s mother gave the gift of vairagya (detachment) to her son.



Gopichand was a king who ruled a large kingdom and had 1600 wives. Once his wives were bathing him in the summer heat with cold water and fragrances. Suddenly little drops of warm water fell on Gopichand’s head. Gopichand looked up to see where the drops came from.

He saw his mother on the balcony above crying. He ordered his wives to stop bathing him and quickly bring him his dry clothes. He immediately went to his mother and asked why she was crying. His mother replied, “There was once a time when your father had a beautiful and healthy body like yours.

However he died, I have tears in my eyes because I know you will also have to die one day.” She said that this body is only temporary, the great amount of treasure kept by you in the treasury cannot stop your death and you will have to leave it all one day.

King Gopichand thought if I am going to die one day and leave behind the temporary happiness of being a King, why don’t I leave it today. Gopichand immediately left his 1600 wives and kingdom to become a tyagi (one who has renounced family life) to go into the forest to attain the ultimate husband, Narayan (God) the source of eternal bliss.



To be continued...

Haribhakta - Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Cardiff

Eleven Niyams – Rules or Laws (Continued)

'Kartat na Atmaghat..' by Premanand Swami.



Niyam Six

'Kartat na Atmaghat' **Do not commit suicide**

What are the circumstances for committing suicide?
Why and who does it?
Here are some reasons why people commit suicide:



- ❖ Anger is the main reason for committing suicide. Sometimes, this step is taken in a blind rage.
- ❖ They feel scared when they have some serious disease.
- ❖ Constant quarrels in the household could drive people to suicide.
- ❖ When a person commits a shameful act and everyone points a finger at him/her.
- ❖ In the name of Dharma or religion. In old times there was a false belief where people thought if you committed suicide at a place of pilgrimage you would go to heaven.

Lord Swaminarayan has forbidden the act of suicide in all these matters. As a result of the bad association/company you keep you happen to commit some improper act and cannot bear to live in the society, then you should leave the place and that society to go and live somewhere far.

Do penance for your acts and behaviour but do not commit suicide. The belief that killing yourself in the name of Dharma brings you salvation is wrong. If that is true then the greatest sinners would kill themselves in the name of Dharma and all their accounts of bad deeds would be cleared. But it is not like that. Whatever deeds (Karma) that have been committed must be paid for.

If deeds in the past lives result in getting a disease, then we have to bear it, if not in this life then in the next. Lord Swaminarayan says our devotees shall never commit suicide.

Sometimes there are quarrels in the family. This is human nature. There are many ways to end conflict. In this world everyone has ego. When someone says, 'Who are you to tell me this? I am eighteen years older than you', what they mean is that their ego is eighteen years older.

This is false pride. Whatever age you may be, greatness of a person is measured in how much they can tolerate. If you want peace in your household and happiness in the family then you have to speak respectfully to everyone even if you disagree with their view.

There are many reasons for ego or pride, namely wealth, beauty, art, knowledge etc. Learn to listen to and understand others. This would create a peaceful atmosphere in your household. So this is our sixth niyam, a person shall not commit suicide in any circumstance.

Based on an article by: *Sashtri Swami Harikeshavdas*

"Pain is temporary. It may last a minute, or an hour, or a day, or a year, but eventually it will eventually go away. If I quit, however, it lasts forever."
- Lance Armstrong

Ghanshyam is fond of Ekadashi

The Lunar calendar is based on the movement of the moon. A month is divided into two parts called Sud (Shukla Paksh) and Vad (Krishna Paksh). Ekadashi takes place on the 11th day of both Sud and Vad.

Lord Swaminarayan in child form is called Ghanshyam. One day Ghanshyam went to visit the Hanuman Garhi Temple in Ayodhya. There was a monk named Mohandas who was reading the Ramayana scripture. Mohandas was reading about the greatness of Ekadashi.

He explained it is much greater than performing a thousand Ashwamedh yagnas. Ghanshyam was happy to hear this and asked Mohandas, "If Ekadashi is so great, why don't people follow it?"



Mohandas felt offended because he didn't stay Ekadashi and didn't teach anyone else to follow it. Mohandas argued saying, "We shouldn't stay hungry as it is our duty look after our bodies, so we should be able to eat as much as we want."

The explanation of Mohandas was against the scriptures, Ghanshyam left and sat separate from the sabha(congregation). The sabha saw Ghanshyam get up, the people listening to Mohandas got angry at him. They said, "How dare you sit as a preacher and give a sermon against religious niyams(rules) and penance."

Mohandas started to realise his mistake. Tears started to roll down his cheeks as he thought to himself, 'The young boy cares so much about what is true and righteous, whereas I am selfish always thinking about myself even at my old age and because of that I teach everyone to do wrong.'

Mohandas went to Ghanshyam and fell at his feet asking for forgiveness, he then promised to stay Ekadashi and explain the importance of Ekadashi from then on.

Fasting on Ekadashi

During Ekadashi a person fasts and does not eat any food, if they are unable to do this then they are allowed to eat fruit once a day, if they also unable to do this then they can eat farrar foods.

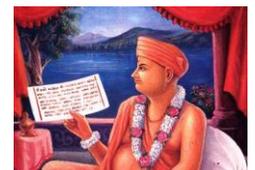
Farrar foods include: Potatoes, Sweet Potato, Cassava (Mogo), Turnip, Yams, Milk, Yogurt, Fruits, Nuts, vegetables and some special grains such as Samo and Rajagri.

Only homemade and food made at the temple from raw produce can be eaten.



Ekadashi is not just about fasting, a person should make a greater effort to control all the senses and make a greater effort to perform extra devotional activity whilst remembering Bhagwan(God).

The great saint Brahmanand Swami says "*e vrata kare te dhanya maanavee re, te to nahaayo kotikavaara jaahnavee re*" ("One who does this fast is a fortunate person, it is equal to him bathing in the holy rivers a million times.")



Joke

Made in India

Once there was a Japanese man who went to India for a holiday. On the last day of his visit, he used a taxi and told the taxi driver to drive to the Airport.

On the way to the airport a Honda car drove past the taxi. Seeing this the man leaned out of the window excitedly and shouted, "Honda, very fast! Made in Japan!!!"

After a few minutes, a Toyota car drove past the taxi, getting excited again the Japanese man leaned out of the window and shouted, "Toyota, very fast! Made in Japan!"

Then a Mitsubishi car drove past the taxi. For the third time, the Japanese man leaned out of the window and shouted, "Mitsubishi, very fast! Made in Japan!" The taxi driver was a little angry, but he kept quiet. This same thing happened as other cars passed the taxi.

Finally, the taxi reached the airport. The cost of the taxi ride was 800 rupees. The Japanese man was surprised and asked "What??? Why is the taxi ride so expensive?!!" Hearing this, the taxi driver replied, "Meter, VERY FAST! made in India!!!"

Veg of the month: Carrots

Even though carrots are available throughout the year, locally grown carrots are in season mainly in the summer. Carrots belong to the *Umbelliferae* family of plants, named after the umbrella shaped flower clusters that plants in this family grow. Carrots are in the same plant family as parsnips, cumin, parsley, fennel and anise. They can be eaten raw, can be stir fried, roasted, steamed or pureed.

Growing Carrots

Carrots are thought to grow best in full sunlight but can tolerate some shade. In order to for carrots to grow in the best way it is better to plant them in loose soil free from rocks. The seeds should be sown about 5cm deep. Carrots take around 4 months to mature and it is advised the best time to sow carrot seeds is from mid March to June.

Health Benefits

Health benefits of carrots are:

- A single carrot will provide enough vitamin A for a whole day
- Is known to cut the risk of lung cancer
- The high level beta carotene can reduce the chance of getting prostate cancer
- Eating carrots regularly reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease.



How to spot the best ones

Look for firm smooth carrots, the smaller they are the sweeter they are. Avoid choosing carrots with the following: blemishes, cracks, rubbery and soft feel.

Before storing, remove the green tops off the carrots, as they will reduce the carrot of both moisture and nutrients. It is best to use carrots within two weeks as this will give you greater nutrients and a fresher taste.



Festivals and Holy days – March 2012

Holi – 7th March

[Narnarayan Dev Jayanti - Fuldol Utsav – 9th March](#)



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Ekadashi

Amalaki Ekadashi – Sunday 4th March 2012

Papmochini Ekadashi – Sunday 18th March 2012

If you have any interesting facts, stories, jokes, or feedback, please email them to us at sstym@swaminarayanwales.org.uk

Editor: Sonal Patel, Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Cardiff

Recipe: NAN Khatai (Check all ingredients to see if they're suitable for vegetarians)

Ingredients

- 2 cups - all-purpose flour (Maida)
- 1 cup - powdered sugar (or adjust to taste)
- 1/2 cup - butter or ghee (at room temp, or melted)
- 1 tsp. - baking powder
- 3 tbsp. - milk powder

Method

1. Heat the oven to 350 degree F. Lightly coat a large baking tray with butter and dust with all-purpose flour and set aside.
2. Sift the flour, baking powder, and milk powder in a mixing bowl.
3. Beat the butter and sugar in a separate bowl till it is light and fluffy.
4. Fold in the flour mixture into this and whisk again, in the same direction until it is smooth.
5. Remember, this will not be as liquid as your cake dough.
6. Cookie dough is supposed to be firmer so that it can easily form shapes.
7. Now take some oil and grease your palms.
8. Divide the dough into 12 equal portions, then flatten the dough and form a circular shape with your palms.
9. Keep pressing the edges to form a smooth cookie.
10. Alternately, you can use a cookie cutter or mould if you are more comfortable with it.
11. Make all the Nan khatais in this way and arrange on the baking tray, at least 1-2 inches apart.
12. Bake them for 10-15 mins, or until done.
13. Do not over-bake as that would make them hard and burnt!
14. Remove from the oven, let them cool down to room temperature, and then store them in an air-tight container.



Bhakti Patel (Bhavna), Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Cardiff

Offer to Ghanshyam Maharaj and enjoy the prasad