

Shree Swaminarayano Vijaytetram

Ekadashi Letter

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Jay Shree Swaminarayan

Swami Shree Akshar Jivan Dasji's Ekadashi Letter

Sadguru Swami Aksharjivandasji residing at Shree Kutch Bhuj Swaminarayan Mandir writes this nectar filled sermon letter, TO BE READ ON EKADASHI. To prevent incautious behavior of Devotees residing in various regions of India and abroad, it has become necessary to write this letter.

This is to write to the devotees of the Udhav Sampraday whose origins are from Kutch, that in this kaliyug (age of kali) Shree Sahajanand Swami, PuranPurushottam Bhagwan incarnated on this earth and brought with Him infinite emancipated souls. Bhagwan, with His known ultimate authority, transformed kaliyug into a satyug like place and freed innumerable souls. Therefore, devotees who are eager to attain Shreeji Maharaj's Abode shall follow the scriptures written by Gopalanand Swami, Nityanand Swami Vasudevanand Swami, Muktanand Swami, Brahmanand Swami, Mahanubhavanand Swami and many other souls from Akshardham. They shall follow through example of how these Santos lived their lives, what have they asked us to observe in their scriptures and shall always remain dedicated on this path. The Santos shall be dedicated to religious rules and regulations set in Shikshapatri, Dharmamrut and Nishkamsuddhi. Householders shall be dedicated to Shikshapatri, Vachnamrut and Niti so that the cultural behavior is understood, the mind and sense organs behavior stays under control and thus one achieves peace and tranquility. The reason being that there is no penance like perseverance, no disease like taste and no charity like kindness. Therefore the sense organs and the mind are one's friend as well as one's enemy. As the saying goes " JAGME VERIE KOI NAHI JO MAN SHEETAL HOI, AAPA METTI KHELIYE TO DAYA KARE SAB KOI " (You have no enemies if you have a tender mind and heart. If you show due respect to everyone then you shall see kindness in everyone). All these good virtues can be developed through the association and listening of religious discourses from the Santos. This is described in Vachnamrut "JENE KATHA VARTA MA RUCHI NAHI, TENI KORNEMA ATKAD KARVI JE EENA VISHE MOTA GOON NAHI AAVE" (It can be assumed that those who do not have interest in religious discourses and discussions will not develop good virtues). Therefore, no matter how intelligent or educated in scriptures one is, there is no way even through renowned intelligence, that he can understand the true meaning of scriptures without the association of the Santos. Therefore one shall always associate with the Santos and should do so without laziness, backward knowledge and ego. This is because the Soul has a natural tendency of being egoistic and this behavior prevents it to see the brighter side, which is a dire mistake and can be realised through association with Santos. Furthermore, this mistake can also be overcome through the association with Santos, but again if one attends religious discourses regularly, sits in these discourses and listens to the discourses but the thoughts and mind are far away, then he will not understand correctly the way it should be understood. Therefore one should always try and concentrate for an hour or two and listen to the discourses this itself is a great solution that will assist the Soul to overcome its major problem which is; always experiencing everlasting illusion. Therefore whatever Shriji Maharaj and His ultimate devotees have said and asked us to do shall be taken very seriously and given deep thought (absorbed into the soul) after listening or reading to revitalise and achieve great peace for the benefit of the Soul.

For the ease of understanding, this open minded letter has been written for the devotees of God who possess less knowledge in the Scriptures and who associate with Santos less frequently. Therefore as a devotee, listen very carefully by keeping this letter close to your heart. This letter will be beneficial to you through regular remembrance and only after understanding the true purpose of its content. The following facts have been written for every man and woman to carefully listen to. The female devotees shall be affectionate towards other female devotees and male devotees shall be affectionate to other male devotees, because as you may know, where there is affection there is mutual understanding. Thus a mistake by one devotee for instance, can be openly discussed and accepted, without developing a grudge towards one another. Therefore affection is a great virtue and all devotees shall obey and strictly follow the tenets of

modesty outlined by Shriji Maharaj and shall never fall from observing one of the five great vows. This is because the mind and sense organs are ones' greatest inner enemies. Even great souls have not been spared. Furthermore as age of Kali is more prevalent and even great people become victims of bad deeds due to the weakness of the mind and sense organs, One should always act responsibly and observe religious rules and regulations with a view of maintaining reputation in society. As reputation acts like renunciation and a person who does not care about his reputation, be it in society or religion, shall be considered an outcast and such people are often punished like an ox, pay penalties, lose their self esteem and many will also lose their lives too.

Therefore all devotees shall be careful and not falter from the five great vows and elder devotees shall enforce this on other devotees who disobey. In most villages, most people follow at least three vows considerably well, but the vows of stealing and adultery are often broken by many. Therefore be careful and do not let such a person enter the temple if he has broken these vows, no matter how reputable this person may be. However, if a good devotee happens to break a vow, then one shall not blow it out of proportion by announcing it publicly. In the case of a good devotee, one shall advise or counsel to the best of their ability so that he does not follow this path again in future. If this person does not listen to the devotee's advice then we (Santos) shall take the matter in our hands and provide advise accordingly, but one shall not in any way show favour even though he is a relative or a reputable person. If one is desirous to go to Shriji Maharaj's abode then he shall strictly obey whatever Maharaj has instructed us to do, as these days the heads of different religious sects are not enforcing the principles defining the religious way of life. They themselves do not properly follow these principles. At present, in this world none of the sect heads and follower's follow the religious principles by controlling their mind and sense organs as stipulated in our scriptures and are thus unable to enforce on others. However, in accordance to Shriji Maharaj's teachings, these principles are being followed by our Santos and they are able to better advise the devotees to follow the same even though the devotee may feel bad. Similarly in the villages, four elder devotees shall strictly obey and follow these religious principles and enforce these on other devotees. If these elder devotees through their authority do not properly advise other devotees on the religious principles, then they become an offender of God. There is no age factor in our group (Satsang). Whoever is in favour and follows the religious principles, enforcing them on other devotees, should be considered as an elder in our group and one shall follow the religious principles by listening and obeying to such elders. A person who shows interest to follow the religious principles as stated above, shall be initiated into the group in accordance with the scriptures. None shall act in favour of a wicked person who is against the group. Such a person shall be barred from the group without any compromise towards the status of the person.

Furthermore, Shriji Maharaj has separated the assemblies of men and women. Therefore men and women shall not sit together when listening to religious discourses and discussions. However, this restriction does not apply amongst relatives. Also one shall not alter Shriji Maharaj's principles by sheltering under His or the devotees glory, because all is lost if one alters his religious principles. Therefore no matter how hard you try and impress Shriji Maharaj in other ways, He will not be happy if you alter His principles. Also, people with less understanding in the religious group are carrying out crafty activities. These people are being targeted by those who practice black magic and are recruiting them into their group. Therefore, such people shall be barred from the religious group and the temple. All devotees shall refrain from telling lies, swearing, speaking immoral language, taking snuff, smoking, eating garlic, onions and asafoetida. When one is ill, he shall take medicine from a known medical practitioner but never from an unknown practitioner or doctor. If one does take medicine unknowingly from an unknown practitioner or doctor, then he should repenting accordance to the Scriptures. A number of narrow minded people develop a habit of stealing petty things such as fruits, flowers, food and clothes from their places of work, thus creating a low image in society for them and become victims of the law by paying fines. Therefore one should not associate and conduct these activities with such people. Again, regular donated funds (Dharmado), any other funds for the temple and funds of a widow that are knowingly or unknowingly permanently kept in a householder's home, can result in major

problems in life. Therefore one shall be very careful whilst dealing with these type of funds and should handle with utmost care. Presently in this age of Kali where all sorts of people have begun to integrate with different cultures and castes, it is important for a member of the group to understand the facts clearly, that one shall not drink water from a utensil made of copper, brass, iron and a utensil used for serving alcoholic drinks that has come into contact with the lower caste. Also a devout member of the group shall not purchase and eat food made with gram flour etc. cooked in restaurants as this is against the rules and regulations of the caste and mode of life. The above has been written for the benefit of the members of the group. If a member falls from these; he will have to undergo punishment in accordance with the rules and regulations of the religion.

The above has also been written with a belief that you as a whole are my own and for the betterment of your lives in this world and thereafter. Therefore you shall all strictly follow the rules and regulations set forth by Maharaj and worship Him with reverence and a true heart towards Him. As you know, Maharaj will take care of us and ultimately take us to His abode if we worship Him by giving up our habits or bad qualities. If one falls against Maharaj's wishes, then he shall suffer great distress even in this world. Presently the members who properly follow the rules and regulations are very happy and are not disadvantaged in terms of clothes, food and reputation, and during their last stages in life, will definitely be taken by Maharaj to His abode. Therefore one shall always remain on his toes and be fearful of God knowing that He is the all knower of our inner conscious. As you know, God is ever watching the behavior of the soul, so if you want to be happy, you should become a God fearing person whilst performing all your day to day activities like eating, drinking walking etc.

One shall not develop a grudge against another devotee be it due to his/her nature or monetary loss incurred due to the devotee's. Remember Maharaj and this devotee shall be indebted to you for this sacrifice. A grudge against a devotee is a greatest sin ever and is greater than the five great sins., Therefore males, females, children and elders shall all be obedient to Maharaj's teachings., Again whoever wishes to worship God and emancipate his/her soul, shall strictly follow whatever has been written above showing a sense of need and whatever faults one may possess, one shall gain understanding on how to overcome the same.

Also one shall not develop faith in black magic, charms and strings etc. Through misunderstanding and/or by behaving against the scriptures, one shall not offer worship elsewhere by ignoring the true worship, meditation and overall understanding the true meaning of God's glory as stipulated by our religion. Maharaj will be happy if the above is strictly followed and elders should request and enforce others to follow the same. It has to be understood that Maharaj's happiness is the ultimate achievement that has been totally fulfilled by the soul and it's birth as a human being. If someone is not following the tenets of the religion properly then the four elders shall intervene and advise accordingly. If the elders due to laziness, relationship or being a friend are unable to relay the message, then the matter should be brought to the Santos and nothing further shall be said after that. If one tries to obstruct this protocol through rude or malice behavior then he shall suffer public disrepute.

Furthermore, in an unfortunate event where a cow, buffalo, camel, ox, donkey etc are killed or an even greater sin than mentioned above is committed, then a Saint or a devotee shall not take food or water before performing the required penance. All devotees shall read and remember the contents of this letter. This letter shall be read on every Ekadashi in the temples for both men and women. Samvat 1953 Posh Sudh 13.