

**SUPREME LORD
SHRI SWAMINARAYAN
—AND—
THE WORLD RELIGION**

**Written & Compiled by
Rev. Shri Narayanbhai G. Thakker**

Omni-Beneficial Series

24



SHRI SWAMINARAYAN DIVINE MISSION

AHMEDABAD - 13

Emblem of Shri Swaminarayan Divine Mission



The Emblem depicts the lotus-feet of Lord Shri Swaminarayan. There are sixteen signs referred to in Samudrik Shashtra as the signs confirming the divine origin of God, the incarnate.

** Nine signs in the right foot.*

Swastika stands for the auspicious Figure of God.

Astakona (octagon) suggests that the divine compassion is constantly flowing in all the eight directions: North, South, East, West, South-East, North-East, South-West and North-West.

Urdhvarekha indicates continuous progress of souls by the divine grace.

Ankusha (the spur) indicates that the Supreme Power, the cause of all causes controls everything and it also suggests that we must restrain the inner enemies.

Dhwaj (a flag)	or Ketu stands for the spiritual victory of God, the absolute form of Truth.
Vajra (weapon of Indra)	stands for the prowess of God which destroys the weaknesses of the souls and frees them from the fear of time, actions and delusions.
Padma (the Lotus)	symbolises the tenderness and compassion of God which helps the devotee attain detachment from the mundane life, the way a lotus remains unaffected by water.
Jambu (rose apple)	symbolises the sap of divine joy that one receives from communion with God.
Jav (barley)	confirms that God takes care of the crops and the needs of those devotees who are in communion with Him and who perform non-violent Yajnas by offering foodgrains such as barley, sesame seeds etc. to the Holy Fire.
	* Seven signs in the left foot.
Meen (fish)	asks us to reach God, the source of the spiritual energy, the way a fish swimming against the current, reaches the source of a stream.

Trikona (triangle)	symbolises liberation of the soul from the mental, physical and mundane problems and difficulties. It also stands for the need to free oneself from the trial of Ishwar, Maya and Brahman and to remain steadfast in Parbrahman the ultimate reality.
Dhanush (bow)	defends the faith by protecting the devotees against evil influences.
Gopada (foot-mark of cow)	suggests the beneficial qualities of cows as well as of the saints who are dear to God.
Vyoma (the sky)	signifies the infinite and detached all-pervasiveness of God.
Ardhchandra (the crescent)	shows that the way the moon increases slowly and gradually, one can attain perfection through patient meditation of God.
Kalasha (the pot at the top of a temple)	stands for the supremacy and absoluteness of God.

Keeping the divine signs depicted in the emblem of the Mission before our eyes, we have been conducting spiritual activities for the welfare of mankind through our Gnan-Dhyan-Seva programmes. We bow down to the lotus-feet of Shri Hari and pray for His divine guidance and assistance in the fulfilment of our mission.

Shri Swaminarayano Vijaytetram

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Under the auspices of
Shri Abjibapashri Sardh Shatabdi

Organised by
Shri Abjibapashrini Chhatrī, Baladia, Kutch

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*** Publication Committee ***

Inspiration & Guidance

Rev. Shri Narayanbhai G. Thakker

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Supreme Lord
Shri Swaminarayan

Dedication

We offer the flowers of faith and
devotion in the form
of this omnibeneficient series of
books to the lotus
feet of extremely merciful Anadi
Muktaraj Param Pujya,
Shri **Abjibapa**, who was an
accomplished interpreter
of the ideal and divine philosophy
of Lord Swaminarayan,
the incarnate God, eternally
immanent and divine
in Personal form and the Master
of infinite Muktas
who have attained the ultimate
state of liberation
Param Pujya **Bapashri** spread the
supremacy of Lord
Swaminarayan in all directions,
made many devotees
experience the highest state of
Anadi Mukta, the
state of an ideal perfection, and
thus obliged the
entire mankind by bringing light
and divine joy of the
Supreme Lord Shri Swaminarayan
on the earth



**Anadi Mahamukhtaraj
Shri Abjibapashri**

We Believe

Shri Swaminarayan Divine Mission intends to bring out a series of books that will not only benefit the entire mankind but also enrich the lives of the people by offering them what is best in Indian thoughts and culture.

In this age of reason, the span of higher education is expanding day by day. The basic aim of higher education is to establish highest moral standards and to inculcate ethical values in life. The highest value and the loftiest goal of life is to experience the supreme joy which comes through communion with God. We hope the readers will find this series very useful in the achievement of these ultimate goals.

In a time, when the span of higher education, science and technology is continuously expanding, we want to mould them in such a way that they do not merely remain the means of producing material wealth and physical comforts, but should be best utilised for the inner development and spiritual perfection of mankind. Moreover, let us not forget that the final stage and purpose of evolution is to develop our self steadily and finally get immersed in the divine happiness of Supreme Lord.

Man has been gifted with an innate ability to develop continually to attain the divine bliss. This shows that we can strive together and create such social, economic and political conditions as are conducive to an unhampered spiritual progress and sublimation of life. To accelerate this process, we shall have to prepare literature, that inspire and assist the seekers of the divine pleasure.

For the social betterment and spiritual enrichment of the human society. Lord Shri Swaminarayan has established a universally acceptable, comprehensive philosophical system. It's a path of pure knowledge which elevates our soul and helps us attain oneness with the Supreme Lord. Vachanamrutam and Shikshapatri, are two great classics, containing the essence of the ideal philosophy of Shri Swaminarayan. In a simple but lucid and convincing language, Lord Shri Swaminarayan has tried to spread His message through these two great spiritual works. He also inspired His saints and seers, His liberated householder devotees and scholars to compose plenty of work expressing their own spiritual experiences, to contribute to the understanding of His percepts, which are beneficial to the whole of mankind.

These books contain the quintessence of

real art of living. Whether one belongs to the East or the West, each one of us will find this series useful as a spiritual guide leading us on the path of divinity, satisfying our longing for the touch of the Divine. Here, through this series, an attempt would be made to show how one can develop one's own self to attain oneness with the Lord Supreme. We are confident that the reading of this literature will help us overcome all conflicting deformities of modern life and usher in an era of peace, harmony and tranquillity.

We will incorporate in this series all positive and constructive ideas and religious tenets which are in consonance with our ideology and objectives.

In order to reach readers in different parts of India and abroad, we hope to publish this series, not only in Gujarati but also in Hindi, English and other languages.

We are hereby seeking everyone's active co-operation and assistance for the success of the Mission's activities. We pray for the divine grace of Lord Shri Swaminarayan to lead us and guide us in this great endeavour of ours.

V S. 2043
Shri Hari Jayanti
April 18, 1986
Ahmedabad.

Humblest of Humble
Narayanbhai G. Thakker
Founder President
Shri Swaminarayan Divine Mission



Preface

The indetachable, absolutely divine sportive acts (Leela) of Lord Shri Swaminarayan and His benevolent social and spiritual activities aimed at the well being of all living beings are powerful enough to instill in us the highest virtues of humanity, selfless service, social upliftment and devout worship blended with love (Prembhakti). His all pervading power is potent enough to tear the dense darkness of atheism and enable us to perceive the divine light of Parbrahman -the Ultimate Reality. By constantly contemplating upon this Divine Power, we can bring about radical changes in our life and become civilized moral and satsangi in the real sense of the term. Keeping this lofty goal in mind Rev. Shri Narayanbhai Thakker has prepared this little booklet.

When the social environment was being disturbed and polluted by blind-beliefs, evil-practices, temptations, superstitions and misinterpretation of religion, the great revolutionary incarnator Mahaprabhu Shri Swaminarayan was born among men in Human Form and rescued mankind, by leading people, out of the encircling darkness of ignorance, to

the light. He taught men to discriminate between the meaningful and the meaningless and between truth and untruth. He achieved this not by delivering sermons alone, but by involving Himself actively with the lives of the people. By imbibing the real meaning and value of moral conduct, religion, knowledge, renunciation and devotion in their lives, people became more humane and civilized.

These days the pure and redeeming flame of Mahaprabhu Shri Swaminarayan's all embracing, universally accepted religion is spreading its divine light all over the world. His divine message is awakening mankind by stirring the conscience of the people.

It is necessary for all the seekers with spritual-thirst to study minutely the life and work of Lord Shri Swaminarayan. For, He is the Supreme God.

To encourage and inspire individual to do so, we have published this booklet covering various aspects of Lord Shri Swaminarayan's social and spiritual life, highlighting His incarnatory work. We hope and pray to Mahaprabhu that this little book may not remain a means of knowledge only but become a book that teaches the art of living, leading mankind to ideal perfection.

We feel thankful to Prof. Mahesh Dave for his kind assistance in the publication of this booklet in English.

We pray, may Shreeji Maharaj and Bapashri bestow their choicest blessings and divine grace on one and all who have contributed to the publication of this book.

Samvat 2051
Prabodhini Ekadashi
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Supreme Lord Shri Swaminarayan and The World Religion

The task of evaluating the incarnatory work and mission of Purna Purushottam [the Supreme Person] Shri Swaminarayan, is as difficult as that of diving deep into the ocean to fetch pearls. How can a mortal understand or judge Parbrahman Paramatma -the Supreme Soul? Who can describe His attributes? None, but the Lord Himself can reveal His true nature to us.

We all know that the Supreme Person Shri Swaminarayan is beyond the grasp of our reasoning mind. How can the finite explain the infinite? We cannot understand Him; we can only experience Him. However, we can always turn to those blessed ones, the saints and sages, the thinkers and seekers and devotees who actually walked this earth with Him and had personally experienced His bliss and grace. We can also look up into scriptures and other authentic texts, which support the fact of incarnate God Shri Swaminarayan. Let us try to have a glimpse of His divine self in the writing of these great men.

Yet let us not forget that God reveals Himself to only those who have an insatiable urge to see Him and whose highest end in life is to attain oneness with Him. He who seeks shall find Him!

Even for a while if our limited vision does not allow us to perceive His divine attributes and if we take into account His services to mankind and His acts of love, we cannot miss in His human form the Divine Supreme Power which permeates all living beings. This knowledge will not only benefit us but redeem the entire mankind. His life is His mission.

Manifestation of Shri Swaminarayan

In every age, whenever religion is on the decline, and people go astray, God comes back to deliver the holy, to destroy the sin of the sinners and to establish the path of righteousness. Since long time, before the manifestation of Shri Swaminarayan among men, our land had been overrun by decoits, tyrants, despots and other evil agencies. The period was marked by anarchy, chaos and total collapse of morality. Kundapanth, Vamamarga, Kaul, Shakta and Shushka-Vedant were prevalent. The evil Tamas Yajnas were in practice. Even Vaishnavism had weakened under the impact of this all-pervading moral decay.

Thus, when our land was plunged into darkness and chaos, Bhagvan Shri Swaminarayan manifested Himself as the luminous son of Bhaktimata and Dharmadev on 9th day of the bright half of Chaitra of Samvat Year 1837 (April 2, 1781 AD) at Chhapaiyapur near Ayodhya. His father's real name was Hariprasad but as he strictly followed the path of righteousness, he was called Dharmadev; His mother Premvati was called Bhaktimata because she had all the qualities of an ideal devotee.

The actual arrival of Shri Swaminarayan was heralded by the birth of some Muktas, the liberated or the self-realised souls and saints. As soon as the Lord descended on the earth, these great souls joined Him in His work of bringing about a social and religious revolution. The way the sunrise illumines all the dark directions and quickens life, the dawn of our Lord's birth was extraordinarily radiant. It was a dawn of spiritualism. People began to experience divine joy. Some of them saw His divine self with naked eyes. In some hearts the desire to renounce automatically arose and in the hearts of common men there arose a wish for salvation, to attain ideal perfection. These were the sure signs of our Lord's manifestation.

The manifestation of Supreme Lord

Shri Swaminarayan was marked by revolution in every walk of social, religious and political life. The eighteenth century was a period of great revolutionaries, great thinkers and poets. In Gujarat, Kutchh and Kathiawar, great devotees and poets like Bhoja, Ranchhod, Lalo and Dayaram were born. It was during this period that the great social reformer, Raja Ram Mohan Roy had launched his reformist activities. In Indian history this period is remembered as an age of great revolutions. Lord Shri Swaminarayan's contributions to the history of revolutions of this period was the greatest.

Childhood

Our Lord was given the name of Ghanshyam At the age of eight, He was given the sacred thread which marks the beginning of the study of the scriptures. At a very tender age He completed the study of all the scriptures including the Vedas and displayed extraordinary scholarship. During this period, young Ghanshyam accompanied His father Dharmadev to Kashi (Varanasi) to participate in a meeting of the scholars who believed in the philosophy of the Advaita [not dual or Monoism]. He humbled all the scholars by His logical convincing arguments. They were simply stunned by His scholarship and

were struck by the deep insight, perseverance and persuasive power of this little boy.

Let us look at one more incident from His childhood. Ghanshyam must have been eight or ten years old. A fisherman of Chhapaiya had caught some fish from the Meen Sarovar(Lake of fish) and had kept them on the bank. Lord Ghanshyam arrived there and just with a glance brought the dead fish back to life.

He preached the message of Ahimsa, non-violence to the fisherman, saying, "Like you, these creatures too have a right to live." This brought about a change of heart and the fisherman gave up his profession. He was greatly struck by the spiritual powers of this child. Only an extraordinary child with divine attributes can perform and display such miraculous acts.

When Ghanshyam was hardly eleven, within a short period of just six months, both His father and mother returned to Akshardham (the eternal abode). One day, it so happened, that Ghanshyam in a wrestling match hurt a boy by flinging him on the ground. Some people approached His elder brother Shri Rampratapji and complained against Him. The elder brother mildly and lovingly reproached Him. Ghanshyam promised His brother, "I won't give any cause of complaint in future."

Rampratapji could not comprehend the significance of his brother's promise. But Ghanshyam had got the cause to renounce.

Renunciation

On the very next day, after this incident, eager to embrace a life of an ascetic, loving penance and non-attachment, Ghanshyam, without informing anyone, left home, saying that He was going to take His morning bath. Thus on 10th day of the bright half of Ashadh in Samvat Year 1848 [29-6-1792 AD] before the dawn of Friday, Ghanshyam set out on a journey to accomplish His divine mission on this earth. This day of renunciation is celebrated as Shri Swaminarayan's Nishkraman Day [the day of renunciation].

Vanavicharan and Bharat Parikraman (The Pilgrim's Progress)

Ghanshyam now came to be known as Neelkanth. The fearless young Neelkanth, for seven years, one month and eleven days, wandered through the dense forests of the Himalayas and travelled on foot to almost all important places of pilgrimage in India. While in forests, Neelkanth practised Ashtang Yoga [all the

eight parts of body are brought under the control of the mind] under the guidance of a yogi called Gopala, and attained mastery over the most difficult arts of Hatha Yoga [a mode of practising abstract meditation through self mortification]. The penance that He offered during His stay in the forest, was so severe that His body was emaciated to that extent that if He got hurt or injured, not blood but water trickled out of the cut. But this did not deter Him and He always appeared cheerful and radiant even in this condition.

As this Divine Pilgrim Neelkanth passed through forests and different parts of India, He transformed the lives of many people. He preached the message of right conduct to the wandering mendicants and beggars and brought them back on the path of righteousness. He inspired many fallen individuals to give up the path of sin and helped them return to the life of morality and truth. His divine presence in the midst of these people, radically transformed their lives and they all became the seekers after the Ultimate Reality. They sought salvation through Him. Nothing is impossible for God the incarnate.

If we study the entire history of human civilization, we cannot miss the significance of the pilgrimage undertaken by Neelkanth Varni. It

was a unique method of educating others by imbibing the cultural and religious life of India. As He travelled further and farther, He began to unfold His divine and spiritual process before the people, finally emerging as the Absolute Reality or the Godhead.

Diksha or Initiation

The initiation of Neelkanth Varni is not without its divine meaning and significance. The Divine Pilgrim, arrived at village Loja near the port city of Mangrol in Saurashtra. While He was sitting on the platform of a step-well on the outskirts of the village to relax, there came a monk called Sukhanand, one of the disciples of Swami Ramanandji, to take his morning bath. Sukhanand on seeing the luminous figure of Neelkanth Varni was filled with divine awe and began to experience divine joy. There was a brief conversation between the two. When Sukhanand asked Him, "Where have You come from and what is Your destination? Who is Your father and who is Your mother?", Our Lord replied, "I have come from Brahmpur and Brahmpur is My destination and those who can lead Me to Brahmpur are My parents." Thus in a symbolic language, Neelkanth revealed to Sukhanand His true divine Self. Sukhanand was simply struck by

the divine wisdom of this young ascetic. He found this young celibate to be a treasure of knowledge which he has been seeking all those years from his master. Sukhanand paid his respects to Him and requested Him to accompany him to see his master. First, they met Swami Muktanandji, the chief disciple of Ramanandji, to whom He expressed His desire to realise God and to have a glimpse of the Supreme Lord. Muktanand and Neelkanth sent two separate letters to Swami Ramanandji. Ramanandji was actually awaiting the arrival of a suitable disciple who could continue his work. He was waiting for a genius, a man possessing divine knowledge to take his place. He often used to say, "I am only a drum beater, a crowd catcher, the real charmer is yet to arrive." On receiving the letters, when Ramanandji read about Neelkanth's insatiable thirst, for the realisation and glimpse of God, he immediately recognised Neelkanth and informed the congregation, "The one I have been waiting for has arrived."

Keeping Swami Ramanandji's observation in view, once Swami Nishkulanandji remarked, "Our new guest resembles Swami Ramdas, doesn't He?" Ramanandji replied, "You can't compare the two. He is far greater."

Nishkulanandji asked him if He was as great as Muktanandji. The Swami observed that He was superior to Muktanandji. Ultimately when Nishkulanandji asked him, "Is He of your stature?" The swami replied, "I stand nowhere in His comparison. He is far greater than, and superior to me." Later on, after years when Nishkulanand Swami perceived His supreme Self through personal experience, he observed, "Now I have understood the meaning of Ramanandji's observation."

In reply to the letters received by him, Ramanandji asked Neelkanth Brahmachari to stay at Loja under the guidance of Muktanand Swami and teach Hatha Yoga to the disciples. Accordingly, Neelkanth began His work under the guidance and supervision of Muktanand Swami and carried out his instructions. He performed sundry chores of collecting dried cow dung for fuel, swept and cleaned the dwelling place for the saints, cooked food for them and nursed the saints taken ill. He never grudged any work, big or small. To Him no work was low or unimportant. In the human form of Neelkanth, our Lord was eager to set an example for the people to follow. Our supreme Lord through His actions showed, "Although

He had nothing to gain from the three Lokas [the three spheres] nor had He to achieve anything not yet achieved, nowever still, in order to set an example and confirm the dignity of labour He must toil and work. After all people imitate the great."

After some time, Swami Ramanandji arrived at village Piplana near Loja. He asked Neelkanth Varni to see him at Piplana where on the 11th day of Prabodhini Ekadasni of the bright half of Kartik of Samva Year 1857, He was offered Diksha- initiation and was given the name Sahajanand by His Guru. this was the most appropriate name because whosoever came into His contact experienced an instant joy. Moreover, as He possessed all the attributes of Narayan in Him, Ramanand Swami called Him by the name of Narayan Muni. As He possessed all the spiritual qualities and divine attributes and although He was only 21 years old, He was appointed the chief preceptor of the Satsang Fellowship. Shortly after handing Him over the reigns of the religion, in a month's time, Ramanand Swami dropped his mortal body and returned to Akshardham. Thus Swami Ramanandji had prepared a background for the divine activities of this great

preceptor of all preceptors.

Within the Satsang Fellowship, keeping His different attributes in view, the devotees call Him by different names such as Ghanshyam, Neelkanth Varni, Sahajanand Swami, Narayan Muni, Harikrishna Maharaj, Shreeji Maharaj, Shri Hari etc

The day of Diksha-initiation marks the beginning of the third phase of the luminous life of Shri Swaminarayan. During this phase, God the incarnate, among men, revealed His prowess by uprooting adharma -the path of sin, and by establishing the path of righteousness. In order to assert His divine origin, He performed acts which no mortal can conceive of or accomplish. As a result, during His stay on this earth Shri Swaminarayan was worshipped as the God Incarnate. Due to paucity of time and space we shall have only glimpses of some of His divine acts of love and mercy and of social and moral regeneration.

Cleansing of Thoughts and Attitudes

After Ramanand Swami gave up his body, Shri Swaminarayan launched His incarnatory activities by forming different groups of saints. Each group was assigned a specific region where the saints of that particular unit worked

and preached. He too led a group and travelled widely preaching the message of Bhagvat Dharma. Thus, the divine message of Bhagvat Dharma was spread to every corner and every house, cleansing the minds of the people. He turned them on to the path of righteousness and salvation.

Eradication of Superstitions and Corrupt Practices

In order to rid the religion of deception, intrigue, fraud, immorality, wrong-action and other corrupt practices, Shri Swaminarayan administered Five Basic Vows or ★Panch Vartman

He inspired thousands of people to take this pledge and thus made their lives free of vices. By His divine luminous Self and His art of persuading people, He liberated them from the clutches of blind beliefs, superstitions and worship of the evil spirits, evil Gods and Goddesses. He made them fearless by telling them that once you cast all your cares to God, once you seek His protection, there is no need to fear anyone or anything. Have faith in Him and be fearless.

★ Vide Yoga For Entire Life the booklet of this omnibeneficient series for the detailed description of **Panch Vartman**.

Goodbye to Bad customs and Addictions

No Hindu scripture supports the custom of practising Sati (self-immolation) after the death of a husband. This evil custom has no religious sanction; it has roots in the traditions of backward and superstitious societies. "One who dies on the funeral pyre of the dead husband can never attain Moksha-salvation. A widow, instead of committing Sati, should remain wedded to God and lead a life of a devotee surrendering her mind, speech and action to Him the divine Husband." He took the people into confidence and convinced them to give up the evil practice of Sati.

In those days the Kathis used to kill their female babies by drowning them into milk. This most inhuman practice had its roots in the evil of the dowry system. Sahajanandji with his great convincing power, tamed the irrepressible militant Kathi community, and made them bid goodbye to all evil customs and practices. They became non-violent.

Sahajanand Swami strongly objected to the singing of vulgar, lewd songs at the time of weddings and asked people to sing songs commemorating the wedding of Radha and Rukmani. He commissioned His poet-saints to

compose such inspiring wedding songs and encouraged people to sing them.

He denounced all types of addiction and impressed upon the people that they were the greatest obstacles in the path of leading a life of piety and righteousness. He gave strength and support to the victims of addiction and freed them from the destructive habit of consuming alcohol, opium, hemp, hashish, tobacco etc. Thus, through His divine power, He saved many lives from getting ruined.

The Message of Ahimsa (Non-violence)

Sahajanandji, with the help of the scriptures convinced the people to perform Yajnas, sans sacrifice. He referred to the text that says 'अजेन यजेत' and explained that here the meaning of the word 'अज-aja' is not to be taken as a goat; 'aja' also means old paddy which should be offered in the Yajnas. Thus by giving a new interpretation, He stopped the animal slaughter and introduced non-violent Brahm-Yajnas, asserting the oneness of atma (soul) and Paramatma the Super Soul, the God.

He convinced the people that violence had no place in any human activity; much less in the religious observations. To restart to violence for any purpose is to practice

adharma -the path of evil," He asserted, and thus showed to the world the supreme path of non-violence.

He talked to Sir John Malcolm, the then Governor of Bombay, and convinced him to put a ban on cow-slaughter and, thus protected our precious animal-wealth.

Elevation of the Lowly

Shri Swaminarayan took deep interest in the socially neglected poor classes and established personal rapport with Koli, Bharwad and other so-called backward people. He involved Himself with their work and inspired confidence in them. Likewise He raised the standard of living of Kanbi, Suthar, Kadiya, Darji, Mochi, Khoja and others and brought them on the path of piety. Even the prostitutes and other fallen women were not denied His divine grace and love. He brought them on the path of righteousness and redeemed them. Thus, Shri Swaminarayan earned the title of Adhamodharak (the Redeemer of the Fallen).

Removed the Evil of Social Discrimination

Shri Swaminarayan was the first spiritual

leader revered by Hindus and non-Hindus alike. His work of including Non-Hindus such as Parsis, Muslims, Khojas, Jains and Christians into the Hindu fold is unparalleled. He used to say, "The soul has neither caste nor class; neither race nor colour; neither status nor gender. God simply does not discriminate on such basis. To Him, all are equal and He does not deny His love or grace to anyone. To Him, one who possesses positive qualities and is steadfast on the path of righteousness and is busy doing constructive and creative work is the highest." Thus, by preaching the message of equality He removed the age old misconceptions of higher and lower classes. By asking the people to keep themselves free from the bias of cast, the bias of community, the bias of creed, the bias of colour and gender. He helped them achieve emotional integration and encouraged in them the feeling of brotherhood and oneness.

Re-defined the Varnashram Dharma

Lord Swaminarayan re-defined the Varnashram Dharma; the four-fold division into Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Kshudra.

Shri Swaminarayan, while accepting the necessity of the Varnashram Dharma gave its correct definition and reinterpreted it to remove

the feeling of mutual contempt and hatred. This is how He interpreted it:

- (1) Varnashram Dharma is not rigid. It is flexible, and changes keeping the time and place in view. Only non-violence, truth, brahmacharya (celibacy), mercy and forgiveness are constant and eternal.*
- (2) The incarnations of God are not simply meant to establish the Varnashram Dharma but to establish the Ekantik Dharma (the All-Embracing Religion relating us to the Supreme Reality.)*
- (3) One does not attain moksha-salvation by only observing the tenets of varnashram Dharma. In fact those who are proud of their social status never qualify to be a Sadhu -a seeker of the divine bliss.*

Shri Swaminarayan brought the untouchables, the Harijans into the Satsang Fellowship and treated them at par with other upper class people. They were made His followers and His attitude towards them was far more advanced, liberal and sympathetic than that of any other contemporary social reformer.

Sadavratas and Annasatras

(Places where free food is distributed to the needy ')

Shri Swaminarayan considered charity and altruism as essential attitudes in a welfare

society. Pained by the suffering of the poor the Lord declared, "The poor and the oppressed are my dearest and nearest. Those who will try to mitigate their suffering and pain shall win my heart." He taught His followers to serve the poor by establishing and running charitable community kitchens everywhere. Thus, starving and the deprived members of the society got relief. He got wells, stepwells and ponds dug through His saints and followers whenever the need arose. By improving the economic condition of the poor, He inspired them to lead a life of honesty and good conduct.

Emancipation of Women

Shri Swaminarayan can be easily described as a pioneer of programmes aimed at the emancipation of women in those days. He launched a literacy drive to educate women and gave them dignity by imparting them social, moral and spiritual knowledge. He produced great women scholars. He founded separate institutions for them and appointed women preceptors to educate other women and to run and manage their institutions by themselves. He considered them worthy of receiving spiritual knowledge and of practising it to attain moksha -salvation. He gave

them equal rights in the matter of renunciation and diksha -initiation. He asked the widows to follow the Samkhya Dharma (the Yoga which helps us to liberate the soul from the bonds of worldly existence.)

Taught Self-restraint (Brahmacharya)

Shri Swaminarayan emphasised the importance of celibacy -Brahmacharya and asked people to practice self-restraint. He was greatly concerned about the slackening of moral standards and widespread corruption. By asking men and women to discipline and sublimate their baser instincts, He protected their virtue and enhanced the image of Indian society and culture. By asking the monks to emulate the example of His untainted, disciplined and righteous disciples, He purified the order of Tyagashram (the order of Sadhus). By presenting an ideal of self-restraint before the licentious and fallen Dharmagurus (the preceptors), He re-established Brahmacharyashram.

Converted the Dacoits

The age old belief of "Might is Right" and "Only arms can resolve a problem" was removed

from the minds of the people. Shri Swaminarayan with His divine power, without the aid of weapons or police tamed the most dangerous dacoits and other violent tribes which were beyond the control of the police or the British Government. He brought about a change of hearts and made them drop their weapons. In place of a sword He offered them a rosary and transformed them into peaceloving, non-violent devotees. The story of this transformation spread all over India and abroad.

No more Conflicts, no more Controversies

By asserting that the Vedas look upon Narayan and Shiva as identical and unified divine entities, Shri Swaminarayan settled the age old conflict and controversy that bothered the followers of Shaivism and Vaishnavism. By striking a balance between Gnanmarga (the path of pure knowledge) and Karmayoga (the path of selfless action), He advised people to follow both these paths. For, righteousness, knowledge or self-abnegation (Vairagya) alone will not help the seeker to realise God (Atmaswarupa). If these three are tempered with devotion (Bhakti) then only one could succeed in curbing one's ego (I-ness and My-ness) and

finally realise the Supreme Lord (Paramatma) or the Ultimate Reality. He showed the validity of this truth by the example of His own conduct and thus removed all doubts created by scholarly disputes.

No Place for Laxity and Lethargy

Sahajanandji through His busy and purposefully active life removed laxity and lethargy from the society. He asked people not to waste their time and leisure in sloth and unproductive activities. Instead, they should spend it in prayer and constructive humanitarian activities.

Built Temples in the Service of Man

Lord Swaminarayan built magnificent, self-sufficient temples, where lived the monks and Paramhansas (an ascetic of highest order) who have controlled and subdued all their senses by Yam (control), Niyam (observance) and Samyam (self-restraint). These temples, resonating with devotional songs are the source of divine light, solace, peace and tranquility. Shreeji Maharaj used to say, "Temple is where the mind remains steadfast in the luminous, divine image of Paramatma, the Supreme Lord."

Organised Religious Festivals and Samaiya (Gatherings)

With a view of instilling pure joy, religious fervour, alongwith the highest virtues of righteousness, knowledge and devotion among His devotees, Lord Shri Swaminarayan organised festivals and religious gatherings at different places. During these festivals the learned saints and scholars gave religious discourses and strengthened the Satsang Fellowship by encouraging fellow-feelings and unity.

Art for Life's Sake

Shri Sahajanand Swami considered art as a mode of worshipping the supreme beauty of God Shri Premanand Swami described Sahajanand Swami as "the gold mine of all fine-arts." The contribution of these saints and disciples of Lord Swaminarayan to the development of architecture, sculpture, painting, music and poetry is immensely great. The magnificent temples, the carved arches and mandapams are excellent examples of Indian architecture and sculpture. He encouraged and appreciated the art of dress-designing, making ornaments, wood-work, furniture-designing etc.

The offerings by devotees in the form of artifacts such as garments, ornaments, wooden sandals, rosaries, bajaths (wooden stool), carpets, artistic cushions, cots, carts, paintings and literary works have been preserved as a part of our rich heritage. The festival of annakuta encouraged the art of preparing dainty dishes offered to the Lord by the devotees. The paintings and idols revealing different facets and moods of Shreeji Maharaj bear testimony to the advancement of art and literature made under the guidance and inspiration of Shri Swaminarayan.

The Gift of Holy Scriptures

By composing Shikshapatri a classic, containing the code of conduct, He made His devotees adhere to the moral principles of achar shuddhi, dharma shuddhi and vyavahar shuddhi -the three fold principles of purity of action, purity of thought and purity of conduct and behaviour. Vachanamrutam is a compilation of Shri Swaminarayan's own divine utterances on different aspects of life and religion. These two spiritual classics have elevated and enabled the lives of the people and helped them remain steadfast on the path of righteousness and good conduct. Thus, for the sublimation and

redemption of both, the body and the soul, Lord Swaminarayan provided guidance to mankind, through these two great scriptures.

Spiritual Heirs

Having founded a unique spiritual order, Shri Swaminarayan appointed scholarly, devout and righteous Acharyas or Chief Preceptors to spread the message of the religion and to manage the temples and other assets. The Acharyas were ordained by the Lord to run the institution in consultation with the senior saints and devout householders belonging to the Satsang Fellowship. The Chiefs were asked not to act independently in an arbitrary fashion. He not only founded a flawless religion that would constantly guide the whole world in its spiritual quest but also turned it into an institution governed by a constitution and rules suitable to both the spiritual and social groups. Thus, when He was just forty-nine years old, Shri Swaminarayan had accomplished the goal He had aimed at. Who, except God the incarnate, could have completed the task of social regeneration in such a short period?

Unique Qualities of Shri Swaminarayan

(i) Of all the spiritual leaders, Lord

Shri Swaminarayan has been the most dynamic, most vibrant, most radiant and most redeeming. For the spread of the Ekantik Dharma (the ultimate and absolute truth), He, for 28 years, constantly moved across the length and breadth of the country either on foot or on horseback. He visited thousands of towns and villages, transforming people into ardent devotees.

(ii) He did not keep anybody out of His divine grace Hindus, Parsis, Muslims, Khojas, Jains, Britishers and even those who did not believe in the Vedas, directly or indirectly experienced His divine bliss.

(iii) His life was His mission. Therefore, for the spiritual education and redemption of thousands of people He projected Himself as Sadhak -the practitioner, Sadhan -means (instrument) and Sadhya -the spiritual end. His entire incarnatory life itself was a living book of theology and metaphysics.

(iv) He could explain the abstract and most explicable philosophical concepts in the language of the masses. His interpretations were so simple that even a layman could understand Him without any difficulty. His discourses were marked by a simple, direct, colloquial, epigrammatic and conversational style.

(v) Even in His attempts at correcting the morals and manners of the people, His approach was always constructive and corrective.

(vi) He always believed in returning good for evil. He was always eager to do a good turn to those who thought ill of Him. He never cursed anybody, nor did He wished ill of anyone. On the contrary, even if His disciple had offended anybody, He would approach the aggrieved person and tender an apology.

(vii) He had a boundless love and compassion for children. In spite of His busy schedule, He used to spend some time with children and preach them. He always grieved if a child suffered. He would not hesitate to say sorry even to a child. He always behaved with them as one of them.

(viii) Sadguru Premanand Swami has addressed Him as Karunalochan (Merciful) in his song:

‘કોઈને દુખિયો રે, દેખી ન ખમાય,
દયા આણી રે, અતિ આકળા થાય.
અન્ન, ધન, વસ્ત્ર રે, આપીને દુઃખ ટાળે,
કરુણાદ્રષ્ટિ રે, દેખી વાન જ વાળે.’

(Grieved to see others in grief, pains of others pained Him. The compassionate one moved by pity, offered food, clothes and cash. And with a glance divine, the Merciful mitigated all miseries.)

(ix) Once, revealing His mission on the earth Lord Shri Swaminarayan declared: "I have come

here for accord and not for discord."

(x) Shri Swaminarayan had the yogic power and spiritual magnetism to attract people. His absolutely transparent spiritual life forever guided people on the path of righteousness. He provided inspiration, moral strength and support. These divine attributes illuminated His whole being and warmed those around Him with joy divine.

(xi) Whosoever came into contact with Him experienced.

(a) That there was magnetism, a magic in His eyes, in His utterances and also in His gait.

(b) That from His eyes there always trickled the nectar of divine love.

(c) That everyone, mesmerised by His radiant figure, instantly paid obeisance to Him. Even today, His wooden and marble icons continue to captivate our minds.

(d) The propitious, 'boon-granting' posture of His hand makes us fearless and inspires confidence in us.

(e) In the right foot of Shri Swaminarayan there were nine incarnatory signs and His left foot revealed seven divine signs. In all, there were sixteen unique marks asserting His incarnation.

Distinctive Features of Swaminarayanism

(1) The followers of this Faith come from all

walks of life and they belong to different castes, classes, vocations and sects. It has absorbed one and all irrespective of their caste or creed. It welcomes all human beings with love and compassion and treats them as equals within the Satsang Fellowship.

(2) All those who embrace Swaminarayanism are enjoined to observe Panch Vartman -Five moral codes for the purification of mind and body. These five moral codes are.

The devotees shall-

- a) abstain from all intoxicants
- b) not eat flesh
- c) not commit theft
- d) not commit adultery
- e) not defile others nor get defiled.

(3) The edifice of Swaminarayanism rests on four basic tenets:

Truthfulness

Non-violence

Celibacy-chastity

Worship of God the incarnate

(4) Lord Shri Swaminarayan has explained the nature of God in the light of all the four scriptures viz. Samkhya, Yoga, Vedanta and Pancharatra.

(5) The philosophy of Swaminarayan Dharma has incorporated:

a) Devotion with real understanding of the greatness and glory of God from the doctrine of Dvaitavada (dualism)

b) Sadhanchatushtaya (Four means of spiritual accomplishment) and Jivan Mukti (liberation of soul in life itself) from Advaita (the doctrine of Monoism)

c) Mode of Upasana or worship from Shudhadvaitam (Pure Monoism)

d) The concept of Sharir-Shariri Sambandha -relationship between 'body' and 'soul' and man's total surrender (Sharanagati) to His Divine will, from the doctrine of Vishishtadvaitam (Modified Monoism)

All these doctrines have been adopted, with their proper interpretation in the ideal philosophy of Shri Swaminarayan.

(6) This religion contains in its purest form, what is best in the spiritual and cultural traditions of India as well as what is noblest in all the great religions of the world.

(7) This religion is not exclusively spiritual or other-worldly. Being the religion of man, it teaches the art of living and provides guidance in our day-to-day life. It is also a pure Vyavahar Dharma -a religion of human relationship. Again, this religion has not been a monopoly of the rich, educated upper-classes. In fact, it is the universal

religion of the masses, wedded to the principle of 'Unto this last.'

(8) This religion shines out with righteousness, renunciation, thirst for knowledge and austerity. With their right actions and spiritual fervour, the saints and householders of this faith occupy a special place in our society. Here, in an extremely pious environment, one can experience the soothing touch of divinity, the elevating effect of devotion that comes through the practice of self-restraint, selfless-service, charity, care and concern for the fellow beings. Whatever rituals, codes of moral conduct and religious instructions have been prescribed for the followers, are supported by truth and have redeeming effect on the practitioners.

(9) The ever-increasing span of this religion in India and abroad is the proof of its universality.

(10) It has crossed all the barriers of time and space and has become a religion of humanity, in the sense that even after thousands of years, it appears contemporary and will continue to deliver mankind from the bondage of ignorance.

Thus, Lord Shri Swaminarayan has shown His unique capacity to combine spiritualism with practical wisdom in the establishment of an all-embracing, universal supreme religion,

promising redemption of the mankind. This is the proof of His being the incarnate God.

Inspiring Opinions of Eminent Indian and Foreign Thinkers and Leaders of Mankind

1. "India is a land of many sects. But Swaminarayan has struck me as laudable, clean and appealing. I have great respect for this sect."

- Mahatma Gandhi

2. "Swami Sahajanand and the saints of the Swaminarayan sects have spread the fragrance of morality all over Gujarat through their pious and righteous lives. The contribution of this religion to the transformation of the untrained and unlettered people belonging to the backward classes, is very important. It has helped them emerge from their sub-human state and given them respectability and human dignity."

- Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel,

Former Home Minister of India

3. "The teaching of Swami Shri Sahajanand have turned many aggressively violent communities of Gujarat and Kathiawad into docile and peace loving devotees of God. The Vachanamrutam, a collection of His sermons is very deep in its spiritual content and is worth contemplating upon, as a book exploring modes of Upasana, self-realisation."

- Acharya Shri Anandshankar Bapubhai Dhruv

4. "Amongst the great spiritual torch-bearers of Gujarat, the name of Swami Sahajanandji is the foremost."

- **Kanaiyalal Munshi**, eminent Gujarati litterateur

5. "Swami Shri Sahajanand was the last reformist of the medieval Hinduism."

- **Justice, Mr. Mahadev Govind Ranade**

6. "Of all the ideologies propounding the principle of non-violence, the one put forward by Shri Swaminarayan has appeared to be the loftiest to me. Its influence on my personal life has been so great, that I have dedicated my entire life to the cause of non-violence."

- **Gulzarilal Nanda**,

Former Home Minister of India

7. "The Story of Swaminarayan's incarnatory activities which lasted for nearly thirty years and resulted into the establishment of a universal religion, is unique in the world history and unparalleled and revolutionary in the history of Gujarat."

- **Shri Vijayrai Kalyanrai Vaidya**, literary critic

8. "Swami Sahajanand arrived at the nick of time and launched a unique revolution in the life of the people. He transformed the entire society, from the highest to the lowliest, by instilling in them the virtues of truthfulness and

righteous conduct. This can only be done by an extraordinary Supreme Person, like Swami Sahajanand. We remember Him as a great reformer, a founder of religion and a prophet of India's bright future."

- **Manu Subedar,**

President, Sastu Sahityavardhak Karyalaya

9. "The teachings of Swaminarayan are like a clear stream of water, ever flowing and purifying; quenching the thirst of one and all. Man may belong to any caste or creed but he is always in search of light that will lead him nearer to truth. And a prophet or a God is the one who provides him this divine light."

- **Shri Mehdi Navaz Jung,**

Former Governor of Gujarat

10. "When Gujarat, Kutch and Kathiawad were plunged into darkness, for nearly 30 years, Shri Sahajanand Swami strove hard and brought back the people on the path of righteousness. Using His spiritual power and organisational insight, He created a band of committed followers, accepted challenges and faced difficulties, to spread His divine message to people belonging to the upper-classes and lower-classes, to Hindus and non-Hindus alike and illumined their hearts. His spiritual endeavour

reminds us of Lord Buddha. Amongst the eminent persons of His time, Sahajanand Swami was the greatest. He was the Supreme Being, worthy of being worshipped by His contemporaries as God the incarnate."

- **Kishorlal Mashruwalla**, eminent thinker

(11) "How to describe the salient features of the religion propagated by Shreeji? It's a path of piety emphasising the purity of conduct, purity of rituals, purity of U, nsana or worship, purity in our dealings, inner and outer purity i.e purity of body and mind, leading to perfection. By asking the householders to give up hemp, hashish and tobacco, Shreeji made their lives addiction free; by asking the saints to smash their coloured decorative goward-bowls, made them passion-free; by fixing separate entrances for men and women, Shreeji restored the sanctity of the temples; by asking His followers to strictly observe Panch Vartman -five moral codes, made them men of pure conduct; by offering them the gift of Shikshapatri, purified their behaviour; by reciting Vachanamrutas to them He purified their knowledge; by bestowing upon them Prembhakti (devotion combined with love). He made them pure at heart; by introducing festivals and celebrations in life He engendered enthusiasm among the people. He awakened the

conscience of the people through magnificent temples, non-violent Yajnas, pure mode of worship, celebrations of Vaishnavite festivals of Parna-Hindola, Vasant Panchmi, Janmashtami, Jalazilani and Ramnavami. Like a wandering ascetic, He moved from village to village inspiring zest for living. He rocked the masses on the swing of love and affection and boosted their moral and rejuvenated the Indian society. If history wants to know "What did Swaminarayan do?" we can answer in one sentence: "Shreeji Maharaj bathed Gujarat in the holy waters of the Saryu and immersed it in the joy divine." Thus Lord Shri Swaminarayan was the morning sun of the dawn of a new spiritual era."

- Kavi Nahnalal

Now let us see how some foreign dignitaries evaluate the incarnatory work of Shri Swaminarayan:

1. Self-experience of Mr. Henry George Burgess:

"Sahajanand Swami was a man of action, possessing redeeming spiritual powers. Thousands of people who had gone astray were brought back on the path of righteousness by Him, without getting any assistance from the authorities or the rich. He was an object of worship to the prince and the pauper, to the scholars and the illiterate alike. His humility

purged the venom of hatred even from the hearts of His enemies."

2. Mr. Bowles observes:

"The ascetics who join this order are enjoined upon not to resist any kind of oppression but to bear it with calm without any feeling of hurt or ill-will towards the oppressor. This is a unique feature of this religion. His teachings have raised the standards of morality."

3. Collector Williams notes:

"In comparison to the norms of morality determined by other scriptures, the one preached by Sahajanand is much much higher. He asks His followers to have the highest level of absolute piety and purity. He has ordained His disciples not to glance at a woman passing by. He preaches the doctrine of one Supreme God. The villages and regions which were once considered to be the most dangerous, after accepting Sahajanand as their spiritual leader, have become most peaceful and the safest ones."

4. Prince Hopkins, Professor at London University narrates his own experience:

"Although Swaminarayan had immanent divine powers, and was Himself the incarnate God, He never tried to show off. While leading an austere life of an ascetic, He was always

cheerful, playful and had a great sense of humour. He used to sing, play wrestle and even cut jokes. He is immortal, ever present and gives darshan (glimpse) of His luminous figure to many of His devotees, when they are about to leave this world."

This is how scholars and great men of India and abroad have given a historical account of Shri Swaminarayan and His religion. This should convince us that Shri Swaminarayan was indeed an incarnate God.

Redemptive Attributes of God Perceived in Swaminarayan

The herculean incarnatory task accomplished by Shri Swaminarayan was the result of His inherent divine qualities. In order to ennoble our lives let us recall those divine attributes enlisted below:

Lord Shri Swaminarayan possessed the virtues of knowledge, self-abnegation, renunciation, spiritual prowess, cleanliness, truthfulness, forgiveness, mercy, gentleness, non-attachment, self-content, firm determination, equanimity, tolerance and forbearance, austerity, elegance, sensitivity, proficiency, compassion, patience, steadfastness, solemnity, right conduct, humility, non-violence in thought, speech and

action, non-stealing, complete control over six instincts viz. [hunger, thirst, sorrow, passion and delusion, aging and death.], selfless-service, non-possession, non-indulgence in sense-gratifying objects and activities, shunning bad company, saintliness and service before the self.

Now let us have some concrete examples showing how He translated these ideals into action :

(1) Once Sarangpur had torrential rains for nearly three days without any let up. Many houses were destroyed. A brahmin's house collapsed burying 10 to 20 heads of cattle. As soon as Shri Hari saw this, He rushed to the spot, lifted the cross-beam and saved the cattle. Moreover, He helped the poor to rebuild their houses. Thus the merciful Shri Hari used to rush to the needy and the miserable without waiting for an invitation.

(2) Once Lord Shri Swaminarayan as an ascetic Varni was on His way from Jagannathpuri to Rameshvaram. He met a mendicant called Sevakram who was suffering from dysentery. His body was stinking with filth and nobody could go near him. He was groaning with pain. When Swaminarayan saw his suffering, His heart was filled with pity. He broke His journey to nurse Sevakram. He regularly bathed him, changed his

clothes and cooked food for him. He used to visit different localities for His meals. Often, He didn't get any food and had to observe a fast. Although Sevakram was aware of this, he never said, "I've some money. Please cook food for both of us. Let us eat together." Thus, Swaminarayan by serving sick Sevakram gave proof of His selfless service.

(3) Maharaj (Shri Swaminarayan) was running a free community kitchen for the poor at village Lojpur. He used to move around with a Kavad on His shoulders collecting alms for the poor. He used to cook in the morning and evening to feed the poor. Only after serving the poor and His ascetics He would take His meals.

(4) When His preceptor, Ramanand Swami was breathing his last, he asked Sahajanand Swami to ask for two boons. Sahajanand Swami prayed:
(i) O master! Let your devotee be spared the agony which is as painful as the one caused by the sting of a scorpion. Instead of him let Me suffer the pain all over My body even if it is crore times severer than that caused by a scorpion's bite.

(ii) If it is in the destiny of your devotee to receive a ramapatra-beggar's bowl, let it be My destiny. He should never suffer hunger or want of clothes.

The request for the first boon reveals Swaminarayan's concern, care and love for His devotees. While the second boon shows His desire to share the destiny of the devotees. No incarnation of God has ever promised to transfer the tragic fate of His devotees to Him, making their destiny His. Thus, He promised to suffer every sorrow of His devotees. Since then the saints and devotees of Swaminarayan with absolute faith in Him and in His commandments have been leading a life of tranquillity and happiness. This historical fact cannot be overlooked.

(5) Once a brahmin from Siddhpur approached Shri Hari and prayed: "Maharaj, my son has to receive his sacred-thread but I have no money for the thread-ceremony." Shri Hari, soon alighted from His horse and handing the reins of the animal to the brahmin said, "Take away this horse. Sell it off and perform the sacred thread ceremony." Later on, a devotee called Punjaji from the village Methan, offered money to the brahmin and got the horse back. Thus our Lord, the Merciful has come to succor in the hour of need and delivered the miserables from pains and sorrows.

(6) One night Shri Hari arrived unannounced and all alone to the hut of Saghrām Vaghri at

village Limdi. Saghran and his wife could not believe their eyes, "Maharaj, at this hour!" The Merciful sat on the rags spread on the cot and preached the family and spent the whole night with them. The poor man's joy knew no bounds. Thus, Shri Hari had a special place for the poor and the so-called backward classes in His heart.

(7) Once Shri Hari organised a Yajna at Jetalpur. He asked each family to grind 30 kg of wheat for the ceremony. A prostitute approached the Lord and prayed that she too might be allowed to grind the wheat. Maharaj readily complied with her wish but He told her that He would allow her to serve Him on one condition that she must sincerely repent for all the sins committed by her in the past and grind the wheat herself. Then only He will bless her and redeem her. The woman agreed to abide by the Lord's condition, she herself took the pains of grinding the wheat, gave up her sinful profession, followed the path of righteousness and became His ardent devotee. Thus, Shri Hari was always eager to absolve the fallen and pardon them. He was too generous to keep anyone out of His grace and love.

(8) During His tours, once Sahajanand Swami walked into a village called Langhnaj. In this village there lived two of His women devotees; Sonbai Bhavsar and Ganaama who belonged to

Nagar brahmin caste. Sonbai was very poor but Gangama had not to worry about financial support. Gangama approached Sonbai with a suggestion, "You may prepare food and serve the Sadhus. I'll use sweet-smelling rice and prepare special food for Maharaj." Sonbai realised that her poverty was preventing her from serving meals to Sahajanandji Maharaj. But the omniscient Lord would not disappoint her. He never discriminated between His rich and poor devotees. He straight away went to the house of poor Sonbai and ate the food that she had prepared for the saints. When Gangama approached the Maharaj with her rich food, He asked her to offer it to Sonbai.

(9) During the severe drought of 1869 (Agnotero) Lord Swaminarayan sent His saints and householder devotees to different regions to provide relief to the drought-affected people. He had instructed His disciples not to discriminate between His believers, Satsangies and non-Satsangies while offering food and clothes. He Himself visited many drought-affected places and brought relief to the people using His spiritual and divine powers. By His own example He proved that service to mankind is a form of divine worship.

The Immanence and Incarnatory Attributes of Shri Sahajanand Swami:

Whenever God is born among men, He naturally attracts the seekers towards His divine form and exhibits His powers by transforming the lives of the people. The following incidents prove that such divine attributes were present in Shri Swaminarayan and therefore He was worshipped as God the incarnate.

(1) Attracted by His unusual radiance, towering and awe-inspiring personality, depth of knowledge, an accomplished virtuous life, thousands of people had readily prostrated before His divine lotus-feet. Heads of different sects, muslim priests, ascetics, mendicants, saints and sages, worshippers of the goddesses, believers in different theologies, the vedanties, wealthy householders, rulers and men of authority and even the bandits had sought shelter in His most perfect Supreme Self, to make their own lives complete and to attain perfection.

(2) Shri Swaminarayan had radically changed the lives of thousands of people and had lighted the flame of divinity in their hearts. His divine teachings had cleared all their doubts and had helped them attain peace. By receiving His grace many devotees had become steadfast in the state of Samadhi (a state in which one is totally

absorbed in Brahman.) From the eyes of many the film that prevents us from seeing God was removed. Some attained the power to know the past, the present and the future (Trikalgnan); Some had become Satyasankalpa -one who has taken the vow of speaking truth, some became an embodiment of self-denial and for some it became possible to meditate incessantly upon Parameshwar. Some attained the power of resisting the corrupting passions arising from rajoguna (the passion which makes us thirsty for pleasure and possession) and tamoguna (the passion that binds us with delusion and sluggishness.) There were people like Gordhanbhai of Mangrol who was in communion with the divine image of God -Murti.

(3) To protect His ascetic disciples from the cruelties and tortures of the aggressive, violent monks, Shri Swaminarayan resolved to initiate them as Paramhansas. One night at village Kalwani He gathered five hundred ascetics and offered them the initiation of Paramhansa and made them part with Kanthi, Janoi and Shikha (beads round the neck, the sacred thread, and tuft of hair) and taught them to meditate upon the mental Image instead of worshipping the idols of God. Inspired by the command of Shri Swaminarayan, these newly initiated

disciples, without any hesitation dropped their Kanthi, Janoi and modes of worship. It must be noted that some of them had renounced while their marriage was being solemnised; some farmers had even come there leaving their standing crop; some rich people had renounced their wealth and property; there were kings and princes who had abdicated their kingdom, and there were others who even did not wait for a glass of water when they received the message from Shri Swaminarayan asking them to renounce and become ascetics.

(4) Sahajanand Swami with a glance used to send the followers of Shiva, Goddesses, Islam and Jainism into trance and make them behold their individual Gods manifest before them and ultimately merging in His own divine form proving that the entire universe is pervaded by Him.

(5) For a devotee called Parvatbhai of Agatrai and Vyapkanand Swami of Nagadka, He made it possible to see in a vision, all the twenty four Avatars -incarnations manifesting from and dissolving back into His Luminous Divine Image asserting the fact of His being the Godhead.

(6) With a view to bringing back people on the path of righteousness and to help them attain oneness with God, Lord Shri Swaminarayan had

launched what is known as Samadhi prakran. It can be described as a state of instant trance or sublimation. Here are some instances revealing His divine power:

- At the sight of Shreeji many human beings, sparrows, pigeons, monkeys and other animals instantly went into trance.

- Some went into trance simply on hearing the foot-falls of Shreeji's wooden sandals.

- To the ascetics who had not yet accomplished Ashtang yoga, He used to offer His stick saying, "If you touch a person with one end of My stick he will go into Samadhi (trance) and if you touch him again with the other end he will wake up from the trance."

After waking up from Samadhi, the blessed ones used to narrate their spiritual experiences to others. Even by listening to them many people experienced peace and joy.

(7) Muktanand Swami had some doubts and reservations about people going into trance. Sahajanand Swami showed to him in a vision Ramanand Swami sitting under a tree. In that vision Ramanand Swami told him not to doubt Shreeji's power of sending people into trance. He clarified that it was neither a pretence nor an exhibition of feigned spiritualism. This cleared his doubts and Muktanand Swami re-dedicated

himself to the service of Sahajanand Swami. He tendered his apologies and begged His pardon
(8) At Mandvi, using His incarnatory powers, He had made Atmanand Swami recite verses from the Koran before the congregation.

(9) He had made an illiterate boy belonging to Bhat community recite verses from the Vedas in the presence of the collector of Ahmedabad, Vitthalrao Baba. Similarly at Umreth an illiterate and dumb brahmin called Hari Bhatt was made to recite the Vedic mantras.

(10) To fulfil the wishes of His devotees Lord Shri Swaminarayan used to appear simultaneously at different places. The great bandit Joban Pagi had seen Him standing near every horse that he approached with a desire to steal. Sometimes he saw Him offering fodder to a horse and sometimes water to another. On seeing this miracle, Joban Pagi along with other dacoits, gave up plundering and became a staunch devotee of Shri Hari.

(11) At times, during the religious festivals, yajnas, samaiyas or some auspicious ceremonies in the house of a devotee, when there wasn't enough food to serve the unexpected number of guests, He saw to it that there was no shortage of food. He used to replenish it by His divine prowess.

(12) With His divine resolve Shr. Sahajanand Swami had cured many incurable diseases. By offering sacred food from His plate and also from the plates of His great saints, He had cured a severe ailment of Dada Khachar's daughter. By mere wish He had corrected the vision of Mulaji Sheth of village Muli. Throughout his life he could see clearly without glasses.

(13) Predicting the drought of the Samvat year 1869, He had sent letters in advance to Satsangies in every village asking them to store food, fodder and water, and if needed, sell the property but store these essential commodities. As predicted by Him the famine struck the people but those who had paid heed to His advice did not suffer.

(14) Once at Shri Gadhpur while Shreeji Maharaj was dictating letters to Shuk Muni in Akshar ordi (room) all of a sudden the lamp was extinguished. Shuk Muni remarked, "There is no light and the letter is incomplete." At once, Shreeji Maharaj illumined the room by a more powerful light emanating from His toe. It continued to provide light until Shuk Muni completed the letter.

(15) Using His divine powers and grace, Lord Shri Swaminarayan used to bring about changes in the attitudes, temperaments and actions of

His devotees. Even the plants and trees blessed by Him and His holy saints, by mere association with them, had begun to show marked changes in their natural characteristics. Many such blessed trees can be seen at the places visited by the holy company.

(16) Lacs of people during His lifetime had begun to worship Him as Parbrahman Purushottam -God the incarnate and had surrendered themselves completely to His divine will. They would live and die for Him and would carry out His commands without worrying about the outcome.

(17) The saints and Paramhansas revered by the people as God's incarnations, themselves worshipped Him as the Godhead. Hence, it is no wonder that He is the cause and source of all incarnations. The spiritual powers equivalent to those exhibited by the incarnations were shown by Shri Swaminarayan's devotees.

(18) Shri Swaminarayan had shown His incarnatory powers to His devotees. It means that His divine prowess was superior to the one possessed and displayed by other incarnations.

Thus, Shri Swaminarayan, without trying to dazzle anyone revealed His transcendent divine form to help and redeem His devotees. In order to assert His divine supremacy, He

performed deeds which appeared to be miracles.

Here are some verses from the scriptures asserting the manifestation of Bhagwan Shri Swaminarayan as God the incarnate.

It is said in the Brahmanda Puran:

दत्तात्रेयः कृते युगे त्रेतायां रघुनन्दनः ।

द्वापरे वासुदेवः स्यात् कलौ स्वामी वृषात्मजः ॥

"Lord Dattatreya will manifest Himself in Satyug, Lord Ram in Tretayug, Lord Krishna in Dwaparyug and the son of Dharma, Lord Swaminarayan will arrive in Kaliyug." (Yug = an age of the world, the ages are said to be four: Krita or Satya, Treta, Dwapar and Kali.)"

Padma Puran predicts:

पाखण्डबहुले लोके स्वामिनाम्ना हरिःस्वयम् ।

पापपंकनिमग्नं तज्जगदुद्धारयिष्यति ॥

"In this world of heretics, Shri Hari Himself shall manifest as the one known to the people as Swami and shall deliver the world from the mire of miseries and sin."

The Mahabharat explains the difference between Avtar-Avtari [Incarnation and Godhead] as under:

In the Shantiparva's Mokshdharmanushasan

Parva Adhyay 343, Lord Nar-Narayan ask Naradjee:

अपीदानीं स भगवान् परमात्मा सनातनः ।

श्वेतद्वीपे त्वया दृष्टः आवयोः प्रकृतिःपरा ॥

"O Narad, this time, during your visit to Shwet Dwip, in what form did you behold our eternal supreme soul -Paramatma Vasudev, the cause of both of us -Nar and Narayan?"

On being asked to describe the divine form of God, Naradjee said to Lord Narayan:

दृष्टो मे पुरुषः श्रीमान् विश्वरूपधरोऽव्ययः ।

दृष्टौ युवां मया तत्र तस्य देवस्य पार्श्वतः ॥

"O Lord! Not only did I see the self-luminous universal sustainer, the Supreme Person of Lord Vasudev but I also saw you both standing there besides Him."

Bhishma Pitamah tells Yudhisthir:

कृते युगे महाराज! पुरा स्वायम्भुवेऽन्तर।

नरो नारायणश्चैव हरिः कृष्णः स्वयम्भुवः ॥

"O King! In the past in the age of Satya, during the period of Swayambhuv Manvantar, mankind was blessed with four incarnations of Vasudev -the self-sustaining God. These four Avtars or incarnations were known by the names of Nar, Narayan, Hari and Krishna."

Shrimad Bhagwat distinguishes Avtar from Avtari as under:

In chapter 3 of section 1 of Shrimad Bhagwat, it is mentioned that by using Mahad Tatva and other elements, God assumed the form of Vairaj Purush from when emerged the twenty-four incarnations.

In section 10 of volume 1, chapter 41, Sudama speaks to Baldevji and Shri Krishna:

भवन्तौ किल विश्वस्य जगतः कारणं परम् ।

अवतीर्णाविहांशन क्षेमाय च भवाय च ॥

"Both of you, O Krishna and Balram, are the (indefinable) author of everything that exists in this world. For the happiness and progress of this world you have manifested amongst men as fraction (ansh) of Vasudev. In other words, you are incarnations of Vasudev Himself."

In the 17th Adhyay of the 5th Ansh of Vishnupuran:

Beholding Shri Krishna and Baldevji from a distance. Akurjee observes:

भगवद्वासुदेवांशौ द्विधा योऽयं व्यवस्थितः ॥

"Of these two divine figures, Shri Krishna is the manifestation of Lord Vasudev."

In Adhyay 20 Skandh 3 of Harililakalpataru Shri Hari tells Muljit:

नैक्यं हि विद्यते धीमन्नवतारावतारिणो ।

वर्तते वास्तवो भेदस्ताराचन्द्रमसोरिवः ॥

"There is no perceptible unity or resemblance between Avtar (Incarnation) and Avtari (Incarnator); the difference between the two, is the difference that we perceive between the moon and the stars."

In Tarang 146 of Harivakyasudhasindhu Shri Hari has said:

रामकृष्णादयः सर्वेऽवताराः सन्त्यो हि मे ।

पुरुषोत्तमस्य वित्तेरयेतत्सत्यं ब्रवीमि वः ॥

"I, the Supreme Person, tell you with authority that Ram, Krishna and other Avtars are but My own incarnations."

Garg Samhita asserts:

यस्मिन् सर्वाणि तेजांसि विलीयन्ते स्वतेजसे ।

तं वदन्ति परे साक्षात् परिपूर्णतमः स्वयम् ॥

"He in whom all the Avtars get dissolved and whose divine will re-creates them for His own divine purpose must be perceived as the most perfect self-sustained, self-luminous Parbrahman Paramatma (the ultimate reality)."

Note: As explained earlier, we must remember that Shri Swaminarayan from His

own divine figure creates, sustains and dissolves all the Avtars by His divine will. He had shown this power to many devotees while they were in a state of samadhi (trance). No other proof is needed to assert the fact that Shri Swaminarayan is the Supreme Soul that causes all existence to come into being.

In the Skandh 2 Adhyay 1 of Harililakalpataru, Vayuputra Hanuman says to Dharmadev and Bhaktimata:

युष्मत्पुत्राद् बिभेत्यस्मात्सर्वलोकभयंकरः ।

कालस्तथेश्वराः सर्वे सन्त्यस्यादेशवर्तिनः ॥

हेतुरेवावताराणामवतारी स्वराट् प्रभुः ।

एषाऽक्षराक्षरपरः कारणानां च कारणम् ॥

"Even Death that scares all creations fears your illustrious Son. All the incarnations along with Death obey your Son, Shri Hari. Moreover, your Son being the source and cause of all other incarnations is above all the distinctions of Kshar (mutable/mortal) and Akshar (immutable/immortal). He is the cause of all causes."

Now let us listen to Lord Shri Swaminarayan's own words, recorded in The Vachanamrutam:

**Vachanamrutam No. 38 Gadhada,
Last Section:**

"The Supreme Person Purushottam who has kindly manifested Himself among men for the redemption of all living beings, and who can be perceived with the eyes, is your Supreme God, the One who accepts your devotion and service. This self revealed Purushottam Bhagwan the Supreme Reality is the controller of all existences including the Akshar. He is God of all gods, the cause of all incarnations. He is the right object of your undistracted worship. All other incarnations that preceded Him are also worthy to be revered and worshipped by you."

Vachanamrutam No. 11, Loya Section:

"Meditate only upon that Murti (Divine Form) which has been realised by you; all other incarnations of the past may not be meditated upon. One should concentrate single-mindedly with firm faith on God in His present manifestation. One must remain steadfast in one's faith in Him."

**Vachanamrutam No. 13, Gadhada,
Middle Section:**

"That God who is above and beyond Akshar is the cause of all incarnations. All incarnations emerge from Him and return to Him, the Supreme Person. The luminous Figure of

Maharaj standing before you and the one dwelling in the Akshardham is the same indivisible God, who pervades all creation. This knowledge shall redeem you. Repeat this truth over again and again. Do not forget or ignore this fact. For all your fasting and praying without firm faith in God the incarnate will avail not, will not lead you on the path of salvation."

**Vachanamrutam No. 9. Gadhada,
Middle Section:**

"The received or realised Figure of God should always be thought of and worshipped as the self-luminous and self-sustained form (manifestation) the cause of all incarnations. Believing Him to be formless (Nirakar) or comparing Him with other incarnations will be considered as anti-God and will be treated as an affront to Him. Those who never doubt God in His present incarnation are believed to be on the path of right knowledge. One should never deviate from the faith that one is the recipient of the luminous personal form of Supreme Lord Shri Swaminarayan."

**Vachanamrutam No. 58 Gadhada
Middle Section:**

"The devotees must study the scriptures depicting the life and divine acts of God. The scripture containing the life-story of God

from the day of His birth to the day of the dropping of the body strengthens the Sampradaya or the sect founded by Him. Read such Scriptures or listen to them when you are being read to by others.

Vachanamrutam No. 1, Panchala section:

"A person who strives to increase his contact with God is said to be a learned and intelligent man. Man is certainly happier than an animal, a king is happier than a common man, the happiness of deity is far greater than that of a king and the degree of happiness increases as we move from Indra and Brihaspati, to Brahma. But one experiences the supreme joy only in God's Akshardham for the bliss experienced by a soul, there, surpasses the happiness offered by Vaikunth Lok or Gau Lok."

Vachanamrutam No. 7, Ahmedabad Section:

In this Vachanamrutam Shreeji Maharaj explains, "I am the creator, sustainer and destroyer of all the Brahmandas -the entire cosmos. The entire cosmos containing many Brahmandas with innumerable Shivas, innumerable Brahmas, innumerable Kailas, Vaikunths, Gauloks, Brahmpurs and millions of other divine spheres are luminous because of Me. I am the source of their radiance. How will

you perceive My greatness? When I rock this earth with My toe, innumerable earthlike spheres of innumerable Brahmandas begin to shake and even the sun, the moon and stars reflect My light. I am the self-luminous source of their light. All those who worship Me with this conviction and keep their minds steadfast in Me, without getting themselves defiled and if their hearts are united with Me and seek refuge in Me, believing Me to be above all others, I will receive them in My Dham -My Heavenly Abode."

Thus Lord Shri Swaminarayan firmly asserts that He is above all the incarnations and He alone is the cause of all the incarnations.

His contemporary saints and Paramhansas narrating their own experiences say

Ramanand Swami in Harililakalpataru tells Lalji Bhakt:

स इत्यथाऽवदद् भक्तं मतः कृष्णो यथाऽधिकः ।

तथाऽत्यधिक एवेशात् तस्मादपि स विद्यते ॥

"O devotee! Just as Lord Shri Krishna is superior to me, Nilkanth Brahmachari, who has recently arrived at Loj is far greater than and superior to the master of Golokdham, Lord Shri Krishna."

The Swami further says:

सर्वेषामवताराणां कारणं च परात्परः ।

सोऽपाकृतगुणैश्वर्यो विद्यते पुरुषोत्तमः ॥

"O devotee! That celibate possesses all divine attributes and spiritual powers and He is the cause of all incarnations. He is Purushottam Paramatma the Lord Himself, the one who is higher than the highest."

From the discourses of Sadguru Gopalanand Swami:

Discourse No. 167

A devotee asked Swarupanand Swami: "In what terms should we try to understand the incarnation of Shreeji Maharaj?" Swarupanandji correcting the devotee observed: "Know Him not as an ordinary incarnation. He is the Incarnator of all the incarnations including Ram and Krishna. He is the self-revealed Purushottam capable of exhibiting the traits of other incarnations even in His mortal devotees."

Discourse No. 168

Once a monk boasted: "I can see the entire Brahmanda." Vyapkanand Swami turned to him and said: "You are talking about just one Brahmanda, but by the grace of Purushottam Shri Sahajanand, the creator of Ram, Krishna and other incarnations, I can readily, without

any effort, see numerous mysteries, and an infinite number of cosmoses and other divine abodes like Gaulok etc."

**An interesting dialogue between
Shri Sahajanand Swami and some monks:**

Once Sahajanand Swami Himself asked some monks. "Like other incarnations (of God) I have not performed any acts, revealing my might or prowess: I haven't built a bridge across the sea, I haven't killed Ravan having ten heads, I haven't carried Mount Mandarachal on my back, nor have I killed Kans or Shishupal. Then why do you call me Parameshwar?"

The monks replied: "Ram did kill Ravan who was already destroyed by arrogance and lust. Vaman deceived Bali who was already deluded by greed and avarice. Krishna beheaded Kans and Shishupal, but they were already consumed by the six enemies such as pride etc. We worship You as the Godhead or Avtari because You have destroyed our inner enemies such as desire, anger, greed, delusion etc. You did not build a bridge across the sea, but You have built a straight road between the sea of life and Dham, the heavenly abode of God. You may not have lifted Mandarachal or Goverdhan mountain but You have flung mountains of our

sins in a second and purified our conscience. It is for this that we call You the self-revealed Purushottam, God the incarnate."

Sadguru Niskulanandji has sung in Harismrutichintamani:

‘અલોકિક મૂર્તિ આજની, ધરી ધર્મકુમાર;
જોતાં ના’વે જોડવામાં, આ સમ અન્ય અવતાર.
સમર્થ મૂર્તિ સુખભરી, ધરી ન ધરશે કોઈ;
સર્વોપરી છે શ્રીહરિ, સહજાનંદ પ્રભુસોય.’

"The rare and unique Figure of God in our midst as the Son of Dharma surpasses all other incarnations. No one in the past or in the future had meditated upon or shall worship God that surpasses the accomplished the pleasant divine Figure of supreme Lord Shri Hari Sahajanand."

Two Divine Promises Made by Lord Shri Swaminarayan

(1) *One who seeks shelter in us and abides by our moral laws shall see Me at the time of death and I will personally lead him to My Akshardham.*

Accordingly, even today, Shri Swaminarayan Mahaprabhu gives darshan to His devotees at the time of death and receives them in His Eternal Abode. By doing so, He has delivered His devotees from the fear of death.

(2) *Having installed the idols of God in the*

temples, He instilled in them His divine power the life-force and made them divinely authentic and living. Then the Lord promised: "I shall for ever remain self-revealed in these Idols and shall receive in person your devout worship and offerings. I will answer your prayers and fulfil your right wishes." He further said, "Do not look upon these Luminous Figures as idols of wood, stone or paper for I eternally dwell in them."

We have never heard of any Avtar of God making such a promise. Who except our Supreme Lord, can dare to reveal Himself as a living God or make such promises. Therefore, worship Lord Shri Swaminarayan and meditate upon Him with an undistracted mind, devoting every moment to Him.

The Divine Mantra Offered by Lord Shri Swaminarayan

Having declared Himself to be the creator and controller of the entire cosmos, all Brahmandas, the one and only Supreme Person Narayan, our Lord offered 'Swaminarayan' mantra. He advised, "Remember Me and think of Me in all your activities, count the beads (rosary) chanting My name, sing in My praise and narrate the stories of My divine deeds, meditate upon My self-luminous,

self-revealed Figure, serve Me, worship Me; I will deliver you from all sins, remove all your defects and shall help you attain My Supreme Divine Bliss." Only Supreme Paramatma can speak in such a benevolent and redeeming language.

From our study of this text we are convinced that:

(1) Shri Swaminarayan who is the cause of all incarnations and who is above and beyond the mutable and the immutable is the real Parbrahman Paramatma -the Ultimate Reality.

(2) Shri Swaminarayan being higher than the highest, for the highest degree of peace and happiness, He is the right object of worship, for the entire mankind.

(3) The Avatars or incarnations are distinguished from one another on the basis of attributes in terms of fraction (Ansh) skills or radiance, completeness, and absoluteness of divine powers. But the Avtari or the Incarnator manifests Himself through Avatars (incarnations). Therefore the divine incarnatory deeds performed by an Avatar are those of the Avtari. It is in this context that we come across statements in many scriptures asserting unity or complete identity between Avatar and Avtari -the

incarnations and the cause of incarnation.

(4) The one and only easy and accomplished means to achieve the spiritual as well as secular welfare of the individual and the society is the path of righteousness shown to us by Shri Swaminarayan.

(5) Everyone will agree that Swaminarayan religion is a world religion because it absorbs all positive thoughts, it is beneficial to all and it has the catholicity and universality which appeals to one and all. Religion should be defined and interpreted from broad and liberal point of view.

(6) A World Religion is that which makes a man more human in real terms. This statement can be rightly applied to Swaminarayan Religion.

Finally, I conclude with a sincere prayer and lacs of obeisances to our Supreme Lord Shri Swaminarayan that, "May this all-redeeming, beneficial divine religion keep on growing in strength and number and lead the mankind on the path of righteousness."



What does Shri Swaminarayan Divine Mission stand for?



With a view of translating the omnibeneficient divine message of Lord Shri Swaminarayan into action for the spiritual and worldly happiness of mankind:

- (a) We try to provide financial assistance to the needy without any discrimination and uphold the ideal of seva-sadavrat, selfless service.*
 - (b) We are planning to establish and run health-centres and hospitals. We are offering assistance to institutions providing medical help to the people.*
 - (c) We construct, develop and maintain temples and spiritual centres, commemorating great spiritual leaders with a view to bringing peace, happiness and divine joy to people.*
 - d) We encourage creative activities aimed at educating people through literature and art.*
 - (e) To satisfy the spiritual thirst of the devotees we want to establish and*
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manage libraries, research centres and museums or assist individuals and institutions involved in such activities.

(f) We strive to achieve harmony and amity in our society by publishing books that enhance our cultural and spiritual life and take mankind on the path of progress and perfection and thus elevate man to the spiritual heights.

Therefore, we want

(1) to undertake and organise activities aimed at strengthening and improving the moral standards which form the basis of our social life.

(2) to launch programmes for the spread of universal brotherhood, social unity, fellow-feeling, amity, compassion that will end all discords and establish permanent peace; for without peace there cannot be progress.

(3) to organise conferences to bring all the religions and warring groups on a common platform and strive for harmony among them for the social and spiritual welfare of mankind.

The Mission, through constructive programmes and spiritual activities, aims at total development of human society in order to make it worthy of receiving the divine bliss through communion with God.
