



## S.K.S. SWAMINARAYAN TEMPLE (LONDON) – BAL YUVAK MANDAL

Westfield Lane, Kenton, Harrow, Middlesex, HA3 9EA Est. 1966 Charity Reg. No. 271034

Tel: 020 8909 9899 Fax: 020 8909 9897 Email: [bym@sksst.org](mailto:bym@sksst.org)

# Chaturmaas

## Chaturmaas = Four months

Start day = Ashadh Sud Ekadashi (Padma Ekadashi or Devshyani Ekadashi) 30<sup>th</sup> June 2012  
End day = Prabhodhini Ekadashi (After Diwali) 24<sup>th</sup> November 2012

## Covers months of:

Ashadh – July  
Shravan – August  
Bhadarvo – September  
Aaso – October  
This year: Purshottam/ Adhik maas (extra month)

## What is special about Chaturmaas?

- The four months of Chaturmaas are considered of the nature of goodness (satvaguni). Of the three modes of nature (Satvagan, Rajogun and Tamogun – Goodness, passion and ignorance) it is easier to do righteous deeds when the mode of Satvagan prevails. The mind is more focused and hence easier to direct the senses towards God.
- The demi-gods do penance during these four months.
- Nilkanth Varni did thap during these four months in Pulhashram. Other Rushis thought their penance was like a child's play compared to Nilkanth Varni's. Such was Nilkanth Varni's thap.
- Lord Vishnu takes rest in Kshir Sagar (ocean of milk) instead of Vaikunth.

## How do we do this?

**“All my disciplines shall undertake special additional religious duties during the four months of monsoon. Those who are weak and incapable shall perform them at least during the month of Shravan. “Shikshapatri Sholka 77”**

The following are the best additional niyams to take as per Maharaj's instructions in the Shikshapatri;

1. Listening to religious scriptures/kathas
2. Reading of religious scriptures e.g. Vachnamrut & Satsangi Jeevan etc
3. Singing devotional songs (kirtans) in praise of Bhagwan
4. Performing of Mahapuja
5. Chanting the Swaminarayan Maha Mantra (e.g. do extra Malas everyday)
6. Reciting Bhagwan's hymns/stotras
7. Doing Pradikshanas (Walking around the image of God in a clockwise direction)
8. Doing Sashtang Dandvat Pranams - Full physical prostrations.



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Maharaj says that these are the BEST niyams to take; as there is direct close contact with God in all these niyams. We are instructed by the Shikshapatri to take at least one of these niyams.

There are other niyams one could take in addition to these niyams, such as those listed in the attached sheet.

### **What do we get out of observing chaturmaas?**

The special observances for chaturmaas should be practised with maximum devotion to God. These practises should not be undertaken to expect fruits of any kind but only to please Lord Swaminarayan.

Observing a niyam during chaturmass takes us closer to God. We are also following two shloks in the Shikshapatri if we do so.

### **Possible Niyams to take:**

- 1 extra Mala every day
- 5 extra Danvats every day
- 5 extra Pradakshinas every day
- Do extra Maansi Puja that you are not doing
- Chant 1 minute Dhun every day
- Sing 1 kirtan every day
- Sing Chesta every day
- Chant 108 names of Bhagwan everyday
- Read 1 Vachnamrut or 1 paragraph every day
- Read 1 chapter of any other scripture every day.
- Complete 1 whole scripture during Chatur Maas.
- Listen to Katha everyday, be it 5 minutes or 1 hour.
- Listen to Kirtans everyday, be it 5 minutes or 1 hour.
- Go to Mandir every day.
- For students going to Mandir everyday just for Shravan Month only
- Doing Darshan every day online



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- Eating only once a day every day
  - Giving up a favourite ingredient. E.g. stop eating cheese, chocolate or something similar
  - Saying Jay Swaminarayan to every Satsangi
  - Wear a Tilak and/or Chandlo every day
  - Performing Seva, even if only once a week.

Above is just a few examples, there are hundreds more activities we can do to please Maharaj. It can be done at home, at the Mandir or even on the go. If you really feel it's too much than just carry out an additional activity for Shravan Month only. Even if it's 1 extra mala a day it would make the biggest difference. You can even take Niyams as a group so you can all motivate each other to fulfil your goal.

**When we start our Niyams for Chatur Maas we should pray to Bhagwan and ask for strength and courage so that you will be able to follow your chosen Niyam and if due to extreme circumstances we can not complete the Niyam Pray that Bhagwan counts it as complete.**