



# *Haridarsban*

A musical composed for  
Celebrating Women: Past, Present & Future  
held in observance of International Women's Day 2010

Saturday 10 April 2010

BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, London, UK



CELEBRATING  
WOMEN

Past · Present · Future



**BAPS National Women's Forum, UK takes you on a magnificent journey through space and time as we travel through the four Hindu yugas (eras or ages) – from Satya-Yuga, Treta-Yuga and Dwapar-Yuga, to the present day in Kali-Yuga. In each yuga, we meet examples of truly inspiring women, who through their faith and devotion achieved outstanding success.**

**Sit back and watch the critical roles these women played in society as we travel through the four eras.**

**Our journey begins by meeting 'Jilmil' and 'Timtim', two stars who have descended upon Earth to learn about Hinduism and how, specifically, women have been empowered by Hindu values.**

## Satya-Yuga

In Satya-Yuga, we meet *Maitreyi*, wife of Yagnavalkya Rishi. Maitreyi's thirst for spiritual knowledge from the erudite sage Yajnavalkya singled her out as an extraordinary woman of ancient times. With ten hymns accredited to her in the Rig Veda – the most ancient and authoritative of Hindu scriptures – she stands tall even today as a renowned Vedic intellectual.

## Treta-Yuga

Living in the ashram of Rishi Matang, the simple-hearted *Shabri* spent her life chanting the name of her Lord, Shri Rama. Before the rishi passed away, he instructed her to be patient and not leave the ashram, for Rama would surely visit one day. Daily cleaning the place, collecting fruits, and the constant wait for her Lord turned Shabri into an elderly woman. But her patience was rewarded when Shri Rama came to the ashram and her long-awaited wish to personally serve the Lord was finally fulfilled.

## Dwapara-Yuga

Throughout the Mahabharata, *Draupadi* is seen as strong and daring, yet soft and caring. She has a voice to be heard in most crucial debates. As queen to the Pandavas, mother to their children, and a woman of profound faith in Shri Krishna, she is an epical figure continuing to create, nurture and transform inspirational women today. Her story depicts the strength and power inherent in prayer.

## Kali-Yuga

Even this current 'age of darkness' has been blessed with female Hindu luminaries of astounding faith.

*Nirabai* was a 15th century Rajasthani princess. Living amid fearsome times of feuds and upheaval, she found peaceful sanctuary in Shri Krishna. Renowned for her soulful hymns of devotion to him, she exemplifies how faith is an essential component of a fulfilling life – even for one with royal stature and wealth.

Then there is *Jivuba*, a devotee of Bhagwan Swaminarayan. Bhagwan Swaminarayan manifested on Earth in the late 18th century at a time of grave political, social and religious unrest. After travelling around India, He chose to settle in the western state of Gujarat, spearheading a peaceful spiritual renaissance.

While in the small, dusty village of Gadhada, Bhagwan Swaminarayan stayed at the home of Abhel Khachar, Jivuba's father. With the highest level of devotion for Him, Jivuba carved a life of great morality and focus even amid turmoil. Her life epitomises absolute faith in the loving providence of an all-knowing, all-powerful, all-benevolent God.

Another devotee of Bhagwan Swaminarayan who exemplifies the devotion and righteousness of women during Kali-Yuga is *Rudki*. When homeless and penniless, she set out with her husband Sagram from their famine-stricken village to find food in the city. Along the deserted trail, Sagram noticed a silver anklet. Instantly, he covered it with dust, lest his wife behind him was tempted to take it. But Rudki proved to have even greater moral strength. Seeing her husband's actions, she said, "Sagram, why did you just cover dust with dust? Since I have become a disciple of Bhagwan Swaminarayan, I see others' possessions as mere dust!"



# Bhagwan Swaminarayan

Bhagwan Swaminarayan inspired many such female exemplars. He further championed women's causes by encouraging education, empowering them with religious independence, and challenging derogatory public misconceptions about women. He also helped in abolishing abhorrent social malpractices – such as Dudh-piti (female infanticide), Sati (widow-burning) and Daheja (exorbitant dowries) – which not only preserved the dignity of women, but also saved their lives.

Today, millions of women around the world are safe, successful and leading spiritually-fulfilling lives because of His teachings and reforms, and are being guided and inspired by illustrious Hindu women of the past.



Performance: BAPS National Women's Forum, UK  
Lyrics & Choreography: Shri Jayendra Kalyani  
Music: Shri Jaydeep Swadia  
Producers: BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha, UK  
Inspirer: His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj