



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

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

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History of Lord Vishnu's Incarnations

Many people are aware of the three Supreme Powers; Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.

How many Avatars did Lord Vishnu have?

- Matsya (incarnating as a fish)
- Kurma (incarnating as a tortoise)
- Varaha (incarnating as a boar)
- **Nrusinh (incarnating as half-man half-lion)**
- Vamana (incarnating as a dwarf priest)
- Parashurama (incarnating as a Brahman priest)
- Lord Rama
- Lord Krishna
- Buddha
- Kalki

Nrusinh Jayanti

Nrusinh Jayanti celebrates the epic battle of Lord Nrusinh against Hiranyakashipu. The story starts by understanding the situation throughout the world just before Lord Vishnu incarnated as Nrusinh. When Lord Vishnu's third Avatar, Varaha, incarnated on Earth, His mission was to vanquish the demon, Hiranyaksh. As a result of getting rid of the demon, Hiranyaksh's brother, Hiranyakapishu, vowed to take revenge. Hiranyakapishu was known to be the arch-rival of Lord Vishnu and was regarded as a symbol of torture to the noble souls. Through great penance and by scaling the Mandrachal Mountain, Lord Brahma became pleased with his service. As a result, Hiranyakashipu requested a boon from Brahma:

“O Supreme Almighty! Let my death not occur by the hands of man, animal, deva or demon. Let me never die, neither indoors or outdoors, neither during day or night, neither by weapons nor mantra, neither earth or sky. Let me become the eternal emperor supreme of the whole Earth...”

Reluctantly, Brahma granted this boon, after which Hiranyakapishu went on a rampage and on a reign of terror in Trilok (the Three Worlds). Lord Indra became worried about the child growing in the womb of Kayadhu who was Hiranyakashipu's wife. Indra became so worried that He kidnapped Kayadhu. Whilst on His way to a safe haven, Indra came across Naradji who persuaded Him to release Kayadhu. Naradji took Kayadhu to his ashram and instructed her to worship Lord Vishnu. Through reading the sacred texts about Lord Vishnu, the knowledge was imparted on the unborn child in the womb.

Before the child (named Prahalad) was even born, he had the utmost love for Vishnu in his heart. Even as a young child, when he was supposed to be learning the demonic ways from his gurus, his mind remained fixed on Lord Vishnu. As a loving father to Prahalad, Hiranyakashipu often use to sit his son on his lap and find out the progress of his learning. On several occasions, Prahalad use to recite words from the sacred scriptures about Lord Vishnu. Upon hearing these words coming from his son's mouth, he became extremely angry and demanded that the gurus teach him again. On each occasion, the young Prahalad recited from the Holy Scriptures and mentioned that his heart veered towards the one and only Paramatma. With the gurus becoming angry, they started teaching him about worldly desires



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such as wealth and other material items. As before, Prahalad once again sat on his father's lap and was once again asked to recite what he had learnt. The young Prahalad replied by saying:

“O Pitaji, the greatest merit is obtained by imbibing Navdha Bhakti – offering the nine forms of devotion to Bhagwan Vishnu...”

What are the nine forms of Bhakti offered to Bhagwan?

(Hint: This was done during the not 9th Anniversary for BYM)

- **Shravanam** – Listening to His glory
- **Kirtanam** – Singing His glory
- **Smaranam** – Recalling episodes of His leela
- **Padsevanam** – Serving Him
- **Archanam** – Offering Pujan to Him
- **Vandanam** – Bowing to Him
- **Dasyam** – Worshipping Him by regarding oneself as “das” (servant)
- **Sakhyam** – Worshipping Him as a friend
- **Atmanivedanam** – Worshipping Him with unwarranted surrenderance.

Hearing this from his son, Hiranyakashipu became furious and pounced on his son. He was manhandled like a little toy and ordered his servants to kill his son. Prahalad had to endure being jabbed with spikes as well as other means of killing. Throughout the entire ordeal, Prahalad meditated upon Lord Vishnu. Animals that were ordered to kill Prahalad shielded him against the evil servants. As a last resort, Hiranyakashipu, ordered his sister Holika to kill her nephew by sitting with him in a fire. Holika was immune from being burnt due to wearing special clothing. But instead of Prahalad being burnt, Holika got burnt in the fire.

Prahalad then explained to everyone that Paramatma is present in everything, after which Hiranyakashipu asked if He was in the pillar next to him. At this point, Hiranyakashipu became furious and brandished a sword which struck the pillar. The pillar instantly split and Lord Vishnu Himself came out, manifesting in the form the Nrusinh. Nrusinh Bhagwan was a half-man and half-lion. On the evening of Vaishakh Sud 14, a momentous battle ensued between Nrusinh Bhagwan and demon Hiranyakashipu. At the end of the battle Nrusinh Bhagwan, who was neither man nor animal, sat at the doorway – neither fully inside or outside, nor wholly on earth nor in the air, when it was neither day or night – but twilight and with his claws – which were not weapons or mantra. Nrusinh Bhagwan made sure he wasn't going against any of the granted criteria by Brahma and killed the demon Hiranyakashipu. Upon Shree Nrusinh Bhagwan defeating the demon, Prahalad offered a special prayer to Shree Nrusinh Bhagwan to ask for moksha for his father. Shree Nrusinh Bhagwan consented to the request and coronated Prahalad as king.

Every year, on Vaishakh Sud 14, Shree Nrusinh Jayanti is celebrated to commemorate the victory of good over evil. On this day, worshippers are requested to do upvaas or farar to celebrate the victory.