

#SANT NAMDEV MAHARAJ

The Saint Who Answered Power with Bhakti

For followers of the Varkari tradition, Sant Namdev Maharaj is not just a historical figure but a living presence in devotion



Among the great saints of the Varkari Sampradaya, Sant Namdev Maharaj stands out as a figure of fearless devotion and spiritual resolve. His life, woven through history and sacred tradition, reflects a journey where faith became a response to turmoil and injustice.

**Devotion to Vitthal**

Namdev was a lifelong devotee of Vitthal of Pandharpur. His abhangas express a deeply personal relationship with the divine, one that rejected ritualism and embraced pure love and surrender.

**A Time of Turmoil**

The period in which Namdev lived saw significant political upheaval. The invasion of Deccan regions, including Durg Fort, by forces under Malik Kafur during the reign of Alauddin Khilji brought violence and instability.

According to devotional narratives, Namdev was deeply disturbed by the suffering he witnessed. Seeking refuge, he turned to Vitthal and expressed his desire to withdraw from the world through samadhi. Yet, the divine message he received, preserved in tradition, was not one of retreat, but of responsibility. He was urged to carry Bhakti beyond the Deccan, to regions in the north, such as Punjab and even Peshawar, where people too faced hardship.

**Journey to the North**

Taking this as a spiritual mission, Namdev traveled across northern India, spreading devotion, unity, and courage. Tradition holds that he established centers of worship (mathas) and brought the message that God resides everywhere, not confined to temples or regions.

His presence in the north is reflected in the inclusion of his hymns in the Guru Granth Sahib, a rare honour that highlights the universality of his teachings.

For followers of the Varkari tradition, Sant Namdev Maharaj is not just a historical figure but a living presence in devotion. His life story, blending history, faith, and legend, teaches that:

- Faith can stand before power without fear.
- Devotion can cross all boundaries.
- True strength lies in spiritual conviction, not authority.



Looking for the Pandavas

Duryodhana had found the remote and the namkeen, in that order, and was flicking through news channels like a man flicking through enemies. "Show me," he said. "Which side are the Pandavas?" I tried. I really did. "Iran?" he asked. "Its rulers have hanged protesters and armed militias across the region. And they choked the Strait of Hormuz until my gas cylinder felt it."

"To tell him, a challenge was set, often told as a symbolic act involving the life of a cow. A cow and a calf were brought. If cow present was killed, then Namdev had to accept Islam, if not, then he wins. In this narrative, Namdev's devotion triumphs, not through force, but through divine grace. Namdev was offered gifts by the people, but he declined.

**The feast**

"But how did everyone get dragged in?" he asked. "In my time, at least, kings chose."

"Did they? What about your Shalya?"

**This episode represents a deeper truth: Spiritual conviction cannot be coerced by power.**

**Return and Mahasamadhi**

After decades of travel and teaching, Namdev is believed to have returned to Pandharpur in his later years. Around the age of 80, he was granted mahasamadhi, by Vitthal, leaving behind a legacy that continues to inspire millions.

**A Legacy Beyond Time**

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He grinned. It was his favourite story. Shalya, uncle of the Pandava twins, marched out to fight for his nephews. Duryodhana laid out feasts all along his route. Shalya, thinking Yudhishthira was the host, promised the host any favour. Then, Duryodhana stepped out from behind the curtain and asked for his army.

"Best dinner I ever paid for," he said.

"That is how it works now too," I told him. "This year, Gulf countries that hosted American bases found themselves in Iran's line of fire. And India, which never asked for this war, found it in the gas agency queue."

Duryodhana thought about it. "So, every treaty is a Shalya feast."

"And nobody reads the menu until the bill comes."

**A knock at the door**

That was when we heard the flute. Duryodhana groaned. "Not him again."

Krishna walked back in as if he had lived in Jaipur all his life, took the best chair and asked whether there was any *makhan* (butter) in the fridge. There was only Amul. He accepted it graciously.

"From that gold room, I went to New York," he said. "I tried the United Nations."

"And?" I asked.

"They gave me fifteen minutes to speak for peace. Your friend in the red tie took fifty-six last year. Nobody stopped him."

Krishna turned to me. "Do you remember what I offered this one and Arjuna before Kurukshetra? They both came to Dwarka. One could have my whole army. The other could have me, unarmed, only to advise."

"And he took the army?"

"Everyone takes the army," Krishna sighed. "Every leader in the world today would take the army. Nobody would take the unarmed man who only talks. That is why the

United Nations is me, without the chakra."

**And where is India?**

Krishna licked the butter off his finger and looked at me. "And your country? Which side?"

"Neither. We buy Russian oil and American gas, and talk to Tehran and Washington. I think we are your brother Balarama. He loved both sides, so, he refused to fight and went on a pilgrimage."

"And he came back," said Krishna softly, "just in time to watch his two students, Bhima and this one, try to kill each other." He looked at my kitchen. "Neutral hands stay clean, beti. Neutral kitchens still run out of gas."

I did not argue. I had waited 25 days for my last cylinder.

**So, is it due?**

I finally asked the question I had carried all year. "Is another Mahabharata coming?"

Krishna raised an eyebrow. "You want a prophecy? I am God, not an astrologer."

"Please."

He grew serious. "On the last night of my war, Ashwatthama aimed the Brahmastra at the unborn child of the Pandavas. I saved him and named him Parikshit. Your world has built thousands of Brahmastras since. It has not built a single Krishna to stop them."

"There is 1963," I said. "A year after the world nearly blew itself up over Cuba, it signed its first nuclear test-ban treaty."

"Fear is a good teacher," Krishna

said.

"That is how it works now too," I told him. "This year, Gulf countries that hosted American bases found themselves in Iran's line of fire. And India, which never asked for this war, found it in the gas agency queue."

Duryodhana, who was enjoying this less and less.

Krishna showed me Muhammad bin Tughlaq, the sultan who moved his capital to Daulatabad and back. When he died in 1351, the historian Badauni wrote the most savage obituary in Indian history: the Sultan was freed from his people, and they from him.

"Then Aurangzeb, who ruled for nearly half a century over the richest empire on earth. At 88, dying in the Deccan, he wrote to his son: 'I came alone, and I go as a stranger. I do not know who I am, nor what I have been doing.' He asked to be buried in a plain grave open to the sky. Within decades, his empire fell apart."

Krishna switched off the television.

"Karma is not small," he said. "It is only counting. Duryodhana, for thirteen years, while the Pandavas lived in the forest eating roots, you were richer than ever. Kings queued to flatter you. Did karma look small to you then?"

Duryodhana rubbed his thigh and said nothing. He had heard that at Draupadi in the dice hall. Bhima had vowed to break it. On the eighteenth day, he did.

**The next tenant**

"And us?" I asked. "That is the part nobody reads," said Krishna. "Every power a king invents stays in the palace: tariffs by midnight post, fees by proclamation, names by decree. The next man in the chair inherits all of it."

"Like an electricity bill in India,"

rajeshsharma1049@gmail.com

**A square face**

A square jaw is a strong feature. A thicker stronger colour balances a heavier jaw line. A defined sharp peak at the top of the brow makes the brow appear stronger. Angled brows can create this balance.

**A round face**

Avoid gentle or soft arches and apply lines that go up and then down with a sharp curve. This will help lengthen the face.

**When** it comes to style, celebrities are the best inspirations. Right from Lily Collins' minimally shaped bushy arches, Emma Watson's boy brows to the pencil thin curves of Charlize Theron and full brows of Gigi Hadid, eye-

brows have added to the wow factor each time. According to Vedika Bagai, beauty professional, eyebrows are an important aspect of beauty, as they change the overall appearance of the face and bring out a person's natural beauty. "A set of good eyebrows can make you

feel more confident. Of course, not everyone is born with a perfect set of brows. To achieve them, one has to regularly shape and trim them to suit their face and help enhance their eyes. As they say, eyebrows do speak louder than words," she sums up.

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Duryodhana was still on my sofa, eating my namkeen and asking which side the Pandavas were on. Then, there was a knock at the door. The rest of the night did not go the way either of us expected.

Is Another Mahabharata Due?

PART: 3

The Time channel

First came a desert, and two enormous stone legs standing in the sand. In 1818, the poet Shelley imagined the inscription on the pedestal: "My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings; / Look on my Works, ye Mighty; and despair!" Then the last line: "Nothing beside remains."

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This bold look involves parting your eyebrows and splaying the hair into feather-like shapes with the help of Vaseline

So, what is the first thing you notice about a person? The standard response would be the eyes, but little do people know that their eyebrows too have a lot to say. If the eyes are the window to the soul, then the eyebrows offer a glimpse of one's external beauty.

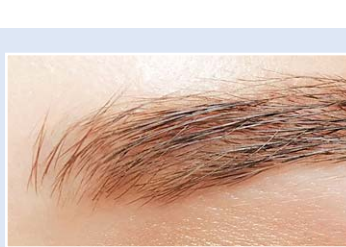


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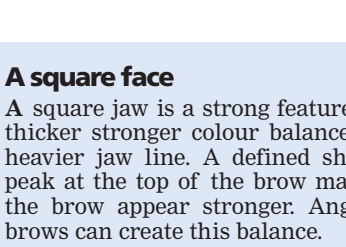
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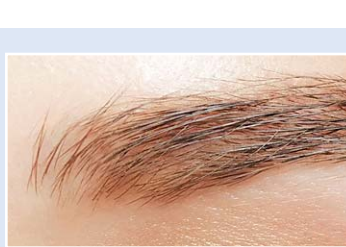


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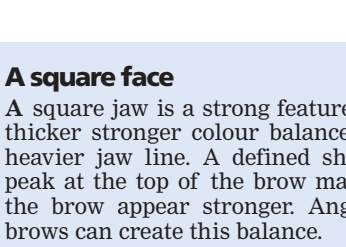
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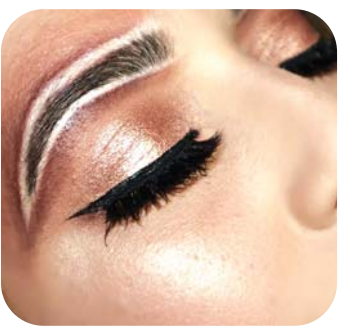
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A recent study, conducted by the University of Lethbridge in Canada, states that when researchers showed people 25 images of celebrities without eyebrows, followed by 25 images of celebrities sans their eyes, participants were able to correctly identify 56 per cent of the celebrities shown without eyes, but only 46 per cent of the



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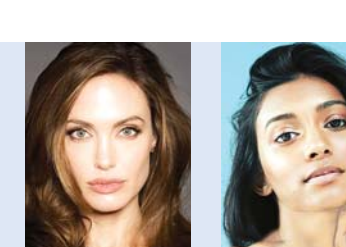
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