



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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Shikshapatri Bhashya

Shlok 51

Then they shall sit in a clean place, on a clean and suitable cloth, untouched by others and facing north or east shall perform Achaman

Asana is explained in **Vishnu Dharmotara**, 'An Asana that is in contact with another Asana, too long, too big, one common Asana for both God's Murtis and oneself and a king's Asana.' Therefore the Lord commands that an '*Asankirna*' Asana should be used which is opposite to that above. Also, an Asana that does not touch anything impure should be used.

Padma Purana explains what the Asana should be made from: 'An Asana of wool will attain and fulfil all desires; an Asana of deer skin will derive salvation; an Asana of tiger skin will derive fruits of penance and wealth; an Asana made of grass or leaves will derive good health'. Therefore only such materials should be used for an Asana.

Vyaas further explains, 'One should sit on an Asana made of either silk, wool, deer skin, washed cloth, wood, leaf or grass; face north or east, and then perform Achaman (sipping of water).' **Karnav Muni** explains the Vidhi for Achaman: 'One should extend their arms towards the east with their hand shaped in a form of a cow's ear. With the thumb and smallest finger touching, they should perform Achaman as they separate these fingers.' 'Dwijas should perform Achaman three times', explains **Yagnavalkya**. Enough water should be used so that an '*Aradha Daal*' will sink. Achaman should always be performed using the right hand such that the left hand does not ever touch the right hand (This is the case for all acts of eating and drinking - the left hand should never be used). Three '*Shuddhis*' - purifications are to be performed daily. The first is *Snaan* - bathing for purpose of exterior or bodily purification - '**Shararik Shuddhi**'. The second is Achman, which is for the inner body purification - '**Antara Shuddhi**', and the third is Pooja, which is for purification of the mind - '**Manas Shuddhi**'. All devotees of God must perform these three purifications daily, those who do not, can never be considered as pure and clean and hence worthy of being called a devotee of God.

Achaman is performed to purify the three bodies - *Sthul, Shukshma and Karana* - gross or physical body, subtle (which the soul resides within) and the causal body. Achaman is to be performed whilst chanting the Mantras:

Ohm Shree Narayanaya Namah

Ohm Shree Vasudevaya Namah

Ohm Shree Vishnavaya Namah



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Shlok 52

All males shall mark their foreheads with a Tilak having a Chandlo in the centre of it. All married women shall make only a Chandlo of Kum-Kum on their forehead.

In this Shloka he first explains the Tilak Chandlo to be marked by male devotees 'Urdvapundra should be marked by householders (*Grihastas*) and saints (*Sadhus*). It should be marked on the forehead (*Lalata*), chest/heart (*Hrudi*) and both arms (*Baho*) whilst chanting the *Mantras: Vasudeva, Shankarsharna, Pradyumna* and *Aniruddha.*'

Brahmcharis and *Vanaprasthas* are to mark five places - the four as above and additionally the neck. **Acharamadhav** of **Brahmanda Purana** explains that even the colours of the Chandlo are significant: 'A black Tilak will derive peace; a red Tilak will bring obedience and control; a yellow one will bring wealth; one which is white will deliver devotion to Vishnu; a Tilak of correct size, marked using one's fingers will offer the Lord's support and blessing; a Tilak in the centre of the forehead will bring youth and long life; the Chandlo made using the third finger (*Anamika*) will deliver joy; and a bounded Tilak will ultimately bring salvation'. Thus one should mark the Tilak with the correct finger making sure that the nail of the finger does not come into use when marking.

Santaralam Prakurvanti Pundra Haripadakruti - 'One which has space in the middle (is not full bodied but is hollow) and is marked like the Lord's lotus feet.' The Tilak made using the finger should also be sized like a finger. Shatanand then explains the two types of Tilaks – **Haripadakruti**, which is slightly wider at the top and **Dandakruti** which is parallel. It is further explained that Dandakruti Tilak is to be marked upon the forehead, a lotus shaped Tilak upon the chest, bamboo shaped Tilaks on both arms and 'Divo' - naked flame shaped Tilak elsewhere.

Skanda Purana explains that the Tilak should be made using a mirror or by looking at one's reflection in the water. The Tilak should be made using mud or paste with space in the middle so that the Tilak or 'U' shape is distinct from the round Chandlo.

Shatanand then explains those Tilaks marked by people which are considered unacceptable and even despicable: A circular Tilak (not vertical), unstraight - leaning to one side, without space in the middle i.e. not hollow, too small, broken - i.e. the 'U' must be complete, without a base - i.e. just two vertical lines, too big, dirty - not of a pure or brilliant colour, made without the use of water, too red, made without the fingers and made using substances with a bad odour.

Finally, married women should wear a Kum-Kum Chandlo upon the forehead