



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

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Shikshapatri Bhashya Shlok 68

|| A person should be addressed according to their status, taking into consideration the time and place but not otherwise ||

This shlok is stating we should firstly understand and know the qualities of a person i.e. his clan, caste, knowledge, penance, yoga, majesty, dignity etc. Once we know this we can address a person accordingly. In addition to this as well as looking at the qualities of a person the second part of the shlok states we should also look at the time and place before we address him.

For example, a guru may address his disciple differently when they are alone compared to when they are seated in a large assembly. When seated in a assembly he must be given respect and addressed properly even though he is his disciple. Shatanand Swami explains the way in which a person is addressed in private should never be used in public. A prime example is where a person is called by their nickname in private but when in public they should be addressed in a proper manner.

Where the shlok states looking at the time (kaal), this means when a disciple is of old age the guru must address him with elderly respect. Shatanand Swami explains that even ones student must be honoured if he displays such qualities. Ramanand Swami was Lord Swaminarayan's guru but the respect Swami gave to Bhagwan was great even though he was his disciple.

1. You have the same conversation with 3 different people i.e. Acharya Maharaj, a Sadhu and a Haribhakt. Would the way you speak to all 3 differ and why?

The qualities of a person, time and place are the 3 things that need to be considered when addressing or even uttering any words. Niti Vivek says, Nobles, Yogi's, Satpurush and statemen should be given due respect when addressing them in varna and ashram.

2. You have a great religious leader or learned person addressing the sabha with a speech and there is something in the speech you do not quite agree with, how would you go about addressing this?

3. If we say we should respect a person according to his status, does that mean we treat the lower class people badly or differently?

It is important to note all should be respected regardless of their background, qualities, education etc. as this is the great quality of man as mentioned numerous times in many Vachanamruts. Lord Swaminarayan has not asked us in this shlok to abuse the lower caste or the less learned as this could unintentionally hurt the person on the receiving end but he is asking us to keep respect and maryada at all times with the different people we meet.