



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 69

|| My devotees shall honour the arrival of a guru, king, elder, learned person, ascetic and saints by standing up and bowing to them. ||

This shlok is a very easy to understand and straight forward but do we really abide by this shlok?

Many of the great people in the past did not follow the above and ultimately paid the price for not showing respect. For all of us to be able to abide by this shlok we must differentiate between who a Guru, Ruler, Elder, Learned person, Ascetic and Saint is (Ask your group to differentiate between these 6 before reading the below definitions)

1. Guru – Acharaya Maharaj and those who give us true knowledge. You can also refer to our parents as our gurus.
2. Ruler – King or Queen of the country
3. Elder – those who are older in age
4. Learned person – those who are well versed in religious scriptures
5. Ascetic – one who performs penance like the Kruchhachandrayan vrat
6. Saint – one who has renounced all worldly pleasures and are engaged in continuous worship to God.

All devotees are courteously required to stand up on the arrival of the above and with folded hands offer 'pranam'. Upon greeting them with respect they must be offered a respectable seat and thereafter one must take their seat in a suitable position. Valmiki rushi extends this same advice of standing and respecting the 6 people mentioned above to Bharat in the Ramayan.

Discussion:-

1. Can you think of any occurrences where this shlok was not followed and resulted in adverse consequences? i.e. Indradev lost his empire as he did not stand from his own seat upon the arrival of Sage Brihaspati.
2. Does this shlok apply if you are a disciple who is elder in age than your Guru?
3. A person has qualities which are worthy of respect should we be standing and bowing to such people?



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Shikshapatri Bhashya Shlok 70

|| In respect, no one should sit in an unmannered posture in front of a guru, a deity, a king or any honourable guest in a congregational assembly ||

This shlok follows on from the previous one, once we greet the 6 people mentioned earlier we should not sit in a unmannered posture in front of them.

Discussion 1: What is meant by an unmannered or inappropriate posture

Smruti says one must not sit in Veerasana which is a posture that befits a warrior. One shall not sit cross legged. Cross legged means the right foot should not be crossed over and placed on the left thigh and vice versa. Sitting in this position is an insult to a Deity, Guru, King, Learned person, ascetic, elder person etc. It is important to note it says 'FOOT' not 'FEET' hence sitting in padmasana is perfectly acceptable.

In addition to this there is another inappropriate position we must not sit in, this is where we use a cloth around the back and tie both knees to make the seating position more comfortable.

Discussion 2: We don't use a cloth these days to sit so are we abiding by this shlok?

Just as we should sit appropriately in front of the people mentioned above we must sit in an appropriate manner when in a sabha also. Padmasana is the preferred way of sitting when in a congregational assembly.

Discussion 3: What should you do if you are tired and are unable to sit in a sabha for a long period of time?