

Jay Shree Swaminarayan, We hope the first session on the worldwide syllabus was very fruitful and beneficial. Please always recap the previous topic before starting any Wednesday sabha. This is lesson 2 on Behaviour at home, mandir and outside. The 2 lessons have been merged into 1 session. However, it will not be possible to cover the topic in details due to sant archivachan. Hence, group leaders should only deliver important message rather than reading all the documents – Jay Hari.

### Behaviour Home and Outside Teachers Notes

1. Behaviour is a range of actions and mannerisms in conjunction with their environment
2. Using the teacher notes describe to the students the few ways to behave at home and externally
  - a. Respecting parents
    - i. One should address the elders as 'tame and not tu'
    - ii. It is disliked by Bhagwan to use the word TU.
    - iii. Touch the feet of your parents and say Jay Shri Swaminarayan, everyday
  - b. Welcoming and respecting others
    - i. Offer food and drink to anyone who comes to your home
    - ii. Make sure they have a place to sit if they come to your house
    - iii. Being respectful to all
  - c. Be truthful and not to lie
  - d. Be friendly to everyone
3. Practically show them the different ways to behave
4. Explain why this is important.
5. To get the student draw images of good behaviour and bad behaviour in at home and outside

### Review / Closure Questions

1. What does the word behaviour mean?
2. What types of behaviour does a devotee have?
3. How should we respect parents?
4. How should we respect guests who come to our house?
5. Why should we be truthful?

### Respect parents

One should address the elders as 'tame and not tu'. It's disliked by Bhagwan to use the word TU.

Page lagva or say Jay Shri Swaminarayan, everyday

*Reason:* Parents feet have ansarth tirath (pilgrimages)

*Example:* Gopalanand swami and boy row no.

### Warm welcome, respect, offer food & drink to all guest who come home

Ref: Shikshapatri 138

They shall welcome and entertain anyone who comes to their house as a guest with food, drink, etc., according to their means. They shall perform with due respect, sacrificial rites to deities and oblation rites to ancestors, according to their ability

The following six are Dharma Bhikshukas: (1) one who crosses your path, (2) somebody who is weak, (3) a student, (4) one who looks after a Guru, (5) a Sanyasin (renounced person) and (6) a Brahmachari (celibate). Thus such persons should be given food and water and welcomed according to one's ability.

They should be made welcome by greeting such person with *Namaskar*. Kashi Khanda explains, 'The Punya obtained by donating cows (*Bhagwanaan*) is obtained by merely according a warm welcome to a Bhikshuka and offering food, water, shelter and the like.'

'Those houses that have never offered even water to Atithis are like houses frosted over by the cold season.' 'Those who do not welcome Atithis are consigned to *Paryavartan* hell, where they are subjected to such intense pains as having their eyes pierced by birds.' 'Those Atithi who leave without proper welcome take away with them the Punya accrued by that household.' Shanti Parva explains, 'Even one's enemy should be welcomed, should he come for shelter.'

Offering to the poor and needy shows great compassion and is the basis of Dana Dharma. Giving to those less fortunate shows humanity and results in great Punya. Those that forever give are famed like Rantideva and

Baliraj, whose kindness and compassion were unsurpassed. By offering to others, we offer to Bhagwan as the Upanishads say: *Atithi Devo Bhava* - 'Thy stranger is Bhagwan

**One shall never make false accusations or abuse anyone verbally even if it serves one's self-interest**

Shikshapatri shlok 20

Reason

*Mithyapavadaha* – false accusation one should never falsely accuse somebody of something, especially in order to acquire money. It is said that to falsely accuse results in sin that is greater than even the five deadly sins. So much so, that Prayaschit for the five great sins is given in Shastras, but no such information is given for false accusations

The second part of this Shlok – never to hurt, abuse or swear at anyone. There is a saying, 'The lash of a sword can be cured often, but the lash of abuse can never be cured.' Thus, what we say to another person can often leave deep scars and so must always be controlled.

The voice is a powerful tool and must be used with care and consideration. Effective communication in society, groups and committees should always be practiced, because only then can there be stability and unification. To speak blatantly without regard can lead to a break down in a community. People must be willing to listen to each other and we must all learn to use the power of speech effectively for the betterment of society.

Through inappropriate speech, swearing etc., it is said that one's Punya is washed away. Therefore, never even in a state of anger, should you hurl abuse at anyone. One must always maintain absolute control over their speech. Swearing and abusive language is undesirable in a person – indeed it defames a person.

### 3) Respect (aadar bhav)

Be courteous to guru, ruler, elderly, sadhu, scholar, ascetic,

Ref: Shikshapatri Shlok 69

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Ref: Shikshapatri Shlok 69

*Gurudevyanrupantike* - Guru, Bhagwan and King are here mentioned but one should include the *Vrudh*, *Tyagi*, *Vidhvaan* and *Tapasvi* as previously mentioned.

One should not sit in the said manner, as it is discourteous and disrespectful. Shatanand clarifies that one leg upon the other thigh is prohibited here and not both legs upon opposite thighs (as this is a form of *Yogasan*).

Similarly one should not sit in a stropy manner with legs outstretched etc. as this also displays disrespect. Thus one should assume a posture of sitting with the legs crossed with the back straight (mind you, not too straight, so as to look proud or egotistical!)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyvrGGpRbE>

### Behaviour Mandir Teachers Notes

1. Behaviour is a range of actions and mannerisms in conjunction with their environment
2. Describe to the students the few ways to behave in Mandir
  - a. Seated on floor with crossed legs
  - b. No talking during Katha
  - c. No talking whilst doing Darshan
3. Explain why it is important to behave in the Mandir in the appropriate manner.
  - a. Respect of Bhagwan
  - b. Respect of others who are present.
4. To get the student draw images of good behaviour and bad behaviour in Mandir

#### Review / Closure Questions

1. How should we sit in the Mandir?
2. Name a few things that we should not do in the Mandir?
3. What type of clothes should we wear in Mandir?
4. What should we do when leaving the Mandir?
5. When should we take Prasad?

#### Further reading

Main focus: not to obstruct other bhaktos in Mandir when doing anything.

Basic behaviour:

One should observe 'Moun Vrat' - the vow of silence once in the Mandir.

*Reason:* Just as one would do when in class in front of a teacher (guru) we should show the same manners and respect when in front of Bhagwan and his devotees, in the same way we observe silence in class to not disturb others we should pay the same respect in Mandir, whatever actions we do, should not disturb others and should only be carried out to please Bhagwan

Thus no talking (especially social interaction), running (kids), eating (even Prasad), burping, farting, no feeding/changing kids, gossiping, the temple is a place of worship not a market place to meet your friends and exchange bargains/fruits/vegetarians

Do not give out dakshina/money, Prasad, gifts in Mandir, any of these things that need to be done should be out of the Mandir, by giving Prasad in Mandir you are encouraging people to eat it, and food should not be eaten in the Mandir (you eat and your hands are dirty, you will litter Bhagwan house) whether it is Prasad, also by doing this, you will be disturbing people and the events that are happening in Mandir, even if it's just people sitting and nothing is going on and it is before sabha time do not do it, as this is time for people to concentrate on Bhagwan by giving then Prasad you are diverting their mind from Bhagwan.

Do not eat: Prasad, chewing, food or drink water in Mandir for any kind (reason above)

No back towards Bhagwan, or stretching your feet towards him not should you point at him Maharaj.

*Reason:* pointing is known to be rude in general society we are taught not to do it in everyday life as a part of good manners, it is deemed as a hostile gesture, so we should not do this to our lord, we should not turn our back towards him, again we are there for him we should always face him, everything we do in the Mandir is for him, so there is no need to face our backs towards. If you were performing for a famous person would you face the person or the wall?

Satsangi jeevan Prakran4 (Adhyay 52) – Apradh Na Bhaysthano

Clothes - should not show parts of your body e.g. chest, navel, backside etc., clothes should allow you to sit properly, do darshan properly without showing any body parts

Shikshapatri 38: My disciples shall never wear clothes, which are likely to cause any indecent exposure of the body.

*Reason:* One must not wear clothing that is revealing as it degrades a person. Wearing such clothes can bring lustful thoughts to an onlooker. It brings unnecessary and inappropriate attention to oneself and shame to oneself



Shatanand Swami explains that clothing is primarily to cover the body and so those clothes worn, which reveal the body, do not serve their purpose. Indeed by wearing such clothes, one is considered naked

Touch the haar worn by Maharaj –pure and a good way to cleanse our minds and thoughts

It has been worn or been gifted to Bhagwan thus it becomes Prasad. Anything that has been offered to Bhagwan is considered very sacred and pure. We touch and smell flowers offered to Bhagwan so that good thoughts and gauns come into us.

Leela: the tyagi was walking on street he saw a flower and he picked up and smelt it, the flower had belonged to a prostitute, as soon as he smelt it, his mind became corrupted and he followed her around all his good work that he did all fell, so we should not smell other people flowers but Bhagwans, however before we give flowers to Bhagwan we should never smell it.

If rubbish in Mandir, pick it up (same as you would do at home)

*Example:* Leela: Uka Khachar picked up dog faeces (poo under the neem tree in Akshar Ordi where Maharaj used to sit to give divine discourse.

**One shall not sit with one leg over the other** or knees bound with a cloth strap, in the presence of a Guru, a Deity, a King (*Vrudh, Tyagi, Vidhvaan and Tapasvi*) or in a congregation Ref: Shikshapatri shlok 70

One should not sit in the said manner, as it is discourteous and disrespectful. Shatanand Swami clarifies that one's leg upon the other thigh is prohibited here and not both legs upon opposite thighs (as this is a form of *Yogasan*).

Similarly one should not sit in a stropy manner with legs outstretched etc. as this also displays disrespect. Thus one should assume a posture of sitting with the legs crossed with the back straight (mind you, not too straight, so as to look proud or egotistical!)

One should not sit in a chair unless physically disabled,

*Reason:* in temple you should always sit lower than Bhagwan and also the person reading the shastra, this is a sign of respect as Bhagwan is greater than you are his servant, therefore you should sit lower, also the person reading shastra is providing you with knowledge so that person has to be respected and you should always sit lower, this is mentioned in Satsangi jeevan,. Also if you are not disabled then you should sit on the floor with legs folded (Ardha Padmasana - half lotus pose) this helps concentration and dhyana.

You should sit on the floor and no leaning on the walls.

*Reason:* this is laziness and by doing this you will not be concentrating fully, one should sit with straight back, since the back is straight and spine is in its natural curve position, it is excellent pose for meditation as the body is alert and not stressed. This will prevent yogi from dozing off during the meditation at the same time makes it easier to sit in meditation, which is essential in the long run for the Sadhana.

Whilst the Katha is recited, you should never make any noise by talking or playing. Keep moun vrath,

*Reason:* you disturb others and Bhagwan from listening, Bhagwan dislikes those who talk. And its shows disrespect if Bhagwan is sitting in front of you and we are yapping away.

When Kirtan, Dhun, Katha, thar is going on than one should not talk but other than that talking about religion is good but do not do this inside Mandir whilst Bhagwan sleeping, whilst Bhagwan is sleeping do not make any noise, you will disturb him

Ref: chesta pad 10: Tyare Fadki Re, Jaage Sundar Shyam, kon che puche re – slightest movement disturbs him

You should never shout or run in Mandir. Bhagwan's home is a place of peace and quiet

Scriptures and holy objects are Bhagwan's image so they should not be thrown around, and should be treated with upmost respect,

*Reason:* it said Bhagwan resides in Shastras so one should treat them with respect, do not put on floor (would you put Bhagwan on floor) and also holy books are the words of Bhagwan, We should go to the place where the books are read and show respect and touching them respectfully to our eyes

When leaving:

Bow down to Maharaj

Reason: Shows respect, like saying goodbye to him, you would not walk out without saying goodbye to family and friends then you should not do that to Bhagwan.

Take Prasad only if you will eat it, do not throw it away, do not be picky which it is (e.g. if favourite fruit apple then take apple and not a banana) Prasad is Prasad it's not how tasty it is, the essence behind it important it has been offered to Bhagwan and now you are having it

Leela: Brahma had received Prasad and it had fallen on the floor and he did not pick up and then he could not see Bhagwan this took place at Jagannath Puri, that's why Shikshapatri shlok 19 say: One shall never consume food or drink prepared by a person from whom one is prohibited by holy scriptures, at any place, even if it is the Prasad from the offerings to Lord Shree Krishna, except the Prasad at Jagnath Puri.

Mahima of Prasad: Indeed any Prasad (sanctified food) in accordance with Shastras have great benefits to those who partake in it. Such blessed food leads to the person who eats Prasad to be also blessed. Many say that the power of Prasad is beyond comprehension, deriving Punya equivalent to numerous fasts (Upavaas). Prasad is said to contain spiritual powers or even miraculous powers and hence the greatness of Prasad can never be fully praised. It is food or drink that is first offered to Bhagwan and then consumed by us and so it is divine food, pure food or sanctified food. Thus Prasad should never be under estimated as 'just ordinary food or drink.'

If Maharaj is asleep, no talking, go outside and talk

When you are in Mandir, you should behave because Bhagwan is looking at you all the time.