



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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Practicalities of Satsang

This Saturday it will be 186 years since the Shikshapatri was written, a lot has changed since then, for one we live in a different country to that in which it was written. Throughout the discussion/debate we must remember that above all else, we do things that are written in scriptures plainly because it is Maharaj's will. When He has asked us to do things we have the utmost faith that everything He says is right and true. The purpose of these discussions, is to empower you to answer questions from non-believers and give you piece of mind that as well as pleasing Maharaj there are practical reasons for doing some of things that we are asked to by the scriptures and more importantly they are as relevant today as they were on the day they were written.

"None shall ever take water or milk unfiltered and use impure or contaminated water for bathing or any other purpose"

Shikshapatri Shlok 30

The first point to discuss is should we filter milk and water before we drink it?

Points to help guide the discussion:

- During Maharaj's time there wouldn't have been the social infrastructure we have today, no running water or supermarket with gallons of pasteurised milk.
- Water would have come from a well or some other underground source and would have contained small insects and bugs.
- The water we drink now is treated and has to pass many strict regulations.
- There have been cases of water being contaminated containing harmful bugs in June 2008 a naturally occurring bacteria was found in the water supply in Northampton
- Milk used to come straight from the cow and could have contained a cow's hair/skin etc
- Milk is now pasteurised before we buy it, meaning it is heated to a certain temperature for a set amount of time and cooled immediately; this slows the growth of micro-organisms and kills a large number of bacteria.



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"All my followers shall wake up early in the morning before sun rise; meditate Lord Krishna for a while; attend to the call of nature and brush the teeth sitting in a clean place, take bath with clean water; put on two washed clean clothes. Then sitting on a separate mat spread on a cleanly sanctified floor, facing the east or the north. They shall perform Achaman (sipping a few drops of water thrice. This is a purifying act and shall be performed at the beginning of every religious ceremony.) Then the males shall make 'U' shaped mark on the forehead (as stated before) with the round dot in it. And women with their husbands alive shall make red dot on the forehead with Kumkum. (Red powder) A widow shall make neither 'U' mark nor red dot (with Kumkum) on her forehead. Then all males or females shall offer mental worship to Shree Krishna. They shall bow down with devotion before the idol or the picture of Radha – Krishna; and chant the Krishna Mantra as far as their time allow. Then they may go to attend to their secular duties."

Shikshapatri Shloks 49-54

The second point to discuss is why do we have to have a bath, brushing teeth and answering the calls of nature, do puja and then eat in that order? And why should you get up before the sunrises.

Points to help guide discussion:

- Why can't we do it in any order as long as it gets done?
- Brushing your teeth before you eat breakfast can help to prevent the dental erosion that can wear away your teeth, most people are unaware that brushing their teeth after eating acidic food and drink can damage their teeth permanently. - This is an extract from findings by the British Dental Health Foundation.
- Can't touch puja before bath, can't eat before doing puja, therefore there is no question of order, it logic.
- Need to get rid of dead skin and small bacteria in your eyes ,mouth and rest of the body before touching anything.
- Maharaj was in India at the time and so the sun would set and rise at around the same time each day regardless of the season. In summer the sun rises at 0430 sometimes.
- There are certain times in the day when doing good deeds is multiplied by 1000.



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"During the menstrual period, they(women) shall not touch human being, clothes or vessels etc. for three days. They are free to do that only on the fourth day after taking the purifying bath."

Shikshapatri Sholk 174

The third point to discuss is whether this is still possible and practical to do this.

Points to help guide the discussion:

- Women can be treated disrespectfully and seen as a burden during this time. Women themselves get frustrated at not being able to do the things they are used to.
- Inconvenience - the man has to cook & clean and the woman has to eat their cooking.
- Body goes through a cleansing process during the menstrual cycle, cleansing process functions efficiently only if there is sufficient rest.
- Microscopic yet highly poisonous bacteria surfaces and exits pores during this time.
- Loss of blood results in weakness. Hence the reason why women are advised to rest. If they keep touching things and perform day to day activities
 - 1) It will contaminate the food and other artefacts
 - 2) Require energy which otherwise could be used to aid the cleansing process
- Classified as strong poison - examples & cases where
 - Flower petals in the garden where the woman have fallen off
 - Fruit rots
 - Cases where flowers have lost freshness
 - A frog's heart began to beat slower in the palm of a *Rajaswala*
 - A *rajaswala* prepared a yeast batter - the batter fermented
- Isn't this a small price to pay to avoid a) risking your own health and b) your loved ones.
- Today unable to tell who is undergoing the menstrual cycle when we sit on the train.
- Shreeji Maharaj has said don't eat from the hands of those unknown to you. Therefore if you don't eat from outside, you should not be worried about who is undergoing the menstrual cycle and who not.