



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

Westfield Lane, Kenton, Harrow, Middlesex, HA3 9EA Est. 1966 Charity Reg. No. 271034

Tel: [020 8909 9899](tel:02089099899) Fax: [020 8909 9897](tel:02089099897) Email: [balmandal@sksst.org](mailto:balmandal@sksst.org)

### SHIKSHAPATRI BHASHYA – SHLOK 19 & 20

|| One shall not take food or water from someone whom one is not allowed to under the restraints of the caste system, even if it is the Prasad from the offering of Lord Shree Krishna, except the Prasad at Jagannathpuri || (19)

This verse tells all the devotees not to eat food cooked or food prepared by a stranger or someone who deals in unholy things, such as meat. **(Discuss why we should not eat it)** Food like that has the power to influence the mind, the thoughts and the habits of the person cooking or preparing the food are absorbed by the person who eats it. Therefore, if a person who prepares food eats meat or has no interest in religion, then by eating that food one's mind gets poisoned against devotion to God. The only repent for this is by living off water for a month.

We should not like to have an animal put into our mouth whatever the circumstances are. We should never eat food in a restaurant or other eateries. Restaurants advertise that they insist on cleanliness and use filtered water but and this is the biggest question...**It may be clean but is it pure? (Discuss why we should not be eating out and the question)** And again we do not know what goes on in the mind of the people preparing the food this in turn affects us.

#### Story –

Once a lady from a religious family married into a non-religious one. On her first day in her new home, her husband threw away her Pooja, mala and kanthi. She told her brother about what her husband had done and he went to a sadhu to seek advice. The Sadhu advised her (through her brother) that she should chant the name of Lord Shree Swaminarayan while cooking food for her husband. After a few months of doing this, her husband's mind became pure and he began to regret throwing her Pooja away. He decided to go and get a new Pooja for her. To do this, he had to go to the next village where he met a Sadhu. The Sadhu realised that he was not a devotee and explained to him the benefits of worshipping Lord Shree Swaminarayan. As the person's mind had been purified by the food he had been eating he was able to understand what the Sadhu had explained and became a good devotee of Lord Shree Swaminarayan.

This story shows the power of purified food and explains why one should not eat food prepared by an unknown person. It is because of eating impure food that one cannot digest the meaning of Kathas.



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Prasad should not be eaten if one does not know, which ingredients have been used for preparing it. People try to pass on impure edibles as Prasad. For example, some people give bhang (cannabis/marijuana) as Prasad on Shivratri; this should be avoided. However, the Prasad at Jaganathpuri is edible as it is very holy. The Prasad offer there is mainly cooked rice. **(Recite Jagnathpuri story see Shikshapatri Bhashya)**

In Swaminarayan Sampraday, it is also said that one can eat Prasad in big Utsavas where thousands of devotees have gathered. Bhakti can only be counted if Dharma is observed at the same time. Dharma can only be observed if the right food is eaten. It may not be right for a Brahmin to eat food prepared by a Vaishya as it may have passed through a leather vessel.

This shows the power of purified food and explains why we should not eat food prepared or cooked by people, whom one does not know. This is the main reason why many of us do not understand the religious discourses, because our mind is not purified with holy food.

**|| One shall never make false accusation against anyone even for the sake of self-interest nor shall the utter abuse to others || (20)**

**(Discuss why we should not accuse people falsely)** Reputation is damaged if we are falsely accused. In some extreme case, entire lives can be ruined. Doing this to someone is as good as slaying him. One may also be driven to commit suicide and this is no better than homicide. Accusing people is something easy to do but very hard to undo. Also, one should not take interest in the criticism or gossip of others.

**(Discuss different issues i.e. accusing a friend for doing something they didn't and problems caused)**

One who accuses someone wrongly with false accusation such as adultery, killing of Brahmin etc earns the sin for himself amounting to double of the sin of the original sinful act. One, who discloses in public about secret sinful acts, earns the sin of that sinful act. Not only that but the sins which are with the accused, are transferred to the one who is accusing. **(Discuss)** Never to speak bad-words or dirty language to fallen ones, because such act attracts the sin of the acts of harshness from others. Mahabharat also says that those who speak lies, back bite, use harsh language and speak limitlessly are consigned to the species of birds and wild animals.

A man who engages in the refutation of others' character can never attain happiness. He continues to be sucked more and more deep into this habit, which is like quicksand. As a corollary, his own life is ruined. Moreover, when this act of his is exposed,



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he loses his stand in society (**Discuss the consequences of being caught lying also mention Shlok 75**).

Using abusive language is a sign of rudeness. We must always be cultured, courteous and loving in speech. A Sanskrit proverb says '**Yatha yatha munchati vakyabanam / tatha tatha jatikulpramanam**' One's identity of caste, class and culture is given away the moment one opens one's mouth to speak therefore we as Swaminarayan Satsangi's should show that we are well cultured, well mannered and well behaved. Abusive language does not only mean using bad words. Very often one loses control over one's speech in a fit of rage. It is said that one who is subordinate to one's ill temper does not benefit from charity, meditation, prayer, yajanas, anything at all. We should always speak politely with a child or a servant.