

Essence of Shikshapatri





Bhagwan Swaminarayan

Essence of *Shikshāpatrī*

Compiled & Translated By

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Publisher

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Essence of *Shikshāpatri*

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Publisher : Satsang Sahitya Department
Swaminarayan Dham,
Gandhinagar - 382421

Edition : June, 2026

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Prologue

Bhagwān Swāminārāyan personally wrote the *Shikshāpatrī* as a guide for His followers; sants, devotees, and seekers. He completed it during the festival of *Vasant Panchmi* in 1826 CE (*Samvat* 1882, 5th day of *Mahā Sud*) at *Vadtāl*. Each word was carefully chosen for the benefit of all souls. Everyone should always abide by the commandments of this *Shikshāpatrī* with love, sincerity, and awareness.

Shriji Mahārāj explained that the *Shikshāpatrī* is not merely a book of teachings, it represents His very presence. When we live according to its teachings, we walk with Him. When we ignore them, we create distance from Him. Following these teachings with respect and sincerity brings peace, strength, and spiritual ability into our lives.

Shriji Mahārāj has Himself said, “My words are my divine self (*swarup*). As such, one should obey these commandments with the highest reverence. Therefore, all my disciples who act according to this Shikshāpatri will certainly attain the four goals of life: *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kām* and *Moksh*. Those who do not follow this Shikshāpatri are considered excommunicated from this fellowship or sect.”

This sacred scripture is meant to be a daily companion. Reading it each day, especially during *pujā*, helps us remain grounded, focused, and spiritually aware. Its purpose is to guide us toward greater awareness, inner balance, and a stronger connection with God.

We follow the path of *Satsang* to attain ultimate liberation. To achieve this, we must cultivate unwavering devotion (*upāsana*) to His divine form and remain steadfast in observing the

commandments given in the Shikshāpatri.

In the Shikshāpatri, Shriji Mahārāj has given the five principal vows (*panch vartmān*) for all disciples (household devotees and ascetic sants) to follow; *Dāru, Māti, Chori, Averi, Vatalvu nahi Vatlavvā nahi*. In addition to these, ascetic sants are required to observe five further vows; *Nishkām, Nirlobh, Nirmān, Nisneh* and *Niswād*. Besides these vows, the Shikshāpatri also prescribes for both devotees and ascetic sants. Every disciple should faithfully observe all prescribed vows and practices.

The Shikshāpatri encourages us to reflect upon and examine our lives, not to feel guilty, but to grow. Mistakes are not permanent failures; they are opportunities to learn. The more sincerely we reflect and progress, the closer we come to living a life filled with His divine presence.

What follows are the five vows, along with

other essential practices from the Shikshāpatri. We should take time to read them, reflect upon them, and apply them in our daily lives. Every step we take in this direction brings us closer to the peace, joy, and ultimate liberation that Bhagwān Swāminārāyan wishes for all.

— *Sahitya Lekhan Vibhag*

Daily Pujā

“Wake up in the morning before sunrise, bathe, and offer pujā to Bhagwān before starting any other activities.”

— *Vachanāmrut Gadhadā First - 48*

Steps of Daily Pujā

- Wake up early, bathe, and wear clean clothes. Men should wear a *dhoti* and *uparni*, and then sit facing east or north for pujā.
- Then, lay out at least two additional *āsans* and respectfully place the murtis for worship.
- Men should apply *tilak-chāndlo*: a sandalwood tilak with a red *kumkum* dot in the centre of the forehead. This shows the union of Mahārāj and Mukta, with the chāndlo resting in the tilak. Apply the same sandalwood tilak and chāndlo on both upper arms and the chest.

- During puḡā, devotees may keep a small water container in their puḡā box for applying tilak chāndlo.
- Women should apply only the kumkum chāndlo on the forehead. The tilak is not to be applied.
- Close your eyes and perform the first *mānsīpuḡā* (mental worship). In your mind, visualise Mahārāj's divine form. Imagine waking Him up and offering Him a bath, a fresh pair of clothes and ornaments appropriate for the season. Perform *ārti*, and then offer and serve Him milk and breakfast.
- Respectfully place the *murtis* of *Shri Sahajānand Swāmi*, *Ḷivanprān Abjibāpāshri*, and the *Sadguru Sants* in their designated places for Puḡā. Then, recite the *Āhvān Mantra* (Invocation).

Āhvān Mantra (Invocation)

Uttishthottishtha he Nāth!

Shri Swāminārāyan Prabho;

Dharmasuno Dayāsindho,

Sveshām Shreyah Param Kuru.

Āgacchha Bhagavān Deva,

Svasthanāt Parameshwar;

Aham Pujam karishyāmi,

Sadā tvam sanmukho bhava.

- Arrange the murtis in this order:

1. *Shri Swāminārāyan Bhagwān* (Meditation Murti)

2. *Jivanprān Abjibāpāshri*

3. *Sadguru Gopālanand Swāmi*

4. *Sadguru Nīrgundāsji Swāmi*

5. *Sadguru Ishwarcharandāsji Swāmi*

6. *Sadguru Vrundāvandāsji Swāmi*

7. *Sadguru Keshavpriyadāsji Swāmi* (Muni Swāmi)

8. *HDH Gurudev Bāpji*

- Focus on the murtis and turn the rosary five times, chanting the Swāminārāyan Mahāmantra bead by bead. Then turn it once more while reciting the Gurumantra: “***Aham Anādimukta Swāminārāyan Dāśosmi***”, one bead at a time. Throughout the entire pujā, remain silent and focused, avoid talking or making gestures.
- Next, stand on your left foot with your right leg bent and turn one full rosary while chanting the *Mahāmantra*. Then, turn one round of the rosary while chanting the Mahāmantra and performing circumambulation (*pradakshinā*) around the murtis.
- Offer five full prostrations (*dandvat pranāms*) to Mahārāj. As taught in *Vachanāmrut Gadhadā Middle - 40*, add one more prostration for atonement, while praying:

“O Mahārāj, protect me from bad company. Forgive me if I have knowingly or unknowingly hurt You or Your devotees through my thoughts,

words, or actions. I bow once more in atonement.”

- Talk to Mahārāj as you would to a close friend. Share your struggles, ask for help, acknowledge and admit your weaknesses.

For example:

"O My Compassionate, O my God, are You pleased with me? This child of Yours wishes to speak to You! By Your grace, I've been blessed with Your divine company. You helped me know who You are, and who I am. Now, with the same grace, guide me, my dear God!

You've already poured so much kindness into my life. That's why I should be alert, careful, and protective of Your grace. Yet, despite Your grace, I often become careless and inattentive. And I can almost see it on Your face, You're not happy with how I take Your grace for granted.

Yet, O God, I sincerely wish to overcome this carelessness. My heart truly wants to please You. The problem? I keep getting stuck in this “I’m just a body, just a human” mindset, and it blocks me from staying connected to You. So even though You’ve already given me more grace than I deserve, I’m begging You for a little more. Help me break out of this limited, body-centred thinking. You lack nothing. I lack everything. That’s why I need You to be merciful and lift me higher.

I know that if You looked only at my flaws, my weaknesses, my mistakes, You wouldn’t want to give me anything. But please don’t leave me there. Help me rise above my ego. Help me trust with all my heart that every action, every breath, comes from You, not from me. Most of all, keep me from ever doubting the greatness of the *Satpurush*. Don’t let me view him through a merely human perspective. Don’t let me see faults in saints or

fellow seekers. Carry me, steady me, and keep me close to You until my very last breath."

Continue this personal conversation silently or aloud, sharing even daily matters and asking for guidance. Offer *thāl* (food) to Mahārāj with love, praying:

"O Beloved God, O Bāpā, O Sadgurus! Please protect me from the trap of "me and mine." Save me from the battles inside, my restless senses, my wandering thoughts, and the pull of negative influences. Strengthen me. Let me always see divinity in You and Your Satpurush. Give me the courage to always follow Your words with care. Please, pour Your grace upon me so that I may become the kind of devotee who truly makes You smile. Grace, God...grace. I need Your grace."

- For any mistakes made during puṇā, ask for forgiveness. Respectfully touch the feet of the murtis and carefully place them back in your puṇā

box. After that recite the *visarjan mantra*.

Visarjan Mantra

Svasthānam gaccha Devesha,

Pujamādaya māmakim.

Ishta-kāma-prasiddhyārtham,

puna-rāga-manāya cha.

- As you conclude your puṣā, read a short passage from "*Essence of Shikshāpatrī*" and "*Hari Ne Game Evā Thavu Chhe-2*".

- **Shikshāpatrī Prayer**

Shikshāpatrī pramāne vartāy,

Hari krupā karone sadāy;

Mandhāryu daie ame muki,

Bhule āgna na jaie chuki.

- Finally, offer two *dandvat pranāms* in the home temple before beginning your day.



The Five Vows (*Panch Vartmān*) for All Devotees

Introduction

This section explores the foundational spiritual and ethical guidelines known as the Five Vows (*Panch Vartmān*), as prescribed by Bhagwān Swāminārāyan in sacred texts such as the *Shikshāpatrī*, *Satsangjīvan*, and commentaries on *Vachanāmṛt Gadhādā First - 78*. The vows are intended to guide both devotees and ascetic sants in cultivating a life of purity, devotion, and integrity.

1. Vow of Non-Intoxication (*Dāru Vartmān*)

The intention behind this vow is to maintain clarity of mind and spiritual awareness. Anything that dulls the senses or impairs spiritual awareness is viewed as equivalent to alcohol and is to be avoided.

This includes:

- Substances like tea, coffee, tobacco, cigarettes, hemp, opium, drugs, gutka, and other addictive items.
- All kinds of liquor and alcoholic beverages.
- Alcohol-based medicines.
- Sensory distractions that intoxicate the mind, such as media and entertainment (TV, movies, dramas, internet content, gambling, lotteries), and other forms of content that promote sensual indulgence.

2. Vow of Pure Diet (*Māti Vartmān*)

The *Māti* vow is about choosing food that keeps the body and mind pure. It's not only about avoiding meat, it also means staying away from anything that could harm living beings, including food items in which tiny insects or other living organisms may be present and be harmed. It also means avoiding anything that could cloud spiritual clarity or compromise hygiene and health. The vow emphasises choosing food that is clean, sanitary, nourishing, sattvic, simple, natural, and uplifting for both body and mind.

This includes:

- Any food or medicine with meat, eggs, or other non-vegetarian animal-derived ingredients.

- Foods that might contain tiny living beings, such as unfiltered water, milk, oil, ghee, unsifted flour, uncleaned beans or grains, and certain vegetables such as cauliflower or certain leafy greens.
- Strong-smelling foods like onion, garlic, and asafoetida are considered tamasic in nature.
- Packaged or mass-produced foods like chocolates, cookies, bakery products, cheese, soft drinks, ice cream, or such foods where hygiene and purity may not always be guaranteed.
- Food served at large gatherings or events, where proper hygiene and spiritual purity may be difficult to guarantee. Devotees are encouraged to prepare meals at home with care, following the above-stated practices of Filtering, sieving or cleaning. Before eating, food is to be lovingly offered to God, thereby becoming *prasād*.
- In unavoidable situations, if one has to use water

from any source, it should be filtered before drinking.

- Similarly, items like buttermilk, lassi, or milk-based juices from outside should only be used after straining. This allowance is given only to devotees.
- For preparing special offerings like *Annakut* or pure dishes, fresh banana stem water drawn in the presence of a devotee (one who abides by the five vows) may be used after filtering. Packaged or pre-made banana stem water from the market should not be used.
- The *Māti* vow is also about practising non-violence (*ahimsā*). One should not harm any living being, not even small insects.
- Just as we are mindful of our food, we must also be mindful of our words and actions. This, too, is a form of *ahimsā*. One should ensure that no one

is hurt by one's words or actions.

- If we do happen to hurt someone, we should immediately acknowledge the mistake and offer a sincere apology.

In this way, by practising care in both food and speech, with the practice of *ahimsā*, the *Māti* vow is truly observed.

3. Vow of Non-Stealing (*Chori Vartmān*)

The vow of non-stealing means living with honesty and integrity. It's not merely about taking or using anything that doesn't belong to you; this vow instils respect for others and fairness in every sphere of life.

This includes:

- Never claim ownership or take anything that isn't clearly yours; even if it's lost, forgotten, or

simply lying around. Always obtain the rightful owner's permission.

- Do not accept any object or money that is not rightfully yours, even if it is offered to you.
- Stay honest in all you do; no cheating, no bribes, and no cutting corners. Always deliver on what you promise.
- Do not stay or establish yourself on someone else's private or unused land without permission.
- Do not waste time at work or while serving others.
- Do not misuse public utilities, including theft of electricity, water, or other government-provided services.
- Stay away from illegal professions or practices that cause harm or exploit others.

Spiritual honesty is also emphasised:

- Ten per cent (10%) of one's honest income, whether earned through business, employment, or farming should be offered as *dharmādo*, a way of dedicating part of your earnings to God, that purifies wealth. If someone is facing significant financial hardship, at least five per cent (5%) should be offered.
- Similarly, dedicating a portion of one's time to spiritual practice is known as time-*dharmādo*, offering one's energy and attention to God through serving sants, engaging in devotion, and attending spiritual discourses.

By following the vow of non-stealing, devotees learn to live truthfully, respect boundaries, and align their outer actions with their inner intentions in purity.

4. Vow of Celibacy & Moral Conduct *(Averi Vartmān)*

This vow instructs one to practise celibacy and maintain purity in thoughts, words, and actions. It involves avoiding all inappropriate interactions or behaviours related to the opposite gender, staying away from impure content, and maintaining respectful, disciplined relationships. The goal is to preserve inner strength and spiritual focus by living a life of self-control and moral integrity.

Some core principles:

- Avoid lustful thoughts, gazes, and relationships with anyone other than one's spouse.
- Keep respectful boundaries with the opposite gender. Even among family or friends, avoid lustful thoughts and gazes, and also avoid being

alone together in private spaces that may cloud one's mind or intentions.

- Avoiding all forms of erotic or inappropriate media (visual, audio, print, digital, etc.); anything that includes nudity, immodest or revealing clothing, or explicit content. Such content is harmful to one's purity, and a devotee should consciously stay away from it.
- All devotees should avoid wearing short, immodest, or revealing clothing.
- Avoid participating in or attending events, such as clubs, parties, discos, or dance events that encourage a lustful and sensual atmosphere.
- Observe menstrual purity rules.
- Married life should be guided by spiritual rhythm. Couples should avoid intimacy on spiritually significant days; the day before, the day of, and the day after *Ekādashī* or *Hari Navmī* on days of fasts, yaghnā, or spiritual celebrations; on

New Moon (*Amāvasyā*); during the month of *Shrāvan* or *Adhik Mās* (the lunar leap month); and while staying at holy places.

5. Vow of Religious Integrity
(*Vatalvu nahi & Vatlāvvā nahi*)

This vow focuses on maintaining the purity of one's religious observances without compromising one's principles or improperly influencing others. One should not accept food, drink, or anything that violates the observance of one's vows. Similarly, if we do not properly uphold certain religious observances or principles, we should not pressure someone who follows them to eat, drink, or accept anything that may compromise their vows.



Essential Practices for All Devotees

In addition to these five vows, devotees of Bhagwān Swāminārāyan should also follow some essential teachings and practices given by Him in the Shikshāpatri as summarised below:

1. Even when things feel dark, never hurt yourself. Do not give in to depression or guilt. You are never alone. Do not harm yourself or others with any kind of weapon. One should never commit suicide by any means.
2. Do not take anything without the owner's permission for any purpose, even a religious one.
3. Never falsely blame anyone for personal gain. One should never speak vulgar or offensive words.
4. Avoid speaking about or listening to the faults, slander, and vices of others.
5. Always be truthful; however, avoid speaking

truths that lead to the betrayal or harm of yourself or others.

6. Avoid the company of ungrateful people who don't appreciate what is done for them.

7. One should never keep the company of six types of people: thieves, sinners, addicts, hypocrites, lustful individuals and deceitful people.

8. Do not listen to the teachings of sinful people who pursue worldly pleasures such as wealth, lust and taste under the pretext of spirituality, devotion and wisdom.

9. Don't spit, urinate, defecate or litter in places like temples, riversides, lakeshores, roads, sown fields, shades of trees, gardens, etc.

10. Do not enter or leave places through unauthorised means.

11. Men should avoid religious debates with

women and not attend their sermons.

12.Never insult a guru, dignified person, scholar, or armed person; always show respect.

13.Do not rush into personal or work-related decisions; think carefully before taking action. However, when it comes to religious duties and seva, act promptly.

14.One should always maintain association with the *Pujya Sants* and listen to their discourses daily.

15.Bring a small offering when going for darshan of God or sants.

16.Never betray someone's trust.

17.Never praise yourself.

18.Men and women should avoid physical contact in temples.

19.Always wear a sacred tulsi or wooden kanthi as a sign of devotion.

20. Wake before sunrise and chant the "Swāminārāyan" Mahāmantra.

21. Then, after defecation, wash your hands 17 times (left hand 10 times, then both hands 7 times together) using clean clay, powder, or liquid soap. Do not use bar soap.

22. Then brush your teeth while staying in one place without walking around. After that, take a bath.

23. Thereafter, one should perform daily puḡā. Do not eat or drink before completing one's puḡā. Men should wear a *dhōti-uparni* during puḡā.

24. Men should apply a tilak made of sandalwood paste on the forehead, with a red kumkum dot (*chāndlo*) in the centre. They should also apply *tilak-chāndlo* to both upper arms and the chest using only sandalwood paste. Women should apply only the red *kumkum chāndlo* on the forehead, while

widows should refrain from applying any mark.

25. Perform the first mānsipujā and experience the divine presence of God in your pujā. Then chant “***Swāminārāyan***” on each bead for five turns of the rosary, followed by one round of the rosary while reciting the *Gurumantra*: “***Aham Anādimukta Swāminārāyan Dāsosmi***” on each bead.

26. Do not eat or use anything before offering it to God. Let everything become *prasād*.

27. Visit the temple daily. Sing *kirtans*, do *dhun*, and listen to the discourses of saints.

28. Assign work to people according to their virtues and abilities, and respect them accordingly. In addition, respect elders and honoured guests and offer them an appropriate seat.

29. One should not sit with outstretched legs, with one leg placed over the other or in any

inappropriate posture during *satsang*.

30. Never abandon or deviate from your religious vows (*dharma*) just for comfort or personal gain.

31. If you know someone's private matter, do not disclose it.

32. During the holy months of *Chāturmās*, one should take on additional vows such as reading scriptures, turning the rosary, listening to spiritual teachings, observing celibacy, performing fasts, and observing *ektāna*, etc.

33. On *Ekādashī* and *Hari Navmī*, fast and skip daytime naps.

34. When in trouble, loudly chant the holy mantra, 'Swāminārāyan', to remain protected from evil spirits and negative energies.

35. Follow the *sutak* rituals during birth and death in the family.

36. If one sins, whether knowingly or unknowingly, whether the sin is great or small, one should atone for it under the guidance of a satpurush or sant.

37. A man should never touch a widow unless she is a close relative.

38. Look after people who depend on you, such as parents, spouses and sick family members, with love, and continue to serve them throughout your life.

39. Save food and money wisely for the future. If you have animals, store food for them too.

40. For any business or financial transactions (land, loans, or anything similar), even with close friends or family, always obtain a written agreement, in the presence of a witness.

41. Do not spend more than you earn. Track your income and expenses daily.

42. Pay your workers the full agreed amount, without deception or dishonesty.

43. For your own well-being, do not hesitate to move if living in your hometown becomes unsustainable, unmanageable or calamitous. One should relocate and reside peacefully wherever the circumstances are favourable.

44. If you're wealthy, help support Bhagwān Swāminārāyan's festivals, temple construction, and the feeding of saints and devotees.

45. Every husband and wife should care for and support their spouse with respect, even if they are blind, sick, or poor, and never speak harsh words to them.

46. Widows are encouraged to find solace in God as their eternal companion and to welcome the loving support and guidance offered by trusted family members.

47. My form (*Bhagwān Swāminārāyan*) is completely *nirgun* (divine) and, by extension, all devotees associated with me are also divine. Hence, one should perceive divinity in them.

48. If someone's words or behaviour distract you from your own devotion, worship, or spiritual practice, do not let them influence you. Do not listen to their lectures or sermons.

49. When a devotee grows weak with age or faces severe circumstances, they can give their *pujā murti* to others so it can be worshipped on their behalf. At the same time, they should continue their devotion in ways they can manage, according to their own strength.

50. The teachings that strengthen my (*Bhagwān Swāminārāyan*) *upāsana* as well as *dharm* (religion), *vairāgya* (asceticism) and *bhakti* (devotion), among these four, the teachings that describe the highest excellence of my form should be considered primary over all others.

The Soul's *Dharma*

In Shikshāpatri verse 116, Shriji Mahārāj explains an important truth: the soul is not the body. The body has three layers; the physical body (*sthool sharir*), the subtle body (*sukshma sharir*), and the causal body (*kāran sharir*). However, the soul is separate from all of these. We should understand the soul as *Murtirup-Purushottamrup*, and remain devoted to Bhagwān Swāminārāyan.

This means: “I am not the body. My body’s name, place, race, caste, habits, and vices are not truly mine. I am the eternal soul.” With this understanding, we should hold the conviction:

"Aham Anādimukta Swāminārāyan Dāsosmi."

"Aham Purushottam Ruposmi..."

(I am an *Anādimukta*, a devoted servant of Bhagwān Swāminārāyan. My true form mirrors the supreme form of God.)

*Deh nahi hun, mukta anādi,
akhand manan rakhāvajo.*

(I am not this body; I am an *Anādimukta*. Help me, always keep this awareness strong.)

With this awareness, we should remain connected within the *Murti* (divine form) of Bhagwān Swāminārāyan as an *Anādimukta* throughout the day and during meditation. This is the commandment for the soul given by Bhagwān Swāminārāyan.

The Foundation: *Swarupnishthā* (Faith in God's Supremacy)

Before we can truly understand the soul, every devotee must first develop unwavering faith in the form and supremacy of Bhagwān Swāminārāyan. In Shikshāpatri verse 108, Shriji Mahārāj clearly states that the one supreme God is *Anādi Krushna* (सःश्रीकृष्ण), Swāminārāyan Bhagwān. He is *Parabrahma Purushottam*, the cause of all

incarnations, the ultimate God, and the only one worthy of worship for every *satsangi* (follower).

According to this verse, all followers must cultivate unwavering faith in Bhagwān Swāminārāyan's supremacy. This also means,

- In all the infinite universes, Bhagwān Swāminārāyan is eternal.
- He is all-powerful, independent, the cause of everything, the supporter of everything, and the controller of everything. Countless entities come into being, are sustained and receive their powers through Bhagwān Swāminārāyan's *anvay* form.
- From the countless divine rays emanating from Bhagwān Swāminārāyan, one ray, called the *anvay swarup* (immanent form), pervades (*vyapi ne rahevu*) from the infinite Mul Akshars down to all *jivas* (living beings) in decreasing order (*uttarottar*). The creation and sustenance of all beings in the *anvay* line are all reliant upon

Bhagwān Swāminārāyan's *anvay swarup*; they are therefore said to have an anvay (indirect) relation with Bhagwān Swāminārāyan. Meanwhile, countless *Chalochāl Bhaktas*, *Ekāntik Bhaktas*, *Paramekāntik Muktas*, and *Anādimuktas* are created and continue to exist through the relation of Shriji Mahārāj's *Vyatirek form* (transcendent power); they are said to have a *vyatirek* (direct) relation. In both lines of existence, no one has independent power.

Thus, Bhagwān Swāminārāyan is the single supreme cause and sovereign of both the anvay (immanent) and vyatirek (transcendent) lines.

- This same Bhagwān Swāminārāyan is eternally present in His Murti form even today. To our eyes, the Murti may appear to be a sacred image or idol, but it is not merely a painting or a statue; it is present, divine, and full of radiant light. The Murti embodies the infinite power, brilliance, *Akshardhām*, and infinite *Muktas* because it is Shriji

Mahārāj Himself, the same Mahārāj who met sants and devotees such as Dādā Khāchar and Gopālanand Swāmi in the past. I have been graced with His divine presence in this form. Such faith is known as *pratyakshpane nishchay*. We should cultivate this type of faith in our lives.

- When a devotee has such firm conviction in His form (*swarupnishthā*) and lives daily with the awareness of being an *Anādimukta*, they gradually attain the state of *Anādimukt*, which is a state of eternal liberation (*sthiti*). Every devotee must strengthen this understanding of Bhagwān Swāminārāyan's form and supremacy. This too is an essential upāsanā related command from Shriji Mahārāj.



The Five Vows (*Panch Vartmān*) for Ascetic Sants

The following is based on *Dharmāmṛut*, *Nishkāṁ Shuddhi*, the *Shikshāpatri* and commentaries on the *Vachanāmṛut Gadhadā First* - 78.

Ascetic sants must follow all the vows prescribed for devotees, as well as the following additional five vows designed specifically for ascetic sants.

1. Vow of Non-Lust (*Nishkāṁi Vartmān*)

Sants must observe the eight-fold vow of celibacy. It includes:

1. Not engaging in physical relationships with women.
2. Not touching the clothes of women.
3. Not making physical contact with women.

4. Refraining from dwelling upon or speaking about the appearance of women, whether they are beautiful, unattractive, young, or old.

5. Not allowing the mind to dwell on thoughts of women.

6. Avoid looking at or touching pictures of women

7. Not even entertaining thoughts of seeking pleasure with women; naturally, physical relations are out of the question.

8. Not speaking directly with women.

- To help uphold this standard, sants should not travel alone but should remain in pairs, so they can support each other in maintaining the eight-fold vow of celibacy. If any mistake occurs unknowingly, it should be atoned for as prescribed in the scripture “*Nishkām Shuddhi*”.

- In the same way, one must remain fully vigilant and uphold nishkām dharma even in interactions with a person of the same gender.

2. Vow of Non-Greed (*Nirlobhi Vartmān*)

Sants should live a life free from possessions and luxury, holding onto nothing as their own. Even the smallest sense of ownership can weigh down the spirit. The vow of non-greed includes:

- Not touching, claiming, or keeping any money, directly or indirectly, even in the smallest amount. To do so brings serious spiritual consequences.
- Keeping only the allowed eleven pieces of clothing (as stated in scripture), never more.
- Wearing simple, thick cotton clothes (*mādarpat*) instead of fine, thin, or decorative ones.
- Abstain from wearing artificially dyed garments. Instead, clothes should be naturally dyed using the saffron-coloured soil available in the Rampur village of Surendranagar, Gujarat.
- Not wearing stitched clothing.

- Never using silk, shiny fabrics, or luxurious materials for personal use.

3. Vow of Humility *(Nirmāni Vartmān)*

One shall never harbour any type of ego. Whether one receives respect or disrespect (insult), whatever comes by the will of Bhagwān Swāminārāyan, one should remain equanimous in both situations.

4. Vow of Detachment *(Nisnehi Vartmān)*

Sants are asked to rise above personal attachments and keep their hearts fully centred on God. To protect this focus, they follow this vow as follows:

- No maintaining personal relationships or interactions with parents, siblings, or close relatives from one's former family life.

- No involvement with or attachment to one's birthplace or former home.
- All love and affection should be rooted only in God and in the company of fellow saints and devotees through their relationship with God.

5. Vow of Non-Indulgence (*Niswādi Vartmān*)

- One should not use metallic utensils for eating or drinking, but should always use a wooden bowl and calabash (*tumbadi*), eating with gratitude and purity, without concern for personal taste.
- By the will of Swāminārāyan Bhagwān, whatever food one receives should finally be mixed with water and only then eaten.



Essential Practices for Ascetic Sants

In addition to these five vows, ascetic sants must also follow the other essential practices given by Bhagwān Swāminārāyan, as summarised below.

1. Avoid places that may put one's vow of celibacy at risk, even for something as simple as taking a bath.
2. Refrain from observing animals or birds engaged in mating, and protect one's mind from all forms of lust.
3. Do not speak to, gaze at, or touch those presenting in the guise of a female.
4. Sants should avoid addressing women directly while delivering spiritual talks or singing kirtans.
5. Any instruction that compromises the observance of non-lust or any of the five vows of sainthood should not be followed, even if coming

from one's guru.

6. If a woman or any person insists on or attempts to compromise one's celibacy, immediately stop them. While maintaining firmness and respect, use strong words or rebuke if necessary to protect the vow.

7. Do not allow yourself, or anyone else, to massage your body with oil.

8. One should take extra care to control one's gluttony and cravings.

9. Work daily to overcome lust, anger, greed, and ego.

10. Never allow a woman to enter where one lives or rests.

11. Never waste time. Fill your day with devotion to Bhagwān Swāminārāyan.

12. Avoid talking or listening to worldly matters

and gossip.

13. Do not sleep on an elevated bed unless there is a genuine need or severe circumstances.

14. Always be honest, open-hearted, and humble when in the presence of great sants.

15. If someone abuses or hurts you, do not respond with abuse or violence. Endure it calmly and wish them well in your heart, but do not wish harm upon them.

16. Bow to all, accept all, endure all and hold on to humility through it all.

17. Let go of one's ego and attachment to past relatives.

Oh Bhagwān Swāminārāyan! Please bless us so that we may observe all commands summarised in Your Holy Shikshāpatri.



श्री शिक्षापत्री

वामे यस्य स्थिता राधा श्रीश्च यस्यास्ति वक्षसि ।
वृन्दावनविहारं तं श्रीकृष्णं हृदि चिन्तये ॥१॥
लिखामि सहजानन्दस्वामी सर्वान्निजाश्रितान् ।
नानादेशस्थितान् शिक्षापत्रीं वृत्तालयस्थितः ॥२॥
भ्रात्रो रामप्रतापेच्छारामयोर्धर्मजन्मनोः ।
यावयोध्याप्रसादाख्यरघुवीराभिधौ सुतौ ॥३॥
मुकुन्दानन्दमुख्याश्च नैष्ठिका ब्रह्मचारिणः ।
गृहस्थाश्च मयारामभट्टाद्या ये मदाश्रयाः ॥४॥
सधवा विधवा योषा याश्च मच्छिष्यतां गताः ।
मुक्तानन्दादयो ये स्युः साधवश्चाखिला अपि ॥५॥
स्वधर्मरक्षिका मे तैः सर्वैर्वाच्याः सदाशिषः ।
श्रीमन्नारायणस्मृत्या सहिताः शास्त्रसम्मताः ॥६॥
एकाग्रेणैव मनसा पत्रीलेखः सहेतुकः ।
अवधार्योऽयमखिलैः सर्वजीवहितावहः ॥७॥

ये पालयन्ति मनुजाः सच्छास्त्रप्रतिपादितान् ।
सदाचारान् सदा तेऽत्र परत्र च महासुखाः ॥८॥
तानुल्लंघ्यात्र वर्तन्ते ये तु स्वैरं कुबुद्धयः ।
त इहामुत्र च महल्लभन्ते कष्टमेव हि ॥९॥
अतो भवद्भिर्मच्छिष्यैः सावधानतयाऽखिलैः ।
प्रीत्यैतामनुसृत्यैव वर्तितव्यं निरन्तरम् ॥१०॥
कस्यापि प्राणिनो हिंसा नैव कार्याऽत्र मामकैः ।
सूक्ष्मयूकामत्कुणादेरपि बुद्ध्या कदाचन ॥११॥
देवतापितृयागार्थमप्यजादेश्च हिंसनम् ।
न कर्तव्यमहिंसैव धर्मः प्रोक्तोऽस्ति यन्महान् ॥१२॥
स्त्रिया धनस्य वा प्राप्त्यै साम्राज्यस्य च वा क्वचित् ।
मनुष्यस्य तु कस्यापि हिंसा कार्या न सर्वथा ॥१३॥
आत्मघातस्तु तीर्थेऽपि न कर्तव्यश्च न क्रुधा ।
अयोग्याचरणात् क्वापि न विषोद्बन्धनादिना ॥१४॥
न भक्ष्यं सर्वथा मांसं यज्ञशिष्टमपि क्वचित् ।
न पेयं च सुरामद्यमपि देवनिवेदितम् ॥१५॥

अकार्याचरणे क्वापि जाते स्वस्य परस्य वा ।
अङ्गच्छेदो न कर्तव्यः शस्त्राद्यैश्च क्रुधापि वा ॥१६॥
स्तेनकर्म न कर्तव्यं धर्मार्थमपि केनचित् ।
सस्वामिकाष्ठपुष्पादि न ग्राह्यं तदनाज्ञया ॥१७॥
व्यभिचारो न कर्तव्यः पुम्भिः स्त्रीभिश्च मां श्रितैः ।
द्यूतादि व्यसनं त्याज्यं नाद्यं भङ्गादिमादकम् ॥१८॥
अग्राह्यान्नेन पक्वं यदन्नं तदुदकं च न ।
जगन्नाथपुरोऽन्यत्र ग्राह्यं कृष्णप्रसाद्यपि ॥१९॥
मिथ्यापवादः कस्मिंश्चिदपि स्वार्थस्य सिद्धये ।
नारोप्यो नापशब्दाश्च भाषणीयाः कदाचन ॥२०॥
देवतातीर्थविप्राणां साध्वीनां च सतामपि ।
वेदानां च न कर्तव्या निन्दा श्रव्या न च क्वचित् ॥२१॥
देवतायै भवेद्यस्यै सुरामांसनिवेदनम् ।
यत्पुरोऽजादिहिंसा च न भक्ष्यं तन्निवेदितम् ॥२२॥
दृष्ट्वा शिवालयादीनि देवागाराणि वर्त्मनि ।
प्रणम्य तानि तद्देवदर्शनं कार्यमादरात् ॥२३॥

स्ववर्णाश्रमधर्मो यः स हातव्यो न केनचित् ।
परधर्मो न चाचर्यो न च पाखण्डकल्पितः ॥२४॥
कृष्णभक्तेः स्वधर्माद्वा पतनं यस्य वाक्यतः ।
स्यात्तन्मुखात्र वै श्रव्याः कथावार्ताश्च वा प्रभोः ॥२५॥
स्वपरद्रोहजननं सत्यं भाष्यं न कर्हिचित् ।
कृतघ्नसङ्गस्त्यक्तव्यो लुज्वा ग्राह्या न कस्यचित् ॥२६॥
चोरपापिव्यसनिनां सङ्गः पाखण्डिनां तथा ।
कामिनां च न कर्तव्यो जनवञ्चनकर्मणाम् ॥२७॥
भक्तिं वा ज्ञानमालम्ब्य स्त्रीद्रव्यरसलोलुभाः ।
पापे प्रवर्तमानाः स्युः कार्यस्तेषां न सङ्गमः ॥२८॥
कृष्णकृष्णावताराणां खण्डनं यत्र युक्तिभिः ।
कृतं स्यात्तानि शास्त्राणि न मान्यानि कदाचन ॥२९॥
अगालितं न पातव्यं पानीयं च पयस्तथा ।
स्नानादि नैव कर्तव्यं सूक्ष्मजन्तुमयाम्भसा ॥३०॥
यदौषधं च सुरया सम्पृक्तं पललेन वा ।
अज्ञातवृत्तवैद्येन दत्तं चाद्यं न तत् क्वचित् ॥३१॥

स्थानेषु लोकशास्त्राभ्यां निषिद्धेषु कदाचन ।
मलमूत्रोत्सर्जनं च न कार्यं ष्ठीवनं तथा ॥३२॥
अद्वारेण न निर्गम्यं प्रवेष्टव्यं न तेन च ।
स्थाने सस्वामिके वासः कार्योऽपृष्ट्वा न तत्पतिम् ॥३३॥
ज्ञानवार्ताश्रुतिनार्या मुखात् कार्या न पूरुषैः ।
न विवादः स्त्रिया कार्यो न राज्ञा न च तज्जनैः ॥३४॥
अपमानो न कर्तव्यो गुरुणां च वरीयसाम् ।
लोके प्रतिष्ठितानां च विदुषां शस्त्रधारिणाम् ॥३५॥
कार्यं न सहसा किञ्चित्कार्यो धर्मस्तु सत्वरम् ।
पाठनीयाऽधीतविद्या कार्यः सङ्गोऽन्वहं सताम् ॥३६॥
गुरुदेवनृपेक्षार्थे न गम्यं रिक्तपाणिभिः ।
विश्वासघातो नो कार्यः स्वश्लाघा स्वमुखेन च ॥३७॥
यस्मिन् परिहितेऽपि स्युर्दृश्यान्वङ्गानि चात्मनः ।
तद्दूष्यं वसनं नैव परिधार्यं मदाश्रितैः ॥३८॥
धर्मेण रहिता कृष्णभक्तिः कार्या न सर्वथा ।
अज्ञनिन्दाभयान्नैव त्याज्यं श्रीकृष्णसेवनम् ॥३९॥

उत्सवाहेषु नित्यं च कृष्णमन्दिरमागतैः ।
पुम्भिः स्पृश्या न वनितास्तत्र ताभिश्च पूरुषाः ॥४०॥
कृष्णदीक्षां गुरोः प्राप्तैस्तुलसीमालिके गले ।
धार्ये नित्यं चोर्ध्वपुण्ड्रं ललाटादौ द्विजातिभिः ॥४१॥
तत्तु गोपीचन्दनेन चन्दनेनाथवा हरेः ।
कार्यं पूजावशिष्टेन केसरादियुतेन च ॥४२॥
तन्मध्य एव कर्तव्यः पुण्ड्रद्रव्येण चन्द्रकः ।
कुङ्कुमेनाथवा वृत्तो राधालक्ष्मीप्रसादिना ॥४३॥
सच्छूद्राः कृष्णभक्ता ये तैस्तु मालोर्ध्वपुण्ड्रके ।
द्विजातिवद्धारणीये निजधर्मेषु संस्थितैः ॥४४॥
भक्तैस्तदितरैर्माले चन्दनादीन्धनोद्भवे ।
धार्ये कण्ठे ललाटेऽथ कार्यः केवलचन्द्रकः ॥४५॥
त्रिपुण्ड्ररुद्राक्षधृतिर्येषां स्यात्स्वकुलागता ।
तैस्तु विप्रादिभिः क्वापि न त्याज्या सा मदाश्रितैः ॥४६॥
ऐकात्म्यमेव विज्ञेयं नारायणमहेशयोः ।
उभयोर्बह्यरूपेण वेदेषु प्रतिपादनात् ॥४७॥

शास्त्रोक्त आपद्धर्मो यः स त्वल्पापदि कर्हिचित् ।
मदाश्रितैर्मुख्यतया ग्रहीतव्यो न मानवैः ॥४८॥
प्रत्यहं तु प्रबोद्धव्यं पूर्वमेवोदयाद्रवेः ।
विधाय कृष्णस्मरणं कार्यः शौचविधिस्ततः ॥४९॥
उपविश्यैव चैकत्र कर्तव्यं दन्तधावनम् ।
स्नात्वा शुच्यम्बुना धौते परिधार्ये च वाससी ॥५०॥
उपविश्य ततः शुद्ध आसने शुचिभूतले ।
असङ्कीर्ण उपस्पृश्यं प्राङ्मुखं वोत्तरामुखम् ॥५१॥
कर्तव्यमूर्ध्वपुण्ड्रं च पुम्भिरेव सचन्द्रकम् ।
कार्यः सधवनारीमिर्भाले कुङ्कुमचन्द्रकः ॥५२॥
पुण्ड्रं वा चन्द्रको भाले न कार्यो मृतनाथया ।
मनसा पूजनं कार्यं ततः कृष्णस्य चाखिलैः ॥५३॥
प्रणम्य राधाकृष्णस्य लेख्यार्चा तत आदरात् ।
शक्त्या जपित्वा तन्मन्त्रं कर्तव्यं व्यावहारिकम् ॥५४॥
ये त्वम्बरीषवद्भक्ताः स्युरिहात्मनिवेदिनः ।
तैश्च मानसपूजान्तं कार्यमुक्तक्रमेण वै ॥५५॥

शैली वा धातुजा मूर्तिः शालग्रामोऽर्च्य एव तैः ।
द्रव्यैर्यथाप्तैः कृष्णस्य जप्योऽथाष्टाक्षरो मनुः ॥५६॥
स्तोत्रादेरथ कृष्णस्य पाठः कार्यः स्वशक्तिः ।
तथाऽनधीतगीर्वाणैः कार्यं तन्नामकीर्तनम् ॥५७॥
हरेर्विधाय नैवेद्यं भोज्यं प्रासादिकं ततः ।
कृष्णसेवापरैः प्रीत्या भवितव्यं च तैः सदा ॥५८॥
प्रोक्तास्ते निर्गुणा भक्ता निर्गुणस्य हरेर्यतः ।
सम्बन्धात्तत्क्रियाः सर्वा भवन्त्येव हि निर्गुणाः ॥५९॥
भक्तैरेतैस्तु कृष्णायानर्पितं वार्यपि क्वचित् ।
न पेयं नैव भक्ष्यं च पत्रकन्दफलाद्यपि ॥६०॥
सर्वैरशक्तौ वार्धक्याद्गरीयस्यापदाऽथवा ।
भक्ताय कृष्णमन्यस्मै दत्त्वा वृत्त्यं यथाबलम् ॥६१॥
आचार्येणैव दत्तं यद्यच्च तेन प्रतिष्ठितम् ।
कृष्णस्वरूपं तत्सेव्यं वन्द्यमेवेतरत्तु यत् ॥६२॥
भगवन्मन्दिरं सर्वैः सायं गन्तव्यमन्वहम् ।
नामसङ्कीर्तनं कार्यं तत्रोच्चै राधिकापतेः ॥६३॥

कार्यास्तस्य कथावार्ताः श्रव्याश्च परमादरात् ।
वादित्रसहितं कार्यं कृष्णकीर्तनमुत्सवे ॥६४॥
प्रत्यहं कार्यमित्थं हि सर्वैरपि मदाश्रितैः ।
संस्कृतप्राकृतग्रन्थाभ्यासश्चापि यथामति ॥६५॥
यादृशैर्यो गुणैर्युक्तस्तादृशे स तु कर्मणि ।
योजनीयो विचार्यैव नान्यथा तु कदाचन ॥६६॥
अन्नवस्त्रादिभिः सर्वे स्वकीयाः परिचारकाः ।
सम्भावनीयाः सततं यथायोग्यं यथाधनम् ॥६७॥
यादृग्गुणो यः पुरुषस्तादृशा वचनेन सः ।
देशकालानुसारेण भाषणीयो न चान्यथा ॥६८॥
गुरुभूपालवर्षिष्ठत्यागिविद्वत्तपस्विनाम् ।
अभ्युत्थानादिना कार्यः सन्मानो विनयान्वितैः ॥६९॥
नोरौ कृत्वा पादमेकं गुरुदेवनृपान्तिके ।
उपवेश्यं सभायां च जानू बद्ध्वा न वाससा ॥७०॥
विवादो नैव कर्तव्यः स्वाचार्येण सह क्वचित् ।
पूज्योऽन्नधनवस्त्राद्यैर्यथाशक्ति स चाखिलैः ॥७१॥

तमायान्तं निशम्याशु प्रत्युद्गन्तव्यमादरात् ।
तस्मिन् यात्यनुगम्यं च ग्रामान्तावधि मच्छ्रितैः ॥७२॥
अपि भूरिफलं कर्म धर्मापेतं भवेद्यदि ।
आचर्यं तर्हि तन्नैव धर्मः सर्वार्थदोऽस्ति हि ॥७३॥
पूर्वैर्महद्भिरपि यदधर्माचरणं क्वचित् ।
कृतं स्यात्तत्तु न ग्राह्यं ग्राह्यो धर्मस्तु तत्कृतः ॥७४॥
गुह्यवार्ता तु कस्यापि प्रकाश्या नैव कुत्रचित् ।
समदृष्ट्या न कार्यश्च यथार्हार्चाव्यतिक्रमः ॥७५॥
विशेषनियमो धार्यश्चातुर्मास्येऽखिलैरपि ।
एकस्मिन् श्रावणे मासि स त्वशक्तैस्तु मानवैः ॥७६॥
विष्णोः कथायाः श्रवणं वाचनं गुणकीर्तनम् ।
महापूजा मंत्रजपः स्तोत्रपाठः प्रदक्षिणाः ॥७७॥
साष्टाङ्गप्रणतिश्चेति नियमा उत्तमा मताः ।
एतेष्वेकतमो भक्त्या धारणीयो विशेषतः ॥७८॥
एकादशीनां सर्वासां कर्तव्यं व्रतमादरात् ।
कृष्णजन्मदिनानां च शिवरात्रेश्च सोत्सवम् ॥७९॥

उपवासदिने त्याज्या दिवानिद्रा प्रयत्नतः ।
उपवासस्तया नश्येन्मैथुनेव यन्नृणाम् ॥८०॥
सर्ववैष्णवराजश्रीवल्लभाचार्यनन्दनः ।
श्रीविठ्ठलेशः कृतवान् यं व्रतोत्सवनिर्णयम् ॥८१॥
कार्यास्तमनुसृत्यैव सर्व एव व्रतोत्सवाः ।
सेवारीतिश्च कृष्णस्य ग्राह्या तदुदितैव हि ॥८२॥
कर्तव्या द्वारिकामुख्यतीर्थयात्रा यथाविधि ।
सर्वैरपि यथाशक्ति भाव्यं दीनेषु वत्सलैः ॥८३॥
विष्णुः शिवो गणपतिः पार्वती च दिवाकरः ।
एताः पूज्यतया मान्या देवताः पंच मामकैः ॥८४॥
भूताद्युपद्रवे क्वापि वर्म नारायणात्मकम् ।
जप्यं च हनुमन्मन्त्रो जप्यो न क्षुद्रदैवतः ॥८५॥
रवेरिन्दोश्चोपरागे जायमानेऽपराः क्रियाः ।
हित्वाशु शुचिभिः सर्वैः कार्यः कृष्णमनोर्जपः ॥८६॥
जातायामथ तन्मुक्तौ कृत्वा स्नानं सचेलकम् ।
देयं दानं गृहिजनैः शक्तयाऽन्यैस्त्वर्च्य ईश्वरः ॥८७॥

जन्माशौचं मृताशौचं स्वसम्बन्धानुसारतः ।
पालनीयं यथाशास्त्रं चातुर्वर्ण्यजनैर्मम ॥८८॥
भाव्यं शमदमक्षान्तिसंतोषादिगुणान्वितैः ।
ब्राह्मणैः शौर्यधैर्यादिगुणोपेतैश्च बाहुजैः ॥८९॥
वैश्यैश्च कृषिवाणिज्यकुसीदमुखवृत्तिभिः ।
भवितव्यं तथा शूद्रैर्द्विजसेवादिवृत्तिभिः ॥९०॥
संस्काराश्चाह्निकं श्राद्धं यथाकालं यथाधनम् ।
स्वस्वगृह्यानुसारेण कर्तव्यं च द्विजन्मभिः ॥९१॥
अज्ञानाज्ज्ञानतो वाऽपि गुरु वा लघु पातकम् ।
क्वापि स्यात्तर्हि तत्प्रायश्चित्तं कार्यं स्वशक्तितः ॥९२॥
वेदाश्च व्याससूत्राणि श्रीमद्भागवताभिधम् ।
पुराणं भारते तु श्रीविष्णोर्नामसहस्रकम् ॥९३॥
तथा श्रीभगवद्गीता नीतिश्च विदुरोदिता ।
श्रीवासुदेवमाहात्म्यं स्कान्दवैष्णवखण्डगम् ॥९४॥
धर्मशास्त्रान्तर्गता च याज्ञवल्क्यऋषेः स्मृतिः ।
एतान्यष्ट ममेष्टानि सच्छास्त्राणि भवन्ति हि ॥९५॥

स्वहितेच्छुभिरेतानि मच्छिष्यैः सकलैरपि ।
श्रोतव्यान्यथ पाठ्यानि कथनीयानि च द्विजैः ॥९६॥
तत्राचारव्यवहृतिनिष्कृतानां च निर्णये ।
ग्राह्या मिताक्षरोपेता याज्ञवल्क्यस्य तु स्मृतिः ॥९७॥
श्रीमद्भागवतस्यैषु स्कन्धौ दशमपञ्चमौ ।
सर्वाधिकतया ज्ञेयौ कृष्णमाहात्म्यबुद्धये ॥९८॥
दशमः पञ्चमः स्कन्धौ याज्ञवल्क्यस्य च स्मृतिः ।
भक्तिशास्त्रं योगशास्त्रं धर्मशास्त्रं क्रमेण मे ॥९९॥
शारीरकाणां भगवद्गीतायाश्चावगम्यताम् ।
रामानुजाचार्यकृतं भाष्यमाध्यात्मिकं मम ॥१००॥
एतेषु यानि वाक्यानि श्रीकृष्णस्य वृषस्य च ।
अत्युत्कर्षपराणि स्युस्तथा भक्तिविरागयोः ॥१०१॥
मन्तव्यानि प्रधानानि तान्येवेतरवाक्यतः ।
धर्मेण सहिता कृष्णभक्तिः कार्येति तद्रहः ॥१०२॥
धर्मो ज्ञेयः सदाचारः श्रुतिस्मृत्युपपादितः ।
माहात्म्यज्ञानयुग्भूरिस्नेहो भक्तिश्च माधवे ॥१०३॥

वैराग्यं ज्ञेयमप्रीतिः श्रीकृष्णेतरवस्तुषु ।
ज्ञानं च जीवमायेशरूपाणां सुष्ठु वेदनम् ॥१०४॥
हृत्स्थोऽणुसूक्ष्मश्चिद्रूपो ज्ञाता व्याप्याखिलां तनुम् ।
ज्ञानशक्त्या स्थितो जीवो ज्ञेयोऽच्छेद्यादिलक्षणः ॥१०५॥
त्रिगुणात्मा तमः कृष्णशक्तिर्देहतदीययोः ।
जीवस्य चाहंममताहेतुर्मायावगम्यताम् ॥१०६॥
हृदये जीववज्जीवे योऽन्तर्यामितया स्थितः ।
ज्ञेयः स्वतन्त्र ईशोऽसौ सर्वकर्मफलप्रदः ॥१०७॥
स श्रीकृष्णः परंब्रह्म भगवान् पुरुषोत्तमः ।
उपास्य इष्टदेवो नः सर्वाविर्भावकारणम् ॥१०८॥
स राधया युतो ज्ञेयो राधाकृष्ण इति प्रभुः ।
रुक्मिण्या रमयोपेतो लक्ष्मीनारायणः स हि ॥१०९॥
ज्ञेयोऽर्जुनेन युक्तोऽसौ नरनारायणाभिधः ।
बलभद्रादियोगेन तत्तन्नामोच्यते स च ॥११०॥
एते राधादयो भक्तास्तस्य स्युः पार्श्वतः क्वचित् ।
क्वचित्तदङ्गेतिस्नेहात्स तु ज्ञेयस्तदैकलः ॥१११॥

अतश्चास्य स्वरूपेषु भेदो ज्ञेयो न सर्वथा ।
चतुरादिभुजत्वं तु द्विबाहोस्तस्य चैच्छिकम् ॥११२॥
तस्यैव सर्वथा भक्तिः कर्तव्या मनुजैर्भुवि ।
निःश्रेयस्करं किञ्चित्ततोऽन्यत्रेति दृश्यताम् ॥११३॥
गुणिनां गुणवत्ताया ज्ञेयं ह्येतत् परं फलम् ।
कृष्णे भक्तिश्च सत्सङ्गोऽन्यथा यान्ति विदोऽप्यधः ॥११४॥
कृष्णस्तदवताराश्च ध्येयास्तत्प्रतिमाऽपि च ।
न तु जीवा नृदेवाद्या भक्ता ब्रह्मविदोऽपि च ॥११५॥
निजात्मानं ब्रह्मरूपं देहत्रयविलक्षणम् ।
विभाव्य तेन कर्तव्या भक्तिः कृष्णस्य सर्वदा ॥११६॥
श्रव्यः श्रीमद्भागवतदशमस्कन्ध आदरात् ।
प्रत्यहं वा सकृद्वर्षे वर्षे वाच्योऽथ पण्डितैः ॥११७॥
कारणीया पुरश्चर्या पुण्यस्थानेऽस्य शक्तिः ।
विष्णुनामसहस्रादेश्चापि कार्येप्सितप्रदा ॥११८॥
दैव्यामापदि कष्टायां मानुष्यां वा गदादिषु ।
यथा स्वपररक्षा स्यात्तथा वृत्यं न चान्यथा ॥११९॥

देशकालवयोवित्तजातिशक्त्यनुसारतः ।
आचारो व्यवहारश्च निष्कृतं चावधार्यताम् ॥१२०॥
मतं विशिष्टाद्वैतं मे गोलोको धाम चेप्सितम् ।
तत्र ब्रह्मात्मना कृष्णसेवा मुक्तिश्च गम्यताम् ॥१२१॥
एते साधारणा धर्माः पुंसां स्त्रीणां च सर्वतः ।
मदाश्रितानां कथिता विशेषानथ कीर्तये ॥१२२॥
मज्ज्येष्ठावरजभ्रातृसुताभ्यां तु कदाचन ।
स्वासन्नसम्बन्धहीना नोपदेश्या हि योषितः ॥१२३॥
न स्पृष्टव्याश्च ताः क्वापि भाषणीयाश्च ता नहि ।
क्रौर्यं कार्यं न कस्मिंश्चिन्न्यासो रक्ष्यो न कस्यचित् ॥१२४॥
प्रतिभूत्वं न कस्यापि कार्यं च व्यावहारिके ।
भिक्षयापदतिक्रम्या न तु कार्यमृणं क्वचित् ॥१२५॥
स्वशिष्यार्पितधान्यस्य कर्तव्यो विक्रयो न च ।
जीर्णं दत्त्वा नवीनं तु ग्राह्यं तन्नैष विक्रयः ॥१२६॥
भाद्रशुक्लचतुर्थ्यां च कार्यं विघ्नेशपूजनम् ।
ईषकृष्णचतुर्दश्यां कार्याऽर्चा च हनूमतः ॥१२७॥

मदाश्रितानां सर्वेषां धर्मरक्षणहेतवे ।
गुरुत्वे स्थापिताभ्यां च ताभ्यां दीक्षया मुमुक्षवः ॥१२८॥
यथाधिकारं संस्थाप्याः स्वे स्वे धर्मे निजाश्रिताः ।
मान्याः सन्तश्च कर्तव्यः सच्छास्त्राभ्यास आदरात् ॥१२९॥
मया प्रतिष्ठापितानां मन्दिरेषु महत्सु च ।
लक्ष्मीनारायणादीनां सेवा कार्या यथाविधि ॥१३०॥
भगवन्मन्दिरं प्राप्तो योऽन्नार्थी कोऽपि मानवः ।
आदरात्स तु सम्भाव्यो दानेनान्नस्य शक्तितः ॥१३१॥
संस्थाप्य विप्रं विद्वांसं पाठशालां विधाप्य च ।
प्रवर्तनीया सद्विद्या भुवि यत्सुकृतं महत् ॥१३२॥
अथैतयोस्तु भार्याभ्यामाज्ञया पत्युरात्मनः ।
कृष्णमन्त्रोपदेशश्च कर्तव्यः स्त्रीभ्य एव हि ॥१३३॥
स्वासन्नसम्बन्धहीना नरास्ताभ्यां तु कर्हिचित् ।
न स्प्रष्टव्या न भाष्याश्च तेभ्यो दर्श्यं मुखं न च ॥१३४॥
गृहाख्याश्रमिणो ये स्युः पुरुषा मदुपाश्रिताः ।
स्वासन्नसम्बन्धहीना न स्पृश्या विधवाश्च तैः ॥ १३५ ॥

मात्रा स्वस्त्रा दुहित्रा वा विजने तु वयःस्थया ।
अनापदि न तैः स्थेयं कार्यं दानं न योषितः ॥१३६॥
प्रसङ्गो व्यवहारेण यस्याः केनापि भूपतेः ।
भवेत्तस्याः स्त्रियाः कार्यः प्रसङ्गो नैव सर्वथा ॥१३७॥
अन्नाद्यैः शक्तितोऽभ्यर्च्यो ह्यतिथिस्तैर्गृहागतः ।
दैवं पैत्र्यं यथाशक्ति कर्तव्यं च यथोचितम् ॥१३८॥
यावज्जीवं च शुश्रूषा कार्या मातुः पितुर्गुरोः ।
रोगार्तस्य मनुष्यस्य यथाशक्ति च मामकैः ॥१३९॥
यथाशक्त्युद्यमः कार्यो निजवर्णाश्रमोचितः ।
मुष्कच्छेदो न कर्तव्यो वृषस्य कृषिवृत्तिभिः ॥१४०॥
यथाशक्ति यथाकालं सङ्ग्रहोऽन्नधनस्य तैः ।
यावद्वययं च कर्तव्यः पशुमद्भिस्तृणस्य च ॥१४१॥
गवादीनां पशूनां च तृणतोयादिभिर्यदि ।
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कार्ये वैवाहिके स्वस्यान्यस्य वाऽर्प्यधनस्य तु ।
भाषाबन्धो न कर्तव्यः ससाक्ष्यं लेखमन्तरा ॥१४४॥
आयद्रव्यानुसारेण व्ययः कार्यो हि सर्वदा ।
अन्यथा तु महद्दुःखं भवेदित्यवधार्यताम् ॥१४५॥
द्रव्यस्यायो भवेद्यावान् व्ययो वा व्यावहारिके ।
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अर्प्यो दशांशः कृष्णाय विंशोऽशस्त्वह दुर्बलैः ॥१४७॥
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ताभ्यां स्वव्यवहारार्थं पात्रभूषांशुकादि च ॥१५०॥
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न गोप्यमृणशुद्धयादि व्यवहार्यं न दुर्जनैः ॥ १५२ ॥
दुष्कालस्य रिपूणां वा नृपस्योपद्रवेण वा ।
लज्जाधनप्राणनाशः प्राप्तः स्याद्यत्र सर्वथा ॥ १५३ ॥
मूलदेशोऽपि स स्वेषां सद्य एव विचक्षणैः ।
त्याज्यो मदाश्रितैः स्थेयं गत्वा देशान्तरं सुखम् ॥ १५४ ॥
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तीर्थेषु पर्वसु तथा भोज्या विप्राश्च साधवः ॥ १५५ ॥
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देयानि पात्रविप्रेभ्यो दानानि विविधानि च ॥ १५६ ॥
मदाश्रितैर्नृपैर्धर्मशास्त्रमाश्रित्य चाखिलाः ।
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राज्याङ्गोपायषड्वर्गा ज्ञेयास्तीर्थानि चाञ्जसा ।
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सभर्तृकाभिर्नारीभिः सेव्यः स्वपतिरीशवत् ।
अन्धो रोगी दरिद्रो वा षण्ढो वाच्यं न दुर्वचः ॥ १५९ ॥

रूपयौवनयुक्तस्य गुणिनोऽन्यनरस्य तु ।
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नरेक्ष्यनाभ्यूरुकुचाऽनुत्तरीया च नो भवेत् ।
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आज्ञायां पितृपुत्रादेर्वृत्यं स्वातन्त्र्यतो न तु ॥१६३॥
स्वासन्नसम्बन्धहीना नराः स्पृश्या न कर्हिचित् ।
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देयं ताभिर्न तत् क्वापि देयं चेदधिकं तदा ॥१६७॥

कार्यश्च सकृदाहारस्ताभिः स्वापस्तु भूतले ।
मैथुनासक्तयोर्वीक्षा क्वापि कार्या न देहिनोः ॥१६८॥
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न्यासिन्या वीतरागाया विकृतश्च न कर्हिचित् ॥१६९॥
सङ्गो न गर्भपातिन्याः स्पर्शः कार्यश्च योषितः ।
शृंगारवार्ता न नृणां कार्याः श्रव्या न वै क्वचित् ॥१७०॥
निजसम्बन्धिभिरपि तारुण्ये तरुणैर्नरैः ।
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सधवाविधवाभिश्च न स्नातव्यं निरम्बरम् ।
स्वरजोदर्शनं स्त्रीभिर्गोपनीयं न सर्वथा ॥१७३॥
मनुष्यं चांशुकादीनि नारी क्वापि रजस्वला ।
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नैष्ठिकव्रतवन्तो ये वर्णिनो मदुपाश्रयाः ।
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न वीक्ष्यं मैथुनपरं प्राणिमात्रं च तैर्धिया ॥१७८॥
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न कार्यं स्त्रीः समुद्दिश्य भगवद्गुणकीर्तनम् ॥१७९॥
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तैर्न मान्यं सदा स्थेयं धीरैस्तुष्टैरमानिभिः ॥१८०॥
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निवारणीया साभाष्य तिरस्कृत्यापि वा द्रुतम् ॥१८१॥
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तदा स्पृष्ट्वापि तद्रक्षा कार्या सम्भाष्य ताश्च वा ॥१८२॥
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वेषो न विकृतो धार्यो जेतव्या रसना च तैः ॥१८३॥

परिवेषणकर्त्री स्याद्यत्र स्त्री विप्रवेशमनि ।
न गम्यं तत्र भिक्षार्थं गन्तव्यमितरत्र तु ॥१८४॥
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पलाण्डुलशुनाद्यं च तेन भक्ष्यं न सर्वथा ॥१८६॥
स्नानं सन्ध्यां च गायत्रीजपं श्रीविष्णुपूजनम् ।
अकृत्वा वैश्वदेवं च कर्तव्यं नैव भोजनम् ॥१८७॥
साधवो येऽथ तैः सर्वैर्नैष्ठिकब्रह्मचारिवत् ।
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न द्रव्यसङ्ग्रहः कार्यः कारणीयो न केनचित् ॥१८९॥
न्यासो रक्ष्यो न कस्यापि धैर्यं त्याज्यं न कर्हिचित् ।
न प्रवेशयितव्या च स्वावासे स्त्री कदाचन ॥१९०॥
न च सङ्घं विना रात्रौ चलितव्यमनापदि ।
एकाकिभिर्न गन्तव्यं तथा क्वापि विनापदम् ॥१९१॥

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न धार्यं च महावस्त्रं प्राप्तमन्येच्छयापि तत् ॥१९२॥
भिक्षां सभां विना नैव गन्तव्यं गृहिणो गृहम् ।
व्यर्थः कालो न नेतव्यो भक्तिं भगवतो विना ॥१९३॥
पुमानेव भवेद्यत्र पक्वान्नपरिवेषणः ।
ईक्षणादि भवेन्नैव यत्र स्त्रीणां च सर्वथा ॥१९४॥
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अन्यथामात्रमर्थित्वा पाकः कार्यः स्वयं च तैः ॥१९५॥
आर्षभो भरतः पूर्वं जडविप्रो यथा भुवि ।
अवर्ततात्र परमहंसैर्वृत्यं तथैव तैः ॥१९६॥
वर्णिभिः साधुभिश्चैतैर्वर्जनीयं प्रयत्नतः ।
ताम्बूलस्याहिफेनस्य तमालादेश्च भक्षणम् ॥१९७॥
संस्कारेषु न भोक्तव्यं गर्भाधानमुखेषु तैः ।
प्रेतश्राद्धेषु सर्वेषु श्राद्धे च द्वादशाहिके ॥१९८॥
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ग्राम्यवार्ता न कार्या च न श्रव्या बुद्धिपूर्वकम् ॥१९९॥

स्वप्यं न तैश्च खट्वायां विना रोगादिमापदम् ।
निश्छद्म वर्तितव्यं च साधूनामग्रतः सदा ॥२००॥
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देहेऽहन्ता च ममता न कार्या स्वजनादिषु ॥२०२॥
इति संक्षेपतो धर्माः सर्वेषां लिखिता मया ।
साम्प्रदायिकग्रन्थेभ्यो ज्ञेय एषां तु विस्तरः ॥२०३॥
सच्छास्त्राणां समुद्धृत्य सर्वेषां सारमात्मना ।
पत्रीयं लिखिता नृणामभीष्टफलदायिनी ॥२०४॥
इमामेव ततो नित्यमनुसृत्य ममाश्रितैः ।
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वर्तिष्यन्ते य इत्थं हि पुरुषा योषितस्तथा ।
ते धर्मादिचतुर्वर्गसिद्धिं प्राप्स्यन्ति निश्चितम् ॥२०६॥
नेत्थं य आचरिष्यन्ति ते त्वस्मत्सम्प्रदायतः ।
बहिर्भूता इति ज्ञेयं स्त्रीपुंसैः साम्प्रदायिकैः ॥२०७॥

शिक्षापत्र्याः प्रतिदिनं पाठोऽस्या मदुपाश्रितैः ।
कर्तव्योऽनक्षरज्ञैस्तु श्रवणं कार्यमादरात् ॥२०८॥
वक्त्रभावे तु पूजैव कार्योऽस्याः प्रतिवासरम् ।
मद्रूपमिति मद्भाषी मान्येयं परमादरात् ॥२०९॥
युक्ताय सम्पदा दैव्या दातव्येयं तु पत्रिका ।
आसुर्या सम्पदाढ्याय पुंसे देया न कर्हिचित् ॥२१०॥
विक्रमार्कशकस्याब्दे नेत्राष्टवसुभूमिते ।
वसन्ताद्यदिने शिक्षापत्रीयं लिखिता शुभा ॥२११॥
निजाश्रितानां सकलार्तिहन्ता सधर्मभक्तेरवनं विधाता ।
दाता सुखानां मनसेप्सितानां तनोतु कृष्णोऽखिलमंगलं नः ॥२१२॥



Sutak

Birth Sutak

1. When a child is born in the family, relatives up to seven generations observe sutak (a ritual period of purity) for 10 days. If news is received after the 10 days, there is no need to observe it. However, if the news is received during the 10 days, the remaining days must still be observed.
2. During the 21 days after birth, if an individual touches the mother's bed or the child, they must take a full bath (including the clothes being worn) before touching anything or anyone else.
3. After 21 days, the mother may touch household items after taking a full bath (including the clothes being worn), but she should not offer puḡā or cook.
4. After 40 days, the mother regains full purity. Only after taking a full bath while wearing her

clothes can she perform puḷā or cook.

Death *Sutak*

If a relative (up to seven generations) passes away, *sutak* must be observed for 10 days, starting from the day the news is received, provided it is received within six months of the death.

During Birth and Death *Sutak*

1. During *Sutak*, personal puḷā and home temple (ghar mandir) seva cannot be done. However, the seva should be arranged through another devotee who is not under *sutak*. Daily practices such as tilak-chāndlo, mānsipuḷā, and turning the rosary can and should still be performed personally. Only after performing these practices may one drink water or eat food.

2. During sutak, do not touch the Murti of Mahārāj, sants, saffron robes, or sacred texts such as the Vachanāmrut and Shikshāpatri. However, satsang literature can be read.
3. One may still attend the mandir, have darshan, and participate in sermons. Touching fellow devotees is not restricted.
4. Daily spiritual practices (*tilak*, chanting, mānsipujā, etc.) should continue.
5. After the sutak ends, sprinkle consecrated water over beds, clothes, and household items before reusing them.
6. On the 11th day, resume personal pujā and home temple's seva without delay.
7. Sutak should not become an excuse to stay away from God, sants, or satsang.

Tārā Satak

1. If someone sees or touches a dead body, or goes to the cremation ground, *tārā* satak must be observed until the stars rise that night. Devotees serving in their home temples, temple *Pujāris*, and sants cannot perform seva or puja of the Murti during this period. Additionally, during this time, devotees cannot touch sants.
2. It is best to bathe and perform puja before going to the cremation.
3. After returning from the cremation, take a full bath while wearing the clothes worn at the cremation and wash the sacred thread (*janoi*) with a powder form detergent. Only then may one eat.
4. Arrange seva-puja through devotees who are not under satak.



Kriyāshuddhi

Eclipse *Kriyāshuddhi*

1. Every satsangi should observe solar and lunar eclipses visible in their area.
2. From the start (*vedh*) of the eclipse, do not eat. From start (*sparsh*) until end (*moksh*), do not drink water or touch any cloth items. During this time, if a temple is nearby, one should go there; otherwise, in a separate designated place within the home, engage in bhajan, kirtan, or satsang.
3. Before the start of the eclipse, dispose of any cooked food and snack items, and do not leave any vessels in an impure and unclean state. Also, wash the kitchen counters and floor with water to maintain purity.
4. After *moksh*, take a full bath while wearing the

clothes worn during the eclipse, wash the sacred thread (*janoi*) twice with powdered detergent, and sprinkle pure water on all cloth items in the house. Thereafter, devotees should give charity, and ascetic sants must perform puḷā.

5. These rules are direct commands of Mahārāj and Motāpurush and should be followed with full devotion. Adhering to them does not falter the upāsanā of Bhagwān Swāminārāyan; therefore, eclipse observance is mandatory.



General Purity *(Kriyāshuddhi)* Rules

1. For males, it is mandatory to place the janoi on the right ear before urination or defecation.
2. During defecation or urination, remain silent, maintain remembrance of the Murti, and mentally chant Swāminārāyan.
3. Wash your hands with water after urination. After defecation, wash your hands 17 times using clean clay, powder, or liquid soap. Do not use bar soap for washing hands.
4. Use your left hand to open toilet doors and your right hand for taps and buckets.
5. After defecation, take a full bath while wearing the clothes worn before touching anything.
6. Do not use the defecation area for urination during the day. If it is touched, bathe again while wearing the clothes worn at the time.

7. Do not put your hands in your mouth, nose, or ears. If this happens, wash your hands immediately, as it is impure and unhygienic. Also, do not put anything other than food directly into your mouth.

8. Drink water without the vessel to make direct contact with one's mouth. Do not blow on food or objects.

9. Do not use saliva for counting money, flipping pages, or picking small items.

10. Use powder or dishwashing liquid for washing dishes.

11. Whenever water is used for cooking or drinking, a cloth filter (*garanu*) must be tied over the tap. Drinking even a single drop of unfiltered water is considered spiritually impure, similar to harming living beings unintentionally. If it happens by mistake, seek guidance from the sants and perform atonement (*prāyashchit*).

12. After a haircut or shave at a barber, take a full bath while wearing the clothes worn. If done at home, bathing is not required.

13. On Ekādashi, you may eat vegetables such as yams (*suran*), bottle gourd (*dudhi*), potatoes, tomatoes, carrots, and sweet potatoes. During *Chāturmas* (from *Āshādh Sud Ekādashi* until *Annakut*), avoid eggplant (bringal), dolichos beans (*vālol*), radish, radish pods (*mogri*), green pigeon peas (*lilituver*), etc. On *Annakut*, eat only after the offering has been made to Thākorji.

14. After midnight, the new day begins; thus, no meals should be taken after midnight. If one is still awake past 12 AM, they may drink filtered water. After 2 AM, even water must not be drunk, and no meals should be taken. If it becomes necessary to eat, one should first bathe, perform puja, and then take food.

15. Understanding purity:

Pure (*Chokhu*): Items allowed on Ekādashi or for faral, barnyard millet (*moraiyo*), amaranth (*rājagro*), selected vegetables and fruits, no grains or pulses.

Purity with respect to water and flour (*Lotvalu*): Grains, pulses, or flour untouched by water.

Wet Impure (*Bhinu Ethu*): Foods cooked with grains, pulses, or flour using water.

Eaten Impure (*Jamelu Ethu*): If the hand used for eating touches any other food or groceries, then all those items are considered eaten impure.

16. Clean the area twice where cooked food vessels or utensils are kept; mop the area three times where plates were used for eating to ensure complete purification.

17. Do not dip a drinking glass directly into water containers; use a ladle or a separate vessel.

18. Keep separate utensils for offering thāl to Thākorji, distinct from personal or cooking utensils.

19. Do not exchange or take any food items from another person's plate after beginning a meal. Once a meal has started, one's plate is considered eaten impure.



Daily Prayer

“He Dayālu, āp sadāy rāji raho, evu divya jīvan jīvnu che, dayā karo, dayā karo, dayā karo.”

“O Bhagwān Swāminārāyan! I wish to live such a divine life that You are always pleased with me. Please bless me with Your mercy.”

When is God truly pleased? When we live a life that reflects His divine values. But we don’t always know what that life looks like, and we can’t live it on our own strength. Only through His power and grace can we do so. To help us, Guruji HDH Swāmishri has given us seven daily prayers, one for each day of the week. During puḷā, we should recite them with sincerity, and throughout the day, reflect on their meaning and strive to live by them.

Monday Prayer

O Merciful God, O Bhagwān Swāminārāyan! You and Your Satpurush, whose association we have been granted by Your grace, are not of this mundane world. You are absolutely, undeniably divine. Where do I stand in comparison to Your greatness? Kindly bless me with the conviction that Your divinity is transcendent. Grant me the wisdom to never attempt to measure You through my limited mind and intellect.

Daily Reflection

- Though God and the Satpurush may appear human in form, they are certainly not like me. They are beyond *māyā* (illusion).
- Whatever they do is always appropriate. Who am I to judge the appropriateness of their actions?
- I am insignificant compared to their vastness.

Tuesday Prayer

O Ocean of Compassion! You and Your Satpurush are all-knowing and ever-present. You witness every step of my journey. Please shower Your grace upon me so that this awareness, that You are always watching, remains constant in my mind and never fades . Instil this truth deeply within my heart.

Daily Reflection

- Though God and the Satpurush may not be physically present beside me, they are always with me through their omnipresence.
- They know my every deed and every thought.
- I must not commit any action or harbour any thought that would displease or hurt them.

Wednesday Prayer

O Merciful One! You are not pleased by those who are arrogant. Therefore, O God, bless me so that my intellect, skills, and efforts never give rise to ego or an egoistic thought while I render service or perform any task. Please bless me with a pure and virtuous life, that I may bow down to everyone with true humility.

Daily Reflection

- Ego is subtle hence deep insights are required to identify it.
- I must guard against thoughts like, "I did this. Look how well I did it. No one else has such proficiency." This is ego.
- Instead, I must think, "I am nothing. Whatever that is done is done by God through me." If I forget that, I am allowing the seeds of ego to sprout making my actions spiritually worthless.

Thursday Prayer

O Ocean of Compassion! You dwell within all who are connected to You. If I offend them with harsh words or conduct, I offend You. Kindly grant me the vision to perceive divinity in all devotees, whether they appear ordinary or great.

Daily Reflection

- Never forget that God dwells within all.
- A person may seem less capable, but if I offend them, the God dwelling within them is offended.
- If God Himself is displeased, my life becomes devoid of virtue. Therefore, I must remain vigilant, never to offend, perceiving the divine in everyone and never causing offence

Friday Prayer

O Ocean of Compassion! Shower grace upon me so that I neither think, hear, nor speak of others' faults, aversions, or gossip. Instead, let me perceive and imbibe the virtues of all. Please, shower Your grace upon me.

Daily Reflection

- Discussing the faults or aversions of others is a grave sin.
- Such acts pollute the mind, whereas the inner self is purified by focusing on the virtues of others.
- If I happen to notice a fault in someone, I should feel genuine regret, pray mentally to God, and actively contemplate that person's virtues to dispel the negativity from my mind.

Saturday Prayer

O Compassionate One! You are not pleased by those who hold grudges. Please bless me so that I may shed my stubborn nature and interact with the Satpurush, sants, and devotees with a simple, open heart. Shower Your grace upon me.

Daily Reflection

- We should never be rigid or obstinate, except in matters concerning the five vows (*panch vartmān*) or the commands of a Satpurush.
- We must be cooperative, generous, and harmonious so that unity, peace, and happiness prevail.
- No one enjoys the company of a person who is difficult over trivial matters. If people dislike such behaviour, how much more must God dislike it?

Sunday Prayer

O Mahārāj! O Compassionate One! You do not like to see a devotee consumed by anger. Kindly bless me so that I may abandon such nature and live a life filled with love and affection for all. Please, shower Your grace upon me.

Daily Reflection

- We must abandon everything that displeases the Supreme God. We must firmly resolve never to succumb to anger.
- Anger always invites destruction.
- Let us learn to live and interact with everyone with affection, peace, and a smile.



Mānsipujā

First Mānsipujā

Refer to Page 8

Second Mānsipujā

We should remove the heavy, expensive clothes, ornaments and jewellery adorned by Mahārāj and dress Him in light clothes. Then we must request Him to sit on a *Bājōth*. After Mahārāj has taken a seat, in a divine *thāl* (dish), we should serve Him a variety of food items such as different types of sweets, vegetables, *roti*, *puri*, *farsān*, rice and pulses (liquid), pickles, salad, butter milk, etc. We should serve Him with love, affection and devotion. Thereafter, we should serve Him drinking water and then serve Him a roll of betel leaf prepared with cinnamon (*taj*), clove,

cardamom, *dhana-dal*, *variya*li, etc. Then request Him to lie on a decorative bedstead and massage Mahārāj's legs. After He is asleep, we should close the doors of the Aksharordi.

Third *Mānsipujā*

We should wake up Mahārāj after prostrating fully before Mahārāj in Aksharordi. We should help Him wash His face and offer Him a nice seat on a *bājōth*. Then we should serve Mahārāj dry fruits and fruits such as watermelon, musk-melon, banana, apple, etc. earnestly with insistence. Moreover, we should serve juices of mango, chikoo, sapodilla, orange, and pomegranate. Thereafter, we should offer Him clean, cool water to drink and offer refreshments. Then dress Mahārāj in luxurious attire and ornaments, and then lead Him to the assembly of devotees with insistence to deliver His religious discourse so that the devotees can take advantage of it.

Fourth *Mānsipujā*

We should request Mahārāj to come for dinner and lead Him to the Aksharordi. Then we should remove Mahārāj's heavy, luxurious attire and ornaments and dress Him in light clothes. Help Mahārāj in washing His hands and face, and offer Him a nice seat on a *bājōth*. Thereafter, feed Mahārāj light food such as *puri*, *pudlā*, *dālvadā*, *khāman*, *bhākhari*, milk, etc. and serve Mahārāj with affection. In addition, serve *khichadi* (hotch-potch) with abundant ghee and thus feed Mahārāj with much love and affection. Then help Him wash His hands and mouth and offer Him drinking water and a roll of betel leaf. Thereafter, dress Him in luxurious attire and ornaments and lead Him to an assembly of devotees and offer Him a seat on a throne and perform His *Ārti*.

Fifth *Mānsipujā*

Mahārāj returns to *Aksharordī*, we remove His heavy and luxurious clothing and ornaments and dress Him in light clothes, *dhoti* and *uparni*. We should prepare a nice bed to sleep on and request Him to sit there. Ask Him to pardon us for the mistakes, if any, are committed by us during the day. Then we should offer Him milk with saffron, almond and cardamom. Thereafter, serve Him drinking water and request Him to sleep. We should serve them with love by massaging His legs till He is asleep, and then prostrate fully before Him and go to bed.



Glossary

Samvat: Indication that it is the Hindu year (*Vikrama* era)

Dharma: Religion; Rules and regulations to conduct the religion

Artha: Wealth, money

Antahkaran: Group of four inner senses (1) *Man* - Mind (2) *Buddhi* - Sense (3) *Chit* - Concentrative Power (4) *Ahankār* - Ego

Kām: Desire, wishes

Moksh: Salvation

Uparni: A cloth worn as an upper garment at the time of puja

Dhoti: A long piece of cloth worn as a lower garment by males

Āsan: Cloth used to place God's murti, or the cloth used for one to sit on

Chāndlo: A round mark which symbolises the *mukta* dwells in the *murti*

Tilak: A “U” shaped sacred mark which symbolises Bhagwān Swāminārāyan, who dwells in *Mukta* in *Murti*

Purushottamrup: Appearance like that of Bhagwān Swāminārāyan (Really used only for *Anādimukta*)

Thāl: Food offered to God with affection as a form of devotion.

Ekādashī: 11th day of the bright and dark halves of the lunar month, when special observances, including fast are observed

Amāvasyā: No-moon day, last day of the dark half of every lunar month

Shrāvan: Tenth month of the year according to the *Vikrama* era

Adhikmās: Additional, extra, month; intercalary lunar month recurring after an interval of 32 months, 16 days, one hour and 36 minutes

Dhun: Continuous rhythmic chanting of the name of Bhagwān Swāminārāyan

Ektāna: A type of religious observance wherein food is taken only once a day

Nirgun: Beyond *rajogun*, *tamogun* and *satvagun*, above material limitations and being an aspect of the divine

Prasād: Sanctified food

Swarupnishthā: Firm conviction in the supreme nature, divinity, and sovereignty of Bhagwān Swāminārāyan

Parbrahma: The supreme being; Bhagwān Swāminārāyan

Anvay power: Power of a single ray of light which emanates from the divine and lustrous idol of Bhagwān Swāminārāyan (in the sense of *Parbhāv*)

Chalochāl: The smallest of those who have attained a relation with Bhagwān Swāminārāyan *vyatirek swaroop*. They have consolidated upāsanā, strictly follow the vows of the five commandments, and acknowledge themselves as the body

Ekāntik: The second of those who have attained a relation with Bhagwān Swāminārāyan *vyatirek swaroop*. They have consolidated upāsanā, strictly follow the vows of the five commandments, and acknowledge themselves as the soul (*brahmroop*). They have consolidated *Dhrama*, *Gnan*, *Vairāgya* and *Bhakti*. They have eradicated all wishes,

desires, and inclinations from their life

Param Ekāntik: The third of those who have attained a relation with Bhagwān Swāminārāyan's *vyatirek swarup*. They are partially *Purushottamrup*

Janoi: A set of three cotton threads, typically worn over the left shoulder and hanging across the chest to the right hip, symbolising commitment to *dharma* and a mark of initiation

Anādimukta: The fourth of those who have attained the highest category in the *vyatirek swarup*. They are completely *purushottamroop*

Vyatirek Swarup: Bhagwān Swāminārāyan, divine luminous Murti itself

Akshardhām: A cluster of lustre (infinite rays) limitlessly spread in all directions. Also known as a group of infinite rays emanates from the divine idol of Bhagwān Swāminārāyan, and it is the highest divine abode among all other abodes

Mādarpat: A type of cotton cloth, usually coarse

Sutak: A ritual for householders to follow after the birth or death of his/her relative (with blood relation)

Satsang: 1) Holy association of God, saints, scripture and soul 2) An assembly where the speaker gives the discourses of Philosophy, glory and episodes of Bhagwān Swāminārāyan

Moraiyo: Kind of grain (from the plant Brassica alba) used on days of fasting, growing without regular cultivation

Rājagaro: Kind of grain (from the plant Brassica alba) used on days of fasting, growing without regular cultivation

Bājoth: A short table used during religious rituals

Aksharordi: The divine room where Bhagwān Swāminārāyan resides

Gurumantra: A mantra given by Guru (here *Satpurush*)

Hari Navmi: The ninth day of the lunar month when Hari (Bhagwān Swāminārāyan) manifested

Kanthi: A double-threaded necklace usually made of *tulsi* beads; both threads signify the presence of Mahārāj and Mukta. It is received as a sign of *satsangi*

Mahā: Fourth month of the *Vikram* Calendar

Mahāmantra: The great and glorious name.

Māyā: The cognitive organs have any trace of desire for the enjoyment of the *Panch Vishayas*, which disturbs the mind engaged in the meditational worship of God

Satpurush: A divine being whose all-doer is God himself. He remains a medium for the salvation of being. Gurudev Bāpji and Guruji Swāmishree are also the Satpurush of Bhagwān Swāminārāyan

Pujā: Worship

Sud: The days of the bright half of the lunar month

Tulsi: Plant of Basil (considered sacred)

Tumbadi: A Wooden glass which is used to drink water by sants

Upāsanā: The philosophical understanding of the Nature of God. Also means the utmost devotion to God

Vedh: The period when an eclipse's influence is considered to have begun, after which eating is avoided

Spars̥h: The moment the eclipse touches, when the eclipse actually begins; from this point, even drinking water is avoided

Moksha: The moment of release, when the eclipse ends, and its influence is considered complete

Prāyashchit: A sincere spiritual act of atonement and self-purification performed to acknowledge a mistake, remove its inner and outer impurity, and re-align one's thoughts, conduct, and devotion.





Gurudev Bapji

Guruji Swamishri

All of my devotees, whether renunciants, sadhus, brahmacharis or householder women and men, should recite daily the Shikshapatri written by me. Those who are unable to read it should listen to it daily. Those who do not have the opportunity to listen to it should worship the Shikshapatri daily. This is what I have written in the Shikshapatri itself.

- Vachanamrut, Gadhada Last 1

The suffering experienced by a devotee of God arises only to the extent that one transgresses God's commands, and the happiness one experiences arises to the extent that one follows God's commands.

- Vachanamrut, Gadhada First 34

— Bhagwan Swaminarayan



Swaminarayan Mandir Vasna Sanstha