

**SHREE SWAMINARAYAN
TEMPLE CARDIFF**(Under Shree Nar Narayan Dev
Temple, Bhuj Kutch)

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Jay Swaminarayan

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**Shikshapatri Jayanti – Vasant Panchmi**

Shikshapatri is a booklet of instructions and teachings. It is the only scripture written by Bhagwan (excluding Vyaas bhagwan who incarnated to write scriptures). The main facts about the Shikshapatri are:

- It was written by Lord Swaminarayan in Sanskrit, translated by Nityanand Swami into Gujarati.
- It was written in Vadatal on the 5th day of the bright half of the month Maha Vikram Savant 1882 (AD1826), on the day of Vasant Panchmi
- It has 212 shloks (verses)
- It shows us the way to live our lives, perform our daily duties and how to behave in the family and society.
- Abiding by it helps us to achieve the four purushartha i.e. Dharma (Righteousness), Arth (Wealth), Kaam (enjoyment of sensual and other desires) and Moksh (Salvation).

**Shikshapatri contains the following verse numbers for each given category**

Introduction (1-10)	Widows (163-172)
General Dharmas of All Followers (11-122)	Females (173-174)
Acharya (123-132)	Naishthika Brahmcharis (175-187)
Wives of Acharya (133-134)	Sadhus (188-196)
Grahasthas [Householders] (135-156)	Naishthika Brahmcharis/Sadhus (197-202)
Rulers (157-158)	Conclusion (203-212)
Married Women (159-162)	

What inspired Maharaj to write the Shikshapatri?

- ❖ Maharaj wanted solace
- ❖ 1882 Karthik month on Ekadashi Maharaj listened to the 10th skandh of Shreemad Bhagwad
- ❖ 1½ months later he listened to the 5th skandh of Shreemad Bhagwad

Why did Maharaj write the Shikshapatri?

- ❖ To deliver the message delivered to all haribhaktos all over the world
- ❖ When Maharaj left this world for Akshardham, there was a code of conduct for the haribhaktos to follow

On Vasant Panchami Shriji Maharaj gave charity to Praghji Purani and to a thousand Brahmins who were also offered food. In the afternoon Shriji Maharaj, thinking about all the haribhaktos and their goodwill, starts to write the Shikshapatri.

Shikshapatri is written:

- ❖ For the wellbeing of everyone
- ❖ To give dharma shiksha for all devotees all over the world
- ❖ By writing the Shikshapatri Maharaj gave us guidance and understanding
- ❖ The Shikshapatri contains the essence of more than 350 shastras

8 copies of the Shikshapatri were sent to the devotees in the 8 directions.



Nilkanth Varni (The incredible journey of Lord waminarayan)



Sent demon to Badrikashram



Travelling from Kapilashram, Nilkanth Varni was walking through a dense jungle when he came upon a small village. A dangerous demon was said to be living in the woods near the village. He killed anyone who went near the woods. The king had posted guards to warn the travellers to stay away from these woods. When the guards saw Nilkanth walking towards the woods where the demon lived, they said, 'Don't go that way! There is a demon living there and he will kill you.'

Nilkanth said, 'I am not scared of anyone. I roam around everywhere without any fear. No one can harm me, so let's see what this demon can do.'

The guards watched in astonishment as Nilkanth walked straight to the trees where the demon lived. A fierce, angry looking demon came out from behind the trees and ran straight towards Nilkanth.

The guards feared that the demon would kill Nilkanth who just stood there and gazed intently at the demon. Suddenly, the demon began to experience great pain and cried for mercy. 'Please stop this pain', he said, 'I can't bear it any more.' Nilkanth said, 'Go to Badrikashram.' The demon vaporised and his soul went to Badrikashram.

The guards were watching and realised that this was no ordinary child but seems to be a great Yogi or a supreme being. When the king found out about this, he invited Nilkanth to stay with him in his city.

Nilkanth said, 'I will not stay with you this time. Meditate on my form and when you leave this body, you will be born as Hathibhai at the house of Jinabhai in Shaurashtra. There we will meet again and your practice of Dharma and Bhakti will secure you my divine Akshardham.'

Nilkanth said goodbye to the king and carried on with his journey.



Three friends



Once upon a time there were three friends, Premal, Pritam and Prem. They lived in a small village and were poor since they had no work. One day they decided to go out of the village to find work and earn money. They packed their bags, said goodbye to friends and family and set off on their journey. After a few hours walking, they came upon a small derelict temple not very far from a village they had just passed. There was a well at the front of the temple.

They got to the steps and saw a very big pile of gold coins and there was nobody around. The friends got very excited and shouted and danced with joy. They would not have to travel far to find their fortune. They divided the coins in three piles. 'Let's celebrate', said one of them. They decided that one of them should go to the village they had passed and buy some food and have a feast, before they return back home. After sending the youngest friend Prem to buy food, the other two friends became greedy and started to think about taking Prem's share of gold for themselves.



Prem came back with a big bag of food including samosas, kachoris, chutney and lots of sweets. He began to unpack the food and laid out the food for picnic. Just then, Pritam and Premal jumped on him and killed him and took his share of the gold.

'Now we can really celebrate. Let's get some water from the well and have our feast', said Premal. While Pritam was pulling the water pot, which was tied to a rope, Premal pushed him very hard into the well. Pritam fell into the well and died.

'I have all the gold now and everyone in the village will respect me', he thought. While greedily munching the samosas he thought about how stupid his friends were and how easy it was to take their share of the gold. Just then, he felt a sharp pain in his stomach and realised what had happened. Prem had put poison in the food so that he can take all the gold for himself. Before he died, Premal realised that if they had not been greedy, they would all be still alive and very rich.



Ravii Patel, Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Cardiff

Eleven Niyams – Rules or Laws (Continued)

'Madh ku pivat nahi..' by Premanand Swami.



Niyam four

'Madh ku pivat nahi..' – Do not drink alcohol.



This is very important. The rules in Shiksapatri coincide with different times. Each of these rules is very important in the lives of people at the present times. In the Shiksapatri, it tells us not to drink 3 types of sura (strong alcohol) and 11 types of madh (light alcohol) but in these days there are many types of alcohols produced.



The devotees should not touch alcohol. Who likes alcohol? In Puran there is katha where devtas and asuras churned the ocean and as a result, one of the things produced was alcohol. The asuras took alcohol but the devtas did not touch it. This implies that the asuras like alcohol.

If you drink alcohol and think that you are being called an asura then that is not the case. Of course you are a good person but just think how your personality changes after drinking alcohol? Alcohol changes your 'Satvik' (peaceful) thinking into 'Tamsi' (angry) thinking.

Millions of pounds are spent on trying to get rid of this problem, but Lord Swaminarayan has led his devotees to live a righteous life from the very beginning. If society accepts what Lord Swaminarayan says in the Shiksapatri about not drinking alcohol, we would not have to spend millions in getting this message across and there would be an atmosphere of goodwill and happiness in the society.



Sashtri Swami Harikeshavdas

An Eye Opener



Once there was a father sitting with his 20 year old son in a train. As the train started the young son was happy and full of joy. The son was sitting on the window side and stretched a hand out of the window to feel the wind. He shouted, 'Papa see all trees are going behind?'

The father smiled and admired the son's excitement. There was another couple near the son who were listening to the conversation between father and son.

They were surprised to see the son behaving like a small child. Suddenly the son shouted, 'Papa see the pond and animals? The clouds are moving with train!!'

The couple were embarrassed by the 20 year old 'man' and were giving him strange looks.

It started raining and some water drops touched the young son's hand. He was filled with joy and closed his eyes. The young son shouted again, 'Papa it's raining, water is touching me, see papa!!'

The Couple sitting nearby couldn't help themselves and asked the father. 'Why don't you visit the Doctor and get treatment for your son?'

The father said, 'Yes, We are just coming back from the hospital, my son has just got his eye-sight and is able to see for first time in his life.'

Morals:

'Don't make conclusions until you know all the facts.'

'Don't interfere in anyone's joy.'

'Everything that we see is a shadow cast by that which we do not see.' - Martin Luther King, Jr.

Mitesh Patel, Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Cardiff

Vachanamrut of Lord Swaminarayan (Gadhada PP 3)



Vachanamrut 3 – Gadhada First chapter, Third Sermon

Upon reading this vachanamrut, the first thing which strikes out is that it differs from the previous sermons. This is because there is no question. Here, Lord Swaminarayan begins showering his words of wisdom without anyone asking anything and this is termed as 'Krupa Vaakya'.

Krupa = grace or kindness, and vaakya = words.

Bhagwan out of his kindness conveys, through the medium of words, beneficial discourse for the benefit of his devotees.



On the surface this seems like a relatively easy vachanamrut to understand but there are some points which may not seem so apparent upon the first reading.

Bhagwan in the first vachanamrut explains that after achieving akhand vrutti (constant reflection on God) there is nothing else left to achieve. Yet here, bhagwan says that even after achieving that state one should still remember the activities of bhagwan, the divine places within which the activities took place and those who were present such as brahmcharis, saints and devotees. This seems like a contradiction to the first sermon.



It is true that there is nothing left to achieve after akhand vrutti but this does not mean that you cannot fall from that position and can't lose akhand vrutti.

An example of this is given in Satsangi Jeevan prakran 2, where Meghji Sukhadiya who had akhand vrutti but due to his flaws managed to lose it. This was because he did not have affection towards saints. He actually thought that he was better than them because he had achieved akhand vrutti. If he had remembered Bhagwan's activities and the saints which were involved in them, then he would have developed the affection for the saints and greater understanding.



Also a person who has akhand vrutti, even their mind is not safe from straying at the time of death, this is due to the mental state before death being extremely unpredictable. We don't know what the circumstances will be at that time. There is said to be a high possibility of the mind straying because there are only but a few moments left for us on this earth.

After reading this vachanamrut, some opportunists may latch onto Bhagwan's last few lines that sinners receive the divine abode if they remember such utsavs (celebratory events) at their time of death.

However, what they do not realise is that just before our death even though we may seem conscious, the mind could be in an unconscious state, therefore only the predominant activities performed in our lives will be remembered.

Hence this last section is referring to those sinners who have reformed their actions after attending such utsavs, e.g. Joban Pagi who was a looter and murderer before attending the Dabhan event and the lady who was a prostitute before attending the Jetalpur event.

Bhagwan says 'this is the reason why I perform such grand religious events, so that my devotees can always keep these fond divine memories in their heart.' These memories will give them strength in times of difficulty and mental instability when Bhagwan's murti proves difficult to focus upon. Through remembering these associated aspects (event, place, attendees), naturally the mind in the end will remember Bhagwan who is the focal point and the cause of the utsav.



'You are invited to the festival of this world and your life is blessed' - Rabindranath Tagore

Pradyuman Halai, Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Cardiff

Akhand Var (Eternal Husband)

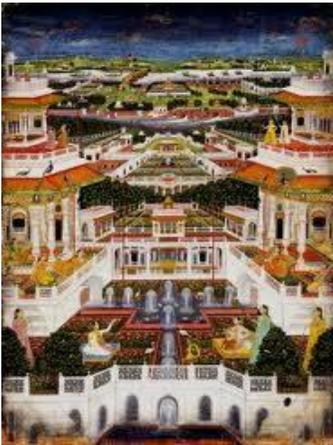
Continued from Issue 15



Previously we learnt that *Sukhdevji* attained detachment from worldly pleasures and gained *Bhagwan* (God) as his eternal spouse. The next name of the devotee who *Bhagwan* accepted as his eternal consort which *Nishkulanand Swami* mentions in *Vrutti Vivah* is of *Rushabhdev*.



Swami says that King *Rushabhdev* not only accepted *Bhagwan's* marriage proposal but also lived up to the qualities to be called *Bhagwan's* consort. King *Rushabhdev* was the father of a hundred sons, who consisted of King *Bharat* as well as the famous nine *Yogeshwars*.



Rushabhdev had so much *Vairagya* (detachment from the world), that he was able to impart it to his nine sons, who became the *nav-yogeshwars*. He was furthermore able to leave all the happiness of his kingdom and his family life. He made eighty one of his sons ministers, gave nine sons the kingship of nine kingdoms and made King *Bharat* the *Chakravarty Raja* (Great King, King of Kings). Giving up everything and handing it all over to his sons, he left for to go to the forest and do *Bhakti* after becoming a *sanyasi* and renouncing the world.

Rushabhdev fulfilled his part as a loyal spouse of *Bhagwan* by being a true saint, serving *Bhagwan* as the only true husband for his soul. He not only left his kingdom but also left the pleasures of food and didn't eat at all in the forest. He had the knowledge that the whole world, including food for his body, was only temporary and only God was eternal. If he felt hungry, he would eat clay to pacify his stomach. Thus adopting the path of *vairagya*, *Rushabhdev* reduced his body so as to join the eternal husband.

To be continued...

Haribhakta - Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Cardiff

Veg of the month: Asparagus

Asparagus is a type of shoot vegetable that can be found in many fruit and veg shops and supermarkets everywhere. It has a wonderful nutty taste, especially at the head of the asparagus 'spears'.

Types

There are two types of asparagus available: white asparagus, which remains white because they are picked before they have emerged from the surface of the soil. The second type is green asparagus, which develops its light green shade when it comes into contact with sunlight.

History

Asparagus was known as a delicacy during Roman times and it represented high status and elegance, as very few could afford it. The high price of asparagus was due to the fact that one crop takes 3 whole years to grow from a seed to a fully edible shoot.

The Roman emperors enjoyed them so much that they had their own fleet of soldiers whose main job was to go and search for them!

Health Benefits

Asparagus was actually used as a medicine long before it was eaten as food. It has many nutritional properties, including a rich source of vitamin C and glutathione, which prevents cataracts forming in the eyes.

How to spot the best ones

Look for asparagus that have a dark green or deep purple tip – these have the most flavour and are at their best. Also make sure that the ends have not wrinkled, which shows they are not very fresh.



Sonal Patel - Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Cardiff

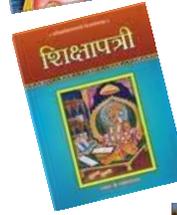
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Festivals and Holy days – October 2011



- Dhanurmas Ends – Saturday 14th Jan
Makar Sankranti – Sunday 15th Jan
Shiva Ratri – Saturday 21st Jan
Shikshapatri Jayanti – Saturday 28th Jan
Vasant Panchmi – Saturday 28th Jan
Shakotsav – Saturday 30th Jan



Ekadashi

Putrid Ekadashi Vat Pumas – Thursday 5th January 2012

Chattily Ekadashi Pumas – Thursday 19th January 2012



If you have any interesting facts, stories, jokes, or feedback, please email them to us at sstym@swaminarayanwales.org.uk

Editor: Sonal Patel - Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Cardiff

e-Fun

e-Knowledge

Recipe: Grilled Asparagus with Mature Cheddar

This recipe makes a fantastic starter for any meal.

Serves 2

Ingredients:

Cheese grater
 Peeling knife
 6 asparagus spears
 ½ Tbsp olive oil
 Mature cheddar cheese – (check for vegetarian logo)
 Salt
 Pepper



Preparation:

Cut off the bottom of the spears by holding the end and slowly bending until it snaps, this is where the natural point of tenderness is for the stalks. If the spear is less than 6 inches long, the ends may have already been trimmed off.

Now peel the skin off the lower halves of each stalk.

Method:

Place the asparagus onto a non-stick tray and drizzle with the olive oil. Turn them so that each spear is fully coated. Sprinkle with a pinch of salt, again making sure each one is covered.

Put the asparagus under a hot grill for 2 minutes or until they become slightly browned in places and the skin has wrinkled a little. Then turn them and grill for another 2 minutes. Be careful not to burn the tips.

Once they are ready, place spears onto a plate and immediately grate some cheddar onto them whilst they are still hot. Finally, sprinkle a little black pepper onto them and serve.

Sonal Patel - Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Cardiff