

SEMINAR ON BRAHMACARYA – PART 2



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Today is the second day of the seminar on Brahmacharya.

Again, brahmacharya is not just celibacy, or remaining single and unmarried. Actually, it means to be situated on the spiritual platform, upon which celibacy becomes a side-effect.

Brahman means the spiritual world, and acarati means to act accordingly, living in such a way that one attains the spiritual platform. To review yesterday's class, there are two things, matter and life. Matter is inert, but due to the presence of the spirit soul, matter becomes alive. Matter is the body, and the soul makes the body alive. The soul's influence is that it enters the womb of the mother, in which it develops a body which grows and finally comes out as a baby. Like this, the soul develops a body made of matter. Then he functions through the body. There, the growth of the body depends upon food. What is food? Food is the juice that a tree extracts from the earth. Basic food is derived from trees and plants. Meat is just the flesh of animals that have eaten grass.

So actually the trees are transforming the juice of the earth into its fruits and leaves and nuts etc. Then the human being eats that. Our stomach extracts the juice of the food we eat. Then the juice transforms into blood, into flesh, into bone, into bone marrow, into Virya, or semen.

So this virya is the ultimate material substance that carries the spiritual energy. Therefore this element is very important for one's spiritual growth. So semen keeps one's spiritual energy, and also it carries a soul into a mother's womb. So semen is the storehouse of spiritual energy.

Therefore one must retain that spiritual energy. Not only the Vedic scriptures say that, but all religions say that. The catholic monks and nuns had to be celibates. The jews also, the suphis also. The fact is that it is a scientific subject. Who can deny the importance of this vital energy in the body?

Butter is separated from milk. Then it is not milk anymore. Similarly, virya spreads throughout our body. But through sexual agitation, it is churned and ejected of the body. So for some fleeting pleasure, it should not be wasted. It is essential for our spiritual progress. One must retain this valuable spiritual energy.

It is a matter of consciousness. Take the spirit soul and consciousness: consciousness comes out of the soul. Where there is light, there is fire. In the same way, consciousness comes out of the

soul. According to the direction of the projection of our consciousness, our spiritual energy will flow in that direction.

In Bhagavad Gita, Krsna says, *dhyayato visayan pumsah*. That is how the consciousness becomes effected. First it flows through the mind, then through the senses toward the objects of the senses with a desire to exploit them: that is lust. So when consciousness goes toward material sense objects, *virya* also goes towards that. In the same way, if consciousness is directed to Krsna, this vital energy will flow toward Krsna.

Therefore all importance is put on fixing our mind on Krsna, fixing our mind on Him. If we project our consciousness on matter, we will run after sense gratification, and we will lose our vital energy. Loss of this energy causes death. Again, consciousness can go toward matter or toward Krsna. If it goes to matter, we lose everything. If it goes to Krsna, this vital energy becomes even further spiritualized, just like a mother's blood is transformed into milk. It becomes transformed into nectar.

What does nectar do? It inundates our heart with joy. therefore the real joy and bliss comes from developing our joy from Krsna. This vital energy, which is apparently matter, becomes nectar. How does it happen? It happens due to our love for Krsna. By transformation, it causes something to our heart that gives us an experience of transcendental joy and bliss.

Therefore again, we are discussing something far beyond celibacy. I will repeat, again, that brahmacharya is not exclusive for brahmacharis, but it is meant also for householders. When the householders engage in sex for procreation, one is also a brahmachari. Even the householders can become pure devotees. There are so many householder pure devotees in our sampradaya. Srila Prabhupada was a householder, so was Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, Gaura Kisor das Babaji Maharaja, and most of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's associates were householders. So everyone in Krsna consciousness is a brahmachari. Ultimately, our material body is secondary, as part-and-parcels of Krsna.

When Brahma realized that it was his duty to create, he created the Four Kumaras, who were perfect brahmacharis. Then he created ten sons, nine of which became progenitors. The last one, Narada Muni, wanted to stay brahmachari. He became a very detached person, and eventually he became a pure devotee of Krsna. He was eventually approached by the daughter of time, and he did not accept her. He decided to remain a celibate. As a result of that, he attained eternal life.

So we can see that when one becomes a brahmachari, one does not become subject to death. Also, when Bhishma got to know that his father wanted to marry the daughter of the fisherman who would only offer his daughter to him only if his daughter's son would become the successor to the throne. So Santanu refused, saying that he already had a successor. When Bhishma got to know that, he told the fisherman that he would forgo his right over the throne.

He said, "I take a vow that I will never get married." For a ksatriya to remain a celibate for one's whole life is so difficult that the demigods showered flowers, saying "Bhishma, Bhishma, what a terrible vow! What a terrible vow!" When Bhishma went back, his father blessed him that he would never die unless he wanted to. Do we see a link here? He decided to remain a celibate, and

he was blessed with immortality. So when one becomes a brahmacari, he conquers death. We can therefore see that when we don't allow the life energy to come out of the body, we get a very very long duration of life. One does not become old either. The Four Kumaras, for example, look like five year old boys although they are zillions of years old.

Bhisma was Arjuna's grandfather. He was so much older at that time, but he was fighting the battle of Kuruksetra so valiantly that thousands of soldiers could not conquer him.

Hanuman is another ideal brahmacari. He had the form of a monkey. He is a perfect brahmacari because he is a devotee of Lord Rama. What sorts of feats he performed! He carried a mountain from middle India and jumped across the ocean to Lanka. These are not fairy tales. It took place! We can consider that because he was a brahmacari, he was also an extremely powerful personalities.

Also, we can remember Vedavati. She was performing austerities to get the Supreme Personality of Godhead as her husband. She was performing severe austerities on top of a mountain. While Ravana was passing by in his airplane, he approached her. First she told him what she wanted. He forcibly tried to molest her. She was so powerful that threw Ravana far away. She was so chaste that because he had simply touched her, she considered herself contaminated, and so she generated a fire to burn up her body with the vow that she would cause Ravana's death. She came back as Sita.

In India there were many others like Gargi, who challenged Yajnavalkya in the assembly of Janaka. She was a brahmacarini. Maitreyi also. In the recent past there is the example of Queen Mirabai. When she was given away in marriage, she could not associate with him because she had already accepted Krsna as her husband in her youth. Her husband finally decided to kill her and gave her poison to drink, which she did without dying. Later she went to Vrindavan and became a devotee of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. These are examples of brahmacarinis in our heritage.

So the goal of our life is to become situated on the spiritual platform, which will lead us to endless Srila Prabhupada joy. therefore let us all become fixed up. Let us realized that this is our goal. If we don't fix our goal with intense seriousness, then we will become frivolous. Today in ISKCON, today somewhere else. That is not good. We came here to achieve the mission to become situated on the spiritual platform and thereby experience spiritual joy. Hare Krsna.

Question: Srila Prabhupada brought Vedic culture to the West, where life is quite different. How do we adjust that?

Answer: Srila Prabhupada did not bring oriental culture to the West. He brought the spiritual culture and made the world aware of it. If we think that we are Westerners and that that culture is from India, then we are making a mistake. We are souls, and in ISKCON, everyone who wants to make spiritual progress has a place. So brahmacarya is a question of developing Krsna Prema, not suppression. When you develop love for Krsna, then you will not be affected by sex attraction. He will deal with women in a very reverential way, full of respect. Another point is

that in ISKCON many members are married. When both husband and wife are in Krsna consciousness, then both help each other.

Question: Is Virya also there in women?

Answer: Yes. There are some anatomical differences, but in summary the answer is Yes