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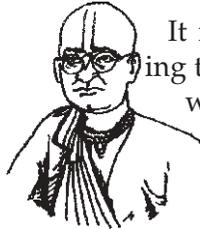
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THIS DAMNED MIND

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
Thakur Prabhupada*



It is painful to see people wasting their valuable time in no better work than mischievous, ill-conceived criticisms of others' conduct. They excel only in giving advice to others. Their damned mind is, no doubt, responsible for this. So, every morning, on rising from bed, they should make their wicked mind hear the following immortal song of Thakur Bhaktivinoda:

*bhaja re bhaja re āmāra mana ati manda
(bhaja) vraja-vane rādhā-kṛṣṇa-caraṇāravinda
(bhaja) gaura-gadādhara advaita guru-nityānanda
(smara) śrīnivāsa haridāsa murāri mukunda
(smara) rūpa-sanātana-jīva-raghunātha-dvānda
(smara) rāghava-gopāla-bhaṭṭa-soarūpa-rāmānanda
(smara) goṣṭhi-saha karṇapūra sena śivānanda
(smara) rūpānuga sādhu-jana bhajana-ānanda*

In this song, the mind is asked, first of all, to hold *bhajan* of Radha-Krishna (in their joyful activity) in the sacred woodland of Vraja. In comparative view, the degrees of excellence of the five *rasas*, from *mādhurya* (consortship) to *śānta* (the state in which active service is wanting), are gradually lowering. A servitor in the last mentioned posi-

tion (i.e., *śānta-rasa*) is neither actively engaged in *bhajan* nor against it. He will neither oppose *bhajan* nor actively hold it. Now, *bhajan* or *bhakti* may be of different kinds. There is such a thing as *michā-bhakti*, false *bhakti*, as opposed to *śuddha-bhakti*, unalloyed *bhakti*. The adherents of karma, who are followers of *smṛti*, take recourse to the former. In *Prema-bhakti-candrikā* 6.18, Thakur Narottama Das warns us against such false *bhakti* by saying:

*karmi, jñāni, michā-bhakta, nā habe tate anurakta,
śuddha-bhajanete kara mana*

Don't absorb your thoughts in the fruitive worker, the philosopher, or the hypocritical devotee. Fix your mind in pure *bhajana*.

The cult of the so-called social reformers (or society makers) of the past or present age is quite different from the ideas and principles of *bhaktas*. The followers of the former are engaged, at present, in various movements relating to personal advantages and self-enjoyment.

Those agitators who, leaving aside all considerations of *bhakti*, are busily engaged in movements for temporal advantages only are doing harm to themselves. And their failure to serve Krishna, who is the emporium, or rather effigy, of all endless, immeasurable nectar of love, joys and pleasures, bespeaks simply of their ignorance of the real state of

affairs. Such desistance of service to Krishna gradually turns a man into an upholder of *nirviśeṣa-vāda*, the doctrine of the unspecifiedness of the absolute truth. What can be more deplorable than such misfortune of mankind? To counteract the aforesaid tendencies in us, we should sing, every morning, advising our wicked mind to hold *bhajan*, which is impossible if we are unmindful of the dictum:

*ṛṇād api su-nīcena taror iva sahiṣṇunā
amāninā māna-dena kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

Which means that *hari-kīrtana* should be continued ceaselessly and with the humility of low grass.

What is the object of our *bhajan*? It is only the holy feet of Radha-Krishna, roaming about freely in the woodland of Vraja. And what should be our line of conduct in holding *bhajan*? Mahaprabhu's advice to Srila Das Goswami [Cc. *antya* 6.236-237], in this connection, is as follows:

*grāmya-kathā nā śunibe, grāmya-vārtā nā kahibe
bhāla nā khāibe āra bhāla nā paribe*

*amānī mānada hañā kṛṣṇa-nāma sadā la'be
vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa-sevā mānase karibe*

Have no worldly talk, nor pay heed to it,
Wear no good clothes, nor rich food eat,
Have *kṛṣṇa-nāma* always, humbly, on your tongue,
Serve Radha-Krishna in the closet of the mind.

In the aforesaid verse, the first two advices are in the negative and the remaining two are in the affirmative. By "*vraja-seva*", Mahaprabhu meant service to Krishna by one who has a transcendental body and whose self-realization is complete. People ignorant of this generally turn into mental speculators, and cannot rightly understand the teachings of the Gaudiya Math. ❀

— From an evening lecture at the Calcutta Gaudiya Math. 12 July 1936.

QUALITIES OF THE AGE OF KALI

*His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*



In the age of Kali, the women and the children, along with *brāhmaṇas* and cows, will be grossly neglected and left unprotected. In this age, illicit connection with women will

render many women and children uncared for. Circumstantially, the women will try to become independent of the protection of men, and marriage will be performed as a matter of formal agreement between man and woman. In most cases, the children will not be taken care of properly. The *brāhmaṇas* are traditionally intelligent men, and thus they will be able to pick up modern education to the topmost rank, but as far as moral and religious principles are concerned, they shall be the most fallen. Education and bad character go ill together, but such things will run parallel. The administrative heads as a class will condemn the tenets of Vedic wisdom and will prefer to conduct a so-called secular state, and the so-called educated *brāhmaṇas* will be purchased by such unscrupulous administrators. Even a philosopher and writer of many books on religious principles may accept an exalted post in a government that denies all the moral codes of the *śāstras*. The *brāhmaṇas* are specifically restricted from accepting such service. But in this age, they will not only accept service, but they will do so even if it is of the meanest quality. These are some of the symptoms of the Kali age, which are harmful to the general welfare of human society. ❀

— Purport to *Bhāg.* 1.16.21.

DON'T HESITATE FOR SPIRITUAL ACTIVITIES

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Śugasyam śīghram — anything auspicious, especially for the service of the Lord, should be immediately executed without delay. However, for anything material you should consider carefully three hundred times before you take it up. Do not be very eager to take up anything material. But anything spiritual, immediately, without consideration, start it. *jīvana aniścitā* — This body is uncertain. At any moment it may go away. Anything spiritual that is done is your permanent, inexhaustible bank balance. A wise, intelligent man immediately accepts it. Working in such a way will free you from all your anxiety. The lotus feet of the Lord is such a place that if you take complete shelter there, if you completely surrender to him,

then there will be no anxiety, no fear, no lamentation, and no death. Mahajan Bhaktivinode Thakur has said (*Śaraṇāgati* 2.8.2):

*aśoka-abhaya, amṛta-ādihāra,
tomāra caraṇa-dvaya
tāhāte ekhana, viśrāma labhiyā
chāḍḍinu bhavera bhaya*

“O Lord, Your lotus feet are such a place that if someone takes complete shelter of them, there will be no fear, lamentation, anxiety, or death, *amṛta*.” ❀

— From a deity installation lecture in Bhubaneswar, Orissa. 21 January 1991.

THE PROCESS OF INITIATION

Śrī Sanat-kumāra Samhitā Texts 86-108

*atha dīkṣā-vidhiṁ vakṣye śṛṇu nārada tattvataḥ
śravaṇād eva mucyante vinā yasya vidhānataḥ*

O Narada, please hear and I will tell you about spiritual initiation. Simply by hearing of this, even without following this description, people can become liberated.

*ā-viriñcāḥ jagat sarvaṁ vijñāya naśvaram budhaḥ
ādhyātmikādi tri-vidhaṁ duḥkham evānubhūya ca
anitya-toāc ca sarveṣāṁ sukhānāṁ muni-sattama
duḥkha-pakṣe vinikṣipyā tāni tebhyo virajyate*

O best of sages, becoming aware that every place in the material world, from Brahmaloaka down, is temporary and destined for destruction, directly feeling the three kinds of material suffering, beginning with sufferings caused by one’s own body and mind, and also seeing that all kinds of material happiness come to an end and finally lead only to pain, a wise person renounces the world. No longer is he interested in the things of this world.

*virajya saṁsṛter hānau sādhanāni vicintayet
anuttama-sukhasyāpi samprāptau bhṛṣam duḥkhitāḥ*

When a person no longer desires to enjoy material things, he should consider how to finally sever all connection with this world. Only when he succeeds in that will such a person, unhappy with the world, attain peerless happiness.

*śaraṇaṁ duṣkaratvaṁ hi vijñāya ca mahā-matiḥ
bhṛṣam artas tato vipra śrī-gurum śaraṇaṁ vrajet*

O *brāhmaṇa*, aware that the shelter of the Lord is very difficult to attain, and also distressed by material life, a wise person should take shelter of a bona-fide spiritual master.

*śānto vimatsaraḥ kṛṣṇa-bhaktō ‘nanya-prayojanaḥ
ananya-sādhanāḥ śrīmān krodha-lobha-vivarjitaḥ
śrī-kṛṣṇa-rasa-tattva-jñāḥ kṛṣṇa-mantra-vidāṁ varaḥ
kṛṣṇāśrayo nityaṁ mantra-bhaktāḥ sadā-śucih
sad-dharma-sādhako nityaṁ sad-ācāra-niyojakaḥ
sampradāyī kṛpā-pūrṇo virāḡī gurur ucyate*

It is said that a bona-fide spiritual master should be peaceful, non-envious, devoted to Lord Krishna, not interested in things that have no relation to Lord Krishna, not engaged in activities that have no relation to Lord Krishna, filled with spiritual virtues, free of anger and greed, learned in the science of the nectar mellows of Lord Krishna, expert in the mantras glorifying Lord Krishna, always surrendered to Lord Krishna, always taking shelter of Lord Krishna, devoted to chanting the mantras glorifying Lord Krishna, always pure, always pious and religious, always engaged in devotional service to the Lord, a teacher who shows his disciples how to serve the Lord, himself a disciple in the *sampradāya* (disciplic succession), filled with mercy, and renounced.

*evam-ādi-guṇaḥ prāyaḥ śuśrūṣur guru-pādayoḥ
gurau nitanta-bhaktaś ca mumukṣuḥ śiṣya ucyate*

It is said that a bona-fide disciple should also have qualities like these. He should have faith in his spiritual master’s feet, be completely devoted to his spiritual master, and have the attainment of liberation as the goal of his life.

*yat sāksāt sevanaṁ tasya premṇā bhagavato bhavet
sa mokṣaḥ procyate prājñair veda-vedāṅga-vedibhiḥ*

Service to the spiritual master is the same as direct loving service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The wise, learned in the *Vedas* and *Vedāṅgas*, declare that this service is the path to liberation.

*trāyasva bho jagan-nātha guro saṁsāra-vahninā
dagdham ca kāla-daṣṭam ca trāhi maṁ bhava-sāgarāt*

O spiritual master of all the worlds, please rescue me, for I am burning in the fire of repeated birth and death! I am bitten by the black snake of time! Please rescue me from the ocean of birth and death!

*śrī-nanda-nandanaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sarva-deva-śiro-maṇiḥ
pādāmbujaika-bhāḡ eka-dīkṣā proktā maṇiṣibhiḥ*

Lord Krishna, the son of Nanda, is the crest jewel of all deities. One should worship his lotus feet alone. One time only one should accept initiation into the worship of his lotus feet. This is said by the wise.

*āgatya ca guroḥ pāde nija-vṛttān nivedayet
sa-sandehānaṁ prāhvatyā bodhayitvā punaḥ punaḥ*

One should approach the spiritual master's feet, offer service to them, and learn the truth by repeatedly asking questions.

*sva-pāda-pranātaṁ sāntān śusrūṣuṁ nija-pādayoḥ
ati-hṛṣṭa-manāḥ śiṣyaṁ gurur adhyāpayen manum*

Happy at heart, the spiritual master then teaches the sacred mantra to the disciple who is peaceful, who has faith in his spiritual master's feet, and who is surrendered to his spiritual master's feet.

*candanena mṛdā vāpi vilikhet bāhu-mūlayoḥ
vāma-dakṣiṇayor vipra śaṅkha-cakre yathā kramam*

O *brāhmaṇa*, using sandalwood paste or clay, the spiritual master should draw a conchshell and *cakra* on the left and right shoulders.

*ūrdhva-puṇḍraṁ tataḥ kuryād bhālādiṣu vidhānataḥ
tato mantra-dvayaṁ tasya dakṣa-karṇe vinirdiśet*

Then the spiritual master should draw *vaiṣṇava tilaka* on the forehead and other

places, and then speak the two mantras in the disciple's right ear.

*mantrārthaś ca vadet tasmai yathāvad anupūrovaśaḥ
dāsa-śabda-yutaṁ nāma dhāyaya tasya prayatnataḥ*

Then he should explain the meaning of the mantras, and then he should give the disciple a name ending with the word "*dāsa*" (servant).

*tato 'ti-bhaktiā sa-snehaṁ vaiṣṇavān bhojayed budhaḥ
śrī-gurum pūjayec cāpi vastrālaṅkāraṇādibhiḥ*

Then the wise disciple should affectionately and devotedly feast the *vaiṣṇavas*, and then he should worship the spiritual master with garments, ornaments, and other gifts.

*sarvasvaṁ gurave dadyāt tad-ardhaṁ vā mahā-mune
sva-deham api nikṣiptaṁ puras tiṣṭhed akiṅcanaḥ*

O great sage, then the disciple should offer all his wealth to his spiritual master, or he may offer half his wealth, or, being penniless, he may offer his body in the spiritual master's service.

*ya etaḥ pañcabhir vidvān saṁskāraiḥ saṁskṛto bhavet
dāsyā-bhāgī sa kṛṣṇasya nānyathā kalpa-koṭibhiḥ*

With these five *saṁskāras*, purificatory rituals, one becomes purified. He becomes a servant of Lord Krishna. Even in ten million *kalpas* he will not renounce that service.

*aṅkanam cordhva-puṇḍraṁ ca mantra-nāma-vidhāraṇam
pañcamī yāga ity uktam saṁskāraṁ pūrva-sūribhiḥ*

The previous sages say these five *saṁskāras* are the marking of the body, *tilaka*, the mantra, the name, and the *yajña*.

*aṅkanam śaṅkha-cakrādyaiḥ sac-chidra-puṇḍra ucyate
dāsa-śabda-yutaṁ nāma mantrō yugala-samjñakam*

The marking is the marking of the conchshell, disc, and other signs. The *tilaka* is *vaiṣṇava tilaka*. The name is the name to which the word "*dāsa*" (servant) is added. The mantra is the two mantras already described.

*guru-vaiṣṇavayoḥ pūjā yāga ity abhidhīyate
ete parama-saṁskārā mayā te parikīrtitaḥ*

The *yajña* is the worship of the spiritual master and the *vaiṣṇavas*. I have thus described these great *saṁskāras* to you. ❀

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