



तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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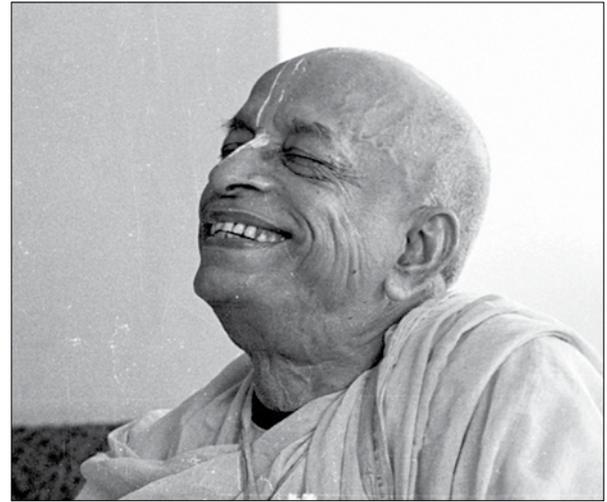


THE FAULT OF WANTING TO BE MORE AND MORE IMPORTANT

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

The perfect spiritual concept of life is complete knowledge of one's constitutional position, in which one knows enough to dovetail himself in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. One must know that he is finite and that the Lord is infinite. Thus it is not possible to actually become one with the Lord even if one aspires for this. It is simply not possible. Therefore, anyone who has any desire or aspiration for satisfying his senses by becoming more and more important, either in the material sense or in the spiritual sense, cannot actually relish the really sweet taste of devotional service. Srila Rupa Goswami has therefore compared possessing these *bhukti* (material) and *mukti* (liberation) desires with being influenced by the black art of a witch — in both cases one is in trouble. *Bhukti* means material enjoyment and *mukti* means to become freed from material anxiety and to become one with the Lord. These desires are compared to being haunted by ghosts and witches, because while these aspirations for material enjoyment or spiritual oneness with the Supreme remain, no one can relish the actual transcendental taste of devotional service. ❧

— From chapter three of *Nectar of Devotion*.



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

DON'T THINK YOURSELF A VAISHNAVA

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

If this thing enters into your mind, “Oh, I am a great *vaiṣṇava sādhu!*” then a demon enters into you. You will develop pride and become puffed up. You will demand respect. You will never pay respect. But Mahaprabhu says, *amānī mānada* — “Don't demand respect. Pay respect to one and all.” But if you think, “Now I am a great *sādhu, vaiṣṇava!*” you cannot become *amānī* and pay respect to one and all. You will demand respect and your heart will become contaminated. You will run after name, fame, prestige and adoration — material gain — and thus

your heart will become contaminated. *Pratiṣṭhāsā āsi', hr̥daya dūṣibe, ha-iba niraya-gāmī* — “Then I will go to hell.” [Bhaktivinode Thakur’s *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru* 2.8] That is the consequence, the result that you will get. You will desire *lābha, pūjā, pratiṣṭha* — name, fame, prestige and adoration. Your heart will become contaminated and you will go to hell. Your heart will not be purified but rather will become more contaminated. So this is the most important thing. One should eternally be a disciple and remain in the position of being eternally disciplined by guru. 🙏

— *Sri Guru-vandana*, p. 74-75. Gopal Jiu Publications. Bhubaneswar. 1996. From a lecture, Bhubaneswar, March 1993.

THE RIGHT OF ALL HUMAN BEINGS

*From a Letter by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta
Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada*

According to *śāstra*, everyone has a right to receive spiritual initiation. It is not confined to a particular *sampradāya*, as is the case with ordinary worldly initiation. I am quoting here some scriptural evidence. Kindly explain the meanings to *paṇḍita mahāśaya*.

The qualities of a candidate eligible for chanting these mantras:

*tāntrikeṣu ca mantreṣu dikṣāyām yoṣitām api
sādhvīnām adhikāro 'sti sūdrādīnām ca sad-dhiyām*

Not only faithful twice-born *brāhmaṇas*, but also chaste ladies, pious *sūdras*, and others who are engaged in the service of their spiritual master, are qualified to be initiated into these mantras described in the *Tantras*.

In the *Smṛti-artha-sāra*, as well as the *Padma Purāṇa*, *Vaiśākha-māhātmya*, in a conversation between Sri Narada and Sri Ambarish, it is stated:

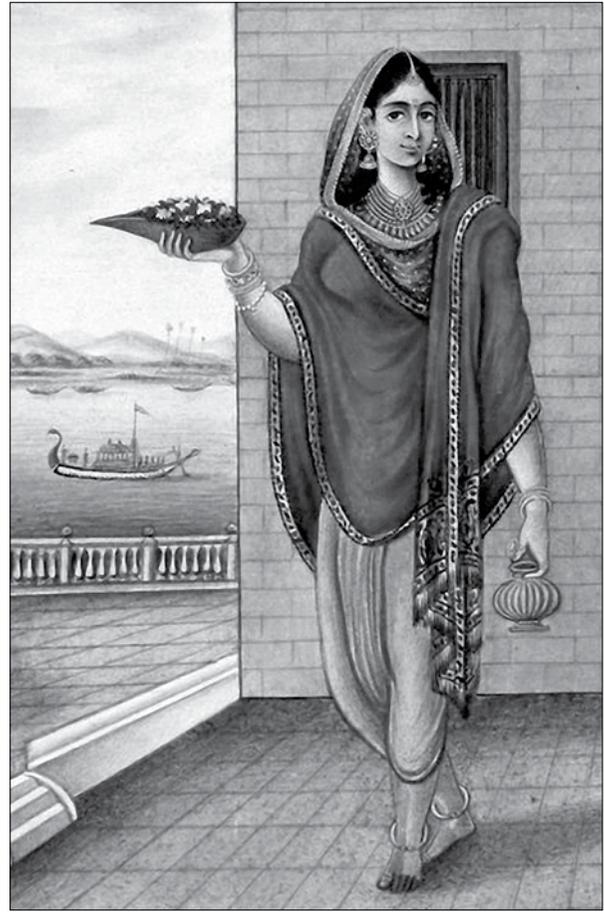
*āgamoktena mārgeṇa strī-sūdrais caiva pūjanam
kartavyam śraddhayā viṣṇoś cintayitvā patiṁ hr̥di*

According to the path shown in the *Āgama* literature, the ladies and *sūdras* have the right to worship the Lord. They should perform such worship with great faith, thinking of their respective masters in their hearts.

*sūdrānām caiva bhavati nāmnā vai devatārcanam
sarve cāgama-mārgeṇa kuryur vedānusāriṇā*

For the *sūdras* the worship of the deity can certainly be done by chanting the names of the Lord, and all this is to be done according to the path shown in the *Āgamas* that follow the Vedas.

*strīnām āpy adhikāro 'sti viṣṇor ārāadhanādiṣu
pati-priya-hitānām ca śrutir eṣā sanātani*



Anglo-Indian school at Patna, circa 1880. Attributed to Bani Lal

Indian lady going to do pūjā

Even the ladies have a right in performing worship, etc., of Lord Vishnu, especially those who desire welfare for their husbands. This is the verdict of the eternal *śruti*.

In the *Agastya-samhitā*, regarding the *rāma-mantra*, it is stated:

*śuci-vrata-tamaḥ sūdrā dharmikā dvija-sevakāḥ
striyaḥ pati-vratās cānye pratilomānuloma-jāḥ
lokās cāṇḍāla-paryantāḥ sarve 'py atrādhikāriṇaḥ*

Sūdras who are religious, who serve the *brāhmaṇas*, and who observe sacred vows, as well as chaste ladies, those born in intercaste families, and even dog-eaters, are eligible to chant the *śrī rāma* mantras. (*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*, chapter 1, texts 194 to 198.)

In the *Gautamiya Tantra* it is stated in a general way:

*atha kṛṣṇa-manūn vaksye dṛṣṭādr̥ṣṭa-phala-pradān
yān vai vijñāya munayo lebhire muktim añjasā*

Now I will describe the Krishna mantras, the chanting of which give results which are sometimes seen and sometimes unseen. By knowing these mantras, thoughtful practitioners can easily attain liberation.

*grhasthā vanagās caiva yatayo brahma-cāriṇaḥ
striyaḥ sūdrādayas caiva sarve yatrādhikāriṇaḥ*

Brahmacāris, gr̥hasthas, vānaprasthas, and sann̄yāsīs, as well as women and sūdras, are eligible to chant these mantras. (*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 1.217-218.)

The living entities attain the human form of life especially for serving the Supreme Lord. Animals cannot accept spiritual initiation and only human beings are eligible for it.

Acceptance of initiation is eternal. It is stated in the Āgama literature:

*dvijānām anupetānām svakarma adhyānādiṣu
yathādhikāro nāstiha syāt ca upanayanādānu
tathātra dikṣitānām tu mantra devārcanādiṣu
nādhikārāstitaḥ kuryāt ātmanam śiva samstutaḥ*

Just as a brāhmana boy is not qualified to perform his occupational duties and study the Vedas if he is not initiated, so a person who has not taken spiritual initiation is not eligible to chant spiritual mantras and worship the Supreme Lord. By accepting initiation into Vishnu mantras, one makes himself worthy of praise even by Lord Shiva. Just as one cannot separate oneself from worshipping the Supreme Lord, one cannot separate oneself from accepting initiation.

In a conversation between Brahma and Narada recorded in the *kārtika-prasaṅga* section of the *Skanda Purāna*, the following statement is found:

*te narāḥ paśavo loke kiṁ tesām jīvane phalam
yenair labdhā harer dikṣā nārcito vā janārdanaḥ*

Those who on attaining initiation as a servant of Hari do not worship him, such people certainly are animals in the form of humans in this world, what is the use of their lives?

A conversation found in *Viṣṇu Yāmala* between Rukmangada and Mohini, includes the following statement:

*adikṣitasya vāmoru kṛtam sarvaṁ nirartakam
paśu-yonim avāpnoti dikṣā-virahito janaḥ*

O beautiful one! All activities performed by an uninitiated person are useless. Not only that, but after death such a person receives the body of an animal. (*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 2.3-6)

This is described in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*:

The spirit soul is neither male, female, nor neuter. The living entities that are forced to enjoy the fruits of their karma consider themselves to be male or female due to forgetfulness of their constitutional position and accept their material body as the self. But learned persons do not.

*yasyātmā-buddhiḥ kuṅape tri-dhātuke
sva-dhīḥ kalatrādiṣu bhauma ijya-dhīḥ*

*yat-tīrtha-buddhiḥ salile na karhicij
janeṣv abhijñeṣu sa eva go-kharaḥ*

One who identifies his self as the inert body composed of mucus, bile, and air, who assumes his wife and family are permanently his own, who thinks an earthen image or the land of his birth is worshipable, or who sees a place of pilgrimage as merely the water there, but who never identifies himself with, feels kinship with, worships, or even visits those who are wise in spiritual truth — such a person is no better than a cow or an ass. (*Bhāg.* 10.84.13)

*prāyeṇa veda tad idaṁ na mahājano 'yaṁ
devyā vimohita-matir bata māyayālam
trayyām jaḍi-kṛta-matir madhu-puṣpīṭyām
vaitānike mahati karmaṇi yujyamānaḥ*

Because they are bewildered by the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Jaynavalkya and Jaimini and other compilers of religious scriptures cannot know the secret, confidential religious system of the twelve *mahājanas*. They cannot understand the transcendental value of performing devotional service or chanting the Hare Krishna mantra. Because their minds are attracted to the ritualistic ceremonies mentioned in the Vedas—especially the *Yajur Veda*, *Sāma Veda*, and *Ṛg Veda* — their intelligence has become dull. Thus they are busy collecting the ingredients for ritualistic ceremonies that yield only temporary benefits, such as elevation to Svargaloka for material happiness. They are not attracted to the *saṅkīrtana* movement; instead, they are interested in *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa*. (*Bhāg.* 6.3.25)

Without understanding the teachings of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* and the concept of bondage and liberation, many people are bereft of the opportunity of receiving spiritual initiation. No learned follower of *sanātana-dharma* can disagree with the principal that every male and female has the right for spiritual initiation. The spirit soul is not a male or a female of this material world. There are many social and worldly duties which display their prominence due to a lack of the realization of one's constitutional position. One is advised to surpass all those conceptions and proceed on the path of devotional service. (Letter from Sri Gaudiya Matha, Calcutta. 2 March 1929.)

— Excerpted, with a few verses retranslated, from *Patrāmṛta*, *Nectar from the Letters*, pps. 44-48. Touchstone Media. Kolkata. 2012.

CREAM FOR KRISHNA

From Govinda Maṅgala by Duhkhi Shyamdas

Duhkhi Shyamdas, also known as Duhkhishtyam, lived in the late 1500s. He was a disciple of Srila Shyamananda

Unknown artist, c. 1950's



Krishna and Mother Yasoda

Pandit and an accomplished poet. He was born in the village Hariharpur in the Kedarkund district, about sixteen miles east of Midnapore. His parents were Srimukha De and Bhavani.

In his Govinda Maṅgala he has presented, in various metrical styles, Krishna's pastimes of the tenth canto of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, including points from various other sources, such as the Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa and Srīla Sridhar Swami's Bhāvārtha-dīpikā commentary on Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. It is said that Duhkhi Shyamdas spent his time wandering around in the Midnapore area reciting from his Govinda Maṅgala.

tabe eka dina kṛṣṇa vicāriyā mane
upanīta haila eka gopīra bhavane

☞

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On another day, after considering things in his mind, Krishna reached the house of a gopī.

śuna go sundari eka upadeśa vāṇī
kara parṇa kari sara deha goyālīni

tomāra bharete tabe nā āsibe cora
satya kathā kahi āmi barābara tora

[Krishna told her:] “O beautiful lady, listen to my advice. If you give some cream in my hand then no thief will enter your house. I am telling you the truth.”

śuniyā uṣatacitta haila goyālī
dugdhera mohanā haite sara āne tuli

Hearing this that woman became very happy and brought the cream from the bowl of milk.

govindera kara tāhe nahila pūraṇa
kṛṣṇa bale sara āna śuna gopīgaṇa

However, the hands of Govinda were not filled up. Krishna said, “Listen gopīs, bring more cream for me.”

vyanta haila goyālīni ihā dekhi śuni
paḍasīra ghara haite sara māgi āni

The milk maids became restless hearing his words and begged cream from their neighbours.

śateka hāṇḍira sara emana prakāre
bāre bāre dila laiyā govindera kare

Nearly a hundred bowls of cream were brought as they tried again and again to fill the hands of Govinda.

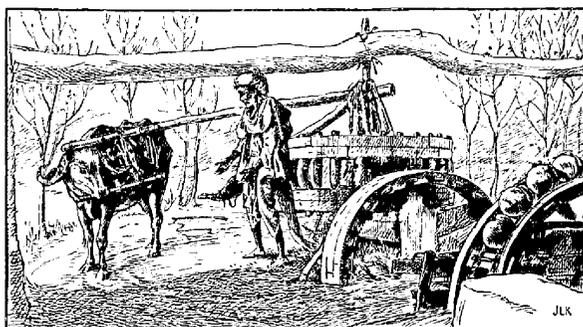
kara-pūrṇa na ha-ila yādumaṇi hāse
khāilā se saba sara ekāi garāse

When the hands of Yadumani Krishna were still not filled, he started laughing. Indeed he ate everything up simply in one morsel.

dekhi camakita gopī nāke dila hāta
mūcaki hāsiyā grhe gela gopīnātha

Seeing this, the women were astonished. Gopinatha smiled and left for his home. ☞

— Translated from the edition published by Sri Biharilal Sarkar. Kolkata. 1808 Sakabda. (1886)



Man and an ox pumping water