

# YAMADUTAS v/s VISHNUDUTAS



When the time of death arrived for the foolish Ajāmila, he began thinking exclusively of his son Nārāyaṇa. Ajāmila then saw three awkward persons with deformed bodily features, fierce, twisted faces, and hair standing erect on their bodies, ready to take him to the abode of Yamarāja.

When he saw them he was extremely bewildered, and because of attachment to his child, who was playing a short distance away, Ajāmila began to call him loudly by his name. Thus with tears in his eyes he somehow or other chanted the holy name of Nārāyaṇa.

The order carriers of Viṣṇu, the Viṣṇudūtas, immediately arrived when they heard the holy name of their master from the mouth of the dying Ajāmila, who had certainly chanted without offense because he had chanted in complete anxiety. The order carriers of Yamarāja were snatching the soul from the

core of the heart of Ajāmila, but with resounding voices the messengers of Lord Viṣṇu, the Viṣṇudūtas, forbade them to do so.

When the order carriers of Yamarāja were thus forbidden, they replied: Who are you, sirs, that have the audacity to challenge the jurisdiction of Yamarāja? Your eyes are just like the petals of lotus flowers. Dressed in yellow silken garments, decorated with garlands of lotuses, and wearing very attractive helmets on your heads and earrings on your ears, you all appear fresh and youthful. Your four long arms are decorated with bows and quivers of arrows and with

swords, clubs, conchshells, discs and lotus flowers. Your effulgence has dissipated the darkness of this place with extraordinary illumination. Now, sirs, why are you obstructing us?

The servants of Vāsudeva smiled and spoke the following words in voices as deep as the sound of rumbling clouds.

“If you are actually servants of Yamarāja, you must explain to us the meaning of religious principles and the symptoms of irreligion. What is the process of punishing others? Who are the actual candidates for punishment? Are all karmīs engaged in fruitive activities

punishable, or only some of them?

The Yamadūtas replied: That which is prescribed in the Vedas constitutes dharma, the religious principles, and the opposite of that is irreligion. The Vedas are directly the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, and are self-born. This we have heard from Yamarāja.

The sun, fire, sky, air, demigods, moon, evening, day, night, directions, water, land and Supersoul Himself all witness the activities of the living entity. The candidates for punishment are those who are confirmed by these many witnesses to have deviated from

their prescribed regulative duties.

In the beginning this brāhmaṇa named Ajāmila studied all the Vedic literatures. He was a reservoir of good character, good conduct and good qualities. Firmly established in executing all the Vedic injunctions, he kept his mind and senses under control. Ajāmila was very respectful to his spiritual master, the fire-god, guests, and the elderly members of his household.

Once this brāhmaṇa Ajāmila, following the order of his father, went to the forest to collect fruit, flowers and two kinds of grass, called samit and kuśa. On the way home, he came

upon a śūdra, a very lusty, fourth-class man, who was shamelessly embracing and kissing a prostitute. The śūdra was smiling, singing and enjoying as if this were proper behavior. Both the śūdra and the prostitute were drunk. The prostitute's eyes were rolling in intoxication, and her dress had become loose. Such was the condition in which Ajāmila saw them.

When Ajāmila saw her, the dormant lusty desires in his heart awakened, and in illusion he fell under their control. As far as possible he patiently tried to remember the instructions of the śāstras not even to see a woman. With the help of this knowledge and his intellect, he

tried to control his lusty desires, but because of the force of Cupid within his heart, he failed to control his mind.

Taking advantage of this situation, he always thought of the prostitute, and within a short time he took her as a servant in his house and abandoned all the regulative principles of a brāhmaṇa. Thus Ajāmila began spending whatever money he had inherited from his father to satisfy the prostitute with various material presentations and gave up all his brahminical activities.

Thus, the victimized brāhmaṇa Ajāmila engaged in sinful acts in the prostitute's



association. He even gave up the company of his very beautiful young wife, who came from a very respectable brāhmaṇa family. Although born of a brāhmaṇa family, this rascal, bereft of intelligence because of the prostitute's association, earned money somehow or other, regardless of whether properly or improperly. This brāhmaṇa irresponsibly spent his long lifetime transgressing all the rules and regulations of the Holy Scripture, living extravagantly and eating food prepared by a prostitute.

This man Ajāmila did not undergo atonement. Therefore because of his sinful life, we must take him into the presence of

Yamarāja for punishment. There, according to the extent of his sinful acts, he will be punished and thus purified.

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