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ADDRESS EVERY WOMAN AS MOTHER

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



From five years old, if a child is trained to call all women as mother, then naturally his culture is different. ... This was the practice. Not only religiously, but morally. It is so good, to look upon all women as mother. That is the

system still in India, any unknown woman who has no introduction with you, she is addressed with "mātājī". She may be just like a daughter or a granddaughter, but still, as a respect to the woman, one would address her as mother, "mātājī". This is the Indian system. Now some rascals have introduced "bhaginījī", "sister". But that is not śāstric. In the śāstra, all women except one's wife should be addressed as mother. (Lecture in Los Angeles. 7 January 1974)

Any woman except one's wife is mother. It doesn't matter whether she is elderly or young. Still in India, one can address any unknown woman with "mother". The first relationship is mother. Now they have introduced "sister", "bahinjī". No, that is not Vedic etiquette. No "bahinjī". We should learn this. Except for one's wife, all women should be addressed as "mother". This is civilization. Then there will be no corrupt relations. If from the very beginning, you establish your relationship with

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other women as mother, then there is no question of another relationship.

(Lecture in Los Angeles. 13 July 1974)

One of the qualifications one must have to be considered a learned scholar is *māṭṛvat para-dāreṣu* — all women should be treated as mother. Nowadays it has been introduced in India, "bahinjī". No. This is not the etiquette. The etiquette is to address every woman, never mind whether she is young or old, as mother. This is *brahmacārī*.

(Lecture in Bombay. 5 April 1974)

All women should be treated just like mother. Not like the present society. Formerly, every woman was addressed as mother, "mātājī". And now they have invented "bahinjī". No. Woman should be addressed as mother. *Māṭṛvat para-dāreṣu*.

(Lecture in Vrindavan. 6 August 1974)

At the present moment, they have invented the word "bahinjī", "sister". No. In the Vedic culture there is no such thing as "sister". "Mother" — that is Vedic culture. Any woman is called "mother", because mother is always respected. The *brahmacārī* would go to the householder's house and address the ladies, "Mother, give us some alms." So from the childhood, a *brahmacārī* is trained to address all women as mother. Therefore, when they are young they cannot see women in any other way. This is Vedic culture.

(Lecture in Mayapura. 4 October 1974) 

Mātṛvat para-dāreṣu — one should see all women as mother. But in this age, there is no education. Therefore, practically everyone is a *mūḍha*, not educated. He does not know how to look upon women. Woman should be looked upon as mother. ... In Northern India, they have introduced “*bahinjī*”. No, this is not the etiquette. One should say, “*mātājī*”. This is Indian culture, not “*bahinjī*”.

(Lecture in Mayapura. 16 February 1976) ❀

A CONSTITUTIONAL INJUNCTION FOR EVERY BIRTH

From *Sri Bhaktyāloka*

By *Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode*



Aspiring devotees should first take shelter of the lotus feet of a bona fide guru. Without taking shelter of a guru, one cannot achieve anything auspicious. There are two types of people — one having developed intelligence and one having undeveloped intelligence. Those whose intelligence is undeveloped are absorbed in the so-called happiness of this world. If by chance they get the association of a *mahājana*, then they also become intelligent. They consider, “How unfortunate I am! I’m always engaged in sense gratification. I’m passing my days hankering for material enjoyment.” This initial association with a great soul is also called association with the guru by hearing. By acquired good fortune, at this time faith is awakened. When faith is awakened, one endeavors for devotional service. Then it is essential for one to take shelter of the lotus feet of a guru. In this way by the influence of ones previous good works, performed knowingly or unknowingly, persons with undeveloped intelligence become intelligent and take shelter of the lotus feet of a guru.

What type of guru one should take shelter of is explained in the *śāstras*: Someone who has conquered the six enemies beginning with lust, who is pure, who performs devotional service on the path of *rāga*, who is *brahminical*, who knows the clear path of the Vedas, whom *sādhus* can respect as guru, who is able to control the senses, who is merciful to all living entities, who is cultured, who is without duplicity, and who is truthful — such a householder is fit to be accepted as guru. All these qualities are considered in two ways. The principal quality of a

guru is attachment to Krishna and detachment for what is not related with Krishna. All other qualities are secondary. That is why Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has said in the *Chaitanya-caritāmṛta* (*madhya* 8.127):

*kibā vipra, kibā nyāsī, śūdra kene naya
yei kṛṣṇa-tattva-vettā, sei ‘guru’ haya*

Whether one is a *brāhmaṇa*, a *sannyāsī*, or a *śūdra* — regardless of what he is — he can become a spiritual master if he knows the science of Krishna.

If one possesses this principal symptom of a guru, then he is eligible to be guru, even though he lacks one or two secondary symptoms. Being a *brāhmaṇa* and being a householder are counted as secondary symptoms. It is good if a person possesses these two secondary symptoms along with the principal qualification. But those who are defective in the principal symptom are unqualified to be guru, even though they possess the other two. As stated in *Padma Purāṇa*:

*mahābhāgavata śreṣṭho brāhmaṇo vai gurur nṛṇāṃ
sarveṣāṃ eva lokānāṃ asau pūjyo yathā hariḥ*

*mahākula-prasūto ‘pi sarva yajñeṣu dikṣitah
sahasra-śākhā-dhyāyī ca na guruḥ syād avaiṣṇavaḥ*

Among all human beings, the *brāhmaṇa* who is a *mahā-bhāgavata*, or great devotee, is topmost and qualified as guru. He is as worshipable as Lord Hari. A non *vaiṣṇava* is never fit to be guru, even if he has taken birth in a great family, performed all sacrifices, and studied many branches of the Vedas.

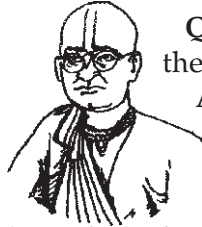
After finding a qualified guru, a faithful disciple should serve him with firm conviction and without duplicity. After pleasing the guru, one should accept initiation and *kṛṣṇa-mantra*. Those who are averse to taking initiation and only make a drama of *kaṣṭha-kīrtana*, duplicitous chanting, while advertising themselves as *vaiṣṇavas* certainly cheat themselves. It is not the duty of materialistic persons to renounce the process of initiation because a few great souls like Jada Bharata did not take initiation. Initiation is a constitutional injunction for every birth of the living entity. If initiation is not seen in the life of a perfected soul, it should not be taken as an example. General rules are not changed because something happens to a particular person in a special situation. Sri Dhruva Maharaja went to Dhruvaloka in his material body — seeing that, should one waste time hoping for the same? The general rule is a living entity gives up his material body and goes to Vaikuntha in his spiritual body. General rules should be accepted

by people in general. Whenever and whatever is desired by the Lord, who is full of inconceivable potencies, only that happens. Therefore, we should never transgress the general rules. After pleasing the guru by serving him without duplicity, one should receive from him instructions on the absolute truth and initiation into the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. ❀

— From *Śrī Bhaktiyāloka* pages 83-84. Translated by Sri Bhumipati Das. Edited and Published by Sri Pundarik Vidyānidhi Das, Vrajraj Press. Vrindavan. 1996

SIN AND OFFENSE

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
Thakur Prabhupada



Question: Are sin and offense the same?

Answer: No. One commits sin by disobeying the rules of society, but one commits offense by showing disrespect to the lotus feet of Vishnu and *vaiṣṇava*. Offense is a million times more dangerous than sin. Sin can be destroyed by atonement, but offense cannot be destroyed that way. Only by taking the all-beneficial names of Sri Sri Gaura-Nityananda, the friends of the fallen, can one make offense go away. ❀

— From *Prabhupada Saraswati Thakur*. Mandala Publishing Group. Eugene Oregon. 1997.

PASTIMES IN THE EARLY MORNING

Sanat-kumāra Saṁhitā 36.202-219

The Sanat-kumār Saṁhitā is an ancient literature that is quoted by many of our ācāryas. Today only chapters thirty-six and fifty-five are known to exist. Chapter fifty-five narrates Krishna's replies to Rukmini Devi when she asked Him to describe His Vrindavan pastimes. Chapter thirty-six consists of a conversation between Narada Muni and Lord Sadashiva discussing concern for the suffering of the living entities in Kali Yuga, meditation on Krishna, the process of worship of the Lord's eternal associates, and bhajan in servitorship. At the end of the chapter, Vrinda Devi describes Krishna's daily pastimes.

Vrinda Devi spoke as follows: “Wakened by His mother in the early morning, Krishna rises from bed. He and Balaram brush Their teeth, and with His mother's permission, Krishna eagerly goes to the cowshed to milk the cows.

“Wakened by Her *gopī* companions, Sri Radha also rises from Her bed. She brushes Her teeth with a twig and Her *sakhīs* massage Her with

fragrant oils. Then She goes to the bathing-room where Lalita and other *gopīs* give Her a divine bath. Next, She enters the decorating-room, where Her friends adorn Her with garlands, scents, oils, and many glittering ornaments. Then, after first taking permission from Radha's mother-in-law, Yasoda calls Radha and Her friends to cook breakfast for Krishna.”

Hearing this, Narada Muni asked, “O goddess, why does Yasoda call Radha to cook when Rohini and so many other expert cooks are present in her home?”

Vrinda Devi replied, “The great sage Durvasa gave Radha a boon that She would be the best of cooks. This I heard from the mouth of Katyayani:

*tvaṃ yā yat pacyate devi tad-annam mad-anugrahāt
miṣṭam svādva-āmṛta-sparadhi bhoktur āyus-karam tathā*

[Durvasa said to Radha:] O goddess, by my mercy, whatever You cook will be more delicious than the nectar of the gods. It will increase the life of whoever eats it. (Text 209)

“Thus Yasoda calls Radha to cook every day. Yasoda thinks, ‘Eager to eat this delicious food, my son will live a very long life.’

“Receiving permission from Her mother-in-law, Radha becomes very happy. Accompanied by a host of friends, She goes to Krishna's home to cook.

“Meanwhile, Krishna milked some cows and had some other boys milk the others. Then, called by His father, He and His friends return home. There the servants happily massage Krishna, bathe Him, dress Him in clean garments, garland Him, and anoint His body with sandalwood paste. Decorating His forehead and cascading down onto His neck and shoulders, Krishna's curling black hair shines brilliantly. The servants make the moon of His forehead splendid with *tilaka*. Krishna wears jeweled armlets and bracelets on His wrists and His hands are adorned with jeweled rings. He wears a brilliant pearl necklace across His chest and dazzling shark-shaped earrings dangle from His ears.

“Called again and again by His mother, holding the hand of one of His friends, Krishna follows Balaram into the breakfast-room. There, seated with His friends, He eats a breakfast feast of many different kinds of foodstuffs. He makes many jokes with His friends, and they all laugh together. The servants bring betelnuts. After sharing them with

His friends and chewing some Himself, Krishna rests for a moment on a splendid bed.

“While Krishna enjoys His pastime of eating breakfast, Radha watches. Afterwards, when Yasoda calls, Radha, accompanied by Lalita and other *gopī* friends, shyly have Their breakfast.” ❀

— *Sanat-kumāra Samhitā*. English translation by Sri Kusakratha Das. The Krishna Library, Culver City, California.

— *Sanat-kumāra Samhitā*. Published by Sri Haridas Sastri. Vrindavan. 1997. Sanskrit

PRAYER TO THE VAISHNAVAS

Sri Radha Mohan Das

In A History of Brajabuli Literature, the Bengali scholar Sukumar Sen writes:

Radha Mohan was a great-grandson of Srinivas Acharya. He was born sometime about 1699 A.D. and died in 1778. Radha Mohan was one of the greatest vaiṣṇava scholars of his time. When he was a young man, there arose an acute doctrinal difference between two schools of vaiṣṇava thought. One school supported the doctrine of svakīyā [That the highest attainment in the conjugal mellow is experienced when the beloved relates to Krishna as her husband.] and the other the doctrine of parakīyā [That the highest attainment is experienced when the beloved relates to Krishna as her paramour.]. This controversy came to such a head that an assembly of all the leading vaiṣṇavas was called, and the leaders of the two



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schools were asked to discuss their doctrines publicly and to accept the judgment of the assembly. Radha Mohan was chosen as the leader of the parakīyā school. After a protracted and lively discussion, Radha Mohan vindicated the doctrine of his school, and was given a certificate to that effect, signed by all the vaiṣṇava scholars present. This document was registered at the court of Murshidkuli Khan in March 1718. Radha Mohan lived at Malihati, a village a few miles distant from Katwa. He was the guru of Maharaja Nandakumar. Radha Mohan's great work is the Padāmṛta-samudra, an anthology of 730 vaiṣṇava lyric poems, of which 185 belong to himself.

(*Dhānaśī-rāga*)

*sakala vaiṣṇava gosāi dayā kara more
dante tṛṇa dhari kahe e dīna pāmāre*

O saintly *vaiṣṇavas*, please be merciful to me! Holding a blade of grass in his teeth, a poor wretch speaks as follows:

*śrī-guru-caraṇa āra śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya
pāda-padma pāoyāiyā more kara dhanya*

Please give me the great treasure of the attainment of shelter at the feet of the spiritual master and Sri Krishna Chaitanya.

*tomā sabāra karuṇā vinā iha prāpti naya
viśeṣe ayogyā muṇi kahila nīscaya*

Without the mercy of all of you, reaching such a goal is not possible. I speak of my disqualifications with certainty.

*vāñchā-kalpa-taru hao karuṇā-sāgara
ei ta bharasā muṇi dhari ye antara*

You are all wish-fulfilling desire trees and oceans of mercy. I have that faith in my heart.

*guṇa leśa nāhi mora aparādhera sīmā
āmā uddhāriyā loke dekhāo mahimā*

I have not even a trace of any valuable quality, and I have reached the limit of offensiveness. In my deliverance, the world will understand your glories.

*nāma-saṅkīrtana ruci āra prema-dhana
e rādḥā-mohane deha ha-iyā sa-karuṇa*

Therefore, please kindly give to this Radha Mohan Das the gift of taste for the congregational chanting of the Lord's holy names and the great treasure of ecstatic spiritual love. ❀

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