



तवकथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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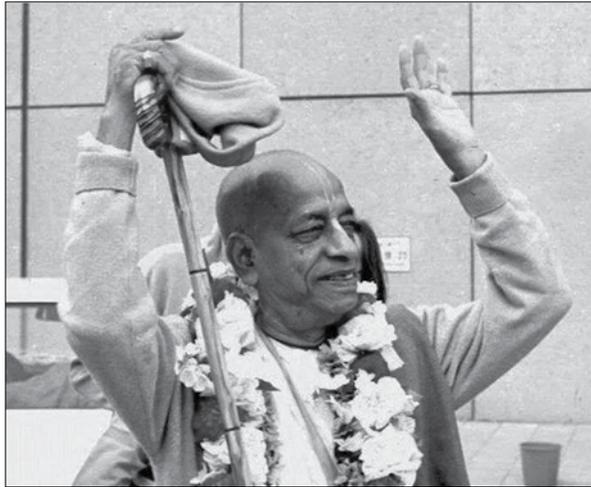
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TOPSY-TURVY SECULARISM

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Another duty of the *kṣatriya* is to see that people are being educated spiritually. The king looks over the citizens and makes sure that they are being properly trained up. At the present moment some states have become secular. Secular means that, “You do all nonsense — we don’t care. You just pay me income tax and you go to hell. It doesn’t matter.” This is actually not a secular state. A true secular state means that the state must be very vigilant whether all citizens are doing their duty, everyone is employed in his duty. And if everyone is not employed,

it is the duty of the government to make sure he is employed. A *brāhmaṇa* is employed, a *kṣatriya* is employed, a *vaiśya* is employed. If they are unemployed then an idle brain will be a devil’s workshop.

Now they have discovered machines. The machine is able to carry out a hundred men’s work. So a hundred men are unemployed. The machine has not improved the situation. It has improved the pocket of the capitalists, but it has not improved the condition of the mass of people. No. They are unemployed. Therefore, in the Western countries, because of machines and industry, now the universities are only producing unemployed hippies. 🙏

— Lecture in London. 2 September 1973.

THE GREAT HINDRANCE TO PERFECTION

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Suppose you are sitting down to accept food. Many people are sitting in rows and the food is being served. You want more food. You are a greedy fellow and you have a big belly. You are not satisfied with a little food. But if you think, “Oh! If I take much food in the presence of other people, what will the people think of me? ‘He is such a greedy glutton!’” So the food was served. Then when it comes a second time, he says, “No, no, no, no. I don’t want it; I am satisfied.” This is crookedness.

If you say “No! No!” you will remain hungry. Why do you say it? “Yes, I need more; please give me more.”

Why don't you say that? One who is very simple will say, "Yes, I need. I am hungry, I want more food. Please give me more."

"No, no, no. I do not want, this is enough for me. I am satisfied." is *kāpaṭya* — crookedness. You are not a simple-hearted person. You have no simplicity at all.

Suppose a teacher is teaching mathematics to the students. There are many students in the class. The calibre of the students is not the same. There are different varieties of students. Some are intelligent and others are dull-headed. The teacher asks, "Have all of you understood?"

"Oh yes!" everyone replies. One dull-headed student does not understand. However, he does not say, "I don't understand." He thinks, "If I say 'I don't understand', what will the others think of me?" He is such a dull-headed fellow. He does not understand the subject when the teacher explains it nicely. So out of shyness, or whatever it may be, he says, "Yes, yes. I understand." Then what will happen? He cannot make advancement; he cannot gain entrance to the higher mathematics class. He will fail in the examination. It is a hindrance. It is a great stumbling block on the path of perfection. That is *kāpaṭya*.

There is a saying in Bengali, *nācte se ghumṭā tānle habe nā* — You have come to the stage to perform a dance. Generally, girls or women come to perform dances like Odissi dance, Manipuri dance — there are so many dance performances. So you have come to the stage. There are many onlookers in the audience who are waiting to see how you dance. You have to show different postures — *mudrās*. But if you put a veil over your head on coming to the stage to dance, how will it be? You cannot perform your dance at all. You cannot please the audience. You cannot achieve success or perfection in your dancing performance. You have come to dance, so why are you feeling shy and putting a veil over your head? Take it off and dance freely. Then you will achieve success or perfection in your dance performance. 🌸

— *Trṇād api sunicena*. Chapter 4. Published by Tattva-vicāra Publications. Perth, Australia. 1997.

VARNASHRAMA DHARMA AND VAISHNAVISM

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura

Question: Is the performance of *varṇāśrama-dharma* one of the soul's constitutional duties?

Answer: The sages have instructed us to become fixed in the practice of *varṇāśrama-dharma*. It is certainly important to follow *varṇāśrama-dharma*, but Sri Gaurangadev questioned its necessity.

Varṇāśrama-dharma is not our eternal dharma. It is not the constitutional propensity of the soul and therefore it is not our constitutional duty. Rather, it speaks to certain material propensities that lead toward self-realization even while we remain in the conditioned state. *Varṇāśrama-dharma* is based on trying to worship Lord Vishnu from a particular position. It is not unmotivated, uninterrupted, pure devotional service to Krishna. Service to Krishna is not rendered from the platform of *varṇāśrama*. *Varṇāśrama* only admits a little Vishnu worship. Therefore, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said that we should first ascertain who we are. To decide that we are *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas*, or *sūdras*; *sannyāsīs*, *gṛhasthas*, *vānaprasthas*, or *brahmacārīs* is all right, but these are temporary designations of conditioned living entities. They are not our eternal constitutional position. We are eternal servants of Krishna. A spirit soul is a servant of the Supersoul. Serving the Supersoul is a living entity's duty.

Question: Are the designations expressed in *varṇāśrama-dharma* eternal?

Every living entity considers his body the self, but the living entities should learn to think as follows: "I am the Lord's eternal servant and it is my eternal constitutional



Nāma-tattva

THE GREATEST DEVOTEES

Bhagavan-nāma-māhātmya-saṅgrahaḥ

*kalau nāma-parā eva satataṁ dvija-sattamaḥ
uktā mahā-bhāgavatā bhagavat-priya-kāriṇaḥ*

In the age of Kali, those who are constantly dedicated to chanting the holy names are known in the scriptures as *mahā-bhāgavatas*, the greatest devotees, and *bhagavat-priya-kārī*, immense givers of pleasure to the Lord.

— From the *Bhagavan-nāma-māhātmya-saṅgraha*. Princess of Wales Saraswati Bhavana Text No. 56. Edited by Mahamahopadhyaya Gopi Natha Kaviraja. Printed at Vidya Vilasa Press, Benares City. 1934.





Unknown artist

Sri Nityananda Prabhu

duty to serve him. I belong neither to the four *varṇas* nor the four *āśramas*.” If this is true, how can *varṇāśrama-dharma* be an eternal dharma? By properly following the practices of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, one receives an immense advantage both in this life and the next. One can follow the *varṇāśrama* system as long as one has a material body. It is appropriate when one is trying to make material advancement. It is good to follow this

system as long as one wanders throughout the fourteen worlds. But it has no use in the spiritual world. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu states:

*nāham vipro na ca nara-patir nāpi vaiśyo na sūdra
nāham varṇī na ca gr̥ha-patir no vanastho yatir vā
kintu prodyan nikhila-paramānanda-pūrṇāmṛtābdher
gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-dāsānudāsaḥ*

I am not a *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya*, or *sūdra*. I am not a *brahmacārī*, *gr̥hastha*, *vānaprastha*, or *sannyāsī*. What am I? I am the eternal servant of the servant of the servant of Lord Krishna.” (*Padyāvalī*, 63)

The Supreme Lord is cognizant, as are the living entities because they are part and parcel of the Supreme Lord and share his qualities. But the living entities are not super-cognizant; they are only minutely cognizant. Therefore the living entities are subordinate to the Supreme Lord. Because they have misused their independence, the living entities have been degraded. As soon as they fall down from the Lord’s service, they begin to suffer material miseries. Once they again engage in his service, they attain auspiciousness.

Question: What is the duty of all living entities?

Answer: Krishna, the son of Nanda Maharaja, is the supreme enjoyer and the eternal object of everyone’s service. The *jīvas*’ eternal constitutional duty is to serve him. Forgetting that service, the living entities sometimes become impersonalists and consider themselves God. At other times, they become busy following the *varṇāśrama* principles in the guise of material enjoyers. Sometimes they care only to please their wives. Therefore I say, “O living entities! Give up your false pride, self-adoration, and subordination to your wives. Please serve the Supreme Lord under the direction of Srimati Radharani and Sri Rupa Manjari. Please constantly engage in Krishna’s service under the guidance of the *gopīs* of Vraja.” 🙏

— From *Amṛta Vani — Nectar of Instructions for Immortality*. Pp. 285-287. Touchstone Media. Mumbai. 2004.

THE COOLING SHADE OF NITAI’S FEET

The medieval poet Hare Krishna Das

*ṭhākura nitāi-cānda dayā kara more
tomāra caritra nāma, dibā niśi avirāma
sadā yena kaṅthe mora sphure (refrain)*

O my dear Lord Nityananda Prabhu! Please be merciful unto me so that your name and character always appears within my mouth.

*hādāi paṇḍita dhāma, ekacakrā nāme grāma
avatāra ananta vaibhava
jagati janāra bandhu, nitāi karuṇā-sindhu
prema dichena haiyā akaitava*

The abode of Hadai Pandit is the village named Ekachakra, where you appeared with your endless opulences. O ocean of mercy Nitai! You are the true friend of the people of this world. You give pure love of godhead free of any cheating propensity.

*caitanyaera yāhāre roṣa, nityānanda kṣami doṣa
hena pāpī nistāra karilā
nija puri dekhi śūnya, yama āsi kare dainya
more adhikāra chāḍāilā*

Nityananda forgave even those upon whom the merciful Lord Chaitanya exhibited anger. Thereby he delivered even such sinners. When Yamaraj, the presiding deity of the hellish planets, saw all his hells empty, he came to Nitai in a dejected mood, and said, “You have forcibly relieved me of my duties.”

*pūrve nāmābhāse yena, ajāmīla brāhmaṇādhama
saba pāpe karilā uddhāra
hari nāma śuni ebe, vaiṣṇava ha-ilā sabhe
kene more dilā adhikāra*

[Yamaraj continued], “Previously the lowest among brahmins named Ajamila delivered himself from all sins by chanting *nāmābhāsa*, the shadow of the pure



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Deity of Nityananda Prabhu at his birthplace in Ekachakra holy name. Now [that you have appeared] everyone has suddenly become a *vaiṣṇava* by hearing the pure holy name. O Lord! If you wanted to take away my responsibilities in such a manner, why give them to me in the first place?”

*nityānanda pade āśa, kare hare-kṛṣṇa dāsa
deha more nija pada-chāyā
yadi janma haya pūna, caitanya nitāi guṇa
gāi yena hena kara dayā*

Hare Krishna Das submits a plea at the lotus feet of Nityananda, “O Nitai! Give me the cooling shade of your feet. If I ever take birth again, let your mercy be upon me even in that life so that I will always sing the glories of Chaitanya and Nitai.” 🙏

— *Vaiṣṇava Padāvalī*, fourth edition, April 2010. Compiled and edited by Hare Krishna Mukhopadhyay. Published by Shishu Sahitya Sansad Pvt. Ltd., Kolkata.

