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Mahābhārata



RAMANUJACHARYA AND HIS DISCIPLES

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Ramanujacharya was a great ācārya of the Sri Vaishnava *sampradāya*. His spiritual master gave him a mantra, and instructed, “My dear boy, chant this mantra silently. Nobody should hear it.”

Ramanuja asked, “What is the effect of this mantra?”

He said, “By chanting this mantra you’ll get liberation.”

So Ramanujacharya immediately went out, and in a big public meeting he said, “You should chant this mantra. You will all be liberated.” [laughter]

Later, he came back to his spiritual master. His spiritual master was very angry, “I told you that you should chant silently.”

Ramanuja said, “Yes, I have committed offense. So whatever punishment you like, you can give me. But because you told me that this mantra will liberate, I have given it publicly. Let everyone hear and be liberated. I have disobeyed your order. Let me go to hell. I don’t mind. I am prepared. But if by chanting this mantra, if anyone is liberated, then let it be publicly distributed.”

His spiritual master then embraced him: “You are greater than me.”

So if a mantra has such power, why it should be secret? It should be distributed. People are suffering. So Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, “Chant this Hare Krishna mantra. Anyone who hears it, even the birds and beasts will be liberated.” (Room Conversation, 11 September 1969.) 🙏

THE NINTH STAGE OF SEPARATION

The medieval poet Madhava Das

Suhinī Rāga

This song is about the ninth stage of separation, technically known as jaḍatā, which refers to inertia and lack of knowledge of the external surroundings. Jaḍatā is the penultimate stage of separation before the tenth and final stage named mṛtyu, where a person afflicted by separation gives up their body.

*tejala guru-kula-gaurava lāja
tejala gṛha gṛha-patika-samāja*

[A messenger conveys the condition of Srimati Radharani to Krishna], “She has given up all pride of being born in a high family. She has given up her home, her so-called husband and the general society.”



Unknown artist

Radha has given up her home, her residence, her ornaments and her desire to eat and drink

tejala loka nagara ghara vasati
tejala bhūṣaṇa aśana rasa-pirīti

“She has given up her home, her village, her residence. She has given up her ornaments and her desire to eat and drink.”

tejala hr̥ṣika-karaṇa abhilāṣa
tejala vadane amiyāmaya bhāṣa

“She has given up the desire to decorate herself. She has given up her sweet nectarean talks.”

tejala nayane nimīṣa avirāma
tejala kiśalaya-śayanaka nāma

“She has stopped blinking her eyes. She has given up the desire of sleeping on a soft creeper bed.”

śuna śuna vajara-kaṭhina pitavāsa
tejala aba dhani jīvana-āśa

“Hear me! Hear me! O Pitavasa (Krishna), whose heart is harder than a thunderbolt! She has now given up even her desire to live.”



Unknown artist

Virahini Radha

tejala virahiṇī sabahuṃ geyāna
navamī daśā sabhe karu anumāna

“Virahini Radha has now given up all knowledge of external behavior. Everyone thinks that it is navamī daśā, the ninth stage of separation.”

aba yadi yāi karaha avasāda
mādhava tohāri caraṇa dhari kām̐da

“If at this stage you exhibit lack of enthusiasm to go and meet her, then I, Madhava Das, will hold your feet and keep crying [until you agree to go and meet her].”

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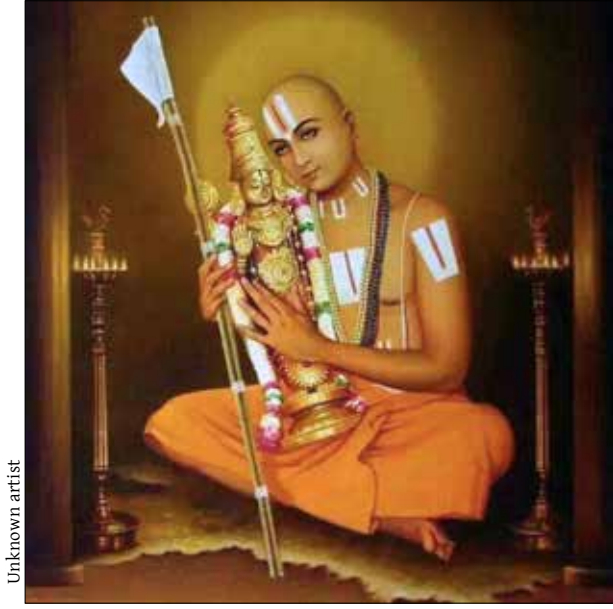
VALUABLE INSTRUCTIONS BY SRI RAMANUJACHARYA

Selections from Prapannāmṛtam, Chapter 65

Prapannāmṛtam is a Sanskrit book in the Sri Vaishnava line written by Anantacharya, a descendant of Andhrapurna, who in turn was a disciple and personal servant of Srila Ramanujacharya. It gives biographies and teachings of various saints in their line up to and including Ramanuja. Prapannāmṛtam was often quoted by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Prabhupada and Srila A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada in their writings.

yā prītir āsīt satataṃ bhagavan-nāma-kīrtane
sā syāt prītir hi tad-bhakta-nāma-saṅkīrtane ca vaḥ

Whatever love you have for chanting the names of the Lord, may you have the same love for chanting the names of the devotees of the Lord. (Text 29)



Unknown artist

Ramanujacharya and the deity Lord Varadaraja

*kāraṇaṁ bhagavat-prāp̄ter mahā-bhāgavatāśrayaḥ
iti matvā dṛḍhaṁ teṣāṁ ājñayā vartayet sadā*

The root cause of attainment of the Lord is the complete shelter of a *mahā-bhāgavata* devotee. Understanding this well, one should always follow the orders of such *mahā-bhāgavata* devotees. (30)

*nāhūyed eka-vacanān mahā-bhāgavatān janān
pūrvāñjalim vaiṣṇavānām dṛṣṭa-mātre ca kārayet*

Never address the *mahā-bhāgavatas* using singular case. As soon as one sees such *mahā-bhāgavatas*, one should fold one's hands in the mood of offering obeisances. (33)

[Translator's Note: In the Sanskrit language, a person is usually addressed in singular case. For example, if a person named Devadatta arrives in front of us, we may say *bho devadatta!* — “O Devadatta!” However, if the person named Devadatta is a *mahā-bhāgavata*, then Sri Ramanujacharya instructs us that we should address them in plural case “*bho devadattāḥ!*” — “O Revered Devadatta!” Plural case in Sanskrit denotes respect.]

*vaiṣṇavāgamaṇaṁ śrutvā gacched abhimukhaṁ tadā
sākaṁ gacchet kiyaḍ dūraṁ bhaktyā teṣāṁ vinirgame*

As soon as one hears of the arrival of a *vaiṣṇava* at one's home, one should immediately walk out and welcome them. Whenever a *vaiṣṇava* departs from one's home, one should walk for a few steps along with them. (39)

*yadi praṇamate pūrvam dāso 'ham iti vaiṣṇavaḥ
anādare kṛte tasminn apacāro mahān bhavet*

If a *vaiṣṇava* approaches you, offers obeisances, saying, “I am your servant,” and if you disregard them, then it will lead to a grave offense. (49)

*sadā śrī-vaiṣṇavair dattaṁ prasādaṁ viṣṇu-sannidhau
upavāsādi-niyama-yukto 'ham iti na tyajet*

Whenever one is offered *prasāda* of the Lord in front of the deity by a *vaiṣṇava*, one should never reject it, thinking, “I am currently fasting.” (61)

*sannidhau vaiṣṇavānām ca sva-guṇān naiva kīrtayet
śrī-vaiṣṇavānām sannidhye nānyaṁ paribhavej janām*

In front of the *vaiṣṇavas*, one should never glorify oneself. One should not offer respects to a non-devotee in front of the *vaiṣṇavas*. (63)

*śrī-vaiṣṇavānām cihnāni dhṛtvāpi viṣayāturaiḥ
taiḥ sārddhaṁ vañcaka-janaiḥ saha-vāsaṁ na kārayet*

Even if hypocrites who are fond of material enjoyment put on the marks and symbols of a *vaiṣṇava*, one should still not live with them. (67)

*vaiṣṇavena tiraskāraḥ kṛto hi bhavatām yadi
apakāra-smṛtiṁ tasmād amatvā maunato vaset*

If you are ever insulted by a *vaiṣṇava*, then keep quiet without harboring any ill-feelings. (74)

*dharmād apetaṁ yat karma yadyapi syān mahā-phalam
na tat seveta medhāvī na hi tad hitam ucyate*



Unknown artist

Srila Ramanujacharya



Unknown artist

Srila Ramanujacharya

An intelligent person never engages in any act devoid of dharma, even if such an act may give a so-called great benefit. Such fruits obtained by such acts can never be called beneficial in any way. (76)

*nānarpitam tu haraye kadācid api bhakṣayet
puṣpa-candana-tāmbūla-vastrodaka-phalādikam*

Never consume or partake of anything that is not offered to Lord Hari. This includes flowers, sandalwood paste, betelnut, clothes, water, fruit, etc. (77)

*śrīmad-bhāgavatārcaṇam bhagavataḥ pūjā-vidher uttamam
śrī-viṣṇor avamānanād gurutarām śrī-vaiṣṇavallaṅghanam
tīrthād acyuta-pādajād gurutarām tīrtham tadīyāṅghrijam
tasmān nityam atandrito bhava satām teṣām samārādhane*

The topmost form of worshiping the Supreme Lord is the worship of his pure devotee. More dangerous than disrespecting Lord Vishnu is to disrespect a *vaiṣṇava*. More potent than the water that washed the Lord's feet is the water that has washed his dear devotee's lotus feet. Therefore, you should carefully and sincerely serve the *vaiṣṇavas*. (86)

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Ślokāmṛta

CONTROL OF SPEECH

Mahābhārata, Udyoga-parva, 36.12

*avyāhṛtam vyāhṛtāc chreya āhuḥ
satyam vaded vyāhṛtam tad dvitīyam
priyam vaded vyāhṛtam tat tṛtīyam
dharmyam vaded vyāhṛtam tac caturtham*

The first level of controlled speech is to remain silent rather than speaking nonsense. [If at all speech is needed, then] the second level is to speak only the truth. The third level is to also speak in a pleasing manner, and the fourth level is to also exclusively speak that which is based on the principles of dharma.

— Translated from *Mahābhāratam* with the commentary of Nilakantha. Edited by Pandit Ramchandra Shastri Kinjawadekar. Printed at Chitrashala Press, Sadashiv Peth, Pune, India. 1929 A.D.



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