

ŚRĪ MAHĀNET

Since the beginning of the Millennium

May 2018



Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada

We don't use the word mystic. Our reality is God realization, which occurs when we come to the spiritual platform. As long as we have a bodily concept of life, our understanding is sense gratification, because the body is made of senses. When we progress from the bodily platform and we see the mind as the center of sense activity, we take the mind as the final stage of realization. That is the mental platform. From the mental platform we may come to the intellectual platform, and from the intellectual platform we can rise to the transcendental platform.

Finally we can rise above even the transcendental platform and come to the mature, spiritual platform. These are the stages of God realization. However, in this age, because people are so fallen, the *sastras* [scriptures] give the special recommendation that people come directly to the spiritual platform by chanting the holy names of God: Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare. Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare. If we cultivate this practice on the spiritual platform, then immediately we can realize our spiritual identity.

From Srila Prabhupada's
Science of Self Realization

ŚRĪ ŚRĪ PRAPANNA-JIVANAMRTAM

by Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣhaka Śrīdhara

Deva Goswāmī Mahārāja

Verse 2.3-4

tadatmya-yatharthyam smrtau –

*ahankrtir ma-karah syan, na-karas tan nisedhakah
tasmāt tu namasa ksetri-, svatantryam pratisidhyate
bhagavat-paratanthro 'sau, tad ayattatma-jivanah
tasmāt sva-samarthyā-vidhim, tyajet sarvam asesatah*

Padma-uttara-khanda

The cause of the tangible reality of surrender is expounded in the Standard Codes of Religion (*Smṛti*) –

"The syllable *ma* means 'self-asserting ego' (the misconception of considering oneself to be a 'doer'), and the syllable *na* indicates its prevention. Thus, the act of offering obeisances (*namah*) nullifies the offerer's independence. The soul is naturally subordinate to the Almighty, his intrinsic nature and innate function being servitude to the Supreme Lord. Therefore, all actions performed thinking, 'I am the doer,' should be utterly abandoned." -- *Padma Purana*

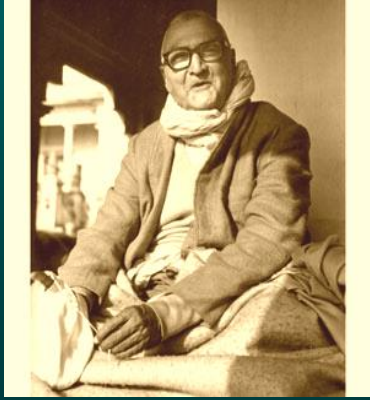


Namaste

WORDS OF OUR GUARDIANS

Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī Mahārāja
from *The Search For Sri Krishna – Reality The Beautiful*

DEVOTION MIXED WITH DESIRES



Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, “This is superficial; go deeper.” Of course, it may be thought that actual theistic life begins from here, giving up the special, local purpose, and acting for a universal purpose, as already ordered and programmed in the *Vedas* and *Upanisads*. But Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, “This is superficial; go deeper.” Then, Ramananda Raya said, *krsne karmarpana—sarva-sadhya-sara*: “To offer the results of one’s activities to Krishna is the essence of all perfection.” In *varnasrama dharma*, it is the fashion that people are generally engaged in external

activities and do not care to give up the fruits of their action. Even if they do, they have no direct consciousness of Visnu or Krishna. They worship the goddess Durga, perform the *Sraddha* funeral ceremony and execute so many other religious practices. Indirectly, it is ultimately connected with Vishnu. They may or may not know how, but the link is there. That is the general conception of *varnasrama*, but here, Ramananda says that it will be better to have direct consciousness that Krishna is the authority. All the results of whatever we do within the *varnasrama* social system must be given to Krishna. If we perform all our physical, social, national and spiritual activities in Krishna

**Srila Bhakti Rakshak
Sridhar Deva Goswami
Maharaj**

“So, nothing about Krishna - His name, form, qualities, or pastimes - can be touched by our physical or mental senses. But when we have a serving attitude, He comes down to us of His own accord.”

consciousness, then we can approach the fulfillment of our goal in life. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said “This is superficial; go deeper.” Then Ramananda Raya revealed new light, quoting the *Bhagavad-gita* (18.66): *sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja*, “Give up all your duties, and just surrender to Me.” We must be particular with the object of life, not the external activities of *varnasrama*. Less importance should be given to the form of our activity; whether I am a king, a *brahmana* intellectual, or a worker does not matter. We may think, “I have this sort of duty, I have that sort of duty,” but that does not matter very much. We must have no attachment for that. The king may leave his kingdom and take to a *brahmanical* life of renunciation and austerity. A *sudra* may give up his labor, become a beggar, and chant the name of Krishna. A *brahmana* may give up his performance of

sacrifice and become a mendicant. So, we are to be particular about the aim of life, not the form of our duty. We must exclusively devote ourselves to the cause of the Lord, ignoring our present paraphernalia and duty.

KNOWLEDGE AND DEVOTION

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, “This is also superficial; go ahead—deeper.” Then, Ramananda Raya explained *jñāna-misra bhakti*, devotional service mixed with knowledge, by quoting from the *Bhagavad-gita* (18.54) where Krishna says:

*brahma-bhutah prasannatma
na socati na kanksati
samah sarvesu bhutesu
mad-bhaktim labhate param*

One who has come to the stage of identifying himself with spirit above

matter has nothing to do with this mundane world. Any loss or gain in this mundane world is of no use to him. He is spirit; his prospect is in the world of soul, and he has nothing to do with this material world, whether it is laudable or blamable. He is already settled in the consciousness that he is soul proper and has nothing to do with matter, so within himself he feels satisfaction. He is *atmarama*: self-content; he neither mourns, nor aspires for anything. If something is lost, does he mourn? No. He thinks, “This is nothing; it is only matter.” And when something is gained, he is not overly cheerful, because it is only matter; it is unnecessary and unimportant. Now true devotional service can begin. His soul can begin living in the spiritual plane, with a pure serving attitude, unmixed with any mundane aspiration. When one attains the spiritual platform, he gets the opportunity to practice a higher type

of service. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, “This is also superficial. Such a person is only on the verge of devotional service; he has no substantial touch of devotion. He has not entered the domain of *bhakti*; he is just waiting in the marginal position, at the door. He may attain *bhakti*, but he has not yet achieved it. His negative forces are finished, but still, he is just at the door; he has not yet entered. He may enter; he may not enter. From there, if he gets anything, it will be pure, but he is still at the door.

BEYOND SPIRIT, “GO DEEPER”

Ramananda Raya then said, *jñane prayasam udapasya namanta eva*: “It is a very difficult thing to cross the charm of knowledge.” We think, “I want to understand everything first, and then I shall act.” Calculation and an underlying

suspicion is there. Before we act, we want to know everything fully; only then will we risk our capital. The ego, the “I” is very strong, and he wants to have an account of his loss and gain. He thinks, “I am the master. The key is in my hand, I want to test everything, I want to know it all. I know what is good for me.” So, we think ourselves masters, not servants, and from the position of a master we make our inquiry.

But this calculating mentality must be given up if we at all want to enter into the domain of the Lord, where everything is superior to us. No one there will care to come to us with an explanation, thinking that we are their master. They will not reassure us by saying, “Yes, there will be no loss; your gain will be big.”

DIVINE INSTRUCTION

Srila Bhakti Sundara Govinda Deva Goswami Maharaja
from “Revealed Truth”

OFFERING EVERYTHING TO THE LORD

Srila Narottam Thakur has explained how we can properly practice this,

‘kama’ krsna-karmarpane, ‘krodha’ bhakta-dvesi jane ‘lobha’ sadhu-sange hari-katha ‘moha’ ista-labha vine, ‘mada’ krsna-guna-gane niyukta kariba yatha tatha

(*Prema-bhakti-chandrika*: 2.10)

‘Kama’ Krsna-karmarpane, if you have many desires in your mind then you can offer the things you desire to Krsna before you take them. *‘Krodha’ bhakta-dvesi jane*, if you feel angry then you can use your anger to check persons who are inauspicious and envious of the devotees. *‘Lobha’ sadhu-sange Hari-katha*, you can engage your greed in hearing the glories and pastimes of the Lord from the *sadhu*. *‘Mada’ Krsna-guna-gane*, you can

engage your desire for intoxication in madly glorifying the Lord and His devotees. *‘Moha’ ista-labha vine*, if you have not connected with your worshippable Master then you can try to realize why that is and can express your hankering in a bewildered way like Raghunath Das Goswami.

In this way Srila Narottam Thakur advises us how to engage our internal enemies in the service of Krsna. Srila Narottam Thakur’s advice shows us that we all have desires that we are suffering from,



Srila Bhakti Sundara
Govinda Deva Goswami
Maharaja

but if we engage them strongly in the service of *Guru-Vaisnava* and *Bhagavan* with our full energy then they will be automatically controlled. So everything we struggle with in our life can be good if we use it properly for the service of Krsna. This is our hope. When our enemies—lust, anger, greed, etc.—will come to us we can invite them in, “Come here and pay *dandavat pranam* to the Deity! You are already coming, so come, and offer yourself to the Deity.”

The practicing procedure of bhakti-yoga is very sweet and finally,

*bhidyate hrdaya-granthis chhidyante sarva-samsayah
ksiyante chasya karmani mayi drste 'khilatmani*

(*Srimad-Bhagavatam*: 11.20.30)

“All of the material desires in our hearts will be removed, all of our doubts will be finished and we will engage ourselves exclusively in the Lord’s service, seeing Him everywhere.”

illusion to think it is mundane or useless and renounce it. Rather, we must live without attachment to anything and relate everything to the Lord, feeling that the Lord is the actual proprietor of everything and we are the servitors of everything that belongs to Him.”

A genuine devotee has no existence where Krsna is not present. A devotee will always be connected with transcendental matters through the Lord’s service and will never be involved in anything material. A devotee may live in the mundane environment but he will take each step forward in his life thinking, “Just now I may not have full realization of the transcendental world but I am a natural member of that world and my real property exists there. So I can proceed from a very low position within the illusory environment to a very high level in the transcendental environment by living always in remembrance of that plane and my service there.”

Through Krsna consciousness we can change all material things into spiritual matters and feel the

Such *Bhagavat-darsan*, divine vision of the Lord and His service, is both very easy and very rare to attain. *Tad dure tad v antike* (*Sri Isopanisad*: 5), “The Lord is very far from us if we are not surrendered or dedicated. But the Lord is very near to us if we are surrendered and dedicated.”

THE ACTUAL PROPRIETOR OF EVERYTHING

Srila Saraswati Thakur understood everything about the position of the conditioned souls. He presented these teachings of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and Srila Rupa Goswami Prabhu in a very condensed form to make the essential nature of transcendental service very clear to us. He wrote,

*sri hari-sevaya yaha anukula,
visaya baliya tyage haya bhula
'asakti-rahita,' 'sambandha-sahita,'
visaya-samuha sakali 'madhava'*

“If any apparently material thing or desire can be connected with the Lord through devotion, or is favorable for His service, then it is a mistaken

Lord’s presence everywhere within the material world. With Krsna consciousness and the divine remnants of the Lord (*prasadam*) everyone can cross over the illusory environment.

THE PURITY OF OUR MOOD

Srila Rupa Goswami Prabhu’s advice to be detached from the mundane is very important for us. We must always try to honor the transcendental form of everything - of the Deity, of the devotees, of the Lord’s *prasadam*, etc. in a detached mood. We may lead any lifestyle, we may have a family life, a student life, a master’s life, any sort of life, but we must not be too attached to that. Even if we are a family man we will have no difficulty with our family maintenance if we think that our family is a spiritual family. If we think in that way no difficulty will come to us. Even if we lose everything materially, still there is no real loss for us because we can always engage ourselves in the service of Krsna, no matter what our material condition is, through proper consciousness.

SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE

Srila Bhakti Nirmal Acharya Maharaja
from "Guidance" { Volume 1 }

The Four Regulative Principles

From a lecture in June 2010

Question: *To take initiation, we must follow the four regulative principles, but some people can be afraid to take initiation because they know they may fall down, break, or not follow the regulative principles. What advice could you give us?*

You should not force anybody but should give them advice, tell them, "You should follow the instruction. Avoid what is not good." *Dyūta, pāna, striya, sūnā* (gambling, intoxication, illicit sex, animal-eating) are the four types of bad things where Kali always stays. 'Kali' means *kalau*, always fighting.

Kali is a very bad age, *Kaler doṣa-nidhi* (Kali has many faults), but

we are fortunate that we have got this life: Mahāprabhu, the Lord Himself, came in this age, and we have got a bona fide Guru under the guidance of Mahāprabhu. At the same time, you must follow these rules. It is not a question of not chanting or not taking initiation, the question is that if you do not stop these four - *dyūta, pāna, striya, sūnā* - it is bad for *you*, and *you* can be attacked by Kali Mahārāj. You can tell it to them in this way, and they should slowly, slowly avoid it. Kali Mahārāj always stays in these four places, so you should preach that we should avoid these places.

If you do not avoid that, it is like somebody has a gastric disease, acidity, and they take antacid (the medicine), but also take so much chilli, sour food, etc., then how will they get relief? They must think both ways—either you drink milk or you drink whiskey. Which do you choose? You cannot drink both. You must drink milk and avoid these things. Śrīla Prabhupād said, "*Kupatha varjan korte habe āṛ supatha grahaṇ korte habe* (you should reject



Srila Bhakti Nirmal Acharya Maharaja

It is not a question of not chanting or not taking initiation, the question is that if you do not stop these four—dyūta, pāna, striya, sūnā—it is bad for you, and you can be attacked by Kali Mahārāj.

unhealthy things, and take wholesome, healthy things)." It means take *prasādam* and avoid these things; otherwise if you chant the Holy Name and take these kinds of things, it will not give any cure in your life.

I saw also many people in India, Bengal, who had taken initiation from *Gurudev*. *Gurudev* asked them directly, "Will you obey the four rules and regulations?" They promised to follow, but in India people can actually follow only three regulative principles, and the only one they cannot follow is giving up *māch*, fish. They can leave meat, but they cannot leave fish. So, some take the Holy Name, but after one-two years they leave everything, they cannot chant or practice any more. I saw this even in Param Guru Mahārāj's disciples—some do not follow the rules and regulations, and a few days, six months, or one year after taking initiation they put the beads away in some high place and the beads dry up, or get eaten by insects...

VAISNAVA CALENDAR for Sri Dham Navadwip, India

May 2018

1. (Tue) Krishna Pratipad. Disappearance of Tridandi Swami Srimad Bhakti Saranga Goswami Maharaj.
5. (Sat) Krishna Panchami. Disappearance of Srila Ramananda Ray.
9. (Wed) Krishna Navami. Disappearance of Stripad Santosh Krishna Das Adhikari Prabhu.
11. (Fri) Krishna Ekadashi. **Apara Ekadashi. Fast.**
12. (Sat) Krishna Dvadashi. Paran between 5:03 and 9:23 a.m. Appearance of Srila Vrindavan Das Thakur.

PURUSHOTTAM

25. (Fri) Gaura Ekadashi. **Padmini Ekadashi. Fast.**
26. (Sat) Gaura Dvadashi. Paran between 4:57 and 9:22 a.m.

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