

Week 27 – Members’ Section

Sri Namamrita - The Nectar of the Holy Name

Of all the holy names of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the name “Kṛiṣṇa” is the most powerful

Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī has concluded the Nineteenth Chapter of the Tenth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam by pointing out five particular excellences of Lord Kṛiṣṇa The fourth excellence of Lord Kṛiṣṇa’s appearance concerns the glories of His name. It is stated in the Vedic literature that by chanting the different names of Lord Viṣṇu a thousand times, one may be bestowed with the same benefits as by thrice chanting the holy name of Lord Rāma. And by chanting the holy name of Lord Kṛiṣṇa only once, one receives the same benefit. In other words, of all the holy names of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, including Viṣṇu and Rāma, the holy name of Kṛiṣṇa is the most powerful. The Vedic literature therefore specifically stresses the chanting of the holy name of Kṛiṣṇa: Hare Kṛiṣṇa, Hare Kṛiṣṇa, Kṛiṣṇa Kṛiṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Lord Caitanya introduced this chanting of the holy name of Kṛiṣṇa in this age, thus making liberation more easily obtainable than in other ages. In other words, Lord Kṛiṣṇa is more excellent than His other incarnations, although all of them are equally the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Kṛiṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Passage for Discussion

For a Happy Life – Follow the Rules from the Vedic Scriptures

yaḥ śāstra-vidhim utsṛjya/ vartate kāma-kārataḥ na sa siddhim avāpnoti/ na sukhaṁ na parāṁ gatim

TRANSLATION

But he who discards scriptural injunctions and acts according to his own whims attains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the supreme destination.

PURPORT

As described before, the śāstra-vidhim, or the direction of the śāstra, is given to the different castes and orders of human society. Everyone is expected to follow these rules and regulations. If one does not follow them and acts whimsically according to his lust, greed and desire, then he never will be perfect in his life. In other words, a man may theoretically know all these things, but if he does not apply them in his own life, then he is to be known as the lowest of mankind. In the human form of life, a living entity is expected to be sane and to follow the regulations given for elevating his life to the highest platform, but if he does not follow them, then he degrades himself. But even if he follows the rules and regulations and moral principles and ultimately does not come to the stage of understanding the Supreme

Lord, then all his knowledge becomes spoiled. Therefore one should gradually raise himself to the platform of Kṛiṣṇa consciousness and devotional service; it is then and there that he can attain the highest perfectional stage, not otherwise.

The word *kāma-cāraṭaḥ* is very significant. A person who knowingly violates the rules acts in lust. He knows that this is forbidden, still he acts. This is called acting whimsically. He knows that this should be done, but still he does not do it; therefore he is called whimsical. Such persons are destined to be condemned by the Supreme Lord. Such persons cannot have the perfection which is meant for the human life. The human life is especially meant for purifying one's existence, and one who does not follow the rules and regulations cannot purify himself, nor can he attain the real stage of happiness.

Bhagavad-gīta 16.24

tasmāc chāstraṁ pramāṇam te/ kāryākārya-vyavasthitau jñātvā śāstra-vidhānoktaim/ karma kartum ihārhasi

TRANSLATION

One should understand what is duty and what is not duty by the regulations of the scriptures. Knowing such rules and regulations, one should act so that he may gradually be elevated.

PURPORT

As stated in the Fifteenth Chapter, all the rules and regulations of the Vedas are meant for knowing Kṛiṣṇa. If one understands Krishna from the Bhagavad-gītā and becomes situated in Krishna consciousness, engaging himself in devotional service, he has reached the highest perfection of knowledge offered by the Vedic literature. Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu made this process very easy: He asked people simply to chant Hare Kṛiṣṇa, Hare Krishna, Kṛiṣṇa Kṛiṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare and to engage in the devotional service of the Lord and eat the remnants of foodstuff offered to the Deity. One who is directly engaged in all these devotional activities is to be understood as having studied all Vedic literature. He has come to the conclusion perfectly. Of course, for the ordinary persons who are not in Krishna consciousness or who are not engaged in devotional service, what is to be done and what is not to be done must be decided by the injunctions of the Vedas. One should act accordingly, without argument. That is called following the principles of śāstra, or scripture. Śāstra is without the four principal defects that are visible in the conditioned soul: imperfect senses, the propensity for cheating, certainty of committing mistakes, and certainty of being illusioned. These four principal defects in conditioned life disqualify one from putting forth rules and regulations. Therefore, the rules and regulations as described in the śāstra-being above these defects-are accepted without alteration by all great saints, ācāryas, and great souls.

In India there are many parties of spiritual understanding, generally classified as two: the impersonalist and the personalist. Both of them, however, lead their lives according to the principles of the Vedas. Without following the principles of the scriptures, one cannot elevate himself to the perfectional stage. One who actually, therefore, understands the purport of the śāstras is considered fortunate.

In human society, aversion to the principles of understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the cause of all falldowns. That is the greatest offense of human life. Therefore, māyā, the material energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is always giving us trouble in the shape of the threefold miseries. This material energy is constituted of the three modes of material nature. One has to raise himself at least to the mode of goodness before the path to understanding the Supreme Lord can be opened. Without raising oneself to the standard of the mode of goodness, one remains in ignorance and passion, which are the cause of demoniac life. Those in the modes of passion and ignorance deride the scriptures, deride the holy man, and deride the proper understanding of the spiritual master, and they do not care for the regulations of the scriptures. In spite of hearing the glories of devotional service, they are not attracted. Thus they manufacture their own way of elevation. These are some of the defects of human society, which lead to the demoniac status of life. If, however, one is able to be guided by a proper and bona fide spiritual master, who can lead one to the path of elevation, to the higher stage, then one's life becomes successful.

Discovery:

1. What is the purpose of following the rules and regulations given in the Vedas?
2. What is the danger we face if we do not follow them?
3. Why should we accept the rules and regulations only from Shastra?
4. When is a person acting whimsically?
5. What are the two classifications of spiritualists?

Understanding:

1. What is the highest perfectional stage one can achieve in spiritual life?
2. How did Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu say we could reach this state very easily?
3. Why do people fall down in their proper understanding of the Absolute truth?
4. How do people behave in the modes of passion and ignorance?
5. Why do we undergo miseries in material life?

Application:

1. Discuss any one rule that you are following in Krishna consciousness and how it has helped you to elevate your consciousness.

Preaching is the Essence

Out of compassion for living entities, the sādhu preaches

The symptoms of a sādhu are that he is tolerant, merciful and friendly to all living entities. He has no enemies, he is peaceful, he abides by the scriptures, and all his characteristics are sublime.

A sādhu, as described above, is a devotee of the Lord. His concern, therefore, is to enlighten people in devotional service to the Lord. That is his mercy. He knows that without devotional service to the Lord, human life is spoiled. A devotee travels all over the country, from door to door, preaching, “Be Kṛiṣṇa conscious. Be a devotee of Lord Kṛiṣṇa. Don’t spoil your life in simply fulfilling your animal propensities. Human life is meant for self-realization, or Kṛiṣṇa consciousness.” These are the preachings of a sādhu. He is not satisfied with his own liberation. He always thinks about others. He is the most compassionate personality towards all the fallen souls. One of his qualifications, therefore, is kārūṇika, great mercy to the fallen souls.... He is merciful because he is the well-wisher of all living entities. He is not only a well-wisher of human society, but a well-wisher of animal society as well. It is said here, sarva-dehinām, which indicates all living entities who have accepted a material body. Not only does the human being have a material body, but other living entities, such as cats and dogs, also have material bodies. The devotee of the Lord is merciful to everyone—the cats, dogs, trees, etc. He treats all living entities in such a way that they can ultimately get salvation from this material entanglement.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.25.21