

Śrīmad-Bhāgvatam – Canto 6

(Q & A Format)



Atonement must be according to the gravity of one's sinful acts.

The dharma-sashtras like the Manu-samhita prescribe that a man who has committed murder should be hanged and his own life sacrificed in atonement. Previously this system was followed all over the world, but since people are becoming atheists, they are stopping



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capital punishment. This is not wise. Herein it is said that a physician who knows how to diagnose a disease prescribes medicine accordingly. If the disease is very serious, the medicine must be strong. The weight of a murderer's sin is very great, and therefore according to Manu-samhita a murderer must be killed. By killing a murderer the government shows mercy to him because if a murderer is not killed in this life, he will be killed and forced to suffer many times in future lives. Since people do not know about the next life and the intricate workings of nature, they manufacture their own laws, but they should properly consult the established injunctions of the sashtras and act accordingly. In India even today the Hindu community often takes advice from expert scholars regarding how to counteract sinful activities. In Christianity also there is a process of confession and atonement. Therefore atonement is required, and atonement must be undergone according to the gravity of one's sinful acts.

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), "Srimad Bhagavatam", Sixth Canto, Chapter 01 – Text 08



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Glorification of the Lord eradicates the dirt from one's heart completely.

“The ritualistic ceremonies of atonement recommended in the religious scriptures are insufficient to cleanse the heart absolutely because after atonement one's mind again runs toward material activities. Consequently, for one who wants liberation from the fruitive reactions of material activities, the chanting of the Hare Krishna mantra, or glorification of the name, fame and pastimes of the Lord, is recommended as the most perfect process of atonement because such chanting eradicates the dirt from one's heart completely.

Srimad-Bhagavatam (1.2.17):

*“srnvatam sva-kathah Krishnah punya-sravana-kirtanah
hrdy antah-stho hy abhadrani vidhunoti suhrt satam”*

“Sri Krishna, the Personality of Godhead, who is the Paramatma [Supersoul] in everyone's heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who relishes His messages, which are in themselves virtuous when properly heard and chanted.” It is the special mercy of the Supreme Lord that as soon as He knows that one is glorifying His name, fame and attributes, He personally helps cleanse the dirt from one's heart. Therefore simply by such glorification one not only becomes purified, but also achieves the results of pious activities (punya-sravana-kirtana). Punya-sravana-kirtana refers to the process of devotional service. Even if one does not understand the meaning of the Lord's name, pastimes or attributes, one is purified simply by hearing or chanting of them. Such purification is called sattva-bhavana.

One's main purpose in human life should be to purify his existence and achieve liberation. As long as one has a material body, one is understood to be impure. In such an impure, material condition, one cannot enjoy a truly blissful life, although everyone seeks it. Therefore Srimad-Bhagavatam (5.5.1) says, tapo divyam putraka yena sattvam suddhyet:



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one must perform tapasya, austerity, to purify his existence in order to come to the spiritual platform. The tapasya of chanting and glorifying the name, fame and attributes of the Lord is a very easy purifying process by which everyone can be happy. Therefore everyone who desires the ultimate cleansing of his heart must adopt this process. Other processes, such as karma, jnana and yoga, cannot cleanse the heart absolutely.”

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 02 – Text 12



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Chanting the name of the lord can alone free one from the reactions of all sinful life.

“Sri Krishna, the Personality of Godhead, who is the Paramatma [Supersoul] in everyone’s heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who relishes His messages, which are in themselves virtuous when properly heard and chanted.” It is the special mercy of the Supreme Lord that as soon as He knows that one is glorifying His name, fame and attributes, He personally helps cleanse the dirt from one’s heart.

Therefore simply by such glorification one not only becomes purified, but also achieves the results of pious activities (punya-sravana-kirtana). Punya-sravana-kirtana refers to the process of devotional service. Even if one does not understand the meaning of the Lord’s name, pastimes or attributes, one is purified simply by hearing or chanting of them. Such purification is called sattva-bhavana.

At the time of death, this Ajamila helplessly and very loudly chanted the holy name of the Lord, it was due to Ajamila’s glorifying the holy name of the Supreme Lord that he was not punishable. The Vishnudutas explained this as follows: “Simply by once chanting the holy name of Narayana, this brahmana has become free from the reactions of sinful life.

Indeed, he has been freed not only from the sins of this life, but from the sins of many, many thousands of other lives. He has already undergone true atonement for all his sinful actions. If one atones according to the directions of the sastras, one does not actually become free from sinful reactions, but if one chants the holy name of the Lord, even a glimpse of such chanting can immediately free one from all sins. Chanting the glories of the Lord’s holy name awakens all good fortune.

In Bhagavad-gita (8.5) it is stated:

*“anta-kale ca mam eva smaran muktva kalevaram
yah prayati sa mad-bhavam yati nasty atra samsayah”*



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If one remembers Krishna, Narayana, at the time of death, one is certainly eligible to return immediately home, back to Godhead.”

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 02 – Text 12, 13, Introduction



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The power of chanting the Hare Krishna mantra.

Fire will act, regardless of whether handled by an innocent child or by someone well aware of its power. For example, if a field of straw or dry grass is set a fire, either by an elderly man who knows the power of fire or by a child who does not, the grass will be burned to ashes. Similarly, one may or may not know the power of chanting the Hare Krishna mantra, but if one chants the holy name, he will become free from all sinful reactions. In the Western countries, where the Hare Krishna movement is spreading, learned scholars and other thoughtful men are realizing its effectiveness, the movement is turning hippies addicted to drugs into pure Vaisnav as who voluntarily become servants of Krishna and humanity. Even a few years ago, such hippies did not know the Hare Krishna mantra, but now they are chanting it and becoming pure Vaisnav as. Thus they are becoming free from all sinful activities, such as illicit sex, intoxication, meat-eating and gambling. This is practical proof of the effectiveness of the Hare Krishna movement. One may or may not know the value of chanting the Hare Krishna mantra, but if one somehow or other chants it, he will immediately be purified, just as one who takes a potent medicine will feel its effects, regardless of whether he takes it knowingly or unknowingly.

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 02 – Text 18 & 19



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Marriage between devotees.

The men of the higher classes—the brahmanas, ksatriyas and vaisyas—do not beget children in the wombs of lower-class women. Therefore the custom in Vedic society is to examine the horoscopes of a girl and boy being considered for marriage to see whether their combination is suitable. Vedic astrology reveals whether one has been born in the vipra-varna, ksatriya-varna, vaisya-varna or sudra-varna, according to the three qualities of material nature. This must be examined because a marriage between a boy of the vipra-varna and a girl of the sudra-varna is incompatible; married life would be miserable for both husband and wife. Consequently a boy should marry a girl of the same category. Of course, this is trai-gunya, a material calculation according to the Vedas, but if the boy and girl are devotees there need be no such considerations. A devotee is transcendental, and therefore in a marriage between devotees, the boy and girl form a very happy combination.

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 02 – Text 26



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Why change of names is essential at the time of initiation?

In the beginning of his life Ajamila was certainly very pure, and he associated with devotees and brahmanas; because of that pious activity, even though he was fallen, he was inspired to name his son Narayana. Certainly this was due to good counsel given from within by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As the Lord says in Bhagavad-gita (15.15), sarvasya caham hr̥di sannivisto mattah smrtir jnanam apohanam ca: “I am seated in everyone’s heart, and from Me come remembrance, knowledge and forgetfulness.” The Lord, who is situated in everyone’s heart, is so kind that if one has ever rendered service to Him, the Lord never forgets him. Thus the Lord, from within, gave Ajamila the opportunity to name his youngest son Narayana so that in affection he would constantly call “Narayana! Narayana!” and thus be saved from the most fearful and dangerous condition at the time of his death. Such is the mercy of Krishna. Guru-Krishna-prasade paya bhakti-lata-bija: by the mercy of the guru and Krishna, one receives the seed of bhakti. This association saves a devotee from the greatest fear. In our Krishna consciousness movement we therefore change a devotee’s name to a form that reminds him of Vishnu. If at the time of death the devotee can remember his own name, such as Krishnadasa or Govinda dasa, he can be saved from the greatest danger. Therefore the change of names at the time of initiation is essential. The Krishna consciousness movement is so meticulous that it gives one a good opportunity to remember Krishna somehow or other.

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 02 – Text 32



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Why Ajamila's chanting was inoffensive?

“Ajamila had named his son Narayana, and because he loved the boy very much, he would call him again and again. Although he was calling for his son, the name itself was powerful because the name Narayana is not different from the Supreme Lord Narayana. When Ajamila named his son Narayana, all the reactions of his sinful life were neutralized, and as he continued calling his son and thus chanting the holy name of Narayana thousands of times, he was actually unconsciously advancing in Krishna consciousness.

One may argue, “Since he was constantly chanting the name of Narayana, how was it possible for him to be associating with a prostitute and thinking of wine?” By his sinful actions he was bringing suffering upon himself again and again, and therefore one may say that his ultimate chanting of Narayana was the cause of his being freed. However, his chanting would then have been a nama-aparadha. Namno balad yasya hi papa-buddhih: one who continues to act sinfully and tries to neutralize his sins by chanting the holy name of the Lord is a nama-aparadhi, an offender to the holy name. In response it may be said that Ajamila's chanting was inoffensive because he did not chant the name of Narayana with the purpose of counteracting his sins. He did not know that he was addicted to sinful actions, nor did he know that his chanting of the name of Narayana was neutralizing them. Thus he did not commit a nama-aparadha, and his repeated chanting of the holy name of Narayana while calling his son may be called pure chanting.

Because of this pure chanting, Ajamila unconsciously accumulated the results of bhakti. Indeed, even his first utterance of the holy name was sufficient to nullify all the sinful reactions of his life. To cite a logical example, a fig tree does not immediately yield fruits, but in time the fruits are available. Similarly, Ajamila's devotional service grew little by little, and therefore although he committed very sinful acts, the reactions did not affect him. In the sastras it is said that if one chants the holy name of the Lord even once, the reactions of past, present or future sinful life do not affect him.



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To give another example, if one extracts the poison fangs of a serpent, this saves the serpent's future victims from poisonous effects, even if the serpent bites repeatedly. Similarly, if a devotee chants the holy name even once inoffensively, this protects him eternally. He need only wait for the results of the chanting to mature in due course of time.

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), "Srimad Bhagavatam", Sixth Canto, Chapter 02 – Text 49



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One who chants the holy name of the Lord constantly is guaranteed to return home.

At the time of death one is certainly bewildered because his bodily functions are in disorder. At that time, even one who throughout his life has practiced chanting the holy name of the Lord may not be able to chant the Hare Krishna mantra very distinctly. Nevertheless, such a person receives all the benefits of chanting the holy name. While the body is fit therefore, why should we not chant the holy name of the Lord loudly and distinctly? If one does so, it is quite possible that even at the time of death he will be properly able to chant the holy name of the Lord with love and faith. In conclusion, one who chants the holy name of the Lord constantly is guaranteed to return home, back to Godhead, without a doubt.

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 02 – Text 49



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(Q & A Format)



In the present day there are many sampradayas which are not bonafide.

In Bhagavad-gita Lord Krishna refers to bhagavata-dharma as the most confidential religious principle (sarva-guhyatamam, guhyad guhyataram). Krishna says to Arjuna, “Because you are My very dear friend, I am explaining to you the most confidential religion.” Sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja: “Give up all other duties and surrender unto Me.” One may ask, “If this principle is very rarely understood, what is the use of it?” In answer, Yamaraja states herein that this religious principle is understandable if one follows the parampara system of Lord Brahma, Lord Shiva, the four Kumaras and the other standard authorities. There are four lines of disciplic succession: one from Lord Brahma, one from Lord Shiva, one from Laksmi, the goddess of fortune, and one from the Kumaras. The disciplic succession from Lord Brahma is called the Brahma-sampradaya, the succession from Lord Shiva (Sambhu) is called the Rudra-sampradaya, the one from the goddess of fortune, Laksmiji, is called the Sri-sampradaya, and the one from the Kumaras is called the Kumara-sampradaya. One must take shelter of one of these four sampradayas in order to understand the most confidential religious system. In the Padma Purana it is said, sampradaya-vihina ye mantras te nisphala matah: if one does not follow the four recognized disciplic successions, his mantra or initiation is useless. In the present day there are many apasampradayas, or sampradayas which are not bona fide, which have no link to authorities like Lord Brahma, Lord Shiva, the Kumaras or Laksmi. People are misguided by such sampradayas. The sastras say that being initiated in such a sampradaya is a useless waste of time, for it will never enable one to understand the real religious principles.

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 03 – Text 21



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Sankirtana is more important than the vedic ritualistic ceremonies.

“Since one may easily achieve the highest success by chanting the holy name of the Lord, one may ask why there are so many Vedic ritualistic ceremonies and why people are attracted to them. As stated in Bhagavad-gita (15.15), vedais ca sarvair aham eva vedyah: the real purpose of studying the Vedas is to approach the lotus feet of Lord Krishna. Unfortunately, unintelligent people bewildered by the grandeur of Vedic yajnas want to see gorgeous sacrifices performed. They want Vedic mantras chanted and huge amounts of money spent for such ceremonies. Sometimes we have to observe the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies to please such unintelligent men.

Especially in this age of Kali, sankirtana alone is sufficient. If the members of our temples in the different parts of the world simply continue sankirtana before the Deity, especially before Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, they will remain perfect. There is no need of any other performances. Nevertheless, to keep oneself clean in habits and mind, Deity worship and other regulative principles are required. Srila Jiva Gosvami says that although sankirtana is sufficient for the perfection of life, the arcana, or worship of the Deity in the temple, must continue in order that the devotees may stay clean and pure. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura therefore recommended that one follow both processes simultaneously. We strictly follow his principle of performing Deity worship and sankirtana along parallel lines.”

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 03 – Text 25



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Those who desire to eat meat may satisfy the demands of their tongues by eating lower animals.

By nature's arrangement, fruits and flowers are considered the food of insects and birds; grass and other legless living entities are meant to be the food of four-legged animals like cows and buffalo; animals that cannot use their front legs as hands are meant to be the food of animals like tigers, which have claws; and four-legged animals as well as food grains, are meant to be the food of human beings. These four-legged animals are those such as deer and goats, not cows, which are meant to be protected. Generally the men of the higher classes of society—the brahmanas, ksatriyas and vaisyas—do not eat meat. Sometimes ksatriyas go to the forest to kill animals like deer because they have to learn the art of killing, and sometimes they eat the animals also. Sudras, too, eat animals such as goats. Cows, however, are never meant to be killed or eaten by human beings. In every sastra, cow killing is vehemently condemned. Indeed, one who kills a cow must suffer for as many years as there are hairs on the body of a cow. Manu-samhita says, pravrttir esa bhutanam nivrttis tu maha-phala: we have many tendencies in this material world, but in human life one is meant to learn how to curb those tendencies. Those who desire to eat meat may satisfy the demands of their tongues by eating lower animals, but they should never kill cows, who are actually accepted as the mothers of human society because they supply milk. The sastra especially recommends, krsi-go-raksya: the vaisya section of humanity should arrange for the food of the entire society through agricultural activities and should give full protection to the cows, which are the most useful animals because they supply milk to human society.

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), "Srimad Bhagavatam", Sixth Canto, Chapter 04 – Text 09



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If one wants to return back to Godhead, one should voluntarily refrain from sex life.

“The Lord says in Bhagavad-gita (7.11), dharmaviruddho bhutesu kamo ‘smi: “I am sex that is not contrary to religious principles.”” Sexual intercourse ordained by the Supreme Personality of Godhead is dharma, a religious principle, but it is not intended for sense enjoyment. Indulgence in sense enjoyment through sexual intercourse is not allowed by the Vedic principles. One may follow the natural tendency for sex life only to beget children. Therefore the Lord told Daksa in this verse, “This girl is offered to you only for sex life to beget children, not for any other purpose. She is very fertile, and therefore you will be able to have as many children as you can beget.””

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura remarks in this connection that Daksa was given the facility for unlimited sexual intercourse. In Daksa’s previous life he was also known as Daksa, but in the course of performing sacrifices he offended Lord Shiva, and thus his head was replaced with that of a goat. Then Daksa gave up his life because of his degraded condition, but because he maintained the same unlimited sexual desires, he underwent austerities by which he satisfied the Supreme Lord, who then gave him unlimited potency for sexual intercourse.

It should be noted that although such a facility for sexual intercourse is achieved by the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, this facility is not offered to advanced devotees, who are free from material desires (anyabhilasita-sunyam). In this connection it may be noted that if the American boys and girls engaged in the Krishna consciousness movement want to advance in Krishna consciousness to achieve the supreme benefit of loving service to the Lord, they should refrain from indulging in this facility for sex life. Therefore we advise that one should at least refrain from illicit sex. Even if there are opportunities for sex life, one should voluntarily accept the limitation of having sex only for progeny, not for any other purpose. Kardama Muni was also given the facility for sex life, but he had only a slight desire for it.



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Therefore after begetting children in the womb of Devahuti, Kardama Muni became completely renounced. The purport is that if one wants to return home, back to Godhead, one should voluntarily refrain from sex life. Sex should be accepted only as much as needed, not unlimitedly. One should not think that Daksa received the favor of the Lord by receiving the facilities for unlimited sex. Later verses will reveal that Daksa again committed an offense, this time at the lotus feet of Narada. Therefore although sex life is the topmost enjoyment in the material world and although one may have an opportunity for sexual enjoyment by the grace of God, this entails a risk of committing offenses. Daksa was open to such offenses, and therefore, strictly speaking, he was not actually favored by the Supreme Lord. One should not seek the favor of the Lord for unlimited potency in sex life.”

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 04 – Text 52



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All the sastras advise nivritti-marga, or release from the materialistic way of life.

Bhagavad-gita (16.7) says, pravrttim ca nivrttim ca jana na vidur asurah: demons, who are less than human beings but are not called animals, do not know the meaning of pravrtti and nivrtti, work to be done and work not to be done. In the material world, every living entity has a desire to lord it over the material world as much as possible. This is called pravrtti-marga. All the sastras, however, advise nivrttimarga, or release from the materialistic way of life. Apart from the sastras of the Vedic civilization, which is the oldest of the world, other sastras agree on this point. For example, in the Buddhist sastras Lord Buddha advises that one achieve nirvana by giving up the materialistic way of life. In the Bible, which is also sastra, one will find the same advice: one should cease materialistic life and return to the kingdom of God. In any sastra one may examine, especially the Vedic sastra, the same advice is given: one should give up his materialistic life and return to his original, spiritual life. Sankaracarya also propounds the same conclusion. Brahma satyam jagan mithya: this material world or materialistic life is simply illusion, and therefore one should stop his illusory activities and come to the platform of Brahman.

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 05 – Text 20



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Duty of father is to give cultural education to his sons.

Prajapati Daksa sent his second group of sons to the same place where his previous sons had attained perfection. He did not hesitate to send his second group of sons to the same place, although they too might become victims of Narada's instructions. According to the Vedic culture, one should be trained in spiritual understanding as a brahmachari before entering household life to beget children. This is the Vedic system. Thus Prajapati Daksa sent his second group of sons for cultural improvement, despite the risk that because of the instructions of Narada they might become as intelligent as their older brothers. As a dutiful father, he did not hesitate to allow his sons to receive cultural instructions concerning the perfection of life; he depended upon them to choose whether to return home, back to Godhead, or to rot in this material world in various species of life. In all circumstances, the duty of the father is to give cultural education to his sons, who must later decide which way to go. Responsible fathers should not hinder their sons who are making cultural advancement in association with the Krishna consciousness movement. This is not a father's duty. The duty of a father is to give his son complete freedom to make his choice after becoming spiritually advanced by following the instructions of the spiritual master.

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), "Srimad Bhagavatam", Sixth Canto, Chapter 05 – Text 25



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Chanting of the Vedic mantras beginning with Omkara is directly chanting of Krishna's name.

Every Vedic mantra is called brahma because each mantra is preceded by the brahmaksara (aum or omkara). For example, om namo bhagavate vasudevaya. Lord Krishna says in Bhagavad-gita (7. 8), pranavah sarva-vedesu: “In all the Vedic mantras, I am represented by pranava, or omkara.” Thus chanting of the Vedic mantras beginning with omkara is directly chanting of Krishna's name. There is no difference. Whether one chants omkara or addresses the Lord as “Krishna,” the meaning is the same, but Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has recommended that in this age one chant the Hare Krishna mantra (harer nama eva kevalam). Although there is no difference between Hare Krishna and the Vedic mantras beginning with omkara, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the leader of the spiritual movement for this age, has recommended that one chant Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 05 – Text 26



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In material world a man suffers at every step, he will not cease his attempts to enjoy.

It is said that unless a woman becomes pregnant, she cannot understand the trouble of giving birth to a child. Bandhya ki bujhibe prasava-vedana. The word bandhya means a sterile woman. Such a woman cannot give birth to a child. How, then, can she perceive the pain of delivery? According to the philosophy of Prajapati Daksa, a woman should first become pregnant and then experience the pain of childbirth. Then, if she is intelligent, she will not want to be pregnant again. However, this is not a fact. Sex enjoyment is so strong that a woman becomes pregnant and suffers at the time of childbirth but she becomes pregnant again, despite her experience. According to Daksa's philosophy, one should become implicated in material enjoyment so that after experiencing the distress of such enjoyment, one will automatically renounce. Material nature, however, is so strong that although a man suffers at every step, he will not cease his attempts to enjoy (trpyanti neha krpana-bahu-dukhha-bhajah). Under the circumstances, unless one gets the association of a devotee like Narada Muni or his servant in the disciplic succession, one's dormant spirit of renunciation cannot be awakened. It is not a fact that because material enjoyment involves so many painful conditions one will automatically become detached. One needs the blessings of a devotee like Narada Muni. Then one can renounce his attachment for the material world. The young boys and girls of the Krishna consciousness movement have given up the spirit of material enjoyment not because of practice but by the mercy of Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and His servants.

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), "Srimad Bhagavatam", Sixth Canto, Chapter 05 – Text 41



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A society without Vedic laws and regulations will not be very helpful to humanity.?

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura says in this regard that when a president or king is sitting on his throne, he does not need to show respect to everyone who comes within his assembly, but he must show respect to superiors like his spiritual master, brahmanas and Vaisnavas. There are many examples of how he should act. When Lord Krishna was sitting on His throne and Narada fortunately entered His assembly, even Lord Krishna immediately stood up with His officers and ministers to offer respectful obeisances to Narada. Narada knew that Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and Krishna knew that Narada was His devotee, but although Krishna is the Supreme Lord and Narada is the Lord's devotee, the Lord observed the religious etiquette. Since Narada was a brahmachari, a brahmana and an exalted devotee, even Krishna, while acting as a king, offered His respectful obeisances unto Narada. Such is the conduct visible in the Vedic civilization. A civilization in which the people do not know how the representative of Narada and Krishna should be respected, how society should be formed and how one should advance in Krishna consciousness -a society concerned only with manufacturing new cars and new skyscrapers every year and then breaking them to pieces and making new ones—may be technologically advanced, but it is not a human civilization. A human civilization is advanced when its people follow the catur-varnya system, the system of four orders of life. There must be ideal, first-class men to act as advisors, second-class men to act as administrators, third-class men to produce food and protect cows, and fourth-class men who obey the three higher classes of society. One who does not follow the standard system of society should be considered a fifth-class man. A society without Vedic laws and regulations will not be very helpful to humanity. As stated in this verse, dharmam te na param viduh: such a society does not know the aim of life and the highest principle of religion.

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), "Srimad Bhagavatam", Sixth Canto, Chapter 07 – Text 13



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(Q & A Format)



Do not board the boat of stone.

“As stated in the Vedic literature (Bhag. 11.20.17):

nr-deham adyam sulabham sudurlabham plavam sukalpam guru-karna-dharam

We, the conditioned souls, have fallen in the ocean of nescience, but the human body fortunately provides us a good opportunity to cross the ocean because the human body is like a very good boat. When directed by a spiritual master acting as the captain, the boat can very easily cross the ocean. Furthermore, the boat is helped across by favorable winds, which are the instructions of Vedic knowledge. If one does not take advantage of all these facilities to cross the ocean of nescience, he is certainly committing suicide.

One who boards a boat made of stone is doomed. To be elevated to the stage of perfection, humanity must first give up false leaders who present boats of stone. All of human society is in such a dangerous position that to be rescued it must abide by the standard instructions of the Vedas. The cream of these instructions appears in the form of Bhagavad-gita. One should not take shelter of any other instructions, for Bhagavad-gita gives direct instructions on how to fulfill the aim of human life. Lord Sri Krishna therefore says, *sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja*: “Give up all other processes of religion and simply surrender to Me.” Even if one does not accept Lord Krishna as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, His instructions are so exalted and beneficial for humanity that if one follows His instructions one will be saved. Otherwise one will be cheated by unauthorized meditation and gymnastic methods of yoga. Thus one will board a boat of stone which will sink and drown all its passengers.”

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 07 – Text 14



Śrīmad-Bhāgvatam – Canto 6

(Q & A Format)



Non devotees cannot understand the contradictions present in the Supreme Lord or His devotees.

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead, being self-sufficient, is full of transcendental bliss (atmarama). He enjoys bliss in two ways—when He appears happy and when He appears distressed. Distinctions and contradictions are impossible in Him because only from Him have they emanated. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the reservoir of all knowledge, all potency, all strength, opulence and influence. There is no limit to His powers. Since He is full in all transcendental attributes, nothing abominable from the material world can exist in Him. He is transcendental and spiritual, and therefore conceptions of material happiness and distress do not apply to Him.

We should not be astonished to find contradictions in the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Actually there are no contradictions. That is the meaning of His being supreme. Because He is all-powerful, He is not subject to the conditioned soul’s arguments regarding His existence or nonexistence. He is pleased to protect His devotees by killing their enemies. He enjoys both the killing and the protecting.

Such freedom from duality applies not only to the Lord but also to His devotees. In Vrndavana, the damsels of Vrajabhumi enjoy transcendental bliss in the company of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna, and they feel the same transcendental bliss in separation when Krishna and Balarama leave Vrndavana for Mathura. There is no question of material pains or pleasures for either the Supreme Personality of Godhead or His pure devotees, although they are sometimes superficially said to be distressed or happy. One who is atmarama is blissful in both ways.

Nondevotees cannot understand the contradictions present in the Supreme Lord or His devotees.

Therefore in Bhagavad-gita the Lord says, bhaktya mam abhijanati: the transcendental pastimes can be understood through devotional service; to nondevotees they are inconceivable. Acintyah khalu ye bhava na tams tarkena yojayet: the Supreme Lord and His form, name, pastimes and paraphernalia are inconceivable to nondevotees, and one



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(Q & A Format)



should not try to understand such realities simply by logical arguments. They will not bring one to the right conclusion about the Absolute Truth.”

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 09 – Text 36



Śrīmad-Bhāgvatam – Canto 6

(Q & A Format)



The difference between sakama and akama devotees.

“There are two kinds of devotees, known as sakama and akama. Pure devotees are akama, whereas devotees in the upper planetary systems, such as the demigods, are called sakama because they still want to enjoy material opulence. Because of their pious activities, the sakama devotees are promoted to the higher planetary systems, but at heart they still desire to lord it over the material resources. The sakama devotees are sometimes disturbed by the demons and Raksasas, but the Lord is so kind that He always saves them by appearing as an incarnation. The Lord’s incarnations are so powerful that Lord Vamanadeva covered the entire universe with two steps and therefore had no place for His third step. The Lord is called Trivikrama because He showed His strength by delivering the entire universe with merely three steps.

The difference between sakama and akama devotees is that when sakama devotees, like the demigods, fall into difficulty, they approach the Supreme Personality of Godhead for relief, whereas akama devotees, even in the greatest danger, never disturb the Lord for material benefits. Even if an akama devotee is suffering, he thinks this is due to his past impious activities and agrees to suffer the consequences. He never disturbs the Lord. Sakama devotees immediately pray to the Lord as soon as they are in difficulty, but they are regarded as pious because they consider themselves fully dependent on the mercy of the Lord. As stated in Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.14.8):

*“tat te ‘nukampam susamiksamano bhunjana evatma-krtam vipakam
hrd-vag-vapurahir vidadhan namas te jiveta yo mukti-pade sa daya-bhak”*

Even while suffering in the midst of difficulties, devotees simply offer their prayers and service more enthusiastically. In this way they become firmly fixed in devotional service and eligible to return home, back to Godhead, without a doubt. Sakama devotees, of course, achieve from the Lord the results they desire from their prayers, but they do not immediately become fit to return to Godhead. It is to be noted herein that Lord Vishnu, in His various incarnations, is always the protector of His devotees. Srila Madhvacarya says:



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vividham bhava-patratvat sarve visnor vibhutayah. Krishna is the original Personality of Godhead (Krishnas tu bhagavan svayam). All the other incarnations proceed from Lord Vishnu.”

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 09 – Text 40



Śrīmad-Bhāgvatam – Canto 6

(Q & A Format)



Benedictions of the demigods are condemned in Bhagavad-gita.

“Here is the difference between the benedictions awarded by the demigods and those awarded by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vishnu. Devotees of the demigods ask for benedictions simply for sense gratification, and therefore they have been described in Bhagavad-gita (7.20) as bereft of intelligence.

*“kamais tais tair hrta-jnanah prapadyante ‘nya-devatah
tam tam niyamam asthaya prakrtya niyatah svaya”*

“Those whose minds are distorted by material desires surrender unto demigods and follow the particular rules and regulations of worship according to their own natures.” Conditioned souls are generally bereft of intelligence because of profound desires for sense gratification. They do not know what benedictions to ask. Therefore nondevotees are advised in the sastras to worship various demigods to achieve material benefits. For example, if one wants a beautiful wife, he is advised to worship Uma, or goddess Durga. If one wants to be cured of a disease, he is advised to worship the sungod. All requests for benedictions from the demigods, however, are due to material lust. The benedictions will be finished at the end of the cosmic manifestation, along with those who bestow them. If one approaches Lord Vishnu for benedictions, the Lord will give him a benediction that will help him return home, back to Godhead. This is also confirmed by the Lord Himself in Bhagavad-gita (10.10):

*“tesam satata-yuktanam bhajatam priti-purvakam
dadami buddhi-yogam tam yena mam upayanti te”*

Lord Vishnu, or Lord Krishna, instructs a devotee who constantly engages in His service how to approach Him at the end of his material body. The Lord says in Bhagavad-gita (4.9):



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“janma karma ca me divyam evam yo vetti tattvatah
tyaktva deham punar janma naiti mam eti so ‘rjuna”

“One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities, does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode, O Arjuna.” This is the benediction of Lord Vishnu, Krishna. After giving up his body, a devotee returns home, back to Godhead. A devotee may foolishly ask for material benedictions, but Lord Krishna does not give him such benedictions, despite the devotee’s prayers. Therefore people who are very attached to material life do not generally become devotees of Krishna or Vishnu. Instead they become devotees of the demigods (kamais tais tair hrta jnanah prapadyante ‘nya-devatah). The benedictions of the demigods, however, are condemned in Bhagavad-gita. Antavat tu phalam tesam tad bhavaty alpa-medhasam: “Men of small intelligence worship the demigods, and their fruits are limited and temporary.” A non-Vaisnava, one who is not engaged in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is considered a fool with a small quantity of brain substance.”

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 09 – Text 50



Śrīmad-Bhāgvatam – Canto 6

(Q & A Format)



One should be happy to see others happy.

“One generally follows different types of religious principles or performs various occupational duties according to the body given to him by the modes of material nature. In this verse, however, real religious principles are explained. Everyone should be unhappy to see others in distress and happy to see others happy. *Atmavat sarva-bhutesu*: one should feel the happiness and distress of others as his own. It is on this basis that the Buddhist religious principle of nonviolence—*ahimsah parama-dharmah*—is established. We feel pain when someone disturbs us, and therefore we should not inflict pain upon other living beings. Lord Buddha’s mission was to stop unnecessary animal killing, and therefore he preached that the greatest religious principle is nonviolence.

One cannot continue killing animals and at the same time be a religious man. That is the greatest hypocrisy. Jesus Christ said, “Do not kill,” but hypocrites nevertheless maintain thousands of slaughterhouses while posing as Christians. Such hypocrisy is condemned in this verse. One should be happy to see others happy, and one should be unhappy to see others unhappy. This is the principle to be followed. Unfortunately, at the present moment so-called philanthropists and humanitarians advocate the happiness of humanity at the cost of the lives of poor animals. That is not recommended herein. This verse clearly says that one should be compassionate to all living entities. Regardless of whether human, animal, tree or plant, all living entities are sons of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Lord Krishna says in *Bhagavad-gita* (14.4):

*“sarva-yonisu kaunteya murtayah sambhavanti yah
tasam brahma mahad yonir aham bija-pradah pita”*

“It should be understood that all species of life, O son of Kunti, are made possible by birth in this material nature, and that I am the seed-giving father.” The different forms of these living entities are only their external dresses. Every living being is actually a spirit soul, a part and parcel of God. Therefore one should not favor only one kind of living being. A



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Vaisnava sees all living entities as part and parcel of God. As the Lord says in Bhagavad-gita (5.18 and 18.54):

*“vidya-vinaya-sampanne brahmane gavi hastini
suni caiva svapake ca panditah sama-darsinah”*

“The humble sage, by virtue of true knowledge, sees with equal vision a learned and gentle brahmana, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a dog-eater [outcaste].”

*“brahma-bhutih prasannatma na socati na kanksati
samah sarvesu bhutesu mad-bhaktim labhate param”*

“One who is transcendently situated at once realizes the Supreme Brahman and becomes fully joyful. He never laments nor desires to have anything; he is equally disposed to every living entity. In that state he attains pure devotional service unto Me.”
A Vaisnava, therefore, is truly a perfect person because he laments to see others unhappy and feels joy at seeing others happy. A Vaisnava is para-duhkha-duhkhi; he is always unhappy to see the conditioned souls in an unhappy state of materialism. Therefore a Vaisnava is always busy preaching Krishna consciousness throughout the world.”

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 10 – Text 09



Śrīmad-Bhāgvatam – Canto 6

(Q & A Format)



Either in opulence or in distress we are not independent.

It is not good to be falsely puffed up, saying that by one's own effort one has become opulent, learned, beautiful and so on. All such good fortune is achieved through the mercy of the Lord. From another point of view, no one wants to die, and no one wants to be poor or ugly. Therefore, why does the living entity, against his will, receive such unwanted troubles? It is due to the mercy or chastisement of the Supreme Personality of Godhead that one gains or loses everything material. No one is independent; everyone is dependent on the mercy or chastisement of the Supreme Lord. There is a common saying in Bengal that the Lord has ten hands. This means that He has control everywhere—in the eight directions and up and down. If He wants to take everything away from us with His ten hands, we cannot protect anything with our two hands. Similarly, if He wants to bestow benedictions upon us with His ten hands, we cannot factually receive them all with our two hands; in other words, the benedictions exceed our ambitions. The conclusion is that even though we do not wish to be separated from our possessions, sometimes the Lord forcibly takes them from us; and sometimes He showers such benedictions upon us that we are unable to receive them all. Therefore either in opulence or in distress we are not independent; everything is dependent on the sweet will of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 12 – Text 13



Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam – Canto 6

(Q & A Format)



The so-called relationships are illusions.

The instructions given by Narada and Angira Muni are the true spiritual instructions for the illusioned conditioned soul. This world is temporary, but because of our previous karma we come here and accept bodies, creating temporary relationships in terms of society, friendship, love, nationality and community, which are all finished at death. These temporary relationships did not exist in the past, nor will they exist in the future.

Therefore at the present moment the so-called relationships are illusions.

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 15 – Text 2



Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam – Canto 6

(Q & A Format)



In devotional service, the apparent material opulence's are not material; they are all spiritual.

A devotee's ultimate achievement is to take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord in any one of the planets in the spiritual sky. As a result of rigid execution of devotional service, a devotee receives all material opulences if these are required; otherwise, the devotee is not interested in material opulences, nor does the Supreme Lord award them. When a devotee is actually engaged in the devotional service of the Lord, his apparently material opulences are not material; they are all spiritual. For example, if a devotee spends money to construct a beautiful and costly temple, the construction is not material but spiritual (nirbandhah Krishna-sambandhe yuktam vairagyam ucyate). A devotee's mind is never diverted to the material side of the temple. The bricks, stone and wood used in the construction of the temple are spiritual, just as the Deity, although made of stone, is not stone but the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. The more one advances in spiritual consciousness, the more he can understand the elements of devotional service. Nothing in devotional service is material; everything is spiritual. Consequently a devotee is awarded so-called material opulence for spiritual advancement. This opulence is an aid to help the devotee advance toward the spiritual kingdom.

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), "Srimad Bhagavatam", Sixth Canto, Chapter 16 – Text 29



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(Q & A Format)



In Bhagavata-dharma there is no question of “what you believe” and “what i believe”.

“Bhagavata-dharma has no contradictions. Conceptions of “your religion” and “my religion” are completely absent from bhagavata-dharma. Bhagavata-dharma means following the orders given by the Supreme Lord, Bhagavan, as stated in Bhagavad-gita: sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja. God is one, and God is for everyone. Therefore everyone must surrender to God. That is the pure conception of religion. Whatever God orders constitutes religion (dharmam tu saksad bhagavatpranitam).

In bhagavata-dharma there is no question of “what you believe” and “what I believe.” Everyone must believe in the Supreme Lord and carry out His orders. Anukulyena Krishnanusilanam: whatever Krishna says—whatever God says—should be directly carried out. That is dharma, religion. If one is actually Krishna conscious, he cannot have any enemies. Since his only engagement is to induce others to surrender to Krishna, or God, how can he have enemies? If one advocates the Hindu religion, the Muslim religion, the Christian religion, this religion or that religion, there will be conflicts. History shows that the followers of religious systems without a clear conception of God have fought with one another. There are many instances of this in human history, but systems of religion that do not concentrate upon service to the Supreme are temporary and cannot last for long because they are full of envy. There are many activities directed against such religious systems, and therefore one must give up the idea of “my belief” and “your belief.” Everyone should believe in God and surrender unto Him. That is bhagavat-dharma.”

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 16 – Text 41



Śrīmad-Bhāgvatam – Canto 6

(Q & A Format)



One who is very powerful should be understood to be faultless.

“One day while travelling, Citraketu wandered into the bowers of Sumeru Mountain, where he came upon Lord Shiva embracing Parvati, surrounded by an assembly of Siddhas, Caranas and great sages. Seeing Lord Shiva in that situation, Citraketu laughed very loudly. Citraketu appreciated the exalted position of Lord Shiva, and therefore he remarked at how wonderful it was that Lord Shiva was acting like an ordinary human being. He appreciated Lord Shiva’s position, but when he saw Lord Shiva sitting in the midst of saintly persons and acting like a shameless, ordinary man, he was astonished. Although Citraketu never meant to insult Lord Shiva, he should not have criticized the lord, even though the lord was transgressing social customs. It is said, *tejiyasam na dosaya*: one who is very powerful should be understood to be faultless. For example, one should not find faults with the sun, although it evaporates urine from the street. The most powerful cannot be criticized by an ordinary man, or even by a great personality. Citraketu should have known that Lord Shiva, although sitting in that way, was not to be criticized. The difficulty was that Citraketu, having become a great devotee of Lord Vishnu (Sankarsana) was somewhat proud at having achieved Lord Sankarsana’s favor and therefore thought that he could now criticize anyone, even Lord Shiva. This kind of pride in a devotee is never tolerated. A Vaisnava should always remain very humble and meek and offer respect to others.

*“trnad api sunicena taror api sahisnuna
amanina manadena kirtaniyah sada harih”*

“One should chant the holy name of the Lord in a humble state of mind, thinking oneself lower than the straw in the street; one should be more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all sense of false prestige and ready to offer all respect to others. In such a state of mind one can chant the holy name of the Lord constantly.” A Vaisnava should not try to minimize anyone else’s position. It is better to remain humble and meek and chant the Hare Krishna mantra. The word *nirjitatmabhimanine* indicates that Citraketu thought himself a better



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controller of the senses than Lord Shiva, although actually he was not. Because of all these considerations, mother Parvati was somewhat angry at Citraketu.”

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 17 – Introduction and Text 07 & 10



Śrīmad-Bhāgvatam – Canto 6

(Q & A Format)



Supreme Lord is neutral to everyone.

“Although the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the ultimate doer of everything, in His original transcendental existence He is not responsible for the happiness and distress, or bondage and liberation, of the conditioned souls. These are due to the results of the fruitive activities of the living entities within this material world. By the order of a judge, one person is released from jail, and another is imprisoned, but the judge is not responsible, for the distress and happiness of these different people is due to their own activities. Although the government is ultimately the supreme authority, the justice is administered by the departments of the government, and the government is not responsible for the individual judgments. Therefore the government is equal to all the citizens. Similarly, the Supreme Lord is neutral to everyone, but for the maintenance of law and order His supreme government has various departments, which control the activities of the living entities. Another example given in this regard is that lilies open or close because of the sunshine, and thus the bumblebees enjoy or suffer, but the sunshine and the sun globe are not responsible for the happiness and distress of the bumblebees.”

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 17 – Text 23



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(Q & A Format)



There is a difference between the understanding of a male and that of a female.

“One day while travelling, Citraketu wandered into the bowers of Sumeru Mountain, where he came upon Lord Shiva embracing Parvati, surrounded by an assembly of Siddhas, Caranas and great sages. Seeing Lord Shiva in that situation, Citraketu laughed very loudly, but Parvati became very angry at him and cursed him. Lord Shiva told Parvati, “Both Citraketu and I are always very dear to the Supreme Lord. In other words, both he and I are on the same level as servants of the Lord. We are always friends, and sometimes we enjoy joking words between us. When Citraketu loudly laughed at my behavior, he did so on friendly terms, and therefore there was no reason to curse him.” Thus Lord Shiva tried to convince his wife, Parvati, that her cursing of Citraketu was not very sensible. Here is a difference between male and female that exists even in the higher statuses of life—in fact, even between Lord Shiva and his wife. Lord Shiva could understand Citraketu very nicely, but Parvati could not. Thus even in the higher statuses of life there is a difference between the understanding of a male and that of a female. It may be clearly said that the understanding of a woman is always inferior to the understanding of a man. In the Western countries there is now agitation to the effect that man and woman should be considered equal, but from this verse it appears that woman is always less intelligent than man. It is clear that Citraketu wanted to criticize the behavior of his friend Lord Shiva because Lord Shiva was sitting with his wife on his lap. Then, too, Lord Shiva wanted to criticize Citraketu for externally posing as a great devotee but being interested in enjoying with the Vidyadhari women. These were all friendly jokes; there was nothing serious for which Citraketu should have been cursed by Parvati. Upon hearing the instructions of Lord Shiva, Parvati must have been very much ashamed for cursing Citraketu to become a demon. Mother Parvati could not appreciate Citraketu’s position, and therefore she cursed him, but when she understood the instructions of Lord Shiva she was ashamed.”

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 17 – introduction and Text 35



Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam – Canto 6

(Q & A Format)



In kali-yuga the relationship between husband and wife will be based on sexual power.

“The natural instinct of a woman is to enjoy the material world. She induces her husband to enjoy this world by satisfying his tongue, belly and genitals, which are called jihva, udara and upastha. A woman is expert in cooking palatable dishes so that she can easily satisfy her husband in eating. When one eats nicely, his belly is satisfied, and as soon as the belly is satisfied the genitals become strong. Especially when a man is accustomed to eating meat and drinking wine and similar passionate things, he certainly becomes sexually inclined. It should be understood that sexual inclinations are meant not for spiritual progress but for gliding down to hell. Thus Kasyapa Muni considered his situation and lamented. In other words, to be a householder is very risky unless one is trained and the wife is a follower of her husband. A husband should be trained at the very beginning of his life. Kaumara acaret prajno dharman bhagavatan iha (Bhag. 7.6.1). During the time of brahmacarya, or student life, a brahmacari should be taught to be expert in bhagavata-dharma, devotional service. Then when he marries, if his wife is faithful to her husband and follows him in such life, the relationship between husband and wife is very desirable.

However, a relationship between husband and wife without spiritual consciousness but strictly for sense gratification is not at all good. It is said in Srimad-Bhagavatam (12.2.3) that especially in this age, Kaliyuga, dam-patye 'bhirucir hetuh: the relationship between husband and wife will be based on sexual power. Therefore householder life in this Kali-yuga is extremely dangerous unless both the wife and husband take to Krishna consciousness.”

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 18 – Text 40



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(Q & A Format)



Women are self-interested by nature.

“Women are self-interested by nature, and therefore they should be protected by all means so that their natural inclination to be too self-interested will not be manifested. Women need to be protected by men. A woman should be cared for by her father in her childhood, by her husband in her youth and by her grown sons in her old age. This is the injunction of Manu, who says that a woman should not be given independence at any stage. Women must be cared for so that they will not be free to manifest their natural tendency for gross selfishness. To satisfy their own interests, women deal with men as if the men were most dear to them, but no one is actually dear to them. Women are supposed to be very saintly, but for their own interests they can kill even their husbands, sons or brothers, or cause them to be killed by others. There have been many cases, even in the present day, in which women have killed their husbands to take advantage of their insurance policies. This is not a criticism of women but a practical study of their nature. Such natural instincts of a woman or a man are manifested only in the bodily conception of life. When either a man or a woman is advanced in spiritual consciousness, the bodily conception of life practically vanishes. We should see all women as spiritual units (aham brahmasmi), whose only duty is to satisfy Krishna. Then the influences of the different modes of material nature, which result from one’s possessing a material body, will not act.

The Krishna consciousness movement is so beneficial that it can very easily counteract the contamination of material nature, which results from one’s possessing a material body. Bhagavad-gita therefore teaches, in the very beginning, that whether one is a man or a woman, one must know that he or she is not the body but a spiritual soul. Everyone should be interested in the activities of the spirit soul, not the body. As long as one is activated by the bodily conception of life, there is always the danger of being misled, whether one is a man or a woman. The soul is sometimes described as purusa because whether one is dressed as a man or a woman, one is inclined to enjoy this material world. One who has this spirit of enjoyment is described as purusa. Whether one is a man or a woman, he is not interested in serving others; everyone is interested in satisfying his or her own senses. Krishna consciousness, however, provides first-class training for a man or a woman. A



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(Q & A Format)



man should be trained to be a first-class devotee of Lord Krishna, and a woman should be trained to be a very chaste follower of her husband. That will make the lives of both of them happy.”

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 18 – introduction and Text 42



Śrīmad-Bhāgvatam – Canto 6

(Q & A Format)



The most important aspect of the Supreme Lord's self-sufficiency is that He depends on His devotees.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is endowed with all six opulences in full, and moreover He is extremely kind to His devotee. Although He is full in Himself, He nonetheless wants all the living entities to surrender unto Him so that they may engage in His service. Thus He becomes satisfied. Although He is full in Himself, He nonetheless becomes pleased when His devotee offers Him patram puspam phalam toyam—a leaf, flower, fruit or water—in devotion. Sometimes the Lord, as the child of mother Yasoda, requests His devotee for some food, as if He were very hungry. Sometimes He tells His devotee in a dream that His temple and His garden are now very old and that He cannot enjoy them very nicely. Thus He requests the devotee to repair them. Sometimes He is buried in the earth, and as if unable to come out Himself, He requests His devotee to rescue Him. Sometimes He requests His devotee to preach His glories all over the world, although He alone is quite competent to perform this task. Even though the Supreme Personality of Godhead is endowed with all possessions and is self-sufficient, He depends on His devotees. Therefore the relationship of the Lord with His devotees is extremely confidential. Only the devotee can perceive how the Lord, although full in Himself, depends on His devotee for some particular work. This is explained in Bhagavad-gita (11.33), where the Lord tells Arjuna, nimitta-matram bhava savyasacin: “O Arjuna, merely be an instrument in the fight.” Lord Krishna had the competence to win the Battle of Kuruksetra, but nonetheless He induced His devotee Arjuna to fight and become the cause of victory. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was quite competent enough to spread His name and mission all over the world, but still He depended upon His devotee to do this work. Considering all these points, the most important aspect of the Supreme Lord's self-sufficiency is that He depends on His devotees. This is called His causeless mercy. The devotee who has perceived this causeless mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead by realization can understand the master and the servant.

Source: A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (2014 edition), “Srimad Bhagavatam”, Sixth Canto, Chapter 19 – Text 05



Śrīmad-Bhāgvatam – Canto 6

(Q & A Format)

