

Śrī Manah-śikṣā

Splendid Instructions to the
Mind

by Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī

Verse-6

Commentary

by

Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

Verse-6

are cetaḥ prodyat-kapaṭa-kuṭi-nāṭi-bhara-khara-
kṣaran-mūtre snātvā dahasi katham ātmānam api mām
sadā tvam gāndharvā-giridhari-pada-prema-vilasat-
sudhāmbhodhau snātvā svam api nitarām mām ca sukhaya

O ruffian mind (**are cetaḥ**)! Why do you burn (**katham dahasi**) yourself and me [the soul] (**ātmānam api mām**) by bathing in the trickling urine (**kṣaran-mūtre snātvā**) of the great donkey (**bhara-khara**) of full-blown hypocrisy and duplicity (**prodyat-kapaṭa-kuṭi-nāṭi**)? Instead, you should always bathe (**sadā tvam nitarām snātvā**) in the nectarean ocean (**sudhā ambhodhau**) of love emanating from the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Gāndharvikā-Giridhārī (**gāndharvā-giridhari-pada-prema-vilasat**), thereby delighting (**sukhaya**) yourself and me (**tvam api mām ca**).

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

In the Bhagavad-gītā, Kṛṣṇa says,

kāma eṣa krodha eṣa
rajo-guṇa-samudbhavaḥ
mahāśano mahā-pāpmā
viddhy enam iha vairiṇam

The big enemy of the conditioned soul is lust.

But Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says that even if you're done with that, there's still another problem to deal with.

Verse-6 Commentary by Srīla Jayadvaita Swami

Deeply embedded within the human heart are four defects, and one of them is the propensity to cheat.

Therefore it is said, dharmah projjhita-kaitavo 'tra paramo nirmatsarāṇām satām.

The Bhāgavatam kicks out kaitava-dharma, “cheating religion.”

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī says that kaitava-dharma means dharma, artha, kāma, mokṣa—material objectives, culminating in impersonal oneness.

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī has some pungent words for this deceit and hypocrisy: (prodyat)(kapaṭa)(kuṭināṭi)(bhara)(khara)(kṣaraṅ-(mūtre)ṣnātvā)—“bathing in the donkey urine of full-blown hypocrisy and duplicity.”

One may ask, “Why donkey urine?”

Well, to begin with, it’s not cow urine.

Verse-6 Commentary by Srīla Jayadvaita Swami

Cow urine is purifying. Some people clean their kitchens with it. It's antiseptic.

But this verse talks about donkey urine.

There's a difference. Donkey urine doesn't seem to be held in high esteem.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said that the donkey, the ass, is the symbol of stupidity, as in the expression “work like an ass.”

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

In America a common insult is to call a person an ass, a stupid ass.

Types of Deceit

Verse-6 Commentary by Srīla Jayadvaita Swami

Srīla Bhaktivinoda, in his commentary, says, "There are three categories of spiritual practitioners (sādhakas)."

He calls two types of householder devotees as sva-niṣṭha-sādhakas and pariniṣṭha-sādhakas, and the renounced devotees as nirapekṣa-sādhakas.

↓
Vaiṣṇava also to set right example

only bhakti
↑
↓
(bhāva & preme)
↓
bābaji dress.

He further writes, "All three types are benefited only when they become thoroughly honest and give up deceit, pretense, and hypocrisy; otherwise, they are surely vanquished. Each type of sādhaka has distinct ways of exhibiting a deceitful nature."

Verse-6 Commentary by Srīla Jayadvaita Swami

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda writes that householders may be deceitful by indulging in sense enjoyment on the pretext of sādhana-bhakti.

For example, a person might offer opulent food for the pleasure of the Lord—thinking of eating it later.

Bhaktivinoda also suggests that a (renunciant) man may want to train ladies in Deity worship so that he can have their association.

These are some of the different ways Bhaktivinoda lists to enjoy sense gratification under the pretext of sādhana-bhakti.

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura warns against the deceit of housholders
“serving rich influential materialists instead of serving simple
nirapekṣa servants of Kṛṣṇa.”

He lists similar pitfalls for the renunciants—for example, the deceits
of “staying with materialistic people with the expectation of
receiving wealth” and “being inwardly anxious and worried about
collecting more wealth, while making a pretense of performing
devotional service or chanting.”

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

In a similar vein, Śukadeva Gosvāmī says, “Aren’t the trees giving fruits? Isn’t the river giving water? Then why are sannyāsīs going to the homes of materialists just to flatter them?”

Of course, we have seen this behavior to an almost absurd extent in Indian culture, but it happens in the West also.

Whether initiated Vaiṣṇavas or “professional” Vaiṣṇavas, supposedly saintly devotees go around from one rich man’s home to another, collecting donations, mainly to support their families.

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

Meanwhile the rich materialists flatter them, saying, “O Mahārāja!”
until the preacher starts to believe he is “mahārāja.”

And then it’s “By the way, where’s my elephant?”

This kind of preacher is basically a businessman who is in “the
Vaiṣṇava business.”

Such a mentality can be also be institutionalized

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

If your institution becomes solely interested in courting the wealthy and influential, then you have a problem.

An ordinary guy walks in, and you size him up.

When you see he doesn't have any money you go on to the next man, neglecting the sincere candidates for devotional service.

That's to be avoided.

Verse-6 Commentary by Srīla Jayadvaita Swami

Bhaktivinoda Thākura talks about yet another kind of deceit, “enthusiasm for meaningless temporary gains, even at the cost of envying and harming others.”

→ another type of deceit

We see this in devotees who get enthusiastic about a more or less mundane project of no great importance.

Often the enterprise is simply self-indulgent.

One indulges one’s mundane propensities under the banner of devotional service.

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

A common example is becoming a rock star again, “for Kṛṣṇa.”

The devotee may be very enthusiastic about it, but it really has no value, except for self-indulgence.

One common form of deceit Bhaktivinoda lists for the parinistha-sādhaka is “making an external show of strictly following rules and prohibitions while inwardly being very attached to material subjects unrelated to Kṛṣṇa.”

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

From my reading of a book by a friend of mine who's a Christian professor, it seems that the Christians deal with the same tendency, which they call 'legalism.'

It's quite a good term, legalism.

The legalist is punctilious, very attentive to following rules and regulations, but his heart is all junk.

Verse-6 Commentary by Srīla Jayadvaita Swami

He makes an outward show of being a very pakka devotee but inwardly allows all sorts of anarthas (weeds) to grow.

Easier than purifying the heart is to make a show of crossing your t's and dotting your i's.

t i

You make sure that you circumambulate the tulasī plant exactly four times, that you chant such-and-such verse in exactly the right meter, that you bow facing the right direction—all the details you can possibly think of, but without a real connection and purification of the heart.

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

The internal and the external are not mutually exclusive.

But when the rules and regulations become the point, or when we make a show of rules and regulations, that's what Rūpa Gosvāmī calls niyamāgraha: missing the point.

If we think rules are the most important thing, we're fooling ourselves: self-deceit.

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

Then again, if others think the rules are the most important thing, we may deceive them by making a show of following the rules, but without having the substance.

Some sādhakas are deceitful by preferring the association of people who are materially impressive in some way.

Bhaktivinoda writes of “preferring the association of non-devotees rather than Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees.”

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

Whether it's intellectually sophisticated company or high-society types or mode of goodness people, such a sādḥaka prefers their association to that of genuine devotees.

That's another type of cheating.

Recognizing the various types of deceit helps us guard against materially motivated religion and contaminated consciousness.

Devotion or Profession

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

Impediments to spiritual progress may also come because we maintain our householder life by what is essentially professional kīrtana.

That is a subject that deserves careful thought because there are so many statements in our literature advising against meeting one's family expenses by speaking Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam or by becoming a professional preacher.

The danger is that it becomes a business.

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

Someone may be a car mechanic, a teacher, or an accountant, and someone is a preacher.

Everybody has a way to maintain his family life, and it becomes exactly that: a business.

And this may occur in any department: Preaching becomes a way to maintain your family, being a pūjārī becomes a way to maintain your family, and devotional service becomes a way to maintain your family.

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

It becomes a profession.

Since our interest lies in building up our bank account, we are interested in preaching to the wealthy or preaching where people give us good money.

And we collect money not for a preaching project, to distribute books or to spread kīrtana but to pay the rent, to save money for the kid's education, all of that.

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

A devotee may sometimes accept some modest contribution for maintenance, but when our program is meant mainly for maintaining our family by professional Vaiṣṇava service, then the situation needs to be looked at.

When we first went to Vṛndāvana, we saw the Deities being maintained very poorly.

Basically Deity worship was a family business.

Verse-6 Commentary by Srīla Jayadvaita Swami

Prabhupāda's evaluation was that the pujaris just keep the temples open to collect some money and don't really care about the Deity, except as a gimmick or tool for making money.

Sometimes we see that people are willing to serve but everything they do has a price to it.

We then have to ask, Is that devotional service, or is that a job?

And if it's a job, is this really what Prabhupāda wanted?

Verse-6 Commentary by Srīla Jayadvaita Swami

Is this really what Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to teach—that devotional service is a means of earning your livelihood?

That's not really the idea.

Better to earn your livelihood by honest means—and do service.

You can have a career, make money, and meet your family expenses, so that everything that you do for the temple or for the preaching is actually devotional service. It's not mixed.

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

You don't have to ask, "Okay, what's my compensation package?"

No, you can say, "My family expenses are met, and this is what I do for service."

So much of our time is taken up with the responsibilities of family maintenance, but they don't take up all our time.

So the balance of our time we can use for Kṛṣṇa's service.

Verse-6 Commentary by Srīla Jayadvaita Swami

We won't waste it watching television, talking prajalpa, and hanging out.

We can invest that balance of our precious time, when we're not earning a livelihood, in devotional service.

There's a strong case to be made for that approach.

On the other hand, Prabhupāda approved of book distribution. “As a business, it's a good business,” he said. “Best business.”

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

A full-time book distributor can keep aside some quota for personal and family maintenance.

You can also use your occupation for serving.

If you are an accountant, then do temple accounts. If you are a lawyer, help get documents registered.

Whatever you are. A cook? Cook for the Deity.

Verse-6 Commentary by Srīla Jayadvaita Swami

But not with the mentality of “How much they will pay me?”

How much will I collect if go to this engagement? How many hours
do they want me to serve?

Can I make the same amount but do less? Maybe I can get a few
more dollars per hour.”

None of that comes into consideration when you cover your own
family expenses separately.

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

Taking payment for service to maintain your family can also create unhappy relations.

For instance, the brahmacārīs are giving selflessly of their time, they are bringing in money—and you are spending it to maintain your household.

Or the congregational householders are working hard and making money and giving it to the temple—and it goes to you to maintain your family.

Verse-6 Commentary by Śrīla Jayadvaita Swami

How good are people going to feel about that?

We also need to ask if this is how we want our temples to operate, basically employing people to do service.