

Śrī Caitanya-Śikṣāmṛta

Nectarean Teachings of Lord Śrī
Caitanya

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Thākura

Chapter – 2

Secondary Rules

Part – 2

Punya karma, Meritorious Action

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

3. Charity

Charity (dana) refers to giving money or materials to a suitable person. Giving to an undeserving person is a worthless expense, and is considered a sin.

There are twelve varieties of charity: giving water by digging wells, planting trees to give shade and air, supplying lights, dispensing medicines, giving education, giving food, building roads, building bathing places on rivers or lakes, building houses, giving materials, giving the first portion of a meal, giving a daughter in marriage.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

3. Charity

Water should be given to those who are thirsty.

If a thirsty person comes to your house, you are obliged to offer drinking water.

Thus digging wells and ponds for drinking water, after selecting a suitable place, is an act of punya, beneficial for others.

Wherever water is necessary, for instance at tirthas (holy places) where there are no rivers or bodies of water, wells should be dug.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

3. Charity

Huge shade trees such as the asvattha should be planted on the sides of the road or river, or at places of relaxation.

Tulasi and other holy trees should be planted in the house and at pure places.

These trees assist in bodily and spiritual health.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

3. Charity

Lights should be installed at bathing places, on roads and narrow paths, to assist night travelers when there is no moonlight.

By giving light in charity a person earns vast amounts of punya.

Raising lights during Kartika month is for beauty but does not aid the traveler, as they are too high to light the path.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

3. Charity

In giving medical relief, a person can go to the house and distribute medicine, or can have the sick persons come to a dispensary and receive free medicine.

A person should perform this punya with sincerity.

Students may be given education from personal funds.

Educating children is a very important service.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

3. Charity

Food distribution may be done at home or at a designated place for the public.

Roads should be constructed to places difficult to approach or to inaccessible places.

Using stone or brick in the construction gives additional merit.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

3. Charity

Bathing places should be constructed on riverbanks or the banks of other bodies of water for the general public.

Constructing a resting place, a shelter, temple or gardens at the bathing place gives additional merit.

Building a house for a person without money or domicile is a punya karma.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

3. Charity

Giving materials should be done to qualified or deserving persons.

Before eating at home, the owner should offer the first portion to another person.

Parents should give their daughter, along with ornaments, to a suitable person of the same varna.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

4. Serving Guests

A person should show hospitality towards his guests and society as a whole.

The householder should carefully serve guests when they arrive.

The scriptures direct that after preparing food the householders should go to the door and call out three times for those who have not eaten.

If anyone appears, they should feed that person first, and later eat along with the rest of the family.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

4. Serving Guests

There is a rule that one should call out about an hour after noon, but in modern times it is difficult to remain without food till then.

Therefore whenever the food is ready, the householder should call out for the hungry.

This does not refer to feeding professional beggars.

Such hospitality is a necessary activity when one is situated in society.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

5. Cleanliness

Purity refers to

1. Personal cleanliness
2. Cleaning roads, ghatas, shops, cowsheds, temples, and house
3. Cleaning forests
4. Going on pilgrimage.

Personal cleanliness is both internal and external.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

5. Cleanliness

Internal cleanliness or purity of mind is accomplished by performance of sinless actions and punyas.

Eating and drinking a regulated amount of food that is sinless and easy to digest also causes internal purity.

By eating or drinking food touched by alcoholics or other sinful people, the mind becomes impure.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

5. Cleanliness

↑ Directly applicable for devotees

Among all the methods for creating purity of mind, the chief is remembrance of Visnu.

→ Karma adhikarīs

For purifying the sinful mind there is prescription of prayascitta or atonement.

By such atonements, however, only the sinful reaction leaves the person.

The root is sinful desire.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

5. Cleanliness

If a person performs atonement with genuine remorse, the sinful desire will be removed, but the seed of all sin – hostility to the Lord – can be removed only by remembering the Lord.

→ Dharma śāstras

Other books should be consulted for the many aspects of atonement.

→ For devotees

↳ & for attracting the Karma adhikāris toward bhakti

The mind is also purified by bathing in sacred rivers such as the Ganga and by seeing the Deity of the Lord.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

5. Cleanliness

If a person performs atonement with genuine remorse, the sinful desire will be removed, but the seed of all sin – hostility to the Lord – can be removed only by remembering the Lord. (Proof Below)

|| 6.2.16 ||

gurūṇām ca laghūnām ca
gurūṇi ca laghūni ca
prāyaścittāni pāpānām
jñātvoktāni maharṣibhiḥ

The great sages (maharṣibhiḥ), understanding the limited nature of atonements (pāpānām prāyaścittāni jñātvā), have said that (uktāni) severe atonements are prescribed for grave sins (gurūṇām ca gurūṇi), and light atonements are prescribed for minor sins (laghūnām ca laghūni).

|| 6.2.17 ||

tais tāny aghāni pūyante
tapo-dāna-vratādibhiḥ
nādharmajaṃ tad-dhrdayaṃ
tad apīśānghri-sevayā

Sins are destroyed (tāny aghāni pūyante) by austerity, charity and vows (taiḥ tapo-dāna-vrata ādibhiḥ) but ~~the root of sin is not destroyed~~ (na adharma-jaṃ tad-hrdayaṃ). However by bhakti to the Lord, even the root of sin, namely desire, is destroyed (tad api
īśānghri-sevayā).

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

5. Cleanliness

Other books should be consulted for the many aspects of atonement.

The mind is also purified by bathing in sacred rivers such as the Ganga and by seeing the Deity of the Lord.

External cleanliness refers to maintaining purity of body, clothing, and residence.

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5. Cleanliness

This external cleanliness is maintained by bathing in fresh water, wearing clean cloth and eating sattvika food.

If the body touches contaminated objects, you should wash that part of the body.

People should not only clean personal houses, ghatas, roads, cowsheds, temples and yards, but the public roads, ghatas, shops, and temples in the town.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

5. Cleanliness

If the town is large, the citizens should together raise funds and maintain the cleanliness.

These acts generate punya.

Citizens should keep their private gardens clean, and contribute the cleanliness of public forests by the above-mentioned method.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

5. Cleanliness

By going on pilgrimage, a person gains enormous purity.

inserting →

Although association with saintly people is the final goal of pilgrimage, by the act of pilgrimage itself, ~~sinful desire is greatly reduced, and therefore all~~ people feel purified.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

6. Festivals

Festivals are of three types: those centered on Deity worship, those centered on family affairs and those for public rejoicing.

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③

Deity festivals are often observed, and without doubt they generate punya, as they include a great gathering of people, feasting, musical performances, shows, food distribution to the needy, and giving gifts to the learned.

If a person is capable of holding such festivals but avoids doing so, he is an offender.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

6. Festivals

→ inspiring

Especially when these festivals are permeated with devotion to the Lord, they must not be avoided.

There are many family occasions for festivals, such as birthdays, distribution of grains, marriage, and sraddha rites with sacrifices.

A person is obliged to celebrate these functions to the best of his ability.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

6. Festivals

A person should also sponsor fairs where the populace can gather for enjoyment.

There are also many social festivals such worship of brothers by sisters, worship of the brother-in-law, arandhanotsava (on the last day of Bhadra month, no cooking is done.), navannotsava (this is the harvest festival where the family eats new rice), pisthakotsava (cake festival), and sitalotsava (This involved worship of the goddess Sitala in order to prevent smallpox).

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

7. Vratas

Vratas or vows are of three types: bodily, social and spiritual.

Early morning bath, parikrama, offering obeisances, which relate to exercising the body, are bodily vows.

When one element of the body becomes disturbed, a person falls ill.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

7. Vratas

To prevent this there are many vows, such as fasting on the new and full moon day or on Mondays.

By fasting and refraining from normal activities on the prescribed days and controlling the senses, a person is made to concentrate on the Lord.

→ Inserting

When it is necessary to fast in this way, a person gains punya by following the prescribed procedures.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

7. Vratas

The samskara rites may be considered social vows.



According to the varna, these rites are performed with modification.

Other rites are prescribed for all men.

Marriage rites, in which one man marries a girl of the same varna, are prescribed for all varnas.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

7. Vratas

The vow of taking only one wife is essential, for any other marriage is simply due to lust.

This tendency is exhibited in persons of low nature.

In exceptional cases, where there are no offspring, a second wife is allowed.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

7. Vratas

The monthly vows mentioned in the Mahabharata and other similar vows such as the 24 Ekadasi fasts and fasting on the six visnu tattva appearance days (jayanti), such as Janmastami, are spiritual vows.

The sole aim of these vratas is spiritual advancement.

These will be discussed along with the topic of bhakti.

Hari-bhakti-vilasa describes these vratas in detail

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

8. Protection of Animals

A person should strive for the upliftment of animals.

Without the help of animals, human life cannot go on properly.

Care should be taken to improve the form, strength and nature of animals.

By selective breeding this can be accomplished.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

8. Protection of Animals

This particularly applies to the cow.

With their help, agriculture and transport develop.

Therefore strong and well-formed bulls must be selected for mating; for this reasons, during the sraddha ceremony young bulls are let loose.

By freely roaming, they become strong and big, and are able to produce good offspring.

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Part – 2 Punya karma, Meritorious Action

8. Protection of Animals

Being of such service to the family, cows should be protected and nourished with proper food and housing.

Cow protection and rearing is well known in India as a very pious activity.