

Bhakti Sastri Seminar

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ISKCON Pandharpur

4th October, 2020

sarvopadhi-vinirmuktam

tat-paratvena nirmalam

hrsikena hrsikesa-

sevanam bhaktir ucyate

Translation :

Bhakti, or devotional service, means engaging all our senses in the service of the Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master of all the senses. When the spirit soul renders service unto the Supreme, there are two side effects. One is freed from all material designations, and one's senses are purified simply by being employed in the service of the Lord.

When we serve hrsikesa, hrsikena hrsikesa. hrsikena means by the senses.

We should read a little Sanskrit also. There are veda and upaveda also. Also vedanga, veda vedanga. Under vedanga comes shiksha, shiksha means pronunciation, and also grammar. So grammar is also veda, vedanga and you should read that also. By the help of vedanga we can read Veda. So let's read Veda, Srimad Bhagvatam, 1.2.18.

Study of Srimad Bhagvatam is graduation study. If you do Bhakti Vaibhav then there you will study Srimad Bhagvatam. Nowadays people keep studying, half of their life they study. First education, then higher education and then overseas education in Australia, America. Bhakti Shastri course is also higher education. VIHE, Vrindavan Institute of Higher Education, higher education in ISKCON started like this, VIHE was established some 20-30 years ago. In Krishna consciousness

all education is higher and outside krishna consciousness all education is lower.

Education about the spirit is higher. There are two things: spirit and matter, there are only two things in the world, one is spirit and another is matter. Most of the education of this world is about the matter, about mud, geography, astro. They are all zero until ke ami, Sanatana Goswami asked Caitanya Mahaprabhu, people call me pandit and learned but I even don't know who I am, ke ami.

So this higher education, spiritual education should be compulsory and if we have not taken this education then we have not even become human, then we remain animals, dvipad pashu.

**nasta-prayesv abhadresu
nityam bhagavata-sevaya
bhagavaty uttama-sloke
bhaktir bhavati naisthiki [SB 1.2.18]**

Translation :

By regularly hearing the Bhagavata and rendering service unto the pure devotee, all that is troublesome to the heart is practically destroyed, and loving service unto the glorious Lord, who is praised with transcendental songs, is established as an irrevocable fact.

Here is the remedy for eliminating all inauspicious things within the heart which are considered to be obstacles in the path of self-realization. Whatever inauspicious things are there they can be removed from our heart, first from heart, then mind, then thoughts or behavior, so how to remove those things is explained here by Srila Prabhupada. Also they are obstacles in the path of self-realization, so they should be removed, nasta. So how to do this, the remedy is mentioned here by Srila Prabhupada. The remedy is nityam bhagavata-sevaya, hearing and reading.

The remedy is the association of the Bhagavatas. There are two types of Bhagavatas, namely the book Bhagavata and the devotee Bhagavata. If someone hears nityam bhagavata-sevaya then what will he understand? He may understand it as the book Bhagavata but Srila Prabhupada is explaining the meaning here. Suta Goswami said in Naimisharanya which is near Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh that there are two types of Bhagavata one is the book Bhagavata and the devotee Bhagavat. So we have to serve both the book and devotee Bhagavata then we will do nityam bhagavata-sevaya.

If we don't serve devotee Bhagavata then we will become kanistha adhikari. One is uttam and another is kanistha, one who only serves the Lord but disrespects the devotees or offends the devotee, then he does not do the complete seva of Bhagavata or doesn't understand Bhagavata. The word is Bhagavat or Bhagawan, from Bhagavat becomes Bhagavata just like Vasudev becomes Vasudev. Bhagavat means Bhagavan, related to the Lord. So the book which is related to the Lord is called book Bhagvata and devotees are also called Bhagvata because they have a relationship with the Lord. Therefore both books and devotees are called Bhagavata therefore we should serve both of them.

Srila Prabhupada was the heart, the essence of Bhagavata. One who has understood Bhagavata, knows Bhagavata can be called Bhagavata. Then he will serve both the book as well as the devotee Bhagavata. But if he is not serving the devotee then his seva remains incomplete and he doesn't understand Bhagavata.

matrvat para-daresu

para-dravyesu lostravat

atmavat sarva-bhutesu

yah pasyati sa panditah [Canakya-sloka 10]

Translation:

One who considers another's wife as his mother, another's

possessions as a lump of dirt and treats all other living beings as he would himself, is considered to be learned.

Pandit means he is learned, he is qualified, he knows the sastras. yah pasyati sa panditah, who sees or who understands another's wife as his mother, another's possessions as a lump of dirt, lostravat and treats all other living beings as he would himself is a pandita. Tukaram was bathing at some other ghat, people asked him why are you bathing here today. He told him that someone has put some abominable things there. He said so because what he saw was looking yellow in colour, it was golden jewellery. Shivaji Maharaja wanted to gift him some golden and silver jewellery but Tukaram Maharaja denied. Being sad they put the jewellery at the ghat where Tukaram maharaj used to take bath. But Tukaram Maharaja saw it as dirt and went to take a bath at some other place. So Tukaram Maharaj was such a pandita. Tukaram Maharaja ki jai!!

We love ourselves the most, so who is really a pandita he treats everyone as himself. All the living entities belong to my Lord and are very dear to Him then they are dear to me also. The Lord said to Arjuna, you are very dear to me. Not only Arjuna was dear to Krishna, all the jivas are dear to Krishna. All living entities are dear to Krishna and if they are not dear to me then I am not intelligent or all the knowledge with me is useless. If all living entities are dear to Krishna then they must be very dear to me. So we have to love them all and we have to serve them, then there will be,

**dadati pratigrhnati
guhyam akhyati prcchati
bhunkte bhojayate caiva
sad-vidham priti-laksanam [NOI 4]**

Translation:

Offering gifts in charity, accepting charitable gifts, revealing one's mind in confidence, inquiring confidentially, accepting prasada and offering pras?da are the six symptoms of

love shared by one devotee and another.

These are symptoms of love. You say I love you devotees or prabhus, it should not be just lip service, show me your love.

If you want to know the Lord then you need to read sastras and you must also know devotees. We should know at least two people, the Lord and his devotees. There are three things in the world: one is the Lord, second are his devotees and third is maya. This is also knowledge to know there is no other fourth thing. Or we can say there are only two things, the Lord and his energies. There are two types of energy: marginal energy which are the jivas and external energy or maya. So to have such knowledge we have to study shastra. The Lord is never alone, he is always with his devotees. We cannot separate the devotees of the Lord from Lord, they are part and parcel just like fire can't be separated from its heat and light. You can't say you just want fire and don't want its light or it's heat. There is no existence of fire without heat and light, fire means heat and light. Similarly when we say Bhagavan then it means part and parcel of the Lord are already included.

mamaivamso jiva-loke

jiva-bhutih sanatanaḥ [Bg 15.7]

Translation:

The living entities in this conditioned world are My eternal, fragmental parts.

The Lord is complete and living entities are parts. So by studying Sastras, Gita, Bhagavatam, Nectar of Instruction, Isopanisad and Nectar of devotion we will get all this knowledge. Especially we should know who jiva or a living entity is, how small he is. He is so small that no one pays attention to it and also to know how small he is we need knowledge. Keshagra, part of hair, shata, divide the tip of that hair into 100 parts and then take one part and again

divide it into 100 parts, now pick up one from that, this is your size.

This is the size of the soul, so small, so tiny. No one pays attention to it as no one can see it, but if you put spectacles of sastras then you can see it. But even after reading you didn't understand then you need jnana. Atma is very small, very subtle, even the microscope or electron microscope can't see it. When a doctor does surgery he sees different parts of the body using a microscope. Everybody has used a microscope to see the body but haven't seen the soul through it. The power of your microscope to see is also imperfect, it can't see everything.

nityo nityanam cetanas cetananam [Katha Upanishad 2.2.13]

Translation :

The Supreme Lord is eternal and the living beings are eternal.
The Supreme Lord
is cognizant and the living beings are cognizant.

This is very very subtle. There are two types of body; one is the gross body made of earth, water, fire, air and ether and another is the subtle body made up of mind, intelligence and ego. Can you see the mind? But does it exist or not, can you say that mind doesn't exist just because you haven't seen it. You can understand the mind by its symptoms, cancalam hi manah [Bg 6.34], we are sitting here but in the meantime our mind can go and visit Solapur. So does mind exist? Just because we can't see it doesn't mean that we can conclude that the mind doesn't exist. So mind, intelligence and ego make the subtle body. Earth, water, fire, ether, these are all things we can see, but air we can't see but it is there and if it blows strongly it distorts everything. We can't see the sky, we can't take selfies with the sky. So air and sky we can't see them but they still exist similarly mind, intelligence and ego can't be seen but they exist. They are more subtle than air and sky also and more subtle than the subtle body is the soul.

You can't even see the subtle body, so how can you see the soul which is even more subtle?

So what we can't see sastras show us. Sadhu shows us with the help of sastra, sadhus just like a teacher explains what is written in the sastras or book.

So sadhu, sastra, acarya and then,

**chakhu-dan dilo jei, janme janme prabhu sei
divya-jnan hride prokashito**

Translation :

He opens my darkened eyes and fills my heart with transcendental knowledge. He is my Lord, birth after birth.

We sing this, at least Narottam das thakur sang this. He understood that my guru has opened my darkened eyes and that is why I will serve him life after life. This can be any guru, diksha guru or shiksha guru or vartma pradakshika guru. We can take knowledge from every devotee, so temple devotees or congregational devotees may be your guru or you may be their guru that is why Lord says in Bhagavad Gita, bodhayantah parasparam [10.9].

Some devotees became students and some devotees became teachers in bhakti shastri course. One day on teacher's day, I became a teacher. To look like teacher we needed clothes so we used to borrow clothes from the teachers and they would not fit us so we used to stitch them. So this is how student became teacher and for this one day all students acted as teachers. But this one is real, in ashram, in bhakti shastri course your guru brother taught you, he became your teacher and you heard humbly. If you have to learn something from anyone then you must become humble without that it's not possible.

Because of corona everywhere there was lockdown but we had Bhakti shastri course and you all achieved karuna of Lord and Srila Prabhupada and now you all are shastrajna. That's the problem we have forgotten that Madhvacarya was shastrajna,

Ramanujacarya was shastrajna, Tukaram Maharaj was shastrajna, Srila prabhupada is also shastrajna, Rupa Gowsami was shastrajna. One who knows shastra is called shastrajna, who has knowledge of sastras. In Gita, Lord says, chastram pramanam te [Bg 16.24], which shastra is evidence? This bhakti shastra. Gita, Bhagavatam, these are all sastras, this is a science, in thi there is scientific knowledge, scientific basis of Krishna consciousness. Prabhupada told Bhakti Svarup Damodar Maharaj to write a book with the title scientific basis of Krishna consciousness. He was a shastrajna, he has done Phd in Chemistry, did his higher studies in California. He was from Manipur. When he became a disciple of Srila Prabhupada then Prabhupada told him to write books and they were titled as scientific basis of Krishna consciousness, life comes from life. Life comes from life and not matter, origin of life is life and not the dead matter. To oppose the misconception that by some chemical combinations and solutions we can create life Prabhuapada told him to write book titled life comes from life and not from matter.

So these Gita, Bhagavatam are sastras, we have forgotten. Gita, bhagavatam, veda, puran are the original shastra and rest all is secondary. So there is para vidya and apara vidya which a few moments before I said as higher and lower education. So you have read sastras and became shastrajna. If there is any database of shastrajna your names should be added to that list. Is the certificate ready?

Congratulations to all those who have become satrajna.