

BEYOND ALL RELIGIONS



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(Disciple of Yuga Acharya Srila Narayana Maharaja)

GOKUL PUBLICATIONS



Dr. Bhagavati Kanta Dasa Ph.D. is an initiated disciple of Yuga Acharya Nitya Lila Pravishtha Om Vishnu Pathaya Ashtothara Sata Sri Srimad Bhakti Vedanta Narayana Goswami Maharaja under Brahma Madhya Gaudiya Sampradaya spreading pure bhakti in the line of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and six goswamis.

BEYOND ALL RELIGIONS

Offering at the lotus feet of Yuga Acharya Srila Narayana
Goswami Maharaja

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One God
No Caste, No Color, No Creed, No Religion.

Only one mantra – the supreme Maha Mantra

hare krishna hare krishna
krishna krishna hare hare
hare rama hare rama
rama rama hare hare

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PREFACE

Gokul Bhajan & Vedic Studies (GBVS) is a unique non-profit service organization to spread Krishna Consciousness everywhere in this world. It has no affiliation or control by any other organization.

Our only goal is to practice pure bhakti under the footsteps and lineage of Srila Gurudeva, Yuga Acharya Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Goswami Maharaja, the Six Goswamis and Guru Parampara coming under Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

This book has been written specifically for those who are new and curious to know the truths and secrets beyond mundane religions, and help them to understand the Jaiva Dharma which is beyond all the religions. We thank the following who helped by reviewing:

Kamala Devi Dasi
Kamalakar Divi
Karuna Mayi Dasi
Dr. Nava Kishori Devi Dasi
Dr. Prema Devi Dasi

This book is submitted as an offering at the lotus hands of Srila Gurudeva begging him for his causeless mercy upon us to become pure devotees and develop pure love for Sri Radha Krishna Yugala.

Dr. Bhagavati Kanta Dasa
Syamali Devi Dasi

INTRODUCTION

The world level genius Socrates was once pushed over a police officer by someone in a crowded market place. The angry police officer asked Socrates, "Who are you?" Socrates humbly said, "Sir! I have been asking myself the very same question for so long. If you know, please tell me."

'Who am I' is a question that cannot be easily answered. Most of the people would answer telling their names, or their parents or their jobs, designations and so on. But none of them is correct, because we are not the body but are spirit souls also called jivas. But even though we are so proud of our external communications, we are not successful in communicating with our own selves. We have not seen our own soul. Even the most advanced science is not able to see our own soul. So, the question 'who are we?', is a lifelong question!

Many ancient sages and yogis have spent their entire lives trying to find the answer to this seemingly simple question. Once when Swami Vivekananda was asked, 'Who are the living beings and where do they come from?', he could not give a proper answer either. He said, 'It is a very strange thing.' Thus, there are truths that even so-called scholars do not know. But we think we are very intelligent and try to know many things that are actually not as important as to know about our own selves first.

Being pulled strongly by their minds, every human being in this world is caught in the illusion of this material world

and wasting their lives only to satisfy their senses. These illusion-ed beings trapped into the ocean of repeated births and deaths (called 'samsara ocean') do not know what the seemingly unending journey they are traveling. They do not know when their journey will end either. They are aimlessly wandering through various planets being born and dead so many times taking birth into the wombs of any of the 8.4 million kinds of species in various planets in unlimited material worlds.

'Who are we? Where did we come from? Where did all these universes come from? Who is behind all these wonderful creations? Does a God exist? If He exists where is He? What is He doing? What is our real goal? Why am I in this endless journey? Who is controlling me? What is my real nature? Where is my peaceful shelter? Where is my real home?'

Many such questions arise in the minds of some intelligent people, but they are not able to give enough time and importance to ponder over this. Everyone is carrying on with their lives. However, when we run into miseries and problems that we cannot solve, then we inquire about any powers beyond us that are controlling us, our lives, environment and all the worlds.

But not knowing where to find the real knowledge, many people are running after various religions to get peace and happiness. But are they finding the real answer? No. The so-called religions are nothing but a set of sectarian people under certain faith and dogma based on teachings by prophets and others who postulate their own ideas of God and divide the one God into so many pieces and separate themselves. As we see they are all nothing but fanatic societies who are trying to take

advantage and misleading the people for their own benefits and profits. Instead of getting peace, they are getting caught into sectarian fanaticism. This is the fact we see in every religion in this age of quarrels and hypocrisy. Like one blind man leading other blind men, they all only fall into the deep ditches.

The fact is that living beings (called jivas or souls or spirits) do not belong to any religion, caste or race. Every jiva came from the same one God. They did not come from different Gods such as Hindu God, Christian God or Mohammedan God, etc.

Every jiva has only one intrinsic eternal divine nature (dharma) and hence called as Jaiva Dharma. This Jaiva Dharma is not a religion and does not belong to any religion. This Jaiva Dharma does not have any beginning or ending. It is eternal and had been followed in ancient times and will be continuing forever. So, the so-called religions are nothing but inventions and artificial societies.

The author of this small book has taken his journeys through many popular religions and finally convinced about the eternal Jaiva Dharma that is beyond all the religions which is the title of this book. Unlike the religions that will have a beginning and hence an ending, Jaiva Dharma has no beginning and hence no ending.

This book has been written in such a way that anyone can easily read and understand. We hope this will help anyone genuinely interested in knowing about the secret ancient wisdom and make one's life successful.

Thank you!

1. Why so many Religions?

We see that there are many religions in this world. It is said that as of now there are more than 200 known religions. Like many previous religions more religions may be coming and going. While the mundane religions exists by the will of the Lord for the jivas to grow in grades in spirituality, why do we have so many religions?

1.1. Ingredients of Religions

1.1.1. Three Modes

The ancient vedic scriptures mention that everything in our world is subjected to three modes of material nature. They are called sattvic (mode of goodness), rajasic (mode of passion) and tamasic (mode of ignorance). This applies to everything around us.

For example, even when we take a day, the morning time (3 am 11 am) is sattvic, daytime (11 am to 7 pm) is rajasic and the night-time (7 pm 3 am) is tamasic. Sattvic time boosts the efficiency of our brain, our studies and power of memory. Rajasic is the quality pertaining to our body and hard work. Tamasic is the quality pertaining to sleep and laziness.

Similarly, when we apply the three modes to us, the people are also classified into sattvic, rajasic and tamasic. Sattvic people tend to use their brain, study, memory and intelligence. Rajasic people tend to use their body and hard work in their lives. Tamasic people are found to be often lazy, sleepy and do not show

interest to excel in anything.

Last but very importantly, even the ancient scriptures are divided into tamasic, rajasic and sattvic scriptures. Sattvic people will be attracted to sattvic scriptures, rajasic people will be attracted to rajasic scriptures and tamasic people will be attracted to the tamasic scriptures.

1.1.2. Three Moods

Similar to the three modes of material nature playing on everyone, one's orientation towards selfish nature will also have effect on choosing a particular religion. Ancient scriptures say the following as the basic ingredients:

1. Asha (Selfish desires to ask from God)
2. Bhaya (Fear of God)
3. Kartavya Buddhi (Rituals and Fanaticism)

1.1.2.1. Asha

Most people go to places of worship to ask God to fulfill their needs and desires. They ask for their daily bread or whatever they want so that they can live happily and enjoy this life.

1.1.2.2. Bhaya

Almost all the religions do have this ingredient, but the degree can be different. This fear comes in the minds of people who are guilty of committing sins. Instead of correcting oneself from sinful activities such as meat eating, they want to put their sins onto the God, and some believe that the God had sent His only son to die

by taking the sins of the people. Many religions make the followers to be so afraid of God by teaching them that they will go to hell if they do not worship God daily for so many times.

1.1.2.3. Kartavya Buddhi

The rituals and strict rules of worship differs from religion to religions. In many religions as we see, these only develop fanaticism. The adulterated teachings by the so-called religions leaders create envy on other religions and most of the wars we see in this world are due to this fanaticism.

1.1.3. Religions from mix of Modes and Moods

We have seen three modes of material nature (sattvic, rajasic and tamasic), and three moods of worship (asha, bhaya and kartavya buddhi). Now, when we mix all these in different ratios, we get various religions!

For example, as there are 200 well known colors, we also have 200 well known religions.

Tamasic religions would say, "We should be afraid of God. Otherwise He may throw us into hell." Hence they preach to worship many times begging for their benefit so that they can escape from going to hell.

Rajasic religions encourage earning money and fame by worshipping God and then go to heaven and enjoy. Some even proclaim that this miserable world is the heaven.

But sattvic religions lead to reaching spiritual worlds starting with brahman which is beyond heavens that the

tamasic and rajasic religions are preaching to reach. Also it is to be understood that heavens are not permanent.

1.2. Jaiva Dharma is beyond Religions

Beyond all the above modes and moods of worship, there is a 'suddha sattvic' mood of worshiping the Supreme Lord. It is not a religion at all but is beyond all the religions, and we call this as 'Jaiva Dharma' or eternal religion for all the jivas (souls).

In this Suddha Sattvic mode and mood of worship, one does not ask any favor ("Asha") from, or have fear ("Bhaya") of God, or have fanaticism ("Kartavya"). In fact, the jiva in the highest mode and mood will only want to give himself to the Lord and make the Lord happy. In this there is no trace of asha, bhaya or kartavya buddhi.

1.3. Love God, Not Afraid of God

This Jaiva Dharma lets us worship the Lord with love and affection. Worship of Sri Radha Krishna belongs to this eternal dharma.

Only the devotees of Sri Radha Krishna can get this highest loving mood and there is no fear of God. Sri Krishna is the God of Love. This love and affection for the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna is beyond any mode or mood found in any religion.

Sri Radha Krishna devotees reject heaven, mukti or any kind of liberation. Many people cannot understand this topmost mood of devotion. So called religions cannot

even understand this. This is why Srimad Bhagavatam the topmost scripture that calls all the religions in this present age of kali (age of quarrel and hypocrisy) as cheating religions.

1.4. Types of Religions

All the known religions of the world can be divided into two types.

- 1) Vedic Religions
- 2) Non-Vedic Religions

Vedic religions have eternal root and promote closer loving devotion to God. On the other hand, non-vedic religions are temporary and often made due to the environmental circumstances and conditions at any time. They come like a mushroom, live for few thousands of years and vanish.

Non-vedic religions cannot worship God in the form of deities as those religions are based of fear of God and not love of God. Deity worship can only be done by the Vedic religions. Other religions are not allowed to worship deities.

The goal of Non-Vedic Religions is different. They are meant to bring the lower man up gradually. So, they may not teach about reincarnation, deity worship, and any of the higher realms above heavens. The only goal of Non-Vedic Religions is to go to heaven and be happy. The followers of Non-Vedic Religions may eat meat and drink alcohol and may not know the truths of the vast ocean of spiritual worlds.

Like the Vedas, Vedic religions have no beginning and no end. That is why it is called Jaiva Dharma. On the other hand, other religions have a beginning and therefore also an end. We see this in history itself. Anything that has a beginning must have an end.

1.5. The Truths of Idolatry

As far as idol worship is concerned, no other religion except the Jaiva Dharma based on the Vedas allows this. When we talk about idolatry, they try to mock us 'Oh are you idol worshipers?' Actually, they talk like this without spiritual knowledge. Even in religions that speak like this, they are indirectly worshiping idols. Christians worship the cross. Mohammedans venerate Mecca and the two black stones Hajar-al-Aswat in the Kabba, and the two-footed image of the holy Prophet Ibrahim called Makkam-Ibrahim. Many people say that those two sacred stones are the scratched Shiva Lingam. Researchers also say that they formerly worshiped the moon god (Lord Shiva wears the moon). Jews hold the Holy Wall as an object of worship. But for many religions 'money' is their biggest idol they worship!

A duly installed deity in a temple is like a post box. It is not just a stone statue. Only when we put the letter in a post box will it reach its destination. Otherwise, it doesn't go. The installed deity is like a post box. All the services we do to that deity go to the Lord.

1.6. Deity worship is not for everyone

If you see the history, Lord Krishna manifested Himself as deities to very advanced devotees. There are many

such self-manifested deities. Swami Haridasa, who lived at the time of Emperor Akbar, was given the deity called Banke Bihari in Nidhuvan, by the Supreme Lord Sri Radha Krishna Himself. We can still see this deity and the holy places where it happened. When Sripad Ramanujacharya called his deity as "vaa yen chella pillai" (meaning 'come my dear child'), the deity ran to him and embraced! We can still see this place of history. The Radha Raman deity of Sri Gopala Bhatta Goswami was self-manifested. We also see in the history that deities even talked and walked. Sakshi Gopal deity from Vrindavan walked all the way to Vidya Nagara of South India. So, when Supreme Lord Krishna Himself is supporting deity worship fully, then what is wrong in deity worship?

If the Lord is omnipresent (situated everywhere) and omnipotent (powerful to do anything), then how can it be difficult for Him to come in a form for us so we can connect with Him? We have fallen into this material world, and it is His mercy with which He helps us to connect back to Him via deity worship. In the most authentic Holy Scripture Srimad Bhagavatam (11.27.12), it is said that a deity of the Lord can appear in eight varieties of objects - stone, wood, metal, earth, paint, sand, the mind or jewels (*śailī dāru mayī lauhī, lepyā lekhyā ca saikatī, mano mayī maṇi mayī, pratimāṣṭa vidhā smṛtā*).

We also see in history where muslim invaders in India encountered many events that blew their ignorant beliefs. When the Arcot Nawab called Ali Khan invaded South India in 1740 AD and stole the golden deity from Adi Kesava temple of Thiruvattar in Tamil Nadu, his chief queen suddenly encountered serious and mysterious

illness with no cure at all. Then the deity appeared in the dream to the Nawab and demanded him to return the archa-vigraha (the deity he stole) back to the temple or else his queen would face death. The Nawab immediately returned the golden deity. The queen's illness vanished without a trace. With his strong faith in the deity, the Nawab donated many gifts including a very large golden crown to the deity. He fully believed that Adi Kesava deity in the temple was the 'Allah', the almighty God and hence named the mandap he built as a donation as 'Allah Mandap'. This mandap (small segment of the temple) can be seen even today.

We even hear that in the Holy Mecca they worship a deity resembling the Linga of Lord Siva surrounded with several other small deities as well. This indeed concurs with what the scholars are now saying that the moon god that they worshipped before, and also now, is indeed Lord Siva who has the crescent moon on his head.

The very important fact that we should remember is that, deity worship is not meant for every one, especially when one thinks that God is formless (nirakar), or believe that one should be afraid of God. If one does not want to connect to God by 'love' but with 'fear', then deity worship is surely not for them. This is the main reason that many modern religions based on fear discourage worshipping deities. They call them idols.

Everyone knows that jivas can never make a replica image of Supreme Lord. But he wants love from us, nor to be afraid of Him. Suppose a funny cartoon was drawn by a child about her father and gave it to him. Even though it looks like a scribbling, he takes it to his office where is the boss and keeps it on his table and shows it

to everyone with so much of happiness. While that boss felt so happy for that tiny cartoon of him drawn by his dear loving child, just think about what would happen if the same thing was done by one of his servants who has relation with 'fear' to his boss? If this servant also paints a cartoon of his boss and gives it to his master and says, "O boss. This is you!" What will happen? Surely, his job will be finished in that very same moment and will be fired! Why? A servant has a relation with his master in the mood of **fear** (not of love) and hence he can't do that.

So, any religion that has 'Fear of God' in their core, can never worship God in deity form. That was the reason their prophets forbade them to worship deities.

In contrast, highly advanced devotees even literally talk to the deities. We have so many historical evidences on this. Srila Vamsi Babaji was talking to his deities all the times. The Sakshi Gopala deity in Vrindavan talked and walked behind His dear devotee. As no surprise, we see an account of our Srila Gurudeva talking to Sri Radha Krishna deity in Mathura and the deity responded back and people witnessed.

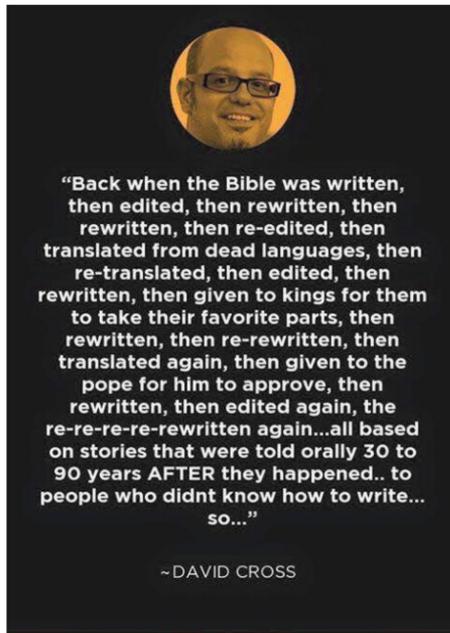
1.7. False Religions

About 40 years ago, I was visiting every religion to know who the Supreme Lord is and what the Supreme Truth is. Many things I heard from them only confused me. Here are few:

- 1) The world is flat
- 2) Animals do not have souls (according to the pre-1955

- Bible, even women did not have souls)
- 3) Animals can be killed due to lack of life.
 - 4) God is jealous
 - 5) There is no rebirth
 - 6) We should always fear God
 - 7) Eternal hell for those who have sinned more
 - 8) Satan is as powerful as God
 - 9) Do not worship God through idols
 - 10) The wage of sin is death

But how true all these things are can only be understood if one examines them with common sense and wholeheartedly. We read that the Catholic Christians of the day poisoned an Italian scientist named Galileo who argued that the world was not flat as opposed to the Bible at that time. Now we see that the Bible had been changed many times with changes, updates and even rewrites as of this date.



In the Bible we see many fables that have changed the beliefs of many people. In one of the fables we hear that satan assumed the form of a snake and deceived Eve tempting to eat the apple that God originally told not to eat. According to Genesis 3:6, Eve ate the fruit and then gave some to Adam.

The present day scholars find that the original Hebrew word 'Nahash' was wrongly translated to mean snake. Scholars say that the word 'Nahash' actually means 'shiny' or 'deceitful', and 'metallic luster' that attracts all.

Here, if we bring our vedic scriptures to compare, this fable maps to how maya tempted some of the jivas to enjoy the mayic lustrous material worlds and thus fell down as baddha jivas and suffer away from God.

Another fable we hear is about how Eve was made from a rib of a man. The Genesis 2:22-24 says, "From the rib, which Jehovah had taken from the man, made a woman, and brought her unto the man..."

But the scholars find that the Hebrew word 'tsela' has been wrongly translated into 'rib'. The word 'tsela' actually means 'side' or a part of a whole together.

If we bring vedic scriptures, an atma in its original form actually has no identity of male or female. Also when an atma falls down by the attraction and conditioned by maya, can become a man, woman or any of the 8.4 kinds of species.

So, it is very clear that this story was made up to make women less important than men, and thus the men could have control over the women.

One of the eternal vedic scriptures called Srimad Bhagavatam says that there will be many such self-interested and misinterpreted false religions and that one should throw them all away and follow only the para dharma or jaiva dharma which is beyond all the so-called religions:

dharmah projjhita-kaitavo 'tra
paramo nirmatsarāṇām satām
... (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.1.2)

"Throw away all deceiving religions and follow only para dharma as stated in Srimad Bhagavatam..."

Lord Sri Krishna also says the same thing in Srimad Bhagavad Gita (18.66):

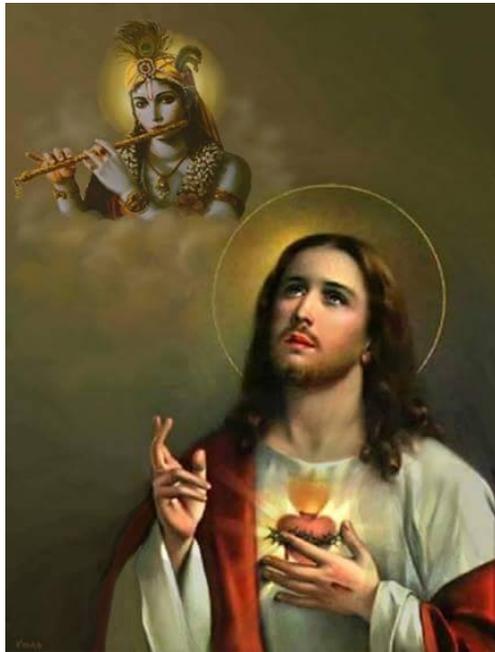
sarva-dharmān parityajya, mām ekaṁ śharaṇam vraja

"Abandon all religions and surrender to Me alone."

In fact, every religion is meant to take man a step more. Different religions are like different classes in any school. Living being can ascend only gradually. Jivas can go from atheism to as high as Krishna Bhakti which transcends all the religions.

The scriptures refer to atheists as two-legged beasts. Because their previous birth was some kind of animal. Above these atheists are those who worship ancestors and nature because at least they have a sense of higher power. The worshipers of the demi-gods are even better than those who worship their ancestors. But those who worship the Supreme Lord are the most superior and hence are above all worshipers.

2. Who is the Supreme Lord?



Who is that 'Father' in the Heaven?

2.1. Many Religions

Although there are more than 200 religions in this world, there is only one Supreme God. But every religion worships the same God in different ways under different names. We find that God has 17 names in the Bible and 99 names in the Quran. Jews say that God has 7 names. Thus each religion gives different names.

At the same time, there are so many philosophies and of which most of them are concocted ideas. Buddhists

claim that everything came from void (nothing) and will go back to void. This is called sunyavada. Another sect called advaita mayavadis claim that everything is God.

Due to the current age of quarrel and hypocrisy, everyone in this world is confused by the ferocity of Kali Yuga and we have split the same one God into hundreds of pieces such as Hindu God, Christian God, Mohammedan God, and the God for the Jews and so on.

All the monotheistic and famous religions that we see in this world are enslaved to position and wealth and are actually doing business. Money is the real God for them. They hide the supreme truths spoken by the God and create impure scriptures and confuse the world. Some fanatics even persecute the followers of other religions. We hear that the Christian Bible alone has been revised about 63 times. Similarly, Puranas have also been edited and adulterated.

2.2. Supreme Lord is not easy to know

But what is the truth? In the Bhagavad Gita, Sri Krishna said, "You may be able to count all the atoms in this entire cosmic creation. But you will never be able to know about Me, or My names or My glories. At the same time, I can give real wisdom to my dear devotees who surrender unto Me."

Most people in this world think of Lord Krishna as an avatar of Lord Vishnu. But Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has explained that the Vishnu Purana is not correctly conveying the absolute truth. Also as per the

Sandarbhas of Srila Jiva Goswami, we see that the real meaning of several words are found to be not translated by H.H. Wilson, a foreigner who translated the Vishnu Purana.

Knowing the Supreme Lord and the truth is not easy. This is why Lord Sri Krishna says this verse in Bhagavad Gita (9.11):

avajānanti mām mūḍhā. mānuṣīm tanum āśritam
param bhāvam ajānanto, mama bhūta-maheśvaram

"When I appear in this world in human form, fools will not know my real supreme position that I am the God of all the gods."

2.3. Why so many Gods?

Here you may ask, 'If God is one, why do people worship thousands of gods?' The truth can only be known by a thorough analysis from the scriptures.

The planet we live in, is one of the 14 levels contained in one of the innumerable Brahmandas (universes) emanated from the breathing of Lord Maha Vishnu. Scriptures say that there are 330 million demi-gods (devas) to maintain our universe. These gods are headed by Ishwaras as their chiefs, and above those Ishwaras are Maheswaras. None of them is the Supreme God. These gods can be compared to the ministers serving an emperor in a kingdom.

2.4. Who will worship Demi-gods?

We don't need to worship any of the demi-gods. There is only one king in a country. But he will have many

ministers. But there will be many people behind those ministers with profit motive. Similarly, if one is addicted to petty material desires, his mind will not go to the Supreme Lord. As Lord Krishna said in the Gita, his mind leads him to worship the demi-gods. This is a scientific fact. Only one who renounces material worldly desires will have the desire to worship the Supreme Lord.

kāmais tais tair hr̥ta-jñānāḥ
prapadyante 'nya-devatāḥ
taṁ taṁ niyamam āsthāya
prakṛtyā niyatāḥ svayā .. (Bhagavad Gita 7.20)

Sri Krishna says, "Whoever's intellect is stolen by material worldly desires, he will not worship Me directly. Instead, he worships My servants the Devas through rules and regulations to satisfy his petty desires. Thus, he is drawn away by his petty selfish desires and worships demi-gods instead of Me."

2.5. Supreme God is One

Hindu, Christian, and Mohammedan scriptures also present the Supreme Lord in many forms. But the Brahma Samhita says that even the Vedas cannot fully know the Supreme Lord (vedeshu durlabham - Ref Brahma Samhita 5.33).

That Supreme Lord said, 'I am beyond all the Vedas. He says that the Vedas cannot know Me. So we have to seek the scriptures beyond the Vedas. About 500 years ago Sri Krishna Himself incarnated as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and showed us such scriptures. He brought many rare scriptures from the eternal Akasha Saptha to

our world through the six Goswamis.

2.6. Who is the Supreme Lord?

Brahma Samhita, Srimad Bhagavatam, Sri Caitanya Charitamruta are the most superior of all the bhakti yoga scriptures. All of these say the very same truth firmly that Lord Krishna is the supreme lord:

Īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ
sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ
anādir ādir govindaḥ
sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam

“Kṛṣṇa who is known as Govinda is the Supreme Godhead. He has an eternal blissful spiritual body. He is the origin of all. He has no other origin and He is the prime cause of all causes.”

Sri Krishna also says the same thing in Bhagavad Gita:

ahaṁ sarvasya prabhavo
mattaḥ sarvaṁ pravartate
īti matvā bhajante mām
budhā bhāva-samanvitāḥ ... (Bhagavad Gita 10.8)

“I am the source of all spiritual and material worlds. Everything emanates from Me. The wise who perfectly know this engage in My devotional service and worship Me with all their hearts.”

Srimad Bhagavatam also states the same truth as "Krishna is the Supreme Lord Himself". Its first nine cantos say either Lord Vishnu or Lord Narayana the

greatest, but finally it says that all those are either expansions or the expansions of expansions of Lord Sri Krishna as below:

ete cāṁśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ
kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam
... (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.3.28)

So, Lord Krishna is the Svayam Bhagavan or the Supreme Lord.

3. Holy Names of Lord Krishna

Every religion speaks of the glories of the holy names of God. But very few know about the real glories of these names. Although the Supreme Lord is one, the potencies of His holy names are different.

3.1. Three types of Holy Names

Scriptures say that the unlimited holy names of God can be divided into 3 types.

3.1.1. Gauna (Ordinary) Nama

Jagadeesa, Allah, Jehovah, Ishwara, Lord, Paramatma, such names are Gauna names. These make us worship God with fear and reverence. Devotees who chant such names would prefer to get to heaven or liberation instead of going to hell. They are probably of tamasic or rajasic qualities. Due to lack of knowledge, many will kill other living beings and eat their flesh. But they do not understand that it is great sin. Although they may understand, they do not realize the truth because they are enslaved to their tongues. Their worship is entirely self-interested. People with excess of tamasic quality are also seen as religious fanatics.

3.1.2. Mukhya (Principal) Nama

These holy names help to worship the Lord with aishwarya (opulent) mood. Examples of important names are Lord Narayana, Lord Krishna, Lord Rama

and so on. These holy names help one to reach higher spiritual worlds. Devotees who chant such names are often possessed with sattvic qualities. They do not kill other living beings or eat any animal flesh. They prefer only sattvic foods.

3.1.3. Uttama (Prema) Nama

The highest of all the holy names of the Supreme Lord are the prema names. They are based by Prema Bhakti. Prema means unconditional love and affection to the Supreme Lord.

Radha Madan Mohan, Radha Ramana, Radha Govinda, Yashoda Nandhana, Syama Sundara, Gopi Natha are some examples in this category. Those who worship with these Uttama Namas are very pure with sattvic qualities. These prema names enable a devotee to attain the highest spiritual abodes way higher than heavens, siva loka, vaikunta and so on. The highest abodes of Supreme God namely Goloka and Goloka Vrindavana are always seated in their hearts.

3.2. Prema Devotees

Prema devotees are the topmost in bhakti yoga. There is no self-interest found in the prema devotees. They are beyond karma, knowledge and yoga and do not desire to obtain even liberation (moksha) which is the main goal of many religions.

jñāna-karma-yoga-dharme nahe kṛṣṇa vaśa
kṛṣṇa-vaśa-hetu eka — prema-bhakti-rasa
... (Caitanya Caritamṛta Adi 17.75)

“By following the paths of jnana, the speculative philosophical knowledge, karma the fruitive activities or mystic yoga to control the senses one cannot win Krsna. The only way of winning His love is through the taste of devotion in ecstatic love (prema).”

The sole aim of the devotees is always only to please Lord Krishna.

Anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyam, jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu- śīlanam bhaktir uttamā
... (Caitanya Caritamṛta Mad. 19.167)

“Uninterrupted loving service without any desire of jnana or karma but aiming only to give happiness to the Supreme God (Krsna), is Pure bhakti.”

Those who chant the Uttama Namas will rise further and further in Krishna Bhakti, and they will go higher to the spiritual level called Suddha Sattva, and even higher than that is Visuddha Sattva who will clearly realize the fact that Sri Krishna is not an avatar but the avatari, and Lord Vishnu and Sriman Narayana are all actually expansions of that Svayam Bhagavan Sri Krishna.

3.3. Glories of Hari Nama

3.3.1. Maha Mantra gives Prema Bhakti

If one obtains the Maha Mantra (the topmost hari nama) from a qualified and authorized guru and chants it continuously, one will attain Prema Bhakti to Lord Krishna. There is nothing more important in our lives than this.

3.3.2. Hari Nama destroys all Evils

In some countries, especially in South India, you may hear about witchcraft. There are many people affected by it. They subjugate the demons with mantras and earn money by harming people with those demons.

But no ghost or evil spirit can come near to one who chants Hari Nama daily.

3.3.3. Hari Nama chases away Demons

Ghosts and other Spirits are mentioned in Srimad Bhagavatam. The planet we live in is just below the Bhuvar Loka and the Pitra Loka. We cannot see these worlds with our material eyes.

Those who die an untimely death and those who worship their ancestors go and remain in this Pitra Loka for a short time. The evil spirits living in this loka can also trouble the human beings living on this earth. But if one is chanting Hari Nama, no evil spirits can approach.

Ashta Shakti Vinayaka or called Lord Ganapati (Vigneshwarar) is also the lord of many ghosts called ganas. That is why he is called Ganapati. In the supreme scripture called Srimad Bhagavatam (10.6.27-29), we see the mentioning of ganas, ghosts, goblins and vinayakas as follows:

ḍākinyo yātudhānyaś ca, kuṣmāṇḍā ye 'rbhaka-grahāḥ
bhūta-preta-piśācāś ca, yakṣa-rakṣo-vināyakāḥ

koṭarā revatī jyeṣṭhā, pūtanā mātrkādayaḥ
unmādā ye hy apasmārā, deha-prāṇendriya-druhaḥ

svapna-dr̥ṣṭā mahotpātā, vṛddhā bāla-grahās ca ye
sarve naśyantu te viṣṇor, nāma-grahaṇa-bhīravaḥ

“The evil witches known as dākinis, Yātudhānis and Kushmāndas are the greatest enemies of children, and the evil spirits like Bhutas, Pretas, Pisācas, Yakshas, Rākshasas and Vināyakas, as well as witches like Kotarā, Revati, Jyashtha, Putanā and Mātrika, are always ready to give trouble to the body, the life air and the senses, causing loss of memory, madness and bad dreams. Like the most experienced evil stars, they all create great disturbances, especially for children, but one can vanquish them simply by uttering Lord Vishnu's name, for when Lord Vishnu's name resounds, all of them become afraid and go away.”

For 10,000 Bhutas, there is one lead Pretas.

For 10,000 Pretas, there is one lead Vedala

For 10,000 Vedalas, there is one Brahma Rakshashi

For 10,000 Brahma Rakshasi, the leader is Lord Siva and Lord Ganapati (Lord of the Ganas).

So, we must be extremely careful whom we worship, because as Lord Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita, one who worships ghosts and spirits will go to their abodes when they die. They will not reach the abode of Supreme Lord Sri Krishna.

Holy names of Lord Krishna are extremely powerful. One who chants the names of Lord Krishna cannot be approached by any demons or devils. On the contrary, on hearing His holy names, they all will fly away.

We should not worship demons and ghosts as they also

eat flesh and drink alcohol. We should worship only Sri Radha Krishna as that worship is the purest and involves prema bhakti. Don't be afraid. Associate with a devotee who worships Sri Radha Krishna and you will be one of the most fortunate in this world.

3.4. Kaliyuga dharma: Chant Mahamantra

The scriptures highly praise the Hare Krishna Maha Mantra. In this Kali Yuga, due to the fierceness of Kali, no mantra except the maha mantra is effective:

harer nāma harer nāma
harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva
nāsty eva gatir anyathā ... (Brhan Nardiya Purana)

"In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy (kali yuga), the only means of deliverance is the chanting of the holy names of the Lord Hari (Krishna). There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way"

So, we can chant this great mantra Hare Krishna mantra and get all the benefits.

hare krishna hare krishna
krishna krishna hare hare
hare rama hare rama
rama rama hare hare

4. Origin and Quality of Souls

4.1 Origin of Jivas

All the living beings are called jivatmas. We are not our body or mind. No matter how many births we take, our atmas are always the same. When we die, we keep changing our bodies, just as one throws away a torn garment and puts on a new one. What is the origin of this jivatma? When did these appear?

Lord Krishna has three types of internal energies: (1) Antaranga Shakti, (2) Jiva Shakti, (3) Maya Shakti. The scriptures say that we all the jivas descended from the Jiva Shakti, one of the energies of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna.

It is from His Jiva Shakti that various jivas have arisen. His magical energy called Maya Shakti creates all the universes. But as infinite rays of light emanate from the sun, all the jivas emanate from the Jiva Shakti of Bhagavan Sri Krishna. So we all came from His internal energy and thus we, all the jivas are subordinate to the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna.

4.2 When did the Jivas Originate?

Now a question may arise: When did we the jivas originate from Lord Sri Krishna's Jiva Shakti and how old are we?

The answer is that our spiritual age is same as that of Lord Krishna which means that as Lord Krishna has no

beginning or ending, we also have no beginning and no ending. This is why in Bhagavad Gita we see this verse:

na jāyate mriyate vā kadācin
nāyaṁ bhūtvā bhavitā vā na bhūyaḥ
ajo nityaḥ śāśvato 'yaṁ purāṇo
na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre.. (Bhagavad Gita 2.20)

For the atma there is neither birth nor death at any time. He has not come into being, does not come into being, and will not come into being. He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain.

4.3 Eternal qualities of Jivas

While we are all emanated from the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna, we have also inherited some qualities from the Lord. Lord Krishna has 64 qualities. We have inherited 50 qualities out of them. However, above all the qualities of the jivas, one quality that binds us closely to Lord Krishna is the most important. What is it?

jīvera 'svarūpa' haya — kṛṣṇera 'nitya-dāsa'
kṛṣṇera 'taṭasthā-śakti' 'bhedābheda-prakāśa'

“It is the living entity’s constitutional position to be an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa.”

This relation that every jiva has with the Lord is the most important to know.

4.4 Jivas have no caste but Gunas

When all living beings originates from the Lord's energy, they were all pure to start with as purity is their eternal nature. But due to the independence of jivas some are fallen to the material worlds and repeatedly being born and dead thus wandering in billions of universes. This fallen condition happened to the jivas due to their desire to enjoy the material worlds away from the Lord. But the material worlds have so many miseries and one of them is the various mixture of three modes of material nature: sattvic (mode of goodness), rajasic (mode of passion) and tamasic (mode of ignorance).

When the jivas are subjected to the mixture of modes of material nature, they develop different qualities. These are called varnas or colors. These qualities are divided into four divisions. They are called brahmanas, ksatriyas, vaishyas and sudras.

Many people in this world are confused with the four kinds of labor of division as they tend to map them to the later evolved caste system that has been created by human beings. Caste is a major issue in almost all religions today. They are not to be confused with the four kinds of divisions by the qualities the jivas.

Many people after reading the Bhagavad Gita half-heartedly, claim that Lord Krishna created the caste system. But, in the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna is talking about 'varnas' - not about castes. Varnas means 'qualities' in Sanskrit.

cātur-varṇyaṁ mayā sṛṣṭam
guṇa-karma-vibhāgaśaḥ
tasya kartāram api mām
viddhy akartāram avyayam .. Bhagavad Gita 4.13

“According to the three modes of material nature and the work associated with them, the four divisions (varnas) of human society are created by Me. And although I am the creator of these system of universal division, you should know that I am yet the non-doer, being unchangeable.”

This varna is not something that a jiva is assigned with, but rather it comes from the character of the jiva as he/she develops. The scriptures say that by birth everyone is a sudra (janmana jayate sutrah). Then according to the will and quality of the jiva, he/she develops the particular guna.

We can see this fact in the world we live. All the human beings in the world can be divided into these 4 types based on their qualities:

- 1) Those who live by using intelligence
- 2) Those who live by using strength
- 3) People who live by trading (distribution).
- 4) Those who live by manual labor

Wherever we go in this world we can find these 4 types of people. It has nothing to do with caste. This is called "Division of Labor."

If we take all the people of this world, we see this:

10% Teachers (Brahmins)
20% Military and Chiefs (Ksatriyas)
30% Merchants (Vaisyas)
40% do the jobs (Sudras)
Total 100%

In our body also we can find this division:

10% Head (intellect)

20% Chest and arms (combat)

30% Abdominal (distribution)

40% lower back and legs (to work or move)

Total 100%

So, what Lord Krishna said has nothing to do with the later developed caste we see. Varna or division of labour is the truth all over the world. Castes have nothing to do with these varnas (qualities).

All these divisions and assigned with proper functions is critical to run this world and our body. For example, we cannot let our feet do the work of the brain and the feet to do the work of the brain. If we do that we will not be alive even for a moment. Similarly, sudras cannot be made to work as Brahmins and Brahmins cannot be made to work as sudras. Because their varnas (qualities) are different.

As we also see above, these varnas do not come to anyone by birth even though the karmic results from previous births may provide a suitable family to be born to start with. When we analyze the scriptures, we see that varna is not inherited from one's birth but comes from the quality one develops.

5. Worships and Destinations

5.1. Different kinds of Worshipers

As we see there are so many religions in this world, every religion has its own way of worship. Some worship the prophets, some worship ancestors, some worship demi gods (devas), and only few are found to be worshipping the supreme lord. Every kind of worship has its own characteristic and destination. Srimad Bhagavad-Gita classifies these worships into four categories.

yānti deva-vratā devān
pitṛn yānti pitṛ-vratāḥ
bhūtāni yānti bhūtejyā
yānti mad-yājino 'pi mām .. (Bhagavad Gita 9.25)

"Those who worship the demigods will reach the abodes of the demi-gods (heavens); those who worship the ancestors go to the lokas of the ancestors (pitra loka); those who worship ghosts and spirits will take birth among such beings; and those who worship Me will live with Me in My own abode."

Now let us analyze this verse in details.

5.1.1. Worshipers of Ghosts and Spirits

bhūtāni yānti bhūtejyā

In the above verse, it has been said by Lord Sri Krishna that whoever worships ghosts or spirits, will be born among the ghosts or spirits. This is the lowest and most

degraded form of worship. We also find many truths about ghosts, spirits and ganas (goblins) from the scriptures. Most of these are said to possess demoniac qualities.

When someone worships ghost, his soul will be snatched away by the ghost at the time of death and he will become part of the group of the ghost. Ghosts are wandering and collecting souls to be added to its group. Sometimes these ghosts can kill the worshipper earlier than the destined time of death. These ghosts live in a loka (abode) called Bhuvar loka. These varieties of groups of ghosts are also assigned with hierarchies of powers and positions as below:

For every 10,000 ghosts there is one leader called gana
For every 10,000 ganas there is one leader called pretha
For every 10,000 prethas there is one leader called vedala

For every 10,000 vedalas there is one leader called brahma rakshasi

For 10,000 such brahma rakshasis are under Lord Siva and Lord Ganapati (meaning: Lord of the ganas).

Ganapati means leader of all ganas (ghosts). As we see in Hinduism there are so many people worship Ganapati and Lord Siva.

In the shaivites tradition, we see even today that the shaivites sing some hymns from their Puranas at the death beds of dying persons wishing 'to become a ghost and join Lord Siva or Lord Ganapati.' This is actually a very unfortunate and dangerous wish. We should be completely away from these tamasic worships involving ghosts, ganas and goblins.

5.1.2. Worshipers of Ancestors

Worshipping the ancestors who have already passed away is a practice that we can find in many countries. Pitra Loka is the abode which is very similar to the heavens of demi-gods where the dead ancestors live for some period before they are taken to the judgement by Lord Yama and assigned to punishments or rewards like hell or heaven. However, after those they will be born again in the material worlds.

We also hear stories told by those who temporarily left their body, but they returned to their body. These cases are called Near Death Experiences (NDEs). These NDEs used to claim that they saw the heaven and met their ancestors living there. Actually, it is not heaven but it is the Pitr-Loka. This is what is mentioned in the Bhagavad Gita Sloka.

pitṛṇ yānti pitṛ-vratāḥ: (Gita 9.25)

After passing some heavenly time with the ancestors in the pitr-Loka, when Yamaraja calls them, they will be destined to hell to suffer for their sins and enjoy in the heaven for their pious deeds. There is no eternal heaven or hell. For the good deeds one enjoys in the heavens and for the bad deeds one suffers in the hell.

The duration of heavenly stay depends on the number of good deeds (good karma) done by the jiva. For the sinful acts (bad karma) such as eating meat, etc. they suffer in the hells. After these, he will be born again in any of the 8.4 million types of living beings.

So, we should understand that the hells and heavens

are not permanent. Actually, the heavens are the headquarters of the demi-gods who maintain any particular universe (brahmanda). Thus, every brahmanda has its own heaven. Depending on the mixture of good and bad deeds one commits, there will be mixture of heavens and hells. Eternal hell or heaven is a manufactured idea of some religions.

5.1.3. Worshipers of the Gods

Even though all the material worlds are created and annihilated by the will of the Supreme Lord, He does not directly participate in the creation or destruction. Instead, His servants who are called demi-gods make the creation or destruction. Maha Vishnu who is an expansion of Lord Krishna and Lord Brahma are the primary and secondary gods of creation. Lord Siva is the god of destruction. But Lord Krishna is above all these gods.

All the material worlds are managed by these demi-gods called Ishwaras. There are so many people who worship these demi-gods. However, all those worships are passed up to the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna as He is saying in the Bhagavad Gita.

The worshippers of demi-gods are so many in the material worlds. They worship the demi-gods because of wanting to get materialistic favors. Where do all those worshippers go when they leave their bodies?

yānti deva-vratā devān (Gita 9.25)

Lord Krishna says, "Those who worship demi-gods will attain the abodes of those demi-gods".

5.1.4. Worshipers of the Supreme Lord

So, if one wants to reach Supreme Bhagavan Lord Sri Krishna, he should worship only Lord Krishna.

yānti mad-yājino 'pi mām (Gita 9.25)

Lord Krishna says, "But one who worships Me alone attains Me and live with Me in My own eternal abode".

So here we must think carefully. Why do we worship gods? As we explained earlier, we should know that we have selfish desires to enjoy in this material world and the demi-gods are empowered to bestow temporary bestowments.

5.2. *Heaven is not Permanent*

Many religions wrongly preach that the attainment of heaven is the ultimate goal. People go to hell or heaven depending on their sins. But neither heaven nor hell is permanent. After suffering for sins committed, or after enjoying in the heaven for the pious deeds as stated in the Gita, they will be re-born again in somebody in some world.

It is very important to remember that going to heaven is a very silly thing compared to going to the abode of Lord Krishna which cannot be attained by ordinary materialistic minded devotion.

6. The Topmost Worship

6.1. *Worshippers of the Supreme Lord*

Who will worship Lord Krishna? Lord Krishna is the lord of love and love. If one takes interest in the worship of Lord Krishna, it means that he has done immeasurable pious deeds in his past and present births. Krishna Bhakti (devotion to Lord Krishna) is not available even to the gods. It is extremely rare:

dharmācāri-madhya bahuta 'karma-niṣṭha'
koṭi-karma-niṣṭha-madhya eka 'jñānī' śreṣṭha
koṭi-jñāni-madhya haya eka-jana 'mukta'
koṭi-mukta-madhya 'durlabha' eka kṛṣṇa-bhakta
(Caitanya Caritamṛta Mad 19.147-148)

Among the followers of Vedic dharma, most of them follow the process of karma and karma yoga (fruitive activity). Out of millions of such people, there may be one who is wise (jnani). Out of many millions of such wise persons, only one may become liberated (mukta), and out of many millions of such liberated persons, a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa is very rarely found.

From this we know the ultimate supremacy of Krishna Bhakti towards Supreme Lord Sri Krishna.

6.2. *Worship of Krishna and Demi Gods*

Probably many people would have worshiped some demi-god before coming to Krishna Consciousness. The first question they ask us is this: "If I leave other gods

and worship Krishna now, won't those gods get angry on me?"

But actually all the gods are servants of Lord Sri Krishna. What did Arjuna see when the Lord gave Arjuna a vision of His Visvarupa form? He saw all the gods as His limbs serving the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. So it is enough if one worships Lord Shri Krishna. All the gods are automatically satisfied.

Srimad Bhagavatam explains this to us by taking a tree as an example. A tree with the root and base trunk has its various branches and leaves. So where do we water that tree? We pour water only on the root of the tree. Only then can all the branches and leaves grow. Conversely, if we water every leaf and branch, the tree will literally die.

yathā taror mūla-niṣecanena
tṛpyanti tat-skandha-bhujopaśākhāḥ
prāṇopahārāc ca yathendriyāṇāṃ
tathaiva sarvārhaṇam acyutejyā
... (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.31.14)

“As pouring water on the root of a tree energizes the trunk, branches, twigs and everything else, and as supplying food to the stomach enlivens the senses and limbs of the body, simply worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead through devotional service automatically satisfies the demigods, who are parts of that Supreme Personality.”

The same is the case with our body. We do not feed each organ individually. We only give food to the stomach. In contrast, what happens if we feed our nose,

ears, feet, and hands individually? We will not survive! Similarly, if we just worship Lord Krishna, all the devas who are His limbs are instantly happy and satisfied.

So what is the truth? If one worships Lord Krishna it is equal to worshipping 'all' the gods. Lord Krishna Himself makes this clearer in Bhagavad Gita. He says that even if one worship other deities, all that worship actually goes to Krishna.

Whatever gods we worship, they cannot claim that worship as their own. They should give it to their Lord Shri Krishna. Lord Krishna also says that even if we worship gods and goddesses, it is against the rule (vidhi) or norm, and the only proper way is to worship the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna.

6.3. So, Whom should we Worship?

Some people, especially the Mayavadis, say the following:

1. They say: "One can worship any god. Since Lord Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita that all worship goes to Lord Krishna, how does it matter as whom do we worship?"

Here is our response:

Lord Krishna says in Srimad Bhagavad Gita 9.23:

ye 'py anya-devatā-bhaktā
yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ
te 'pi mām eva kaunteya
yajanty avidhi-pūrvakam

“Those who are devotees of other gods and who worship them with faith actually worship only Me, O son of Kuntī, but they do so in a ‘wrong’ way.”

Why is this a wrong way? All the gods are the servants of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. Therefore the gods cannot accept any worship as their own. Gods should pass all the worship they get to their Lord Sri Krishna. In the same way, a guru who gets the worship from his disciples should pass it up to his own guru and so on. Finally, it reaches Lord Sri Krishna. This is the divine procedure.

2. They say: "Just as all rivers eventually merge into the ocean, all living beings ultimately go to the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna."

Here is our response:

Lord Sri Krishna does not say that all the living beings will reach His personal abode. Instead, let us see what He says in Bhagavad Gita:

yānti deva-vratā devān
pitṛn yānti pitṛ-vratāḥ
bhūtāni yānti bhūtejyā
yānti mad-yājino 'pi mām .. (Bhagavad Gita 9.25)

"Those who worship the demigods will take birth among the demigods (ie they go to their heavens); those who worship the ancestors go to the lokas of the ancestors (pitra loka); those who worship ghosts and spirits will take birth among such beings; and those who worship Me will live with Me in My own abode."

What does this mean for us? Whoever one worships, all worship goes to Lord Krishna. But only one who worships Lord Krishna attains Him.

There are also verses in Srimad Bhagavatam that explains this more. One takes an example of a mountain, cloud, rain, river and sea. A worshiper of other god is compared to a mountain. The clouds are the procedures of worship of demi-gods. The rain is like the worship of those gods. All their prayers flow like a river towards the ocean. Lord Krishna is compared to the ocean. Here, we see that the mountain (the one who worships other gods) does not reach the ocean while all their worship reaches the ocean!

Now looking at the verse above (Gita 9.25), it makes complete sense. So, worshipers of demi-gods go only to their lokas whereas all their prayers go to Lord Krishna.

And Lord Krishna also says in the Bhagavad Gita (7.23), that only the unintelligent people will worship demi-gods instead of worshipping the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna:

antavat tu phalaṁ teṣāṁ
tad bhavaty alpa-medhasāṁ
devān deva-yajo yānti
mad-bhaktā yānti mām api

“Men of small intelligence worship the demigods, and their fruits are limited and temporary. Those who worship the demigods go to the planets of the demigods, but My devotees ultimately reach My supreme planet.”

6.4. Krishna, Vishnu and Narayana

Although Visuddha Sattva texts such as Brahma Samhita and Srimad Bhagavatam say that Sri Krishna is the Supreme Lord and He is the source of the Vishnu and Narayana expansions and thus He is the avatari, some Karma Sastras say that Sri Krishna is an incarnation of Sriman Narayana or sometimes Lord Vishnu.

Visuddha Sattva texts say that Sri Krishna's abode is beyond all the Vaikuntha planets where Sriman Narayana is residing. But when Lord Krishna descends to our world Sriman Narayan and all Vishnus also come with Him. While the Vaidhi Marga looks at Lord Krishna from the side of Sriman Narayana who is the main object of Vaidhi Bhakti, the Raga Marga sees the truth from the side of Lord Sri Krishna. While the ultimate goal of Vaidhi Marga is to attain moksha in Vaikunta and serve Lord Narayana in dasya mood, the Raga Marga throws away even the mukti and this does not ask for any favour from Lord Krishna.

6.5. Krishna Bhakti alone is the Highest

Thus, worship of Lord Krishna in Raga Marga is the highest and very sacred. There is no other higher form of worship than this.

The Visuddha Sattva sastras say that if one has devotion to the Lord Shri Krishna in raganuga, he is considered superior to all the gods. He doesn't need to obey anyone else (Srimad Bhagavatam 11.5.41).

devarsi-bhutāpta nṛṇām pitṛṇām

na kinkaro nāyam ṛṇi ca rājan
sarvātmāna yah saranam saranyam
gato mukundam parihṛtya kartam

“One who completely surrenders to Sri Kṛṣṇa, the affectionate protector of the surrendered souls, no longer remains indebted to the gods, forefathers (ancestors), other living beings, kinsmen, or guests. He is not subordinate to anyone, and he is not obliged to serve anyone.”

It is said that it is enough just one Krishna devotee appears in a family, because he bestows liberation to everyone in that family. It is also written in the scriptures that if such a person becomes an advanced ‘pure’ devotee of Krishna, the ancestors in the upper world will jump and dance in joy of attaining liberation (moksha).

According to Sri Padma Purana, there are four authorized sampradayas in this world. They are Sri Sampradaya, Brahma Sampradaya, Rudra Sampradaya and Kumara Sampradaya. Even these Sampradayas do not know many facts about Lord Krishna or His abode called Goloka Vrindavan.

As stated in the Bhagavad Gita, and in all the Sattvic and Suddha Sattvic Puranas, there is no God greater than Lord Krishna. In the first nine chapters of Srimad Bhagavatam, the greatest of all Puranas, Sri Vishnu and Sriman Narayana are said to be supreme.

But when we reach the tenth canto, everything changes. The nine cantos so far are meant to prepare the devotees, saying that the Supreme Lord is Sri Krishna, and that the three forms of Vishnu, Sriman Narayana

and all incarnations are expansions (amsa) or expansions of expansions from the Lord Sri Krishna. This is also mentioned even in the first canto itself.

ete cāṁśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ
kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam
... (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.3.28)

“All the incarnations are either plenary portions or portions of the plenary portions of the Lord, but Lord Sri Krishna is the original Personality of Godhead”

So, worshipping Lord Sri Krishna is the highest of all the worships in all the three worlds!

7. Four Pillars of Krishna Bhakti

We have seen so far that worshipping Lord Krishna is the highest. But to engage in this worship the following four rules must be observed.

These four rules are like the four pillars of Krishna Bhakti. The Sastras say that wherever there are sinful activities like eating meat, drinking alcohol, gambling, and having extramarital affairs, there exists the cruel forms of kali who drags one down to the hell.

7.1. No Meat Eating

Here is the first rule. No meat eating. In Krishna Consciousness, eating meat, fish and eggs should be avoided. Because it involves killing other lives. Eating meat is also very harmful to our body and mind. We are what we eat. The food we eat affects not only our body but also our mind, intellect and covers our soul away from spiritual awakening.

Any religion that advocates meat-eating is not a pure religion. These religions can never take us to the higher spiritual world. Instead they will throw us into hell. In Tirukkural, an ancient South Indian poet called Valluvar has said this very beautifully in his famous couplets.

“One who has taken an owe not to eat meat will be respected even by Lord Yama who is the god of judgement for hell and heaven. The one who does not eat meat is not even going to be approached by Lord Yama” - (Tirukural 326)

7.2. No Intoxication

Here is the second rule. No intoxication. Alcohol not only affects one's brain but also affects the whole body and mind. Hence drinking alcohol or any stimulant is prohibited in Krishna Consciousness. It is also better to give up drinking coffee and tea if one is serious in worshipping Krishna. Some religions openly support the consumption of alcohol even in places of worship. In fact consuming alcohol will destroy the family, peace and surely lead one to hell.

Regarding abstinence from alcohol, the South Indian poet Valluvar says this:

“If one consumes alcohol, he is not to be called even as a man. That person is condemned and thrown out of the society like an animal” ... (Thirukural 922)

7.3. No Gambling

Here is the third rule. No gambling. In this world there are many ways people engage in speculation and betting money. So many casinos and clubs promote this evil. The mind of the gambler is very dirty and cannot have spiritual awakening. He aims only at making gains. Bhakti, especially Krishna Bhakti, will never come to him. So, one must stop gambling. The same South Indian poet Valluvar says this about gambling:

‘If one spends his time in a place of gambling, it will destroy his wealth; It spoils even a good family.’ - (Tirukural 937)

7.4. No Un-marital Relationship

Here is the fourth rule. No man-woman relation outside one's marriage. A man should be very restrained in physical relations between man and woman. Do not have physical relations with anyone before marriage. After marriage, one should not have any relationship outside of marriage. The same South Indian poet Valluvar says this about this as well:

“One who does not even look at the wife of another is a very noble person. He will be respected by everyone.” - (Thirukkural 148)

7.5. Hari Nama purifies the heart

One can easily get rid of all the above bad habits by constantly chanting the Maha Mantra. By chanting the names of Lord Hari, the heart is purified and all the above mentioned bad habits are automatically vanished.

8. Importance of clean diet

8.1. *You are what you eat*

We can easily predict a person's temperament from the food he eats and hence the pro-verb, "You are what you eat" is the golden language. The gross part of the food we eat nourishes our body and the subtle part nourishes our mind. The rest of the fecal matter passes out.

If one eats impure foods like meat, fish, eggs, alcohol, he will get an impure body and an impure mind. Only eating sattvic food leads to a clean body and a clean mind. Devotion can arise only in a pure mind.

ahāra suddhau sattva suddhih
satva suddhau dhruva smrtih
smrti lambhe sarva granthī
nām vipra mokshah.....(Chandokya Upanisad 7.26.2)

“By eating sanctified food, one's mind is purified. By the purification of mind, one can constantly think of God and attain the real goal, the spiritual perfection.”

It is so alarming that many religions in this world support the consumption of meat, fish, eggs and alcohol. They shamelessly eat these unclean foods even in their worship and temples. Some claim that by reciting some words it becomes pure. This is cheating. They are impure religions. It is written in Srimad Bhagavatam that such religions will be popular in this age of Kali.

Foods can be divided into three types: sattvic foods, rajasic foods and tamasic foods. These are described in the Bhagavad Gita.

āyuh sattva balārogya
sukha priti vivardhanāh
rasyāh snigdhaḥ sthirā hrđyā
āhārāh sātṽika priyāh ... (Bhagavad Gita 17.8)

“Foods in the mode of goodness increase the duration of healthy life, purify one's existence and give strength, health, happiness and satisfaction. Such nourishing foods are sweet, juicy and palatable. ”

katv amla lavanāty ushna
tikshna ruksha vidāhinah
āhārā rāja sasyeshtā
duhkha sokā maya pradāh ... (Bhagavad Gita 17.9)

“Foods that are too bitter, too sour, salty, pungent, dry and hot, are liked by people in the modes of passion. Such foods cause pain, distress, and disease.”

yāta yāmam gata rasam
puti paryushitam ca yat
ucchishtam api cāmedhyam
bhojanam tāmasya priyam ... (Bhagavad Gita 17.10)

“Foods cooked more than three hours before being eaten, which is tasteless, stale, putrid, decomposed and unclean, is food liked by people in the mode of ignorance.”

Meat, fish and eggs are all impure substances. They are not even food. Onion and garlic do not come in sattvic

foods. As they attract and harbor bacteria, it becomes even worse. If one eats garlic and onion, he will become dull and lazy. Slowing down of the brain due to eating onion and garlic can be clearly seen on an ECG.

8.2. Onion and Garlic are Tamasic Foods

If one comes on the path of Krishna Bhakti, he will soon give up eating garlic and onions. Even when one joins an Ashtanga yoga class, they will give us a great commandment not to eat garlic and onions. But most people don't know its reason.

Apart from that, tamasic foods like onions, garlic, mushrooms should be also avoided as they belong to the family of fungus. One may ask why not to eat onions and garlic. There are many reasons. The bad body odor of onion and garlic is only one of the many reasons.

Around 1955, when airplanes were first used to carry passengers, a rule imposed on pilots was that they should not eat garlic or onions through 72 hours before the flight. The reason was that the onions and garlic would make the brain dull to respond to quick actions when flying in the sky. A pilot could fly only after passing a breath test. But now with computers this rule has been removed.

Apart from this, garlic contains a dangerous substance called Sulphone Hydroxyl. It penetrates the very delicate brain wall and dulls the brain. Scientists have now discovered this great fact. The Western scientist Dr. Beck who invented the EEG, has done extensive research on this and says that garlic and onions are

actually poisons, enemies of mental health, and should not be even used as a medicine.

Few references:

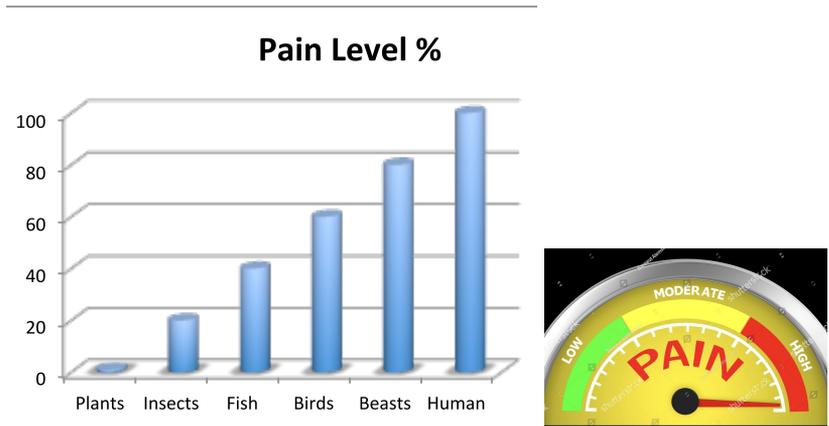
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<https://www.isical.ac.in/~goutam.paul/onion.pdf>

8.3. Killing

Some religions wrongly say that animals do not have soul and hence they can be killed for food. Even in the Bible, until it was revised in 1955, women had no soul. These are certainly not God-given words. According to Jaiva Dharma, every living being has life. But there is a difference in their wakefulness. Because there is a difference in their nervous system development. How much pain we feel when we kill a living thing depends on the development of the nervous system of its body.



Plants do not have a nervous system. So, there is no sin in consuming them. Many meat eaters think they are

smart and even argue with vegetarians that they are killing plant life. But now the truth is understood. Plant food is sinless. Because it has no nervous system it has no pain. However, in the Bhagavad Gita Lord Krishna says that even plant food should be eaten only after offering to the Lord Because the Lord turns it into prasadam (blessings). When we eat prasadam, it gives us a clean spiritual body and especially a spiritual mind.

Unlike plants, the human nervous system is more fully developed. So if one kill a human being, the law give severe punishment to the individual. Just because animals do not have power to speak or protect, people kill and eat them in the names of religions and turn their stomachs into grave-yards. According to the law of karma, they all will go to hell.

All living beings are His children before the Lord. While the Bible says, "Thou shall not kill", they are the ones promoting animal slaughters. Human beings are supposed to protect the animals, not to kill and eat them.

Lord Krishna gives every jiva an opportunity to get the form of a human being. Attaining a human body is extremely difficult. Only a human birth gives the opportunity to go back to the Lord.

Hence only human beings are bound by karmic actions. So, if they kill other jivas they undergo sinful karmic reactions. Only animals do not have karmic reactions. Animals may kill another animal for food. It is the rule laid down by the nature. According to this rule, one animal becomes food for another animal. But that rule does not apply for human beings.

8.4. Spiritual Diet Rules

If one wants to worship Sri Radha Krishna at home, he must first take initiation from a Guru. Sri Radha Krishna worship cannot be done without initiation.

And much effort is required in terms of diet. In the worship of Sri Radha Krishna, only sattvic food shall be consumed. Tamasic and Rajasic foods are sinful in Krishna Consciousness. Meat, fish, eggs, alcohol are all sinful foods. They are also very tamasic foods. They never have a place in Krishna Consciousness.

9. Danger of Mayavada

9.1. *Mayavada is a False Philosophy*

What is Mayavada? It is one of the many hypothesis proposed by several scholars and thinkers of ancient India. “Vada” means a hypothesis (like educated guess) which can be retained or rejected based on a proof, or an argument based on a proposed theory with well established explanation, but lacking proof. It is not necessarily the truth. In India and all over the world, there are many people follow this mayavada.

According to Mayavada, everyone and everything is God, and ‘Brahman’ is the only reality that even God appears from ‘Maya’. They would say, ‘You are god, I am god, everyone is god.’ They also say that this world is not real. They argue that this world simply does not exist. This theory of illusion was proposed and taught by Shripad Shankaracharya. But all the later Vaishnava Sampradaya Acharyas argued and defeated this mayavada theory. However, but still this mayavada is everywhere in the world.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu came to give Krishna Bhakti to living beings by eradicating this mayavada, which is another form of Buddhist Nihilism. Lord Caitanya also strongly warned that if one reads the mayavada books such as Viveka Sudamani by Sripad Shankaracharya, his devotion will be totally destroyed. So, this mayavada is very dangerous. We also read in Sri Chaitanya Caritamruta that Lord Krishna himself made Lord Shiva to incarnate as Sripad Shankaracharya to teach

mayavada to separate those who are not willing to serve Krishna with devotion. Following is what we see in the Shiva Purana, where Lord Krishna instructs Lord Shiva:
dwaparadāu yuge pudhva kalaya manusatisu
svakamāih kalpithais tvam ca
janan mad vimukkan kuru

"You shall appear in the Kali Yuga which follows the Dvapara Yuga, and give false (imaginary) meanings to the words of the Vedas, and separate those who are not My devotees from Me."

And this is what we find Lord Shiva saying to Goddess Parvati in the Padma Purana:

māyāvādān asacchāstrāṃ pracchannāṃ baddha ucyate
mayaiva kathitaṃ devī kalau brāhmaṇarūpiṇā

'I will teach the asad sastra of mayavada to those who have asura intellects who are not devoted to Krishna and I will separate them away from Krishna' - (Padma Purana 6.236.7)

Therefore, Shiva Purana, Padma Purana, Chaitanya Caritamṛta all tell this same truth.

9.2. Truth about Brahman

We can find about Brahman in many higher scriptures. We read that Brahman is just the effulgence emanating from the spiritual body of Lord Krishna.

brahma — āṅga-kānti tāṅra, nirviśeṣa prakāśe
sūrya yena carma-cakṣe, jyotirmaya bhāse

The manifestation of impersonal Brahman is simply the rays of Krsna's spiritual bodily effulgence. It is like the sun. When the sun is seen by ordinary eyes, it appears to only consist of effulgence. Similarly, when we try to see Bhagavan we are unable to penetrate his effulgence to see the beautiful form of Krsna within. Rather we are blinded by the powerful rays of the impersonal brahman.” - (Caitanya Caritamṛta Madhya 20.159)

According to mayavada, there is nothing other than or higher than Brahman. According to mayavada, even Bhagavan comes from Brahman by the power of Maya. If only Brahman is real, then where does this Maya come from? Indeed, God is the source of Brahman which is just the tejas (effulgence) emanating from the spiritual body of Supreme Lord Sri Krishna.

In the example of sun and its light, the sun is the source of the light and light comes from the sun. Bhagavan Sri Krishna is like the sun and brahman is the spiritual effulgence emanating from His body.

Māyāvāda also teaches that none of these material worlds are real. They argue that it does not exist. But the truth is that material worlds are real as they are from the creation of the Lord but they are not permanent.

According to mayavada, there is no difference between Jiva Atma and Bhagavan (Paramatma). But in reality, the living beings are not the Supreme Lord. Atmas originate from Lord Krishna's Jiva Shakti. The living beings resemble the Lord in some qualities but differ in many ways from the Lord in quantity. If the Supreme Lord is a great fire, then the living beings are like the little sparks that come out of that huge fire.

Not only Sripad Madhvacarya and Sripad Ramanujacharya, but many Vaishnava Acharyas and sages have clearly stated that Jivatma and Paramatma are not identical. Even then, so many people are being attracted to this illusory theory of mayavadism.

This world is like an ocean filled with so many crocodiles of many philosophies and manufactured doctrines such as mayavada. Only who is fortunate can take shelter of a genuine guru who gives the genuine knowledge and cross this ocean.

10. Karma, Jnana, Yoga

10.1. Which Yoga is better?

While reading Bhagavad Gita, we learn about many topics such as Dharma, Karma. Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Ashtanga Yoga, Bhakti Yoga. People who have read these may say that Karma Yoga, Ashtanga Yoga or Jnana Yoga is best depending on their spiritual condition.

But when one reads the Bhagavad Gita deeply, in each of its chapters, at the end Lord Krishna invariably says that Bhakti Yoga is the supreme. So in reality, Karma Yoga, Ashtanga Yoga and Jnana Yoga are all only stepping stones to Bhakti Yoga and without Bhakti one cannot attain any kind of Moksha. While Karmis reach heaven and hell, wise men reach Brahman. But these are not ideal goals and hence does not attract the Lord. Only pure devotion to Lord Krishna can attract the Lord.

jñāna-karma-yoga-dharme nahe kṛṣṇa vaśa
kṛṣṇa-vaśa-hetu eka — prema-bhakti-rasa
... (Caitanya Caritamṛta Adi 17.75)

“By following the paths of jnana, the speculative philosophical knowledge, karma the fruitive activities or mystic yoga to control the senses one cannot win Kṛṣṇa. The only way of winning his love is through the taste of devotion in ecstatic love.”

10.2. Being cheated by Ashta Siddhi

But what is the condition of Ashtanga Yogis? Many people try to practice Ashtanga Yoga, but it is very difficult to practice in this Kaliyuga, The ashtanga yogis starting from Yama, and transcends to Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, and attain Ashta Siddhi when they reach the stage of Dharana. After that comes meditation and samadhi. It is Lord Krishna who actually gives the insignificant Ashta Shakti in the stage of Dharana.

10.3. Ashta Siddhi is like a Dog Bone

But how good is this ashtanga yoga? Why does one do Ashtanga Yoga? There are eight kinds of power an ashtanga yogi can get. So those people who want to get ashta siddhic power will be running after this. These people have no desire to render devotional services to Lord Krishna. So, Lord Krishna, who cannot be known by the Vedas or any gods, deceives him. How does He cheat the ashtanga yogis? He throws a bone like insignificant power at the yogi.

Here is an example to understand. Suppose a thief wants to break into a house guarded by a dog at night. He throws a piece of bone at the dog. When the dog gets that piece of bone, which is not useful, it gnaws on it and relishes it. It thinks that the blood coming from its mouth is thought to be coming from the bone. At that time, the thief goes inside the house and finishes his job. Ashta Siddhi is just like this dog-bone.

10.4. Ashta Siddhi is Illusion

This ashta shakti like a dog bone the yogi gets, will now start to work. He will use this to make tricks on the people such producing ash from nowhere, bringing things to appear from nowhere and he can even take copies of himself and appears in many places at the same time. Like this he will gather so many innocent people.

Eventually this ashta siddhi will even make the yogi to say that he himself is the God. He can even give illusory shows showing that even Lord Krishna Himself is subordinate to him! Even though what he shows is not Lord Krishna but his own created illusion, there are so many fools around him will believe it. Now he will get into kanaka (wealth), kamini (women) and prathista (fame) and he is completely lost.

Actually, when these ashta siddhi tells that he is the God, one should ask him to lift a mountain like Lord Krishna did. He cannot do that. He can't even lift a house.

We read in the Srimad Bhagavatam how Maya Dhanavan played with the Lord Himself with illusionary power.

10.5. What is the status of Ashtanga Yogi?

Lay people will look at him and think that he is the God. That is what he wants. He will get great name and fame due to Ashta Siddhis. He will eat meat too. But the messengers of Yama would laugh at him. Finally, he kills

himself by falling into hell and into the union of Brahman called Sayujya. By committing more and more sin, he completely loses the opportunity to reach the feet of Lord Krishna. This is his most miserable condition due to that dog-bone called ashta siddhi.

10.6. Do not worship Siddhas

Although the Siddhas are superior to the Ashtanga Yogis in a sense, they too are actually mayavadis in search of Brahman. They can never give devotion to Krishna.

kṛṣṇa-bhakta — niṣkāma, ataeva 'śānta'
bhukti-mukti-siddhi-kāmī — sakali 'aśānta'

“Because a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa has no material desire, he is peaceful. Karmis desire material enjoyment, jñānīs desire liberation, and yogīs desire material opulence (siddhis); therefore, they are all lusty and cannot be peaceful.” - (CC Madhya 19.149)

So, never worship the siddhas as well. A Krishna devotee should be fully focused only in worshipping Lord Krishna.

11. Pancha Upasana

Sripad Shankaracharya, who preached mayavada, also established a fictitious methodology that is not found in any of the Vedas. The method he proposed involves worshipping and attaining brahman in five ways, is called Pancha Upasana. According to this, one can worship Lord Surya, Lord Ganesh, Goddess Durga Devi, Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu. We find this method of pancha upasana in all the Hindu rituals.



Sun God
(Dharma)



Ganesh
(Artha)



Durga
(Kama)



Shiva
(Moksha)



Vishnu
(Devotion)

11.1. Purpose of Pancha Upasana

This system has a deep meaning behind that some Hindus may not be even aware of. This pancha upasana is the path of spiritual development and signifies the progressive spiritual growth of the human beings. This method of upasana is based on purushartha: dharma (religiosity), artha (wealth), kama (sense enjoyment), moksha (liberation). First, a human being, especially a scientist, will see God's creation as coming from a power. He then worships nature knowingly or unknowingly. Thus, he indirectly worships the sun god.

Then he starts to worship Lord Ganesha so that his actions to earn wealth are free from hindrances (Vignas) when he is still spiritually developed. After that he worships Goddess Durga to get a wife, children and family. Then he worships Lord Shiva for more fame and happiness. But then he realizes that this world is really full of suffering and seeks Moksha. Then he may feel devotion to Vishnu. He attains moksha only by that devotion. So, this method of Upasana is based on Purusharthas of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. But these cannot attract or reach Sri Krishna.

11.2. Panchopasana is not Krishna Bhakti

This method of pancha upasana can never give prema bhakti. These four Purusharthas are easily visible before Krishna Prema Bhakti.

pañcama puruṣārtha
premānandāmṛta-sindhu
mokṣādi ānanda yāra
nahe eka bindu ... (Caitanya Caritamṛta Adi 7.85)

“For a devotee who has actually developed bhava bhakti, the pleasure derived from dharma, artha, kama and moksa appears like a drop of water in the presence of the vast ocean.”

Among the five kinds of moksas (sayujya, salokya, sarupya, samipyā and sarshṭi), a devotee of Krishna or Vishnu hates Sayujya Mukti, union with the brahman. Brahma Moksha, which gives a coma-like state, can be called spiritual suicide. Do you want the dust-like bliss of

Brahma moksha, or the infinite ocean-like premananda obtained from prema bhakti to Lord Sri Krishna?

11.3. About the present Ganesha Worship

Nowadays, worship of Lord Ganesha is going on in abundance among Hindus everywhere. This worship was popularized by one sage called Mudkala Rishi who appeared in the 16th century.



Lord Ganapati is the Lord of the ghosts (ganas), is also the remover of obstacles. But he is not independent. It is very clear in the Brahma Samhita written by Lord Brahma that Lord Ganesa is bowing his head at the feet of Lord Krishna and gets the required power to remove the obstacles in the path of devotion.

yat-pāda-pallava-yugaṁ vinidhāya kumbha-dvandve praṇāma-samaye sa gaṇādhirājaḥ vighnān vihanantūṁ alam asya jagat-trayaśya govindam ādi-puruṣam tam ahaṁ bhajāmi
- (Brahma Samhita 5.50)

“I adore the primeval Lord Govinda, whose lotus feet are always held by Gaṇeśa upon the pair of tumuli protruding from his elephant head in order to obtain power for his function of destroying all the obstacles on the path of progress of the three worlds.

Lord Ganesha is the one who removes the hindrances of spiritual progress. In the Bhakti Rasamrta Sindhu, Srila Rupa Goswami has mentioned that for a neophyte devotee who is trying to get into Krishna Consciousness can pray to Lord Ganesha to remove the obstacles.

But one does not need to worship any gods once he has come to the path of Krishna Bhakti. Krishna Bhakti is Ananya Bhakti. Therefore, Srila Prabhupada has said that Ganesha worship is unnecessary and should not be done by those who have become Krishna devotees.

Krishna devotees do not need to worship Lord Ganesha to get rid of their obstacles. Instead he can worship Sri Narasimha Deva, a direct incarnation of Lord Krishna called 'Sarva Vigna Vinasa Kari'. In the picture shown it is Lord Narasimha who is giving the power to Lord Ganesha to remove obstacles. So, if Krishna devotees want protection and remove obstacles in the path of bhakti, he can directly worship Lord Narasimha Deva because He is Bhagavan Himself and not a demi-god.

12. Jaiva Dharma not a Religion

12.1. What is our Dharma?

What is our true Jiva Dharma? We can see this beautifully in the scriptures.

jīvera 'svarūpa' haya — kṛṣṇera 'nitya-dāsa'
kṛṣṇera 'taṭasthā-śakti' 'bhedābheda-prakāśa'
... (Caitanya Caritamṛta Adi 20.108)

“The real nature of every living entity is that he is the eternal servant of Sri Krishna. All living entities originate from Sri Krishna. They are similar to Lord Krishna in some respects and different from Lord Krishna in other respects.”

So devotion to Krishna is our real dharma of life. It is not a religion. Religions are created to progress step by step and ultimately attain Krishna Bhakti. Bhagavad Gita, Srimad Bhagavatam etc. are not related to any religion.

12.2. Throw away all Mundane Religions

While all the religions we see in this world are created to gradually realize the true dharma of life, when one becomes a Krishna Bhakta, he belongs to the Jaiva Dharma. Jaiva Dharma is not a religion but is beyond all the religions. It is the eternal nature of every jivatma. So, when one becomes a Krishna devotee he transcends above all the mundane religions. This is what Lord Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita.

sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śharaṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvāṁ sarva-pāpebhyo
mokṣha-yiṣhyāmi mā śhu-chaḥ
... (Bhagavad Gita 18.66)

Supreme Lord Sri Krsna says, "Abandon all varieties of religions, and just surrender unto Me. I will deliver you from all your sins and sinful reactions. Do not fear."

But when can we throw away all religions and realize our Jaiva Dharma?

12.3. Yama salutes devotee of Krishna

We know about many religions. We have heard them talk about hells and Yamaraja's judgment (Judgment Day). But a devotee of Krishna Prema, who is initiated by a suitable Guru and wears a tulsi garland, does not belong to Yama Raja's rule. On the contrary, the Sastras say that not only that Yama Raja, but also other Devas will worship the devotee who has Krishna Prema. So great is Krishna Prema Bhakti. Devotion to Krishna is the real great dharma of life. So we should seek the one Krishna Bhakti that shines beyond all religions.

12.4. Need of an Authentic Guru

But to engage in the worship of Sri Radha Krishna, an authentic guru is essential. This is why Lord Krishna speaks of the importance of Guru in the Bhagavad Gita (Gita 4.34):

tad viddhi praṇipātena, paripraśnena sevayā
upadekṣyanti te jñānaṁ, jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ

"To learn the principles of Bhakti, you should surrender to a qualified Guru, serve him and listen to his teachings. He will teach you as he has realized the Supreme Truth."

12.5. Let us not waste our Precious Life

This highest truth of Jaiva Dharma was revealed by Sri Krishna himself who appeared as Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. He appeared about 500 years ago and appointed six goswamis under Him to bring out the highest devotional scriptures that had been lost and forgotten for a very long time.

Jivas are wandering over so many universes being born and dead taking births from 8.4 million kinds of species. Getting a human birth is very rare and only in this human birth can we attain God. If we have wasted this birth, we don't know what birth we will get in the next birth. If we live like a dog, cat, or pig in this life, we will be born like that in the next life. But if we engage in the worship of the supreme Sri Radha Krsna Yugala in this birth with the guidance of a Guru, we will be very fortunate. But it is up to us!

13. How to start in Krishna Bhakti?

We have given some backgrounds and details about the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. The mundane religions are showing only basic understanding about the Supreme Lord but mostly centered around the prophets and making sectarian beliefs. They can only divide the one Supreme God into pieces separating into Hindu God, Christian God, Jewish God, Mohammedan God and so on. They cannot show in details as who is the 'father' in the heaven. We show that father who is Lord Sri Krishna. So many very advanced scriptures show details about His abodes and His spiritual nature and pastimes but is beyond the scope of this small booklet.

While all mundane religions instill fear of God, the Jaiva Dharma shows us to approach Him by selfless and pure Love. Supreme Lord Sri Krishna is the God of Love as He can be approached only by divine love. So, our path is Love of God, not Fear of God.

How do we enter this pure love of God? There are 9 ways (angas) to develop Krishna Bhakti and is given in the following verse from Srimad Bhagavatam (7.5.23):

śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ
smaraṇaṁ pāda-sevanam
arcanaṁ vandanaṁ dāsyam
sakhyam ātma-nivedanam

The nine processes of devotion to the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna are:

1) Sravanam - Hearing (hari kathas):

Hearing about His qualities, holy names, spiritual forms, abode, His teachings), singing His glories and holy names.

2) Kirtanam – chanting:

Chanting His holy names especially the maha mantra.

3) Smaranam – Remembering:

When we follow the above two angas, eventually constantly we will be able to remember about Krishna.

4) Pada Sevanam:

Only when one reaches a higher stage whwn he feels the love of God (not fear of God) develops and accepts the shelter of a bonafide guru, He can perform personal deity worship. Please note that the prophets of mundane religions will prohibits deity worship.

5) Arcanam – Offering puja:

This offering of naivedyam needs qualification by receiving Gayatri mantras from a guru.

6) Vandanam – Offering prayers:

These offering of prayers are not for asking for selfish favors but the glorifications of the Supreme Lord.

7) Dasyam – Being a servant:

When the devotee becomes advanced in devotion, love of God will start to intensify. He will want to become a dear servant of the Lord serving in the temple and also in his mind.

8. Sakhyam – Friendship:

When the devotee becomes even more advanced, he

will start seeing the Lord very dear to him and feel that without the Lord, there is no reason to live. Here, the smaranam gets more intensified.

9) Atma-Nivedanam – Offering oneself:

When the devotion to the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna further intensifies, he will give everything including his own atma (soul) itself to the Lord. This is an extremely high level of devotion to Lord Sri Krishna.

One important thing to note in this devotional process is that one will not ask any favor from the Lord. He will only want to give everything including his own atma (soul) at the lotus feet of Supreme Lord Sri Krishna.

The simple way to start into Krishna Bhakti, is to chant the maha mantra after pancha tattva mantra, sing kirtans and visit any of our temples, and hear hari kathas.

sri krishna caitanya
prabhu nityananda
sri advaita gadadara
srivasadi gaura bhakta vrinda

**hare krishna hare krishna
krishna krishna hare hare
hare rama hare rama
rama rama hare hare**

Please chant and be Happy!
Jai Srila Guru Deva!
Jai Srila Swami Maharaja!

Thank you!

QUESTIONS

1. Who translated Vishnu Purana into English?

- a. Max Muller
- b. Charles Wilkins
- c. H.H. Wilson
- d. Woodrow Wilson

2. "krsnastu bhagavan svayam" comes in...?

- a. Srimad Bhagavad Gita
- b. Srimad Bhagavatam
- c. Padma Purana
- d. Skanda Purana

3. The mind of the gambler is dirty. Why?

- a. He earns money in a crooked way
- b. Devotion will not come in the heart of a gambler
- c. Aims only to accumulate wealth
- d. All the above

4. Who are the so-called "two-legged animals"?

- a. Devotees
- b. Atheists
- c. The Brahmans
- d. Ashtanga Yogis

5. How does Lord Vishnu create universes?

- a. From his head
- b. From his leg

- c. From his shoulder
- d. From his pores of the hairs

6. What is the quality of sattvic diet?

- a. Giving health
- b. Giving longevity
- c. Giving a clean mind
- d. All the above

7. What are the four pillars of Krishna Bhakti?

- a. No drinking, no gambling
- b. No meat eating
- c. No illegal sex
- d. All the above

8. Which religion supports meat eating?

- a. Impure religion
- b. Pure religion
- c. A religion that nurtures devotion
- d. Religion that gives spiritual growth

9. Whose mind seeks Krishna worship?

- a. One who does not crave for sensual pleasures
- b. One with pure sattvic nature
- c. One who has no desire of material positions
- d. All the above

10. Which of the following is false?

- a. Jiva dharma is related to material religions
- b. Jiva Dharma is beyond all religions

- c. Krishna Bhakti is Jaiva Dharma
- d. Jivas originate from Lord Krishna's Jiva Shakti

11. From whom does Lord Ganapati get his power?

- a. From Lord Shiva
- b. From Brahman
- c. From Sri Narasimha Deva
- d. From Lord Brahma

12. Which of the following is false?

- a. Pancha Upasana is not Krishna Bhakti
- b. Guru is a must for Radha Krishna devotion
- c. Siddhas cannot give Krishna Bhakti
- d. Mayavadis are Krishna Prema Bhaktas

13. Which yoga is the best?

- a. Ashtanga Yoga
- b. Jnana Yoga
- c. Karma Yoga
- d. Bhakti Yoga

14. What is the truth about Brahman?

- a. God comes from Brahma
- b. Brahman is the effulgence of of Lord Krishna
- c. Merging in Brahman is the highest Moksha
- d. Union with Brahman is union with Krishna

15. What happens to one who eats tamasic food?

- a. Dullness arises
- b. Causes laziness

- c. Diseases increase
- d. All the above

16. Which of the following is false?

- a. Heaven is not permanent
- b. Those who worship gods attain abodes of gods
- c. Those who worship ghost are born with ghosts
- d. Whoever one worships, he will go to Krishna

17. Which of the following is Prema Nāma?

- a. Parameswara
- b. Ishwara
- c. Sri Radha Madan Mohan
- d. Jagadeesha

18. Why should one never kill animals?

- a. Killing causes pain for the animals
- b. The killer is punished in hell
- c. Killing spoils one's mind
- d. All the above**

19. What are the 9 angas of Krishna Bhakti?

- a. Sravanam, atma-nivedanam and smaranam
- b. Kirtanam, pada-sevanam and dasyam
- c. Sakhyam, vandanam, arcanam
- d. All above

20. The topmost abode Lord Krishna resides in is...?

- a. Vaikuntha
- b. Brahmans
- c. Siva Loka
- d. Goloka Vrindavan

21. Which kind of religion cannot worship deities?

- a. Those who preach Love of God
- b. Those who worship Supreme Lord Sri Krishna
- c. Those who preach Fear of God
- d. Those who has reached atma nivedanam stage

22. How can one enter Krishna Bhakti?

- a. By worshipping the demi-gods
- b. By doing ashtanga yoga
- c. By chanting maha mantra, and singing it as kirtans
- d. By doing Transcendental Meditation

23. What loka (world) the NDEs actually see when they get out of their body?

- a. The heaven
- b. Patala Loka
- c. Pitr Loka
- d. Brahmhaloka

24. Who will never meet Lord Yama who is the god of Judgement?

- a. Those who kill animals and eat meat
- b. Krishna devotee
- c. Those who are afraid of God
- d. Those who worship demi-god

25. What is the easiest way to get into Krishna worship?

- a. Studying all the Vedas
- b. After becoming expert in Sanskrit
- c. Start chanting the maha mantra and do kirtans
- d. Surrender to an ashtanga yoga guru



sarva-dharmān parityajya
 mām ekaṁ śharaṇaṁ vraja
 ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo
 mokṣha-yiṣhyāmi mā śhu-chaḥ
 ... (Bhagavad Gita 18.66)

Supreme Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa says, "Abandon all varieties of religions, and just surrender unto Me. I will deliver you from all your sins and sinful reactions. Do not fear."

jīvera 'svarūpa' haya — kṛṣṇera 'nitya-dāsa'
 kṛṣṇera 'taṣṭhā-śakti' 'bhedābheda-prakāśa'
 ... (Caitanya Caritamṛta Adi 20.108)

"The real nature of every living entity is that he is the eternal servant of Sri Kṛṣṇa. All living entities originate from Sri Kṛṣṇa. They are similar to Lord Kṛṣṇa in some respects and different from Lord Kṛṣṇa in other respects."

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