



Home Deity Worship Course

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 24.330-338



ISKCON Deity Worship Ministry

CC Madhya 24.330

*guru-lakṣaṇa, śiṣya-lakṣaṇa, doṇhāra parīkṣaṇa
sevyā — bhagavān, sarva-mantra-vicāraṇa.*

Translation

“Your book should describe the characteristics of the bona fide guru and the bona fide disciple. Then, before accepting a spiritual master, one can be assured of the spiritual master’s position. Similarly, the spiritual master can also be assured of the disciple’s position. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, should be described as the worshipable object, and you should describe the bīja-mantra for the worship of Kṛṣṇa, as well as that for Rāma and for other expansions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Purport

In the *Padma Purāṇa*, the characteristics of the *guru*, the bona fide spiritual master, have been described:

*mahā-bhāgavata-śreṣṭho brāhmaṇo vai gurur nṛṇām
sarveṣām eva lokānām asau pūjyo yathā hariḥ
mahā-kula-prasūto ’pi sarva-yajñeṣu dīkṣitaḥ
sahasra-śākhādhyāyī ca na guruḥ syād avaiṣṇavaḥ*

The *guru* must be situated on the topmost platform of devotional service. There are three classes of devotees, and the *guru* must be accepted from the topmost class. The first-class devotee is the spiritual master for all kinds of people. It is said, *gurur nṛṇām*. The word *nṛṇām* means “of all human beings.” The *guru* is not limited to a particular group. It is stated in the *Upadeśāmṛta* of Rūpa Gosvāmī that a *guru* is a *gosvāmī*, a controller of the senses and the mind. Such a *guru* can accept disciples from all over the world. *Prthivīm sa śiṣyāt*. This is the test of the *guru*.

In India there are many so-called *gurus*, and they are limited to a certain district or a province. They do not even travel about India, yet they declare themselves to be *jagad-guru*, the *guru* of the whole world. Such cheating *gurus* should not be accepted. Anyone can see how the bona fide spiritual master accepts disciples from all over the world. The *guru* is a qualified *brāhmaṇa*; therefore he knows Brahman and Parabrahman. He thus devotes his life for the service of Parabrahman. The bona fide spiritual master who accepts disciples from all over



the world is also worshiped all over the world because of his qualities. *Lokānām asau pūjyo yathā hariḥ*: the people of the world worship him just as they worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead. All these honors are offered to him because he strictly follows the brahminical principles and teaches these principles to his disciples. Such a person is called an *ācārya* because he knows the principles of devotional service, he behaves in that way himself, and he teaches his disciples to follow in his footsteps. Thus he is an *ācārya* or *jagad-guru*. Even though a person is born in a brahminical family and is very expert in performing sacrifices, he cannot be accepted as a *guru* if he is not a strict Vaiṣṇava. A *guru* is a *brāhmaṇa* by qualification, and he can turn others into *brāhmaṇas* according to the śāstric principles and brahminical qualifications. Brahmanism is not a question of heredity. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.11.35) Śrī Nārada Muni tells Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira what a *brāhmaṇa* is. He states that if brahminical qualifications are observed in *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas* or even *śūdras*, one should accept them as *brāhmaṇas*. In this regard, Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has commented: *śamādhībhīr eva brāhmaṇādi-vyavahāro mukhyaḥ, na jāti-mātrādīty āha — yasyeti. yad yadi anyatra varṇāntare 'pi drśyeta, tad-varṇāntaram tenaiva lakṣaṇa-nimittenaiva varṇena vinirdiśet, na tu jāti-nimittanety arthaḥ*: “The most important criterion for deciding whether to deal with someone as a *brāhmaṇa* or as a member of another *varṇa* is the presence or absence of self-control and similar brahminical qualities. We should not judge primarily according to superficial characteristics like birth. This is stated in the verse beginning *yasya* [*Bhāg.* 7.11.35]. If the qualities of one *varṇa* are seen in someone born in another, he should be designated according to the *varṇa* of his qualities, not that of his birth.”

There is a similar statement made by Nīlakaṇṭha, a commentator on the *Mahābhārata*: *śūdro 'pi śamādy-upeto brāhmaṇa eva brāhmaṇo 'pi kāmādy-upetaḥ śūdra eva*. “Although one may be born in a *śūdra* family, if he is endowed with the brahminical qualities, beginning with *śama* [control of the mind], he is to be accepted as a *brāhmaṇa*. Although one may be born in a *brāhmaṇa* family, if he is endowed with the qualities beginning with *kāma* [lust], he is to be considered a *śūdra*.” No one should present himself as a *brāhmaṇa* simply on the basis of being born in a brahminical family. One must be qualified by the brahminical qualities mentioned in the *śāstras*, particularly the *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.42):

*śamo damas tapaḥ śaucaṁ kṣāntir ārjavam eva ca
jñānaṁ vijñānaṁ āstikyam brahma-karma svabhāva-jam*

“Peacefulness, self-control, austerity, purity, tolerance, honesty, knowledge, wisdom and religiousness — these are the natural qualities by which the *brāhmaṇas* work.”



Unless one is qualified with all these attributes, he cannot be accepted as a *brāhmaṇa*. It is not a question of simply taking birth in a *brāhmaṇa* family. In this regard, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura remarks that Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura and Śyāmānanda Gosvāmī, although not born in *brāhmaṇa* families, are accepted as bona fide spiritual masters because they were *brāhmaṇas* by qualification. Personalities like Śrī Gaṅgā-nārāyaṇa, Rāmakṛṣṇa and many others, who were actually born in *brāhmaṇa* families, accepted Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura and Śyāmānanda Gosvāmī as their spiritual masters.

The *mahā-bhāgavata* is one who decorates his body with *tilaka* and whose name indicates him to be a servant of Kṛṣṇa by the word *dāsa*. He is also initiated by a bona fide spiritual master and is expert in worshiping the Deity, chanting *mantras* correctly, performing sacrifices, offering prayers to the Lord and performing *saṅkīrtana*. He knows how to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead and how to respect a Vaiṣṇava. When one has attained the topmost position of *mahā-bhāgavata*, he is to be accepted as a *guru* and worshiped exactly like Hari, the Personality of Godhead. Only such a person is eligible to occupy the post of a *guru*. However, if one is highly qualified but is not a Vaiṣṇava, he cannot be accepted as a *guru*. One cannot be a *brāhmaṇa* unless one is a Vaiṣṇava. If one is a Vaiṣṇava, he is already a *brāhmaṇa*. If a *guru* is completely qualified as a Vaiṣṇava, he must be accepted as a *brāhmaṇa* even if he is not born in a *brāhmaṇa* family. The caste system method of distinguishing a *brāhmaṇa* by birth is not acceptable when applied to a bona fide spiritual master. A spiritual master is a qualified *brāhmaṇa* and *ācārya*. If one is not a qualified *brāhmaṇa*, he is not expert in studying the Vedic literatures. *Nānā-śāstra-vicāraṇaika-nipuṇau*. Every Vaiṣṇava is a spiritual master, and a spiritual master is automatically expert in brahminical behavior. He also understands the Vedic *śāstras*.

Similarly, a disciple's qualifications must be observed by the spiritual master before he is accepted as a disciple. In our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, the requirement is that one must be prepared to give up the four pillars of sinful life — illicit sex, meat-eating, intoxication and gambling. In Western countries especially, we first observe whether a potential disciple is prepared to follow the regulative principles. Then he is given the name of a Vaiṣṇava servant and initiated to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, at least sixteen rounds daily. In this way the disciple renders devotional service under the guidance of the spiritual master or his representative for at least six months to a year. He is then recommended for a second initiation, during which a sacred thread is offered and the disciple is accepted as a bona fide *brāhmaṇa*. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura introduced the system of giving the sacred thread to a bona fide Vaiṣṇava, and we are following in his footsteps. The qualifications of a bona fide disciple are described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.10.6) as follows:



*amānya-matsaro dakṣo nirmamo dṛḍha-sauhrdaḥ
asatvaro 'rtha-jijñāsur anasūyur amogha-vāk*

The disciple must have the following qualifications. He must give up interest in the material bodily conception. He must give up material lust, anger, greed, illusion, madness and envy. He should be interested only in understanding the science of God, and he should be ready to consider all points in this matter. He should no longer think, “I am this body,” or, “This thing belongs to me.” One must love the spiritual master with unflinching faith, and one must be very steady and fixed. The bona fide disciple should be inquisitive to understand transcendental subject matter. He must not search out faults among good qualities, and he should no longer be interested in material topics. His only interest should be Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

As far as the mutual testing of the spiritual master and disciple is concerned, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura explains that a bona fide disciple must be very inquisitive to understand the transcendental subject matter. As stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.3.21):

tasmād guruṁ prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam

“One who is inquisitive to understand the highest goal and benefit of life must approach a bona fide spiritual master and surrender unto him.” A serious disciple must be alert when selecting a bona fide spiritual master. He must be sure that the spiritual master can deliver all the transcendental necessities. The spiritual master must observe how inquisitive the disciple is and how eager he is to understand the transcendental subject matter. The spiritual master should study the disciple’s inquisitiveness for no less than six months or a year. A spiritual master should not be very anxious to accept a disciple because of his material opulences. Sometimes a big businessman or landlord may approach a spiritual master for initiation. Those who are materially interested are called *viṣayīs* (*karmīs*), which indicates that they are very fond of sense gratification. Such *viṣayīs* sometimes approach a famous *guru* and ask to become a disciple just as a matter of fashion. Sometimes *viṣayīs* pose as disciples of a reputed spiritual master just to cover their activities and advertise themselves as advanced in spiritual knowledge. In other words, they want to attain material success. A spiritual master must be very careful in this regard. Such business is going on all over the world. The spiritual master does not accept a materially opulent disciple just to advertise the fact that he has such a big disciple. He knows that by associating with such *viṣayī* disciples, he may fall down. One who accepts a *viṣayī* disciple is not a bona fide spiritual master. Even if he is, his position may be damaged due to association with an unscrupulous *viṣayī*. If a so-called spiritual master accepts a disciple for his personal benefit or for



material gain, the relationship between the spiritual master and the disciple turns into a material affair, and the spiritual master becomes like a *smārta-guru*. There are many caste *gosvāmīs* who professionally create some disciples who do not care for them or their instructions. Such spiritual masters are satisfied simply to get some material benefits from their disciples. Such a relationship is condemned by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, who calls such spiritual masters and disciples a society of cheaters and cheated. They are also called *bāulas* or *prākṛta-sahajiyās*. Their aim is to make the connection between the spiritual master and the disciple into a very cheap thing. They are not serious in wanting to understand spiritual life.

The words *sevyā bhagavān* in this verse of the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* are important. *Bhagavān* indicates the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu. Lord Viṣṇu alone is worshipable. There is no need to worship demigods. This is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.20):

*kāmais tais tair hr̥ta-jñānāḥ prapadyante 'nya-devatāḥ
taṁ taṁ niyamam āsthāya prakṛtyā niyatāḥ svayā*

“Those whose intelligence has been stolen by material desires surrender unto demigods and follow the particular rules and regulations of worship according to their own natures.”

It is also stated in the *Skanda Purāṇa*:

*vāsudevaṁ parityajya yo 'nya-devam upāsate
sva-mātaram parityajya śva-pacīm vandate hi saḥ*

“A person who worships the demigods and gives up Lord Vāsudeva is like a man who gives up the protection of his mother for the shelter of a witch.”

It is also stated by Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (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.”

Demigods are also living entities and parts and parcels of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore in one sense one worships Kṛṣṇa when one worships the demigods, but not in the proper way. There is a proper method to water a tree: one should water the root. But if one waters the leaves and branches instead, he is simply wasting his time. If one worships the demigods to the exclusion of Lord Viṣṇu, his rewards will only be material. As confirmed by Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.23):



*anta-vat 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.”

Demigod worship is meant for unintelligent men because the benefits derived from demigod worship are all material, temporary and retractable. It is also stated in the *Padma Purāṇa*:

*yas tu nārāyaṇaṁ devaṁ brahma-rudrādi-daivataiḥ
samatvenaiva vīkṣeta sa pāṣaṇḍī bhaved dhruvam*

“Whoever thinks Lord Viṣṇu and the demigods are on the same level is to be immediately considered a rogue as far as spiritual understanding is concerned.”

There are three modes of nature in the material world, but when one is situated spiritually, he is above the material modes, even though he lives in this material world. As Lord Kṛṣṇa states in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (14.26):

*mām ca yo 'vyabhicāreṇa bhakti-yogena sevate
sa guṇān samatītyaitān brahma-bhūyāya kalpate*

“One who engages in full devotional service, unfailing in all circumstances, at once transcends the modes of material nature and thus comes to the level of Brahman.” In material consciousness, however, even one who is situated in the mode of goodness is susceptible to pollution by the modes of passion and ignorance. When the mode of goodness is mixed with the mode of passion, one worships the sun-god, Vivasvān. When the mode of goodness is mixed with the mode of ignorance, one worships Gaṇapati, or Gaṇeśa. When the mode of passion is mixed with the mode of ignorance, one worships Durgā, or Kālī, the external potency. When one is simply in the mode of ignorance, one becomes a devotee of Lord Śiva because Lord Śiva is the predominating deity of the mode of ignorance within this material world. However, when one is completely free from the influence of all the modes of material nature, one becomes a pure Vaiṣṇava on the devotional platform. As Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*:

*anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu- śīlanaṁ bhaktir uttamā*

“One should render transcendental loving service to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa favorably and without desire for material profit or gain through fruitive activities or philosophical speculation. That is called pure devotional service.”



The position of *viśuddha-sattva* is the position of uncontaminated goodness. On that platform one can then understand, *ārādhyo bhagavān vrajeśa-tanayas tad-dhāma vṛndāvanam*: “The Supreme Personality of Godhead, the son of Nanda Mahārāja, is to be worshiped along with His transcendental abode, Vṛndāvana.”

The word *sarva-mantra-vicāraṇa* in the present verse of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* means “considering all different types of *mantras*.” There are different kinds of *mantras* for different kinds of devotees. There is the *mantra* known as the *dvādaśākṣara mantra*, composed of twelve syllables, and there is the *mantra* composed of eighteen syllables. Similarly, there are the *Nārasimha mantra*, the *Rāma mantra*, the *Gopāla mantra* and so on. Each and every *mantra* has its own spiritual significance. The spiritual master has to select a *mantra* for his disciple according to the disciple’s ability to chant different *mantras*.

CC Madhya 24.331

*mantra-adhikārī, mantra-siddhy-ādi-śodhana
dīkṣā, prātaḥ-smṛti-kṛtya, śauca, ācamana*

Translation

“You should discuss the qualifications necessary for receiving a mantra, the perfection of the mantra, the purification of the mantra, initiation, morning duties, remembrance of the Supreme Lord, cleanliness and washing the mouth and other parts of the body.

Purport

The following injunction is given in the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (1.194) regarding *mantra-adhikārī*, the qualification for receiving *mantra* initiation:

*tāntrikeṣu ca mantreṣu dīkṣāyām yoṣitām api
sādhvīnām adhikāro ’sti śūdrādīnām ca sad-dhiyām*

“*Śūdras* and women who are chaste and sincerely interested in understanding the Absolute Truth are qualified to be initiated with the *pāñcarātriaka-mantras*.” This is confirmed by Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.32):

*mām hi pārtha vyapāśritya ye ’pi syuḥ pāpa-yonayaḥ
striyo vaiśyās tathā śūdrās te ’pi yānti parām gatim*



“O son of Pṛthā, those who take shelter in Me, though they be of lower birth — women, *vaiśyas* [merchants] and *śūdras* [workers] — can attain the supreme destination.”

If one actually wants to serve Kṛṣṇa, it doesn't matter whether one is a *śūdra*, *vaiśya* or even a woman. If one is sincerely eager to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* or *dīkṣā-mantra*, one is qualified to be initiated according to the *pāñcarātri*ka process. However, according to Vedic principles, only a *brāhmaṇa* who is fully engaged in his occupational duties can be initiated. *Śūdras* and women are not admitted to a *vaidika* initiation. Unless one is fit according to the estimation of the spiritual master, one cannot accept a *mantra* from the *pāñcarātri*ka-*vidhi* or the *vaidika-vidhi*. When one is fit to accept the *mantra*, one is initiated by the *pāñcarātri*ka-*vidhi* or the *vaidika-vidhi*. In any case, the result is the same.

Regarding *mantra-siddhy-ādi-śodhana*, the efficacy of the *mantra*, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura gives sixteen divisions, which are confirmed in the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (beginning with 1.204):

siddha-sādhya-susiddhāri- kramāj jñeyo vicakṣaṇaiḥ

These are (1) *siddha*, (2) *sādhya*, (3) *susiddha* and (4) *ari*. These four principles can be divided further: (1) *siddha-siddha*, (2) *siddha-sādhya*, (3) *siddha-susiddha*, (4) *siddha-ari*, (5) *sādhya-siddha*, (6) *sādhya-sādhya*, (7) *sādhya-susiddha*, (8) *sādhya-ari*, (9) *susiddha-siddha*, (10) *susiddha-sādhya*, (11) *susiddha-susiddha*, (12) *susiddha-ari*, (13) *ari-siddha*, (14) *ari-sādhya*, (15) *ari-susiddha*, and (16) *ari-ari*.

Those who are initiated with the eighteen-syllable *mantra* do not need to consider the above-mentioned sixteen divisions. As enjoined in the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (1.215, 219, 220):

*na cātra śātravā doṣā narṇasvādi-vicāraṇā
ṛkṣa-rāśi-vicāro vā na kartavyo manau priye*

*nātra cintyo 'ri-śuddhyādir nāri-mitrādi-lakṣaṇam
siddha-sādhya-susiddhāri- rūpā nātra vicāraṇā*

There is *śodhana*, or purification of the *mantra*, but there is no such consideration for the Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. *Balitvāt kṛṣṇa-mantrāṇām saṁskārāpekṣaṇam na hi*: “The Kṛṣṇa *mantra* is so strong that there is no question of *śodhana*.” (*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 1.235)

As far as *dīkṣā* is concerned, one should consult *Madhya-līlā* 15.108. On the whole, when a person is initiated according to the *pāñcarātri*ka-*vidhi*, he has



already attained the position of a *brāhmaṇa*. This is enjoined in the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (2.12):

*yathā kāñcanatām yāti kāmśyaṁ rasa-vidhānataḥ
tathā dīkṣā-vidhānena dvijatvaṁ jāyate nṛṇām*

“As bell metal can be turned into gold when treated with mercury, a disciple initiated by a bona fide *guru* immediately attains the position of a *brāhmaṇa*.” As far as the time of *dīkṣā* (initiation) is concerned, everything depends on the position of the *guru*. As soon as a bona fide *guru* is received by chance or by a program, one should immediately take the opportunity to receive initiation. In the book called *Tattva-sāgara*, it is stated:

*durlabhe sad-gurūṇām ca sakṛt-saṅga upasthite
tad-anujñā yadā labdhā sa dīkṣāvasaro mahān
grāme vā yadi vāraṇye kṣetre vā divase niśi
āgacchatī gurur daivād yathā dīkṣā tad-ājñayā
yadaivecchā tadā dīkṣā guror ājñānurūpataḥ
na tīrthaṁ na vrataṁ hemo na snānaṁ na japa-kriyā
dīkṣāyāḥ karaṇaṁ kintu svecchā-prāpte tu sad-gurau*

“If by chance one gets a *sad-guru*, it doesn’t matter whether one is in the temple or the forest. If the *sad-guru*, the bona fide spiritual master, agrees, one can be initiated immediately, without waiting for a suitable time or place.”

Concerning *prātaḥ-smṛti*, remembrance of the Lord in the morning, in the early morning hours (known as *brāhma-muhūrta*) one should get up and immediately chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, or at least “Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa.” In this way, one should remember Kṛṣṇa. Some *śloka*s or prayers should also be chanted. By chanting, one immediately becomes auspicious and transcendental to the infection of material qualities. Actually one has to chant and remember Lord Kṛṣṇa twenty-four hours daily, or as much as possible:

*smartavyaḥ satataṁ viṣṇur vismartavyo na jātucit
sarve vidhi-niṣedhāḥ syur etayor eva kiṅkarāḥ*

“Kṛṣṇa is the origin of Lord Viṣṇu. He should always be remembered and never forgotten at any time. All the rules and prohibitions mentioned in the *śāstras* should be the servants of these two principles.” This is a quotation from the *Padma Purāṇa*, from the portion called *Bṛhat-sahasra-nāma-stotra*.



The word *prātaḥ-kṛtya* in the present verse of the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* means that one should evacuate regularly in the morning and then cleanse himself by taking a bath. One has to gargle (*ācamana*) and brush his teeth (*danta-dhāvana*). He should do this either with twigs or a toothbrush — whatever is available. This will purify the mouth. Then one should take his bath. Actually householders and *vānaprasthas* should bathe two times a day (*prātar-madhyāhnaḥ snānam vānaprastha-grhasthayaḥ*). A *sannyāsī* should bathe three times daily, and a *brahmacārī* may take only one bath a day. Whenever one is not able to bathe in water, he can bathe by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. One also has to perform his *sandhyādi-vandana* — that is, one has to chant his *Gāyatrī mantra* three times daily — morning, noon and evening.

CC Madhya 24.332

*danta-dhāvana, snāna, sandhyādi vandana
guru-sevā, ūrdhva-puṇḍra-cakrādi-dhāraṇa*

Translation

“You should describe how in the morning one should regularly brush his teeth, take his bath, offer prayers to the Lord and offer obeisances to the spiritual master. You should also describe how one should render service to the spiritual master and paint one’s body in twelve places with *ūrdhva-puṇḍra* [tilaka], as well as how one should stamp one’s body with the holy names of the Lord or the symbols of the Lord, such as the disc and club.

CC Madhya 24.333

*gopīcandana-mālya-dhṛti, tulasī-āharṇa
vastra-pīṭha-grha-saṁskāra, kṛṣṇa-prabodhana*

Translation

“After this, you should describe how one should decorate his body with *gopīcandana*, wear neck beads, collect *tulasī* leaves from the *tulasī* tree, cleanse his cloth and the altar, cleanse his own house or apartment and go to the temple and ring the bell just to draw the attention of Lord Kṛṣṇa.



CC Madhya 24.334

*pañca, ṣoḍaśa, pañcāśat upacāre arcana
pañca-kāla pūjā ārati, kṛṣṇera bhojana-śayana*

Translation

“Also describe Deity worship, wherein one should offer food to Kṛṣṇa at least five times daily and in due time place Him on a bed. You should also describe the process for offering ārati and the worship of the Lord according to the list of five, sixteen or fifty ingredients.

Purport

The five ingredients for Deity worship are (1) very good scents, (2) very good flowers, (3) incense, (4) a lamp and (5) something edible. As for *ṣoḍaśopacāra*, the sixteen ingredients, one should (1) provide a sitting place (*āsana*), (2) ask Kṛṣṇa to sit down, (3) offer *arghya*, (4) offer water to wash the legs, (5) wash the mouth, (6) offer *madhu-parka*, (7) offer water for washing the mouth, (8) bathe the Lord, (9) offer garments, (10) decorate the Lord’s body with ornaments, (11) offer sweet scents, (12) offer flowers with good fragrance, like the rose or *campaka*, (13) offer incense, (14) offer a lamp, (15) give good food, and (16) offer prayers.

In the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (eleventh *vilāsa*, verses 127-140) there is a vivid description of what is required in Deity worship. There are sixty-four items mentioned. In the temple, worship should be so gorgeous that all sixty-four items should be available for the satisfaction of the Personality of Godhead. Sometimes it is impossible to get all sixty-four items; therefore we recommend that at least on the first day of installation all sixty-four items should be available. When the Lord is established, worship with all sixty-four items should continue as far as possible. The sixty-four items are as follows: (1) There must be a big bell hanging in front of the temple room so that whoever comes into the room can ring the bell. This item is called *prabodhana*, or offering oneself submissively to the Lord. This is the first item. (2) The visitor must chant “Jaya Śrī Rādhā-Govinda!” or “Jaya Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava!” when he rings the bell. In either case, the word *jaya* must be uttered. (3) One should immediately offer obeisances to the Lord, falling down like a stick. (4) There must be regular *maṅgala-ārati* in the temple during the early morning, an hour and a half before the sun rises. (5) There must be an *āsana*, a sitting place before the altar. This *āsana* is for the spiritual master. The disciple brings everything before the spiritual master, and the spiritual master offers



everything to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. (6) After *maṅgala-ārati*, the Deity is supposed to wash His teeth by using a twig; therefore a twig must be offered. (7) Water must be offered for washing the Deity's feet. (8) *Arghya* should be offered. (9) Water for *ācamana* should be offered. (10) *Madhu-parka*, a small bowl containing *madhu* (honey, a little ghee, a little water, a little sugar, yogurt and milk) should be offered. This is called *madhu-parka-ācamana*. (11) One should place wooden slippers before the Lord. (12) One should massage the body of the Lord. (13) One should massage the body of the Lord with oil. (14) With a soft, wet sponge one should remove all the oil smeared over the Lord's body. (15) One should bathe the Lord with water in which nicely scented flowers have been soaking for some time. (16) After bathing the body of the Lord with water, one should bathe Him with milk. (17) Then one should bathe Him with yogurt. (18) Then one should bathe Him with ghee. (19) Then one should bathe Him with honey. (20) Then one should bathe Him with water in which sugar has been dissolved. (21) Then one should wash the Deity with water and chant this *mantra*:

*cintāmaṇi-prakara-sadmasu kalpa-vṛkṣa-
lakṣāvrteṣu surabhīr abhipālayantam
lakṣmī-sahasra-śata-sambhrama-sevyamānaṁ
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

(22) One should dry the entire body of the Lord with a towel. (23) A new dress should be put on the Lord's body. (24) A sacred thread should be placed on His body. (25) Water should be offered for cleansing His mouth (*ācamana*). (26) Nicely scented oils like liquid sandalwood pulp should be smeared over the Lord's body. (27) All kinds of ornaments and crowns should be placed on His body. (28) Then one should offer flower garlands and decorative flowers. (29) One should burn incense. (30) Lamps should be offered. (31) Precautions should always be taken so that demons and atheists cannot harm the body of the Lord. (32) Food offerings should be placed before the Lord. (33) Spices for chewing should be offered. (34) Betel nuts should be offered. (35) At the proper time, there should be arrangements so that the Lord may take rest in bed. (36) The Lord's hair should be combed and decorated. (37) First-class garments should be offered. (38) A first-class helmet should be offered. (39) The garments should be scented. (40) There should be Kaustubha jewels and other ornaments offered. (41) A variety of flowers should be offered. (42) Another *maṅgala-ārati* should be offered. (43) A mirror should be offered. (44) The Lord should be carried on a nice palanquin to the altar. (45) The Lord should be seated on the throne. (46) Again water should be given for the washing of His feet. (47) Something again should be offered for eating. (48) Evening *ārati* should be offered. (49) The Lord should be fanned with a *cāmara* fan, and an umbrella should be placed over His head. (50) The Hare Kṛṣṇa



mantra and approved songs should be sung. (51) Musical instruments should be played. (52) One should dance before the Deity. (53) One should circumambulate the Deity. (54) One should again offer obeisances. (55) One should offer different types of prayers and hymns at the Lord's lotus feet. (56) One should touch the lotus feet of the Lord with one's head. This may not be possible for everyone, but at least the *pūjārī* should do this. (57) The flowers offered on the previous day should touch one's head. (58) One should take the remnants of the Lord's food. (59) One should sit before the Lord and think that he is massaging the Lord's legs. (60) One should decorate the Lord's bed with flowers before the Lord takes His rest. (61) One should offer one's hand to the Lord. (62) One should take the Deity to His bed. (63) One should wash the feet of the Lord and then sit Him on the bed. (64) One should place the Lord on the bed and then massage His feet.

Ārati should be offered to the Deities five times daily — early in the morning before sunrise, later in the morning, at noon, in the evening and at night. This means that there should be worship and a change of dress and flowers. As far as the eatables are concerned, all items should be first-class preparations. There should be first-class rice, dhal, fruit, sweet rice, vegetables and a variety of foods to be sucked, drunk and chewed. All the eatables offered to the Deities should be extraordinarily excellent. In Europe and America there is presently no monetary scarcity. People are not poor, and if they follow these principles of Deity worship, they will advance in spiritual life. As far as placing the Deity in the bed is concerned, if the Deity is large and heavy, it is not possible to move Him daily. It is better that a small Deity, which is also worshiped, be taken to the bed. This *mantra* should be chanted: *āgaccha śayana-sthānaṁ priyābhiḥ saha keśava*. “O Keśava, kindly come to Your bed along with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.” (*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 11.40)

The Deity should be placed in bed with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, and this should be indicated by bringing the wooden slippers from the altar to the bedside. When the Deity is laid down, His legs should be massaged. Before laying the Deity down, a pot of milk and sugar should be offered to Him. After taking this thick milk, the Deity should lie down and should be offered betel nuts and spices to chew.

CC Madhya 24.335

*śrī-mūrti-lakṣaṇa, āra śālagrāma-lakṣaṇa
kṛṣṇa-kṣetra-yātrā, kṛṣṇa-mūrti-daraśana*

Translation



“The characteristics of the Deities should be discussed, as well as the characteristics of the *śālagrāma-śilā*. You should also discuss visiting the Deities in the temple and touring holy places like Vṛndāvana, Mathurā and Dvārakā.

CC Madhya 24.336

*nāma-mahimā, nāmāparādha dūre varjana
vaiṣṇava-lakṣaṇa, sevāparādha-khaṇḍana*

Translation

“You should glorify the holy name and explain that one must carefully give up offenses when chanting the holy name. You should also describe the symptoms of a Vaiṣṇava and explain that one must give up or nullify all kinds of *sevā-aparādha*, offenses in Deity worship.

Purport

The devotee should always be very careful not to commit the ten offenses when chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. If a devotee very strictly follows the methods of Deity worship, he will naturally and quickly become a pure Vaiṣṇava. A pure Vaiṣṇava has unflinching faith in the Lord, and he does not deviate at all. He is always engaged in perfect Deity worship.

One should also note the specific offenses against Deity worship. These are mentioned in the *Skanda Purāṇa (Avantī-khaṇḍa)*, spoken by Vyāsadeva himself. One should liquidate all kinds of offenses.

The *śālagrāma-śilā* should be worshiped with *tulasī* where a sufficient quantity of *tulasī* leaves are available. Worship of *śālagrāma-śilā* should be introduced in all ISKCON temples. *Śālagrāma-śilā* is the form of the Lord’s mercy. To worship the Deity with the sixty-four items mentioned may be a difficult job, but the Lord has become so small that anyone in any temple can carefully handle Deity worship simply by performing the same activities with the *śālagrāma-śilā*.

There are thirty-two offenses to the Deity that should be avoided. (1) One should not enter the temple in a vehicle. Shoes and slippers should be removed before entering the temple. (2) One should offer obeisances as soon as he sees the Deity. (3) One should enter the temple after taking a bath. In other words, one should be very clean. (4) One should not offer obeisances to the Lord with one hand. (5) One should not circumambulate demigods before the Deities. (6) One should not



spread his legs before the Deity. (7) One should not sit down before the Deity with his legs crossed, nor should one touch his legs with his hands. (8) One should not lie down before the Deity. (9) One should not eat before the Deity. (10) One should not speak lies before the Deity. (11) One should not speak very loudly before the Deity. (12) One should not talk nonsense before the Deity. (13) One should not cry before the Deity. (14) One should not deal with others before the Deity. (15) One should not utter harsh words before the Deity. (16) One should not cover himself with a blanket. (17) One should not talk enviously of others before the Deity. (18) One should not praise others before the Deity. (19) One should not use slang before the Deity. (20) One should not pass air before the Deity. (21) One should not neglect the sixty-four items of Deity worship. (22) One should not eat anything not offered to the Deity. (23) One should not neglect offering seasonal fruits as soon as they are available. (24) One should always offer fresh, untouched fruit to the Deity. (25) One should not sit with his back toward the Deity. (26) One should not offer obeisances to others before the Deity. (27) One should not sit near the Deity without taking the spiritual master's permission. (28) One should not be proud to hear himself praised before the Deity. (29) One should not blaspheme the demigods. (30) One should not be unkind to others before the Deities. (31) One should observe all festivals in the temple. (32) One should not fight or quarrel before the Deity.

CC Madhya 24.337

*śaṅkha-jala-gandha-puṣpa-dhūpādi-lakṣaṇa
japa, stuti, parikramā, daṇḍavat vandana*

Translation

“The items of worship, such as water, conchshell, flowers, incense and lamp, should be described. You should also mention chanting softly, offering prayers, circumambulating and offering obeisances. All these should be carefully described.

Purport

All these are mentioned in the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*. The eighth *vilāsa* of that book should be consulted as far as possible.



CC Madhya 24.338

*puraścaraṇa-vidhi, kṛṣṇa-prasāda-bhojana
anivedita-tyāga, vaiṣṇava-nindādi-varjana*

Translation

“Other items you should describe are the method of performing puraścaraṇa, taking kṛṣṇa-prasādam, giving up unoffered food and not blaspheming the Lord’s devotees.

Purport

Regarding the *vaiṣṇava-nindā*, see *Madhya-līlā* 15.261.