



Home Deity Worship Course

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 2.3.22 lecture



ISKCON Deity Worship Ministry

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 2.3.22

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Pradyumna: *Om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya. Om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya. Om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya.* Page 159, text 22. [leads chanting of verse] [Prabhupāda and devotees repeat]

*barhāyite te nayane narāṇām
liṅgāni viṣṇor na nirīkṣato ye
pādaḥ nṛṇāṃ tau druma-janma-bhājau
kṣetrāṇi nānuvrajato harer yau*

[[SB 2.3.22](#)]

Prabhupāda: [devotees chant] That's all right. So,

*barhāyite te nayane narāṇām
liṅgāni viṣṇor na nirīkṣato ye
pādaḥ nṛṇāṃ tau druma-janma-bhājau
kṣetrāṇi nānuvrajato harer yau*

[[SB 2.3.22](#)]

Word meaning?

Pradyumna: [leads chanting of synonyms]

barhāyite---like plumes of a peacock; *te*---those; *nayane*---eyes; *narāṇām*---of men; *liṅgāni*---forms; *viṣṇoḥ*---of the Personality of Godhead; *na*---does not; *nirīkṣataḥ*---look on; *ye*---all such; *pādaḥ*---legs; *nṛṇāṃ*---of men; *tau*---those; *druma-janma*---being born of the tree; *bhājau*---like that; *kṣetrāṇi*---holy places; *na*---never; *anuvrajataḥ*---goes after; *hareḥ*---of the Lord; *yau*---which.

[07:20]

[break] Translation = "The eyes which do not look at the symbolic representations of the Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, His forms, name, quality, etc., are like those printed on the plumes of the peacock, and the



legs which do not move to the holy places, where the Lord is remembered, are considered to be like tree trunks."

Prabhupāda: Hm. So, the peacock plumes, they look like eyes, painted. But it has no power to see. Similarly, if we do not see the forms of the Lord, just like in this temple we are seeing, then these eyes are to be considered as painted eyes, not real eyes. Simply just appearing like eyes; it has no use. The human form of life, the eyes are there, particular eyes, to see the forms of the Lord, eye to eye. And because our present position is that with these material eyes we cannot see the Lord in His spiritual form, therefore the Lord has kindly appeared before us in a manner in which we can see Him.

The forms of the Lord is not imagination. They say that they imagine some form. *Sādhakānām hitvārthāya brahmaṇo rūpa-kalpanaḥ*. The Māyāvādī philosophers, due to their poor fund of knowledge, they think that "The Absolute Truth is formless, but because we cannot meditate upon formless, something formless, let us imagine some form." Imagine. *Nirviśeṣa-vādī*, *nirākāra-vādī*, they imagine forms.

Therefore their philosophy, that "Any form you like, you can concentrate. Because after all, there is no form. But for your present facility, you can imagine some form." But there is also mistake on their part, because they say, "Imagine any form." Generally, they prescribe the form of Lord Śiva, the form of Lord Viṣṇu, the form of Durgā, the form of the sun and the form of Gaṇeśa. *Pañcopāsanā*., these five forms. But ultimately, you become "form-less." The example given by them is that you rise up to a upper place with a wooden stair, and as soon as you reach there, you throw it away, so that you'll not be able to come back again.

Similarly, their philosophy is, "With some imagination of form, you worship, and as soon as you realize Brahman, throw it away. No more." These are all imagination; actually there is no fact. They do not know the actual position of spiritual life; therefore they are personally misled, and they mislead others also. Here it is particularly mentioned, *liṅgāni viṣṇoḥ*, the form of Viṣṇu, not of this rascal imagination of Durgā, Kālī or Lord Śiva.

So we are not concerned with the imagination form. They are also not imagination. Actually, everyone, all the demigods, they have got their forms. But the difference is Viṣṇu, the form of Viṣṇu, is eternal; and the forms of demigods or the form, our forms---just like we have got now some form---they're not eternal. Temporary. We all sitting here, we have got different forms, but as soon as these forms will be changed---we shall accept another form---this form's gone forever. It will never come again. But Viṣṇu form, Lord Viṣṇu's form, *viṣṇu-tattva*... *Viṣṇu-tattva* means the forms of the original Lord, Kṛṣṇa.



Kṛṣṇa is the original form. *Kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam* [SB 1.3.28]. But He expands in different forms.

The original form is Kṛṣṇa. *Advaitam acyutam anādim ananta-rūpam* [Bs. 5.33]. In the *Brahmā-saṁhitā* it is said Kṛṣṇa, *advaita*, one. There is no second, I mean to say, counterpart. But He expands. *Advaitam acyutam. Acyuta. Acyuta* means which does not fall down. *Acyuta. Cyuta* means fall down. So God's another name is Acyuta, never falls down. Just like we living entity, we fall down. From spiritual world, we fall down. Because we have fallen down, therefore we have got this material body. But Kṛṣṇa, or God, never falls down.

Advaitam acyutam anādim ananta-rūpam. Ananta, endless. You cannot count how many forms are there of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They have been compared with the incessant waves of the river. Just like in the river you stand, on a flowing river, you will find the waves are day and night flowing, flowing, flowing, flowing.

Similarly, God, Kṛṣṇa, from Him, *ananta-koṭi*, innumerable incarnations are coming out, coming out. *Advaitam acyutam anādim ananta-rūpam*. Then next question may be that "If all the forms are coming from Kṛṣṇa, then Kṛṣṇa also must have come from some other form." Because we see... Suppose I have got hundred children, so I was also born by some father. No. Kṛṣṇa is not like that. *Anādi*. He is not emanation from anyone. He's original. *Kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*. All others are emanation from Kṛṣṇa.

Advaitam acyutam anādim ananta-rūpam ādyam. He's the original. *Ādyam. Purāṇa*, the oldest. Then why Kṛṣṇa does not look like old man? Just like in some other religious sect they present God as very old man. But Kṛṣṇa is, although the oldest... Because He's the origin of all emanation, He must be oldest, but He's *nava-yauvanam ca*, just like a young man, sixteen to twenty years old. That is Kṛṣṇa. *Yogeśvara*. Kṛṣṇa, the oldest of all, still He appears *nava-yauvana*. *Nava-yauvana*, just youthful life is beginning. That is called *nava-yauvana*. So according to our human society, the youthful life begins at sixteen years. So Kṛṣṇa is like that. He'll look always sixteen to twenty years old, not more than that. We have never seen Kṛṣṇa has become old. *Advaitam acyutam anādim ananta-rūpam* [Bs. 5.33].

Liṅgāni. *Liṅgāni* means form. So Kṛṣṇa has many forms = as Kṛṣṇa, as Viṣṇu, as Nārāyaṇa, as Baladeva, as Jagannātha. So many. Govinda. There are thousands and thousands of forms. So we must see at least one of such forms. Either you see Kṛṣṇa form or Rāma form or Viṣṇu form or Nārāyaṇa form or Baladeva form, or His incarnation, Nṛsiṁha-deva form, Matsyāvatāra, Mīnāvatāra... So many. If we do not increase our anxiety or inclination to see one of the forms of Viṣṇu... Here it is specifically mentioned, Viṣṇu, not others.



Līṅgāni... Līṅgāni viṣṇor na nirīkṣate..., nirīkṣato. If we do not see, then our eyes are exactly like the painted eyes on the plumes of the feathers, or plumes of the peacock. It looks very nice, but it has no value. No, it has no seeing power. So our these eyes are also painted, because it is material. These eyes will remain when I shall give up this body, but it will have no more seeing power. The seeing power is gone when the spirit soul gives up this body. So in spite of the beautiful eyes, it is unable to see.

Similarly, so long we have got this instrument... This is an instrument to work. *Māyayā...* In the [*Bhagavad-gītā*](#) it is said,

*īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānām
hṛd-deśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati
bhrāmayan sarva-bhūtāni
yantrārūḍhāni māyayā*

[[Bg. 18.61](#)]

īśvaraḥ, the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, is sitting within everyone's heart, and He's witness, *anumantā-upadraṣṭā* [[Bg. 13.23](#)]. *Upadraṣṭā* means He's seeing our activity. He's noting what I desire, because our desires are coming one after another, one after another. So according to our desire, Kṛṣṇa is so kind, He gives you a body.

īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānām hṛd-deśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati [[Bg. 18.61](#)]. *īśvara*, the Supreme Lord, is sitting within the heart of everyone. So... And *sarva-bhūtānām hṛd-deśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati bhrāmayan*. And He's giving us chance to transmigrate to different types of bodies or species of bodies. He's noting down that "This soul is very much fond of fresh blood and raw meat. All right. You take the body of a tiger. Yes." "This soul feels pleasure being naked. All right, you take the body of a tree.

You stand up naked for ten thousand years. Satisfy your desire for being naked for ten thousand years." Why two years, three years, or five years, ten years? Remain naked. Human body is meant for covering, not to become naked. But if anyone develops the idea of becoming nudie, naked, "All right, next life you get tree. Stand up." The example is there, Yamala-Arjuna, They wanted to be naked. Nārada gave him opportunity, "All right, you remain naked as trees."

So therefore, our business should be to go to the temple, as it is prescribed here, *pādau nṛṇām tau druma-janma-bhājau*. Those who are not moving, they're just like trees. They do not move. So, if we do not move to the places where Viṣṇu's forms are there... Just like in India, we have got many places of pilgrimage. Just like Vṛndāvana. There are... A small city, about fifty thousand utmost



population. But there are five thousand temples, big and small. Out of that, about one dozen temples are very, very big, just like fort. And there are small temples. So altogether, it is a city of fifty thousand population, but there are five thousand temples, Kṛṣṇa. All Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

So this is a chance, that "Come to Vṛndāvana, and wherever you go, you see Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. That will make your life successful." By seeing, seeing, Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, seeing, seeing, you'll get an impression. And if you continue... The inhabitants of Vṛndāvana, you'll find, if, when you go there, that in the morning and evening, all of them, they are going different temples and seeing the Deity Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

So there is no need of education, there is no need of philosophy, there is no need of science. Simply if you visit temples of Viṣṇu, then your life is successful. This is the Kṛṣṇa consciousness process. Simply if you move to the temples and see with your eyes. Very simple process. Our this Kṛṣṇa consciousness program is so simple, at the same time sublime, that you become liberated at the end. *Tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti* [Bg. 4.9], if you simply think of Kṛṣṇa in that way.

If you cannot read, then sit down and simply see the Deity's form. That will also give you. Anything, anything done. Little dancing, little, a little ringing the cymbals or singing Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*... Anything you do. These children... Just like they are dancing. They are also being spiritual profited. It will never go in vain. Somehow or other he has shown some jubilation in front of the Lord, it is noted immediately.

Therefore this verse is there, *pādaṁ nṛṇāṁ tau druma-janma-bhājau*. If you do not move to the temples, then what is the difference between your legs and the trees, which are standing without legs? They have legs, but they cannot move. Tree's another name is *pādapa*. They drink water with their legs, just like we drink water in our mouth. So it is not that all animals act in the same way. No. Just like there is a bird which [is] called bat? They pass stool through the mouth. You know? Yes. So there are different processes. The fishes in the water, they touch with the wings. Their wings are so perfect that three miles off, another big fish is coming to eat them, they can understand by the wings. Immediately they take protection. These are all described in the *Bhāgavata*.

You get so much perfect knowledge, scientific knowledge, of different species of life, how they are acting, how they are eating, how they are moving. All, everything is perfectly..., there. *Vidyā bhāgavatāvadhi*. If you study [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam](#) perfectly, then all your education is complete. You don't require any other book to read; you get from [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam](#) all material and spiritual knowledge, and at the end, Kṛṣṇa. This is the profit.



Kṣetrāṇi nānuvrajato harer yau. Kṣetrāṇi. Kṣetra means pilgrimage. This temple is pilgrimage. It is not ordinary house; it is Vaikuṇṭha. In the *śāstra* it is said that to live in the forest is living in goodness. There are three qualities, you know---goodness, passion, ignorance---in this material world. So when you live in the forest, you live in goodness. When you live in a city, in a town, then you live in passion. And when you live in a liquor shop, in a brothel or Bowery street, then it is living in ignorance. There are three kinds of living. Everything, three kinds. *Sattva, rajas, tamas*, goodness, passion... But if you live in temple, you live in Vaikuṇṭha, above goodness.

So all of you should be very careful that you may not fall down again from the Vaikuṇṭha place. That should be your first business, that you have been given opportunity to live in Vaikuṇṭha, but don't fall down again. Either you fall down on goodness, passion... That is material. They go to forest for meditation, but that is goodness, material goodness. But one who lives in temple, he's not concerned with material goodness, passion or ignorance. He lives in Vaikuṇṭha. In this age it is not possible. You can imagine that "Now I shall go to Himalaya and..., forest, and practice meditation." They're all bogus; you cannot do that. That is not possible. Because the age is different. We are not trained in that way.

Formerly, the *brahmacārīs*, they used to go to the forest, to the teacher, to the spiritual master, and they acclimatized with the atmosphere. But here, from the very beginning, in school, college, dormitories, mixing freely, doing all nonsense. How it can go? That's not possible. That is not possible. Therefore, take advantage of this temple, the centers we are opening, and live in Vaikuṇṭha. And the authorities of the temple should be so careful that it does not turn into something else besides temple. Then you are safe. The *māyā* cannot touch you.

Hmm. What is this? Hmm. Then? Read.

Pradyumna: "Especially for the householder-devotees, the path of Deity worship is strongly recommended. As far as possible, every householder, by the direction of the spiritual master, must install the Deity of Viṣṇu, forms like Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa or Sītā-Rāma especially, or any other form of the Lord, like Nṛsimha, Varāha, Gaura-Nitāi, Matsya, Kūrma, *śālagrāma-śilā* and many other forms of Viṣṇu, like Trivikrama, Keśava, Acyuta, Vāsudeva, Nārāyaṇa, Dāmodara, etc., as they are recommended in the Vaiṣṇava *tantras* or *purāṇas*, and one's family should worship strictly, following the directions and regulations of *arcanā-vidhi*."

Prabhupāda: Hmm. Now, this is the important point. I understand that some of our householder devotees are ordering for Deities in India. But here is the point. The point is that "they worship strictly, following the direction and regulation of *arcanā-vidhi*." Don't make a play. If you follow strictly the Deity worship



method, then you establish; otherwise, don't establish. It will be offense. One who is able to manage... Just like we are showing the example, how to worship Deity in the temple. In the same way, if one can... The idea is, that as here, our devotees are engaged in the worship of the Deity, similarly, a householder, when all the family members are trained up how to worship the Deity, then they can establish. Not that make a farce. Cleanliness, and the rules and regulation, that must be... That is the duty of every... Actually, the higher castes in India still, everyone---*brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya*---they must have Deity worship at home. Therefore, in the [*Bhagavad-gītā*](#) it is said, *śucīnām śrīmatām gehe yoga-bhraṣṭo sañjāyate* [[Bg. 6.41](#)].

Anyone who is rich in India still, they have got Deity worship at home. Very nicely. A separate house, a small house attached to their big buildings, and there is Deity worship, and the all the members should go there, offer prayer. Just like we are doing, the similar, same thing there. In Kanpur there is one temple, Dvārakādhīśa. The temple belongs to a very rich man, Singhanian. The, all the members... It is order of the lady, the mother of Mr. Singhanian, that "You all of you, you must visit the Deity." Very rich men, always busy in business. But still, they have to come to the temple and offer respect, take *caraṇāmṛta* and *prasādam*, then go to office. If one misses one day, then he will be fined. Still. The head man will be fined ten dollars, and the next man five dollars, like that, according to position. So if one day somebody misses, immediately the priest will go with the bill of fine = "Sir, you have to pay this fine." "Yes. You take immediately." Still there are such rules and regulation.

So Deity worship, it is the duty of all householders, Deity worship. That means automatically all the members become devotee. But it must be done according... There are sixty-four kinds of offenses in the devo..., *Nectar of Devotion* you'll find. Deity worship... For chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, there are ten kinds of offenses. But Deity worship, there are so many offenses. These are described. "You cannot sit down before the Deity like this, you cannot yawn before the Deity, you cannot talk nonsense before the Deity." So many things are there. So therefore it is said that "strictly following the direction and regulation of *arcanā-vidhi*."

So you are being trained up. In India they are trained up since centuries. Their culture is different. They automatically can adopt, immediately. They're trained up. You are not trained up as yet. You are being trained. So unless you are fully trained, don't establish Deity to make a farce. Better learn it perfectly in the temple, and when you think that the members of the household are also now as good as the devotees in the temple, then you must establish Deity. That is required.



Next.

Pradyumna: "Any member of the family who is above twelve years of age should be initiated by a bona fide spiritual master, and all the members of the household should be engaged in the daily service of the Lord, beginning from morning, 4 a.m., till night, 10 p.m...."

Prabhupāda: Hmm. This is Deity worship. Not that sleeping up to nine o'clock, and Deity worship. This is farce. That is not allowed. That will be offense. All the members must rise early in the morning, just we are doing in the temple. At 4 a.m. take bath, cleanse, and offer *ārātrika*. That is the beginning of Deity worship. And all the members should be so trained up... Suppose one is absent for some business, the other member should take it. There will be so many assistant, but the Deity worship must go on very nicely.

Then?

Pradyumna: "By performing *maṅgala-ārātrika*, *nirañjana*, *arcana*, *pūjā*, *kīrtana*, *śṛṅgāra*, *bhoga-vaikālī*, *sandhyā-ārātrika*, *pāṭha*, *bhoga*, *śayana-ārātrika*, etc., engagement in such worship of the Deity, under the direction of a bona fide spiritual master, will greatly help the householders to purify their very existence and make rapid progress in spiritual knowledge. Simple theoretical book knowledge is not sufficient for a neophyte devotee. Book knowledge is theoretical, whereas the *arcana* process is practical. Spiritual knowledge must be developed by a combination of theoretical and practical knowledge, and that is the guaranteed way for attainment of spiritual perfection.

"The training of devotional service for a neophyte devotee completely depends on the expert spiritual master who knows how to lead his disciple to make gradual progress towards the path back home, back to Godhead. One should not become a pseudo spiritual master as a matter of business to meet one's family expenditure, but one must be an expert spiritual master to deliver the disciple from the clutches of impending death.

"Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has defined the bona fide qualities of a spiritual master, and one of the verses in that description reads:

*śrī-vigrahārādhana-nitya-nānā-
śṛṅgāra-tan-mandira-mārjanādau
yuktasya bhaktāmś ca niyuñjato 'pi
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

"*Śrī-vigraha* is the *arcā*, or suitable worshipable form of the Lord, and the disciple should be engaged in worshiping the Deity regularly by *śṛṅgāra*, by



proper decoration and dressing, as also *mandira-mārjana*, the matter of cleansing the temple. The spiritual master teaches the neophyte devotee all these kindly and personally to help him gradually in the realization of the transcendental name, quality, form, etc., of the Lord.

"Attention engaged in the service of the Lord, especially in dressing and decorating the temple, accompanied by musical *kīrtana* and spiritual instructions from scriptures, can only save the common man from the hellish cinema attractions and rubbish sex-songs broadcast everywhere by radios. If one is unable to maintain a temple at home, he should go to another's temple where all the above performances are regularly executed. Visiting the temple of a devotee and looking at the profusely decorated forms of the Lord well dressed in a well-decorated, sanctified temple naturally infuse the mundane mind with spiritual inspiration. People should visit holy places like Vṛndāvana, where such temples and worship of the Deity are specifically maintained.

"Formerly, all rich men like kings and rich merchants constructed such temples under the direction of expert devotees of the Lord, like the six Gosvāmīs, and it is the duty of the common man to take advantage of these temples and festivals observed in the holy pilgrimages by following in the footsteps of great devotees [*anuvraja*]. One should not visit all these sanctified pilgrimages and temples with sightseeing in mind, but one must go to such temples and sanctified places immortalized by the transcendental pastimes of the Lord and guided by proper men who know the science. This is called *anuvraja*. *Anu* means to follow.

"It is therefore best to follow the instruction of the bona fide spiritual master, even in visiting temples and the holy places of pilgrimage. One who does not move in that way is as good as a standing tree condemned by the Lord not to move. The moving tendency of the human being is misused by visiting places for sightseeing. The best purpose of such traveling tendencies could be fulfilled by visiting the holy places established by great *ācāryas* and thereby not being misled by the atheistic propaganda of money-making men, who have no knowledge of spiritual matters."

Prabhupāda: So, have *kīrtana*.

Devotees: *Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda*. [devotees offer obeisances] [end]

