

Sādhana-pañcakam
Pujya Swamiji's transcribed talk

This is the second part of the serial article, continuation from March 2021 newsletter.

KARMA IS COMMON TO ALL

Taduditaṁ karma svanuṣṭhīyatām; may you follow the *karma* enjoined by the Veda. *Taduditaṁ* means the *karma* that is enjoined by the Veda⁷ or the *karma* that is born of the Veda.⁸ This includes *agnihotra*⁹ and so on, as well as other daily *karmas* and duties. When the groups of people, divided by the *śāstra* into *varṇa*¹⁰ and *āśrama*,¹¹ are there, then corresponding duties ensue. This part of the verse refers to the *karma-kāṇḍa*, the section of the Veda that discusses means and ends for achieving human desires in life. May the *karmas*, duties, prayers, and so on that are mentioned in the Veda be followed, *Svanuṣṭhīyatām* means may they be followed well¹². You can say this to any religious person, even a Christian or a Muslim, because any religious person's own scripture is considered as his or her Veda in the sense of this verse.

KARMA AS WORSHIP OF ĪŚVARA

*Teneśasya vidhīyatām apacitiḥ;*¹³ may you worship Īśvara by performing *karmas* and doing your duty in accordance with the Veda. The word *tena*, 'by means of,' refers to the *karmas* and duties enjoined by the Veda. Originally such *karmas* were performed according to one's *varṇa* and *āśrama*. Let those *karmas* be done. *Vidhīyatām* means *kriyatām*, may it be done. If the *varṇa-āśrama* system is not practiced, then any given situation at any given time calls for a course of action from you, so let

⁷ वेदेन उदितं कर्म

⁸ वेदे उदितं प्रतिपादितं कर्म

⁹ Daily Vedic ritual performed by a householder.

¹⁰ The social groups within Vedic society, of which there are four: *brāhmaṇa* (priest/teacher), *kṣatriya* (warrior/administrator), *vaiśya* (merchant), and *śūdra* (worker)

¹¹ The four *āśramas* are *brahmacharya* (life of a student), *gṛhastha* (life of a householder), *vānaprastha* (stage of life when one is not an active parent or contributor as employer/employee) and *sannyāsa* (life of a renunciate).

¹² सुष्ठु अनुष्ठीयताम् इति स्वनुष्ठीयताम्

¹³ अपचितिः तेन कर्मणा वेदोक्तकर्मणा ईश्वरस्य विधीयताम्। ईशस्य अपचितिः विधीयताम्। ईश्वरस्य तेन कर्मणा तेनेशस्य विधीयताम्
अपचितिः

that action be performed well, *svanuṣṭhīyatām*. We do not look upon any *karma* as secular or sacred. All *karma* is duty alone. Doing anything that is to be done in a given situation is acting in harmony with Īśvara, the Lord.

Therefore, may one perform the *karmas* properly, as they are to be done in a given situation. By doing this, even by doing your daily *karma*, you are doing *īśasya apacitiḥ*, worship of Īśvara. *Apaciti* is a very peculiar word. The root is *cāi* in the sense of fear or loss, and also in the sense of *pūjā*, honouring or worshipping.¹⁴ Here it means the latter. The prefix *apa* is also there. From the same root, we also have the word *apacaya*, which means loss. Here the root *cāi*, *cāiṛ* is substituted by *ci*, therefore it becomes *apaci*, to which we add the suffix *ti*.¹⁵ This suffix is generally used to create a feminine abstract noun, like *mati*, *citi*, etc. Here the meaning is: may Īśvara be worshipped by doing the *karmas* to be done at a given time, not just at the time of doing *pūjā*.

By performing the *karma* that is to be done, you are worshipping Īśvara because you look upon a given situation itself as Īśvara. You look upon this action which is to be done, as your contribution. In this great *yajña*, ritual, which is called the process of creation, Īśvara has not gone to sleep after creating the world. The creation is still on, and in that process you happen to be a cog in the wheel. By doing what is to be done at a particular time, you contribute to this *īśvara-sṛṣṭi*. If you can maintain *īśvara-arpaṇa-buddhi*, an attitude that all *karma* is done as an offering to Īśvara, then you will find that it becomes worship. This makes it *karma-yoga*. So the author has already come to *karma-yoga*.

LET GO OF KĀMYA-KARMA

*Kāmye matistyaajyatām; mati*¹⁶ means *saṅkalpa*, intent. May your *saṅkalpa* be given up with regard to *karma* that is considered *kāmya*. *Kāmya-karma* means a *karma* that is prompted by a desire for a particular result. It is something meant to improve your *artha*, security, or your *kāma*, pleasure. If *artha* and *kāma* are kept in view when performing a *karma*, then such a *karma* is called *kāmya-karma*.

Even when you are performing *pūjā*, there is also expectation of a result. No one is going to perform an action without expecting a result. However, if the result is

¹⁴ अपचितिश्र (Pā. 7-2-30- see vārttikam)

¹⁵ स्त्रियां क्तिन् (Pā. 3-3-94)

¹⁶ काम्ये कर्मणि मतिः त्यज्यताम्

antaḥkaraṇa-śuddhi, purification of the mind, and that purification is meant for *mokṣa*, then *mokṣa* is not *karma-phala*, the result of an action.

Mokṣa is already accomplished by you, and therefore it is not real *karma-phala*. The only *karma-phala* in that case is *citta-prasāda*, tranquility or placidity of mind, meaning freedom from the hold of *rāgadveṣa*, likes and dislikes. All pressures are absent. Having this kind of natural, cheerful, contented mind is not an ordinary thing. To gain this itself is an accomplishment. Whether you gain enlightenment or not, just gaining *citta-prasāda* is good.

Citta-prasāda is like water in a river which contains big sand grains. There is only one or two feet of clean water through which you can see the riverbed clearly. It is like a clean mind, with no fear, anxiety, or any emotional problems. Anxiety and fear about what will happen tomorrow are always a problem. These type of anxiety attacks are taken care of when the mind has a certain placidity. They call this *saralātā*, purity and this kind of mind, *citta-prasāda* is achieved by doing *karma*. But it is not so easily achieved. That is why we are talking about it so much. It comes through prayer to Īśvara, and also by paying attention to oneself.

Kāmye matistya jyatām; let the *kāmya-karma saṅkalpa*, 'I want this, I want that', be given up. Wanting something is okay, but wanting it thinking it will enhance your security or happiness is a delusion. You have done this for so many years, and it did not make you secure or happy. So give up *kāmyakarmas*. Then what happens? If you do not have *kāmya-karmas* to do, why should you do *karma* at all? After all, if you want security in the form of money and so on, then you should do *karma*. Or if you want to gain some *kāma*, pleasures then you should create situations where you command some pleasure. If you are not interested in either security or pleasure, then why do *karma* which is anyway not a pleasant thing? Getting up every day and doing *karma* is not a pleasant thing.

The author responds by saying that by doing this *karma*, you are able to eliminate *durita*, difficulties and obstacles. When you do *nitya-karma*, your daily duties, then *durita*, *pāpa* goes away.

NEUTRALISATION OF PĀPA KARMAS

Pāpaughah paridhūyatām; may the *pāpaughā*, the bundle of *pāpas* accumulated in this life and past lives, *paridhūyatām*, be destroyed. *Pāpaughā*¹⁷ means the great

¹⁷ पापस्य औघः समूहः पापौघः

group of *pāpa* that is standing in your account in this *prārabdha-karma*¹⁸ itself. We are not going to eliminate *sañcita-pāpa*¹⁹ right now. This line discusses *prārabdha-karma*. What needs to be neutralised is not only the *prārabdha-karma* with which you have come into being here, but also the *pāpa-karma* that you have done so far in this life. *Apacitiḥ kriyatām*, one must atone for that. The word *apaciti* also means atonement; an atonement that brings about a loss of the bulk of *pāpa*. The reduction process is also called *apaciti*, *apacaya*.

Let this *pāpaugha*, this big bundle of *pāpa* that is *adr̥ṣṭa-pāpa*, be reduced, neutralised, destroyed. *Pāpaugha* includes the original *pāpa* that is there *prārabdha-pāpa*, as well any *pāpa* that is gained during this life. When we say that is to be eliminated, we need not tell you not to do *pāpa-karma*. You are not doing any *pāpa-karma* now. We are only trying to eliminate the previous *pāpa* because every human being is a mixture of *punya* and *pāpa*, good and bad.

SEE THE LIMITATIONS OF SUKHA

Once these *pāpa-karmas* are neutralized, then *bhavasukhe doṣo'nusandhīyatām*; may you constantly see and remember, the *doṣa*, limitation, inherent in *bhava-sukha*,²⁰ experiential pleasure. *Bhava-sukha* is *saṁsāra-sukha*. What is *saṁsāra-sukha*? It starts with ice-cream or a hot bath early on a cold morning. Like this, there are many small *sukhas* called *bhava-sukha*. But *bhava-sukha* has got limitations. *Anusandhīyatām* means; 'May you, *muhurmuhuḥ*, again and again, look into and remember the limitations of *bhavasukha*.'

What are the limitations of *bhava-sukha*? First, it is *anitya*, limited in time. Before the *sukha* is born, there is pain. After the *sukha* is gone, there is pain. While the *sukha* is there, there is also pain because it is going away. Some people are afraid even before the *sukha* comes. They worry it is only going to last one minute, or ten minutes, or an hour, or a day. In this way, *sukha* goes away even before it comes! Even before the springtime comes after the winter, many worry that it is only going to last for two months. Such people are always counting down, 'One day gone, two days gone, three days gone.' You do not look at what is coming, instead you always count down, worried about what is going away.

To be continued...

¹⁸ Results of past actions that are fructifying in the present lifetime.

¹⁹ *Pāpa* collected in previous births but not yet fructified.

²⁰ भवे सुखम् अस्ति