

Lecture given by H.H. Suhotra Swami  
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Title: God Is NOWHERE

TRANSLATION

O my friends, sons of demons! In this material world, even those who are apparently advanced in education have the propensity to consider, "This is mine, and that is for others." Thus they are always engaged in providing the necessities of life to their families in a limited conception of family life, just like uneducated cats and dogs. They are unable to take to spiritual knowledge; instead, they are bewildered and overcome by ignorance.

PURPORT

In human society there are attempts to educate the human being, but for animal society there is no such system, nor are animals able to be educated. Therefore animals and unintelligent men are called vimūḍha, or ignorant, bewildered, whereas an educated person is called vidvān. The real vidvān is one who tries to understand his own position within this material world. For example, when Sanātana Gosvāmī submitted to the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, his first question was 'ke āmi', 'kene āmāya jāre tāpa-traya'. In other words, he wanted to know his constitutional position and why he was suffering from the threefold miseries of material existence. This is the process of education. If one does not ask, "Who am I? What is the goal of my life?" but instead follows the same animal propensities as cats and dogs, what is the use of his education? As discussed in the previous verse, a living being is entrapped by his fruitive activities, exactly like a silkworm trapped in its own cocoon. Foolish persons are generally engaged by their fruitive actions (karma) because of a strong desire to enjoy this material world. Such attracted persons become involved in society, community and nation and waste their time, not having profited from having obtained human forms. Especially in this age, Kali-yuga, great leaders, politicians, philosophers and scientists are all engaged in foolish activities, thinking, "This is mine, and this is yours." The scientists invent nuclear weapons and collaborate with the big leaders to protect the interests of their own nation or society. In this verse, however, it is clearly stated that despite their so-called advanced knowledge, they actually have the same mentality as cats and dogs. As cats, dogs and other animals, not knowing their true interest in life, become increasingly involved in ignorance, the so-called educated person who does not know his own self-interest or the true goal of life becomes increasingly involved in materialism. Therefore Prahlāda Mahārāja advises everyone to follow the principles of varṇāśrama-dharma. Specifically, at a certain point one must give up family life and take to the renounced order of life to cultivate spiritual knowledge and thus become liberated. This is further discussed in the following verses.

## LECTURE BY HH SUHOTRA SWAMI:

The word „vidván“ means an educated person. The root is “vid” from the same word we get “veda” and “vidya” and it comes into modern western languages in such words as “wisdom” – the same root but there are two kinds of “vidya” or “education” “knowledge” material and spiritual. So the material knowledge or material “vidya” is actually “tarka”. Tarka means material logic which is just argumentation back and forth. The authority behind the arguments are simply pratyaksa and anumana - gross sense perception and mental speculation. This is the authority. It is declared in Mahabharata tarko apratistha - that this type of material knowledge has no ultimate basis, it is ephemeral, it is ever changing. Actually the basis is simply on the argumentative skill of different persons. Prabhupada points out that someone will become established as the great authority on the basis of his ability to make good arguments, but he will be in time defeated or even not defeated - even not that - just that people get tired of hearing his arguments and gradually they become interested in someone else’s arguments even if that someone else didn’t actually defeat the first person. But just in time someone else’s arguments become fashionable and then this becomes the VOW, to think in this way.

I think it was Max Plank, famous German scientist, who pointed out that scientific theories do not replace one another on the basis of proof, but rather just it becomes fashionable that younger generation of scientists they become advocates of some certain view and as they grow up and take over than that view becomes predominant. And then the next generation comes along and because it is natural for younger people especially nowadays in Kali-yuga to think differently from their elders, than that younger generation they adopt different view and as they grow up and the old ones die off then that becomes the predominant so-called scientific outlook. So this is actually the process of so-called knowledge. Therefore tarko apratistha that actually has no solid foundation in reality. So the real truth - dharmasya tattvam nihita guhayam mahajano yena gatah sa panthah - the real truth, the real confidential knowledge of Vedic sastra is to be understood from the mahajana, the realized souls, in whose hearts the dharmasya tattva is established. So mahajano yena gatah sa panthah - to attain factual vidya, factual knowledge, one has to simply follow in the footsteps of the mahajanas and not speculate.

The speculation – another example, actually I was thinking of writing it on the board but I think I can explain it. It takes the letters to spell, is there a pen? No? OK forget it, forget it, forget it. I just try to explain it. If we could write on this board the letters that spell the phrase “God is nowhere.” And we just cram these letters together. Then we could have a big argument here how to defy, divide these words. You’ll find in these letters the sentence can be formed “God is nowhere.” It can be divided up these letters as “God is nowhere.” or “God is now here.” The same letters. So there can be endless arguments what is the proper way to divide these letters and what sentence should be formed. This is on the platform of tarka, this is the unending argument between atheists and theists, theoretical atheists and theoretical theists. It is just like that. Someone may say: “No, it is ‘God is nowhere, God is nowhere’, and the other one is saying: “God is now here”. Like that. But this is not established on anything except argument, so there is no conclusion.

The real conclusive truth is found in the hearts of the mahatmas who are seeing God directly as we were quoting last night - pratyakṣāvagamaṁ dharmyaṁ. The truth of

dharma has to be seen directly *su-sukham kartum avyayam* and this is the proof, *su-sukham kartum avyayam*, the proof is the experience of transcendental bliss, which as the Lord says in the second chapter of Bhagavad-gita: *rasa-varjam raso 'py asya param dr̥ṣtvā nivartate*, by this higher taste then one's senses are naturally, automatically checked from engagement in ignorant activities. One whose senses are uncontrolled despite his theoretical position as theist or atheist, this is the point being made by Prahlada Maharaja in this verse, that there are many people in this world who are considered to be vidvan, educated or in knowledge, whether atheist in knowledge or theist in knowledge, but in their practical life it is seen that they are acting like cats and dogs. Therefore from Vedic point of view they get no credit for being man in knowledge. Knowledge is seen in how one behaves.

I think it was Aristotle, who said there are three ways in which you can try to convince someone of something. Pathos, logos and ethos. And of these three the ethos is the most important, it is actually the effective way to convince someone. Pathos means by passionate argument, like the politicians do by making impassioned speeches, just trying to rouse person's emotions basically. So that can be effective. Especially in a sleepy Bhagavatam class if we start to shout, then everyone opens their eyes, there is some response. But better than that is logos, by reason, that's more convincing but the best is ethos. Ethos means example. So this is acharya. Acharya may also speak in an impassioned way but more than that he is using reason, Vedic evidence, but more than that he is teaching by example. He is showing practically the way by which everyone can come to the transcendental position. We heard that last night it is very simple: *yāre dekha tāre kaha 'kṛṣṇa'-upadeśa* – very simple formula. We want to become established in this *raja vidya raja guhyam*, then go out and preach. Someone may say: “Well, but I don't know what to preach. I am not at all educated in the spiritual knowledge.” But we heard in the purport Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare. And like Kali-santarana Upanishad says:

*iti ṣoḍaśakam nāmnām  
kali-kalmaṣa-nāśanam  
nātaḥ parataropāyaḥ  
sarva-vedeṣu dr̥ṣyate*

In these 16 syllables *sarva-vedeṣu dr̥ṣyate* - all Vedic knowledge is compressed and in this Hare Krishna mahamantra is all the potency to overcome the evil influence of the Kali-yuga. So one simply goes out and chants Hare Krishna and advises people to chant Hare Krishna and by his example convinces them to chant Hare Krishna. And that person is established in *dharmasya tattva*, in the truth of Vedic culture, Vedic knowledge, Vedic dharma. He is actually a transcendentalist. So this is very simple, sublime formula. This *dharmasya tattva* means *pratyakṣāvagamam dharmyam*, direct perception of the bliss of Krishna consciousness. Krishna is the Ananda-maya purusa, the personification, it does not mean in the impersonal sense, but he is the personification of absolute happiness. One who is in contact with Krishna will experience this transcendental happiness.

So there was one sannyasi who is preaching at the edge of the village under a tree and he was speaking very nicely about God, about Krishna and the villagers were coming and hearing every day. And there was up to date young man who was naturally very skeptical, because this is the fashion today. So the young man came to one lecture and then in the

middle of the lecture he began to protest: “You are speaking always about God, but where is this God, I don’t see Him! Show me God! I can see this and that movie star, I can see this and that pop star directly, I can see this and that political leader directly with my own eyes and hear him with my own ears, but you’re speaking of God and I don’t see that God! And yet you want us to surrender to this God, you want us to change our lives and become devotees of this God. This is not reasonable. So I demand you show me God right now!” Then the sannyasi began to explain: “It is not so easy to see God. First of all your senses must be purified and you must follow the process of sadhana bhakti.” In this way he was speaking very nicely, but the young man was very impatient and again protested: “No, no, no, I don’t have to follow any kind of sadhana to see film stars and pop stars and politicians. They make themselves available directly to my senses, so you say the whole world should surrender to God, so then God should appear before us. This is only reasonable! Show me God!”

Again the sadhu replied to this very calmly, reasonably and the young man was going more and more agitated. Finally the sadhu said: “All right. I think it is time to address everyone. I think it is time that I apply a therapeutic method to help this young man understand what I’ve been explaining here today. And this is called ‘the kamandalu cure’”. As you know kamandalu is the sannyasi water pot. This sannyasi had a big brass water pot next to him and he called the young man up: “Please come here. I want to apply the kamandalu cure to you in this way to be able to better understand my message.” The young man had a scientific attitude, it sounded like an experiment. He came forward and he was expecting something like the sannyasi would take some water from the kamandalu and do something with making him drink it or sprinkle on his head. As he came forward he came close to the sannyasi. The sannyasi picked up the kamandalu by the handle and smashed it over his head. So hard that he was bleeding, he fell down on the ground and he was screaming in pain. Then the young man jumped up and raised the whole human cry: “This sannyasi is a brute, he’s not a sadhu, he’s a rogue, he’s a criminal, did you see how he just attacked me? Look, he bulked my head open, I’m bleeding!”

And so he went and got the police and the whole thing was brought before the judge. So the judge had before him the young man and the sadhu and he asked the young man what happened and the young man presented his side of the story and he explained how the sannyasi had without warning hitting over the head with his kamandalu. Then the judge turned to the sadhu and said: “This young man accuses you of attacking him and brutalizing him, what do you have to say about that?” This sadhu said: “No, I made myself very clear before the whole village, that I was applying a therapeutic method, this was therapy called the ‘kamandalu cure’. I made that very, very clear. And the young man stepped forward to receive the cure. I don’t know why he is complaining.” The judge said: “Well, that’s reasonable response, what do you have to say about this, young man?” The young man said: “What kind of cure is this? This is nonsense. He put me in such misery, such pain, my head is still hearting, oh, how can you call it cure, he attacked me, I almost died from the shock and the pain.” Then the sadhu, he turned to the young man and said: “You keep speaking of this pain. Well, what is this pain, what is the proof that you are in pain right now? Why don’t you show the judge your pain, show the judge this pain? Give him the evidence!”

And the young man turned to the sadhu: “What are you talking? Pain is not something you just take out and show, it is something you experience. Don’t you know what pain is? I mean pain, I feel this pain!” And this sadhu smiled and shook his head and said: “Yes, now you’re also starting to understand how it is that one experiences God. God is not something that you take out and show, but it is something you experience. You are experiencing pain, you know that you are in pain by direct experience. So I know there is God by direct experience and there is a way for you to experience God too just like there is a way for you to experience pain, the ‘kamandalu cure’. I can give you another kind of cure, by which you’ll experience God, but you must accept this cure.” Then hearing this explanation the young man became quiet and he thought about it and he found that this was very reasonable.

Yes *pratyakṣāvagamam dharmyam*, this is the education. The real education means to become educated in the direct experience of God and this is accomplished by following in the footsteps. Following the *ācār* of the *ācāryas*, the *ācār* means behavior, practice as well as the theoretical knowledge of God. It is important to understand. It means accepting first of all that there is a purpose to everything. We see everything now around us. We see that there is a world full of discernible objects of senses. Transcendental inquiry means to accept first of all that all of this has a purpose. If it has a purpose, then there is someone who gave it a purpose, that is Krishna. This is called the teleological argument. This is the proper way of philosophical inquiry. In Greek the word “telos” means “purpose”. So this teleological also is translated as argument of design. So it is the inquiry accepting that everything has been designed, everything has a plan behind it and so we have to simply understand who is that plan-maker.

This is the Vedantic line of inquiry. *Athāto brahma jijñāsā* - to inquire what is Brahman, what is the source of everything. And the speculative inquiry which does not bring one to the Absolute truth is trying to understand what is real and what is not real on the basis of my own sense perception and mental speculation. The principle of this type of philosopher is first of all to detach reality or existence from any higher purpose, he does not admit that. He says: “That is beyond our understanding. We don’t know if there is any higher purpose.” Simply try to figure out by our own perception what is true and what is false here for us. That again is the process of *tarka* - endless argument. Someone will say: “Well I think this is right and this is wrong or this is true, this is false, this is real, this is unreal.” And someone else will say: “No, I think this is true and this is false.” And this way the arguments never come to an end.

But in the method of inquiring into the cause of everything Srila Prabhupada said this is the actual quest for knowledge, to inquiry what is the cause of everything, from where does everything come. That can be practically realized, directly perceived when the things of this world are actually engaged in the service of that cause. Then their true nature becomes self apparent, *su-sukham kartum avyayam*. What is that Srila Prabodhananda Sarasvati says? “*Visvapurna sukhayate*, I see the whole universe filled with happiness.” This is the vision of the devotee who sees everything engaged in Krishna’s service. This is preaching. Preaching means to make that understanding, that knowledge perceptible to everyone. This is the purpose of this Krishna consciousness movement to churn the ocean of nectar, to churn the ocean of bliss by engaging everything in Krishna’s service and engage anyone who comes in contact. Even those in the darkest mode of ignorance, if

they come in contact with this systematic engagement of Krishna's energy in Krishna's devotional service they will taste this bliss and this happiness directly. And by the strength of this happiness they will be lifted up out of the grip of the senses and mind to the transcendental platform.

All right. Hare Krishna. Are there any questions? Yes?

(Question not understandable)

Answer: Because he is a demon. The demons, Prabhupada says, have twofold program. The first step is to establish to believe in the world that there is no God. So this is their trick to persuade everyone to give up standard religious practice and become atheistic and thus weakened by sense gratification. Because when one gives up God then one naturally becomes irresponsible and engages in sinful activities and by sinful activities he becomes weak both physically and mentally and of course spiritually. Then, having persuaded people there is no God and made them weak, the next step of the demons program is to establish themselves as God, as the absolute authority in this world so that all these persons now weakened by the spread of atheism will follow them blindly. This is their motive. This was seen in communist culture that God was officially denied by the government. All religions were considered simply - I actually have a dictionary, it is called a *Dictionary of Philosophy* which was published in the Soviet Union in 1967 by Progress Publishers, which was their propaganda arm and so it is very interesting book. When you look up religion, the explanation religion begins with a religion dash, fantastic hallucinative ideology which is used by imperialists for exploiting innocent people, the opiate of the people, like that. So they write off religion as being hallucination. That was seen in the communist system. And yet they were putting forward their Lenin and Stalin and Mao Tse Tung as being the absolute leaders, practically they were God. Even now, in North Korea still this Kim Ir Sen and Kim Jong Mil (?), his son, they are the.... what are they calling them? They have some title... "great leader", yes. The great leader, anyway, they are addressed by so many titles, which portray them as being perfect authorities, in other words God. So this is their program.

Any other questions? Yes.

(Question not understandable)

Answer: Aha. I think this comment has something to do or what I said in yesterday evening's class, they said yāre dekha, tāre kaha 'kṛṣṇa'-upadeśa..... you see you talk about, but not about the weather. So I think there is some relationship.

Hare Krishna.

Srila Prabhupada ki – jay!

Srimad Bhagavatam ki – jay!

Gaura premanande! Hari Haribol!