

Doing Our Prescribed Duties

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Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev.

Every one of us in this material world has been assigned certain duties by the Lord. He knows our abilities very well, what we can handle and what we cannot and has accordingly distributed the duties. So we should try to perform them meticulously. Even if we fail in our attempts to accomplish the task, the Lord would be pleased when one makes sincere effort to perform the same. The failures which we come across would be lessons for us to improve ourselves in future. On the contrary, if we don't do our duty, rather spend the valuable energy and time provided by Krishna in completing other's duties perfectly, we would surely get into trouble. So the most merciful Lord, taking into account our forgetful nature is repeatedly stressing on this fact in the verses 3.35

shreyaan sva-dharmo vigunah para-dharmaat sv-anusthitaat
sva-dharme nidhanam shreyah para-dharmo bhayaavahah

"It is far better to discharge one's prescribed duties, even though faultily, than another's duties perfectly. Destruction in the course of performing one's own duty is better than engaging in another's duties, for to follow another's path is dangerous."

As well as 18.47 of Bhagavad Gita as follows.

shreyaan sva-dharmo vigunah para-dharmaat sv-anusthitaat
svabhava-niyatam´ karma kurvan napnoti kilbisham

"It is better to engage in one's own occupation, even though one may perform it imperfectly, than to accept another's occupation and perform it perfectly. Duties prescribed according to one's nature are never affected by sinful reactions."

We might wonder what could be the danger or sinful reaction that would affect us in performing other's duties ?

1) First obvious danger is we are the one's who would be held answerable for neglecting our prescribed duties. Be it the boss in this material world or Supreme Lord, both of them would be displeased. We cannot provide them lame excuses that we were busy doing other's duties and hence did not complete ours.

2) One more point to be noted is by doing other's duties, we are not helping them. Rather, we are depriving the opportunity of their progress. By performing their prescribed duties we make them lazy. We can guide others - but not land up doing everything ourselves. As the saying goes, "Tough seas makes efficient sailors". So we should not interfere in other's duties.

Practical example could be that of parents doing the home-work for their children. Any parent who is serious about the child's progress would not do this mistake as they very well know that the child would not gain knowledge if they keep doing the child's assignments. We might have also seen how much pupa struggles inside the cocoon, before it turns into a beautiful butterfly. If we try to cut open the cocoon ourselves, we only hurt the butterfly as its wings would be of less strength and hence would be short-lived. On the other hand when it comes out on its own, its wing will be fully developed and strong.

So let us abide by the words of Supreme Lord Krishna, understanding His instructions without any mis-interpretation and perform our prescribed duties carefully

Thankyou very much,
Yours in the service of Srila Prabhupaad and Gurudev,
Vidyanidhi Krishna Das,
Sharjah

Moderator's note : Vidyanidhi Prabhu is a humble and service minded devotee living in Sharjah. Both Prabhu and Mathaji are very dedicated in service and helpful to devotees. They have two kids Mukunda Krishnadas and Rshaba Krishna das aged 4 and 3 respectively. Apart from their duties of taking care of children and other household responsibilities, they conduct regular satsang programs and do lot of seva to congregation which is very vibrant in the areas of Sharjah and Dubai.

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