

spirit presented herself, as a female hog, and killed him. Thus, she took him to her abode. So, the worship of spirits, is forbidden.

But strivers, can offer oblations of food and water, to evil-spirits and ghosts, so that they may be liberated, from the life of evil-spirits. Even, saints and great souls, have done so.

**Appendix**—The term ‘Vrata’ mean precept (rule). Therefore the term ‘devavrata’ means—to follow precepts relating to the worship of gods (Gītā 7/20). By taking refuge in God, performance of action for Him is ‘worship to God’—‘Svakarmaṇā tamabhyarcya siddhiṁ vindati mānavaḥ’ (Gītā 18/46).

If all actions are offered to God, it is worship to God (Gītā 9/27). If actions are performed in a disinterested manner and they are offered to God, then no forbidden action can be performed because it is due to desire only that forbidden actions are done (Gītā 3/36-37).

In fact all is the manifestation of God. But he who assumes (accepts) any other entity besides God, does not attain salvation. Even if he goes to the highest worlds, he has to return from there to this mortal world (Gītā 8/16).



*Link:—An idea may come to the mind of people, that when access even to the minor gods, is not easy, access to the Lord should be, very difficult. The Lord clarifies the point now.*

**पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति ।**

**तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥ २६ ॥**

**patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam yo me bhaktyā prayacchati  
tadaham bhaktyupahṛtamaśnāmi prayatātmanah**

Whoever, offers Me with devotion, a leaf, a flower, a fruit or even water, I accept these devout offering of a devotee, with love. 26

*Comment:—*

[All the things and actions, belong to the lower nature, of the Lord. But, a man by identifying himself with these becomes their enjoyer, and lord. Actually the Lord is their enjoyer and master. So, the Lord, orders devotees, to offer all things and actions to Him (9/27). By doing so, they will be free, from bondage forever (9/28).]

Secondly, in the worship of gods several ordinances etc., are to be observed, but in attaining Him, there are no rules and regulations, because a man (soul) being His fraction has natural affinity, with him. So he can attain the Lord, without any formalities with firm feelings of affinity with Him, in the same way, as a child can go to the lap of its mother, without any formality.

**'Patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam yo me bhaktyā prayacchati'**—A Devotee, who offers, with love a leaf (basil leaf etc.) a flower, a fruit or even water, the Lord, appears in person and accepts the article offered, by him, with love. The Lord, satisfied the three worlds by demanding a leaf from Draupadī, and by eating it. He liberated, the elephant who offered Him a flower. He relished the fruit offered by Śabarī so much, that he could never forget it and always praised, her hospitality. When Rantideva offered water, to the Lord Who came as a person of low-caste, he had His vision.

When a devotee, is absorbed in devotion, he forgets what he is offering, to the Lord. Similarly, the Lord is also so much absorbed in love, that He takes no heed, of what He is eating. The Lord, ate the rind of the bananas, offered by Vidura's wife, with love.

**'Tadahaṁ bhaktyupahṛtamaśnāmi prayatātmanah'**—The Lord, not only accepts the offering of devotees, but also eats it. As a flower, is to be smelt but the Lord eats it, because it was offered by a devotee, with love. It means that if a devotee wants to offer

food to the Lord, He immediately, feels hungry.

'Prayatātmanah' stands for the devotee, whose heart remains engrossed in God, and who totally depends only on Him. The Lord, partakes the articles offered, by such a loving devotee.

Here, a leaf, flower, or fruit and water denote all things. The reason is, that a leaf, a flower, and a fruit are the effects, of the cause of water, as all the three are born, of water. So all objects (things) of the entire universe, are denoted by them, as all are the result of water. So all things should be offered, to the Lord.

In this verse, the term 'Bhakti' (Devotion), has been used, two times. 'Bhaktyā', shows devotion of a devotee, while 'Bhaktyupahṛtam', is an adjective, for the thing offered with devotion. It means, that when a devotee offers a thing with devotion, it becomes a symbol of devotion (love), and so the Lord, eats it because He has a craving for love.

#### An Important Fact

In this verse, there is stress on devotion (love), rather than of objects, as the Lord, has a thirst for loving sentiment, not for objects. As a chaste wife, and an obedient disciple, feel highly delighted by serving her husband and the preceptor respectively, a devotee is very much delighted by offering a thing to the Lord, because he feels that the Lord by His special grace, has given him an opportunity to serve Him, with a thing, which is actually His.

The Lord, eats the thing, offered with devotion. There is an anecdote in this connection. There was a priest who offered almonds, walnuts, cashew nuts and pistachio nuts etc., to the Lord in the temple, from the Dīwālī festival to the Holī festival. But, when these nuts became costly, he began to offer ground nuts. One day, the priest had a vision of the Lord, in his dream. The Lord said, "My dear, you have started to offer, only ground

nuts." The priest again started to offer almond etc. The priest was convinced, that the Lord ate the things offered, to Him.

It is said, by saints that things offered to the Lord, with devotion, become unusual in smell, and taste etc., and are not spoiled, with passage of time. This is not a hard and fast rule, but it depends upon, the devotion of a devotee.

When articles are offered as oblation, into fire, it is sacrifice; when they are offered to others, it is called charity. When by abstinence, they are not used for one's ownself, it becomes austerity; and when these are offered to God, which lead to union with Him—all these are different names, of renunciation.

**Appendix**—In order to worship the gods, several rules have to be observed (followed) (Gītā 7/20), but in the worship of God there is no rule. In the worship of God there is predominance of love (devotion) and one's regarding Him as one's own, rather than of any method—'bhaktyā prayacchati', 'bhaktyupahṛtam'.

As an innocent (simple hearted) child puts into its mouth whatever comes to its hand, similarly the Lord by becoming simple hearted eats whatever is offered to Him by the simple hearted devotee—'ye yathā mām prapadyante tāmstathaiva bhajāmyaham' (Gītā 4/11); as Vidurānī offered the peel of a banana to Lord Kṛṣṇa, He ate it with a great relish.

The expression 'bhaktyā prayacchati' means that a devotee offers a thing to God with love (devotion), not with a desire. In the worship of gods certain things are necessarily required but in the worship of God nothing particular is required, but only love or devotion is required.



*Link:—A man has a downfall, if he is attached, either to things or actions. In the previous verse, it was mentioned that things should be offered, to the Lord. In the next verse, He explains that actions, should also be offered, to the Lord.*