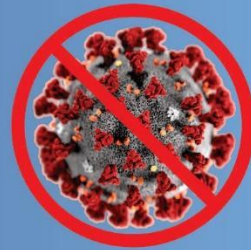


Dodging

Disease

and Death

Indefinitely



Ancient wisdom literature lists the four evils of this material world: janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhī (birth, death, old age, and disease). When prince Siddharta went on his quest for enlightenment, he witnessed four kinds of suffering - birth, death, old age and disease. That sobering experience led him to sit under a tree and meditate to find a solution and thus, he became Buddha - The Enlightened One.

You may say - it was just an ancient story, but actually these sufferings concern each and every one of us and there is no way we can avoid it. Science is trying to fight diseases, prolong life, and preserve beauty by trying to stay young looking, but still people are dying, getting old, taking birth, and getting sick.

The problem of sickness and death was the “elephant in the room” in 2020, and it still is in many countries. Nobody asked for it. Nobody wanted it. But somehow, it was forced upon everyone in the world. When we don't understand why these things are happening to us, we start looking for someone to blame, and start concocting various conspiracy theories, but the blame game won't fix the ultimate inevitable problem of disease and death which is ultimately awaiting everyone. Everyone thinks it's not going to happen to them, and go about their lives as if that were true, even avoiding safety measures like wearing masks and social distancing, and the result is that the ICUs of hospitals get filled to capacity with the very sick and dying. Deep inside, we know that, but we are in denial. This leads us to blame others for our predicament, avoiding this primary question, which should be obvious to any human being - why do we have to suffer these types of disease and death, and is there any way to avoid it? Animals can't ask that question. Only the human species is endowed with such intelligence.

Wisdom literature says that when one asks that question, one rises above animalism to the status of being human, because then one begins to actually use one's human intelligence. If one does not ask that question, then one is living like a two-legged animal – simply eating, sleeping, mating, and defending, without inquiring how to make a permanent solution to these problems. The human form of life is more developed than the animal. If we don't use our God given intelligence to ask these questions, how are we any different than an animal on the way to the slaughterhouse? The cow or sheep is in queue of the meat packing plant, waiting in line to be killed, but it doesn't care until it's too late. We are meant for inquiry into who we are, why we are put into this suffering condition, and how we can get out of it. Human life is the only

opportunity to get out of the material condition, which is full of the miseries of birth, death, old age and disease.

It is possible to “dodge disease and death indefinitely,” but these problems cannot be solved by material means, no matter how advanced the technology. The solution is easily available through a simple process of spiritual science.

One of the oldest books of wisdom extant in human society is the Bhagavad-gītā. This book explains that we are not these temporary bodies. These bodies are not our selves/souls. The soul is eternal, full of knowledge and bliss. Our bodies, however, are just the opposite – temporary, full of ignorance, and miserable, being subject to the above mentioned four evils.

The good news is that we have nothing to do with these bodies. These are just like clothes that get discarded when they are old and worn out. Who we are – that spiritual spark of consciousness does not change, even though we change our bodies. Just as our bodies change from an infant, to a child, to a grown man or woman, to elderly, the soul similarly goes to another body at death based on one's karma and higher authorities. This is called reincarnation. “Re” means again, and “carne” means flesh. We are always constantly reincarnating – or “re-fleshing” our material bodies. This is a natural process. Every seven years every single cell in our body changes. When the body gets old and worn out, we change it, just as one changes one's clothes. The self-realized soul is not bewildered by such a change. But it is painful, because we must leave behind our loved ones and start all over with a new material body. This is called “samsara” - the cycle of birth and death, and the whole purpose of human life is to escape this vicious cycle. The Gītā explains exactly how to do that.

As long as we are in this material world, we are subject to unnatural repetition of birth and death, old age and disease. But the Gītā also tells us that there is another world called “vaikuntha” (“vai” means without, and “kuntha” means anxiety) which is beyond this temporary material manifestation where birth, death, old age, and disease are conspicuous by their absence. That is our original eternal home, where we can live eternally, in full knowledge and bliss.

“Yet there is another unmanifest nature, which is eternal and is transcendental to this manifested and unmanifested matter. It is supreme and is never annihilated. When all in this world is annihilated, that part remains as it is.” – BG 8.20

This is not an empty promise or something that has not been tested and proven. It is an exacting science of the soul called bhakti-yoga, (devotional service) or linking with the source of everything, who is in the ultimate realization a person – the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is not a sectarian process. It is universal and is intrinsic to the nature of all human beings, no matter what sect one may have identified with in the past, or even if one has identified as an atheist. In fact, it is very appealing to the atheist, because the conclusion of this philosophy is to “abandon all varieties of religion.” It is not a set of dogmatic principles that can be learned by scholarship. It is an awakening process that has to be revealed by devotional service when God is pleased by surrender and service. As we surrender to Him, He rewards us accordingly. This process free, easy, and available to all, no matter what background or qualification. It has been documented that many, many persons from time immemorial have traversed this path and reached the goal-freedom from the four evils/miseries of this temporary world (birth, death, old age, and disease), and the result has been certified and guaranteed by the greatest authorities in timeless wisdom literature, so there cannot be any doubt!

If you would like to learn more about this type of yoga, point your phone camera to the QR code below. The link will lead you to more in depth reading material, my audiobook reading of this pamphlet, and an audio clip & transcript from a Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam class (2.1.1) given by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda on September 2nd, 1972 in which he said this:

“The scientist, or the philosopher they do not think very deeply how to stop death. They discover atomic bomb to kill, how to accelerate death problem but not to stop. They can manufacture so-called nice medicine for disease but they cannot stop disease, these are the problems, otherwise what is the value of scientific knowledge? But here is the science Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We can stop your birth death old age and disease. This is the greatest welfare activities to the human society.”

