

Sri Isopanisd #3: Mantras 9-11,

Knowledge and Nescience

Summary of mantras 9-11: One falls down through being involved in nescience. People involved in ordinary mundane activities will go to “the darkest region of ignorance,” and the materialistic intellectuals will go to an even worse place. In order to become transcendental you don’t just forget about mundane things, but you learn to understand them from the transcendental platform. In this way you get the proper picture, and you become free from maya.

Note: There is extreme similarity between verses 12 and 13, and verses 9 and 10. They are almost identical.

Overview of mantras 9-11

Mantra nine evaluates **ignorance and pseudo knowledge**

Mantra ten **defines knowledge** as distinct from both ignorance and pseudo knowledge

Mantra eleven enjoins us to **know spirit and matter**

Mantra nine

Summary: The previous three mantras have described the *maha-bhagavata*, and his vision of Krsna. Mantra 9 discusses two kinds of people who lack knowledge of Krishna: those who are simply ignorant and those who are followers of material scholarship, thinking it the end-all of knowledge. Both kinds of people disregard the Lord’s proprietorship and consequently are degraded into the “darkest regions of ignorance.”

Wolves are dangerous and wolves dressed as sheep are even more dangerous.

Definition of ignorance:

Killers of the soul (general description in mantra three; here specifics)

- Materially ignorant
- Materially knowledgeable.

Evidence in modern society

Categories of those who don’t surrender to Krishna

In Bhagavad-gita 7.15:

- The fool
- Lowest among men
- Those whose knowledge is stolen by illusion
- Outright atheists

Mantra nine categories of those with “so-called” knowledge:

- veda vada ratas. These
- mayayapahata jnana

Mantra ten

Summary: Mantra 9 described the results of cultivating ignorance and false knowledge. Mantra 10 explains that true knowledge brings a different result than either of these. It also emphasizes the need to take guidance from a *dhira* in the act of discriminating between real and illusory knowledge.

Definition of knowledge (from Bhagavad-gita 13.8-12)

Application

Examples

Modern educational institutions
Nationalism

Where does one get real knowledge?

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Mantra eleven

Summary: The previous two mantras have explained that ignorance and false knowledge bind one and are in contrast to true knowledge. Mantra 11 describes how one must know the relative positions of material and spiritual knowledge to transcend the material energy and attain deathlessness.

Material knowledge is insufficient

To conquer death
To achieve our real means of enjoyment

How to achieve spiritual knowledge?

Eighteen principles
Sankirtana movement.

Knowledge of matter must be there also

What kind of mundane knowledge?

Summary: What will bring us happiness and freedom is real knowledge which includes knowing both spirit and the nature of matter, and being able to distinguish between knowledge, false knowledge, and ignorance.