



# DIVYA SANDESH

2019 NEW YEAR



## The Gravest Sin

Sin is the most despicable theme of religious philosophies all over the world. In *Sanatan Dharm* (eternal religion), which is commonly known as Hinduism, *Dharma* defines the ethics and morals of leading a human life. Transgressing from *Dharma* is called *Adharma* and is considered a sin. The intent to follow *Dharma* is to promote socially acceptable behavior/practices and also implement punitive measures to maintain peace and harmony in the world. But the ultimate intent is to encourage us to act in a manner that will release us from the unending series of miseries and to lead us towards the path of unlimited divine bliss.

Observing *Dharma* is called *Punya* and observing *Adharma* is called *Paap*. *Paap* and *Punya* are the twin fruits of [karma](#) (actions). They determine the fate or destiny of the beings on this earth.

Another word which is used mostly in the *Dharmashastras* (scriptures) to denote sin is '*Pātaka*'. It is derived from the Sanskrit root word *paat* (to fall). *Pātaka* means the actions, responsible for one's own downfall.

There are three classes of sins

### 1. The Mahapatakas (महापातक)

These are the gravest sins, which lead to one's downfall into the darkest hell ([narak](#)). Here there is a huge vat which is full of worms. The offending soul with its subtle body is thrown into that vat. These

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worms keep biting and the being does not die but keeps yelling and screaming in pain. These sins cannot be neutralized or washed away by any penance. One has to undergo the sufferings as a consequence of these sins.

Just like a loving mother, all merciful God employs different tactics to discipline His Children. See the article [narak](#) for more details on this.

Some Puranas suggest that these sins may be overcome through devotion or the grace of God. The *Dharmashastras* identify five gravest sins, known as the *Pancha Mahapatakas*. According to the Chhandogya Upanishad (5:10.9), they are the following –

- a. **Brahma-hatya (ब्रह्म - हत्या)** – Murder of a Brahmin is a grave sin. The definition of Brahmin is,

ब्रह्मं एति इति ब्राह्मणः

“The one who has realized God or the one who can read and teach the Vedas”.

So, killing a learned Brahmin is like destroying a significant source of metaphysical knowledge, and thus depriving many inquisitive souls from true knowledge.

- b. **Suvarna-steya (स्वर्ण-स्तेय)** – Stealing any precious object as gold, or anything which was procured as an investment e.g. stealing life-long savings of a retiree or any such similar act of deception / covetousness. These acts immensely hurt someone, hence are grave sins.



Figure 2: Robbing someone of their life-long savings is a great sin

- c. **Sura-paan (सुरा-पान)** – Drinking alcohol and intoxication is considered the worst of all sins because intoxication causes immediate imbalance of mind. Subsequently, it harms important parts of body as heart and liver etc. Addiction to alcohol causes the mental disposition to become demonic and one wreaks havoc in his own family. In that madness he can commit any severe sins like suicide and become violent towards others. For which he might be repentant for the rest of his life. For other sins one has to reap the consequences in after-life; if one kills a Brahmin one may not be caught but would have to face consequences in after-life, If one steals gold he might not get caught and become rich in this life but will have to suffer in after-life. But habitual drinking affects the quality of life in the present. It ruins the



Figure 1: Habitual Drinking affects the quality of life in the present. Therefore is a great sin.

person's mental and physical health, wealth, spiritual progress and the peace of entire family, hence this is the gravest of the *Maha Pataks*.

- d. **Guru-talpa-gaman (गुरु-तल्प-गमन)** – It means seducing the spouse of guru. The word guru denotes spiritual master, teacher, and mentor, priest etc. any elderly honorable person. It is extremely immoral to defile his bed.
- e. **Sahayakattva (पाप-सहायकत्व)** – Assisting in the performance of any of the above sins is also a severe sin. Helping an errant with the sin denotes one's own intention and interest towards that sin. Hence, per God's law the helper also undergoes the same punishment as the errant. The extent to which the help was rendered determines the extent of punishment in after-life.

## 2. The Upa Patakas (उपपातक)

These are second to *Maha Patakas* sins and arise from minor offenses. The following five offences constitute *Upa Patakas* namely

- a. Failure to perform daily Vedic rituals
- b. Incurring the displeasure of one's preceptor
- c. Selling intoxicating drinks
- d. Giving false witness, making false claims
- e. Performing a sacrifice for an unworthy person or unworthy cause.

## 3. The Prakirna Pataks (प्रकीर्ण अथवा साधारण पातक)

The minor offenses which are committed intentionally or unintentionally due to ignorance or carelessness. There are more than fifty minor sins such as being deceitful, killing a woman, studying Shastras which are prohibited by one's spiritual master, killing insects and other creatures, adultery, cruelty, disobedience to parents, accepting alms without performing austerities or sacrifices, etc. These sins can be washed away by performing Vedic rituals ceremoniously, sincere repentance, and seeking forgiveness.

God is generous and forgiving. In the Vedas, He has documented a wide array of fire-sacrifices (*yagya*), worships and ways of atonement to nullify the punishments of these sins. In past uncountable human lives each being has performed uncountable actions. So atoning for uncountable sins will take infinitely long. Plus, a sin is performed in a short period of time whereas atonement takes a long time. So, all sins can never be atoned for; but All-Gracious God forgives all our sins once we completely submit ourselves unto His lotus feet.

## 4. Namaparadh (नामापराध)

But above all these sins there are spiritual transgressions which is known as NAMAPARADH. One cannot atone for these by performing any amount of Vedic rituals for any length of time. Even God does not pardon these. Every human being must know about them and be extremely cautious to avoid them.

All of the aforementioned sins can be washed away by seeking refuge at the lotus feet of Shri Krishna. But those, who get involved in Namaparadh, are sure to meet their downfall. They lose all love for God in the present and after-life are condemned to suffer in hell for eons. Then they come back to Earth in lower life forms and roam around in the cycle of birth and death.

According to the illustrious scriptures of Bhakti viz. Ujval Neelmani and Bhakti Rasamrit Sindhu by Roop Goswami, and Prem Ras Siddhant by Jagadguroottam Shri Kripalu Ji Maharaj etc., there are 10 *Namaparadh* (most severe offences) for which no atonement is suggested in any scripture.

- a. **Speculate difference between Lord Shankar and Vishnu** and consider them to be different from one another or considering one is greater than the other.
- b. **Denouncing Saints –**

हन्ति निन्दन्ति वै द्वेषि वैष्णवानामभिनंदति ।  
कृद्ध्यति याति नो हर्ष, दर्शने पतनाननि षट् ॥

The examples of offences against a saint are physical abuse, censuring him, to be angry with him or feel no joy in seeing him etc. God does not excuse those who commit this offence.

- c. **Dishonor Spiritual Master**  
– Considering a God-realized saint to be an ordinary human being brings the aspirant down from the stage of [Bhav](#) [Bhakti](#) to the lowest level.



Figure 3: Having any ill-feeling towards God's name, forms, pastimes, attributes, abodes, or saints is a spiritual transgression

भावोप्यभावमायाति कृष्णप्रेष्ठापराधतः ।

God reveres the saints so immensely that He says in Bhagawat -

अनुब्रजाम्यहं नित्यं पूयेत्यङ्घ्रिरेणुभिः ।

“I so love my devotees that I walk behind them in anticipation of attaining their foot dust to purify Myself”.

d. **Disrespect the authentic scriptures** like Veda, Bhagavat, Geeta and Ramcharit Manas etc.

e. **Discriminate between divine names** or doubt their exquisite significance described in the scriptures. For example many devotees of Lord Ram and Lord Krishna fight to prove the supremacy of the name of their favorite deity. For example: In Shankarshan Upanishad there is a mantra which is referred to as Mahamantra. Some people change the Mahamantra

*hare ram hare ram ram ram hare,*

*hare krishna hare krishna krishna krishna hare hare.*

It has three names of God: Hari, Ram and Krishna. The meaning of all these three names is one and the same, “The one who captivates the minds of all”. Devotees of Ram sing it the way it is written above, but the devotees of Shri Krishna sing the second line first to establish His supremacy over Ram. This is apex of ignorance and is a serious spiritual transgression. Know that all names of God are equal.

f. **Misinterpret divine names to serve one’s ulterior motives:** Endeavoring to prove that God is formless, therefore all His names are also fictitious or discriminate between names of God is also a serious spiritual transgression.

For example: Lord Ram has been referenced in Guru Granth Sahib, the holy book of Sikhs. Some ignorant (or maybe self-serving) people claim that the Ram depicted in Ramayan is different from the one mentioned in Guru Granth Sahib. These differences are seen and proclaimed only by the ignorant beings, whereas in the scriptures, which are written by God-realized saints, such interpretations are never to be found.

g. **Knowing the unique cleansing power of Divine Names yet continue to frequently perform sinful acts.**

h. **Equate grandeur of divine names to Karma or dharm etc:** Some self-serving “holy” men, in order to earn money, misguide laymen by saying, “you cannot be emancipated without performing particular rituals, or without visiting the sacred places, or without attaining knowledge of formless Brahm”. While our scriptures say –

गो कोटिदानं ग्रहणेषु काशी प्रयागगंगायुत कल्पवासः ।  
यज्ञायुतं मेरुसुवर्णदानं गोविंदनाम्ना न कदापि तुल्यम् ॥ पां. गीता



Figure 4: Scriptures are a God's gift to mankind

“Chanting the divine names of Shri Krishna far outweighs the combined effect of donating 100 billion cows, dying in the holy land of Kashi, leading the life of an ascetic at the bank of Ganges River even in the holy place of Prayag on an auspicious occasion, performance of fire sacrifices and donating the entire Meru, the mountain of gold”.

- i. **Despite knowing the magnificence of divine names having no interest in chanting them.**
- j. **To persuade an atheist to chant divine names:** If we compel a rigid non - believer to chant the divine names, he might say it with wrath / hatred or he might speak ill about God; both of which will be a greater transgression. Besides, forcing someone to do something they don't like might increase his resistance and he might never ever want to do it again. Whereas, once you know he is not interested if you let it go, then in the future the divine name might attract the person and he might be inclined to chant it. That's why Narad Ji didn't attempt to make Ratnakar (Balmiki) chant the word “Rama Rama”. Ratnakar used to kill people so he was more inclined to say “Mara, Mara”. Narad Muni knew this and cleverly asked him to say “Mara Mara” which when said multiple times sounds like “Rama Rama”.

There is no Vedic ritual to atone for *Namaparadh*. The only way is to shed tears of repentance, ask for forgiveness, remember God and seek the grace of a saint.

So, submit yourself unto the lotus feet of an authentic rasik saint with a determination to follow all his instructions. Then, practice devotion under his guidance staying clear of every spiritual transgression, especially towards saints, divine names and scriptures to attain your ultimate goal of attaining divine-love-bliss.

## Kripalu Leelamritam: Power of Saints

This is an incident from 1940s. In those days Shri Maharaj Ji, in the prime of his youth, used to live in Mahu near Indore in the state of Madhya Pradesh, India. The owner of the house was very fond of Shri Maharaj Ji and used to love him as her own son. Though everyone else used to address Shri Maharaj Ji as Pandit Ji yet she used to call him Gopal. A daughter-in-law of the owner narrated this divine story.

Pandit Ji used to conduct satsangs in the temple till late in the night. The temple was surrounded by many Muslim households. They were quite fed up of the sound of singing, majeera, dholak etc. being played till late in the night and asked for it to be stopped. But the satsang didn't stop. Several days later my husband was distributing Prasad to all the devotees, when a large group of Muslims armed with daggers and knives came over to threaten, “From tomorrow onwards there will be no noise or else we will massacre everyone”.

My mother-in-law was perturbed. She pleaded with Gopal to go and save her son. Shri Maharaj Ji dismissed her plea and said, "Why should I go? He is your son, you should go to save him". Everyone in the house and temple was disappointed and the Muslims were getting rowdier by the minute.

My husband put on a brave face and said, "Satsang will not stop. Do what you like". At that moment Shri Maharaj Ji came out and glanced at that group. We don't know what came over them but they discarded all of their weapons, lifted their hands up in the air and started to sing "Radhey Radhey". After that incident the satsang continued, without a hitch, in that temple for 3 more days.



Figure 5: Shri Maharaj Ji came out and glanced at that group... lifted their hands up in the air and started to sing "Radhey Radhey"

**Morale:** God-Realized saints (aka God's representatives) don't discriminate anyone based on religion, cast, creed, gender or any other physical factor. They bestow their grace equally upon everyone. Just once approach such a class of saints and they will immediately start showering you with grace. That is their nature –

चंदन विष व्यापत नहीं । लिपटे रहत भुजंग ।  
संत न छोड़े संतई, केतिक मिले असंत ॥

"The sandalwood tree provides relief from heat to the snakes wrapped around it yet the tree remains unaffected by the poison of those snakes. Similarly, the saints never give up their graciousness however sinful the people around them might be".

Also, the saints are divine. They are endowed with all the powers of God. The living beings are the eternal part of God, hence their attraction towards a Godly personality is natural. The aura emanating from Godly personalities attracts others and they feel, "He is mine. He is divine, He is lovable".

In the life of Mahaprabhu Chaitanya several people experienced a similar sentiment and an analogous example of a present day saint is given here.

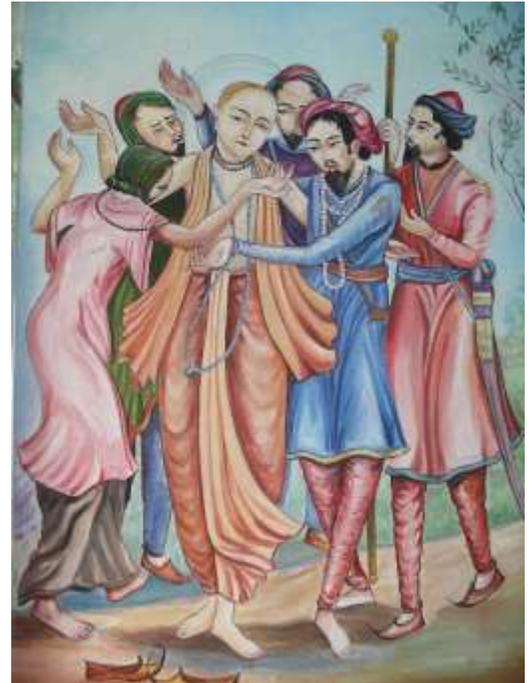


Figure 6: During Mahaprabhu Chaitanya's time several people experienced a similar sentiment

## Kids Story

### Think! Who gives everything you value?

Once Kabir Das was walking in a narrow alley, engrossed in thoughts of the Lord. A small group of women were excitedly chatting and walking ahead of him. Kabir Das overheard their conversation.

In those days in India arranged marriage was prevalent. Kabir Das learned that one of those girls was recently engaged and her in-laws had sent her a nose ring as a token of acceptance of marriage-offer. She kept describing the nose-ring and the events around it in great detail while the others were listening to her in rapt attention.



Figure 7: God gave the nose and He has been forgotten

After repeatedly hearing about the nose-ring Kabir Das could not help himself and he composed this couplet and said it out loud

नथनी दीनी यार ने, उसका तो चिंतन बारम्बार ।  
नाक दीनी करतार ने, उनको दिया बिसार ॥

"Fiancé gave the nose-ring, which is being described again and again. God gave the nose and He has been forgotten."

Think if you didn't have a nose where would you wear the nose-ring?

**Morale:** Innumerable times our actions mimic the situation above. We focus on our physical appearance and physical comforts. Therefore, we adorn our body and are grateful to those who assist in procuring those accessories. While doing all this we forget God the one who gave us this body and also created the world to sustain it.

Constantly being grateful to God, for the grace He showers on us in innumerable ways, is a form of devotion in itself which can lead us to God-realization.

# Happy Bhakti Divas