
Brahmatva in Twenty First Century

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The word “Brahmanism” means the potency of the Brahmans. Potency means the virtues, the characteristics, the qualities, the power etc. Without the necessary characteristics the word Brahman is only nomenclature. The Padma Puran states, “Satkarma nipunah vipra, mantra tantra vishaaradah.”, a Brahmana is one who is well versed in the knowledge of auspicious activities, and graduate in the Vedic and tantric or occult knowledge as well. In other Periods, like Satayuga, Treta and Dwapar, the Brahmans were fully empowered so much so that at the end of Dwapar a little son of a Brahmana cursed Emperor Parikshit to die in seven days by the bite of a snake and no one could avert that curse. Evidently his power came by undergoing severe austerities and through a sincere and honest way of living in those days. They had to live a simple life, with full dedication to the Almighty Lord with honesty, simplicity, purity of mind and the body, mercy to the living beings including the animals, non-violence, service to the society at the cost of even their lives and comforts. Maharshi Dadhichi gave up his body for protecting the society from the demon Vrattasura. The Brahmans were very well known for Vedic rituals and spreading the Vedic knowledge for the good of the society. These virtues gave them tremendous power to achieve anything in this or the other worlds.

With passage of time and the approach of the Kaliyuga, all the virtues of Brahmans have disappeared because no one recognizes or follows any Vedic rituals or rites. Vedic knowledge is unknown to the modern Brahmans. Similarly all other qualities listed above, have totally vanished from the society. Some sincere people who follow them are ridiculed. The sixteen sanskaras are not even known to the people. Over and above, every body in the society (including the Brahmans) has become greedy and selfish. Sense gratification has become the watch word of life. Going to the temples is motivated by some selfish objective and not with a sense of service to the Lord. There are no inhibitions in life, one can eat anything under the Sun in any way, do anything, live any way one likes. In these days and age it is rightly said in the scriptures that every one is born as “shudra” (kalau

shudra sambhavah). People are ashamed of putting tilak or yagnopaveet. They are hesitant to install the Deities of the Lord in their homes, leave aside chanting of Gayatri mantra, to name a few. So what is the potency of Brahmans in this age? As the time progresses things are going to get even worst and not any better.

Is there a remedy? Can the things be reversed? Can we be again Brahmans as in other times (yugas)? In the past our youngsters have asked several times, what does it mean to be a Brahman? In what way (if any) is a Brahman superior to others? I regret, to this date no one has given a satisfactory answer. The reality is that the word Brahman is perpetuated as nomenclature only and in no way different from other classes of the society. If it was due to genes composition that our race was recognized as Brahman then be assured that due to mutation even those have changed, because we do not see any real Brahman presently in the Indian society of America. But not all is gone and still there are real Brahmans who practice Vedic culture in America, who get up and bathe in brahma-muhurta at 4 a.m.(irrespective of the weather conditions), worship Lord Krishna, chant His holy name for an hour at least, then offer to Lord, before they eat anything. They also have restrictions in what they do, what they eat, what they listen, what they see etc. In other words they have restrained from meat eating, gambling, intoxication and illicit sex. They are simple, merciful and respectful to all lives, be it human or animal. They study and preach the Vedic literature. These are real Brahmans whom we call the Hare Krishnas. If we follow them and the teachings of their spiritual master, late A.C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, then there is some hope of regaining our identity as Brahmans, otherwise there is none. The author is a life member of this ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness) for over 30 years and has thoroughly studied them before coming to this conclusion. If we, along with our children, associate with them then success is assured. In the present times, that is the one path left according to the author. I am sure not every one will agree with this but it is up to them to find their own way.

