

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF OFFERINGS (BHOGE)



On the path of devotion, offerings are generally made to God either to give thanks or to seek blessings. For example, if there is success in education, a bounteous crop or recovery from ill health, bhog is offered in the form of fruits, food, clothes or even jewellery among other things as a token of appreciation. In the case of future new projects, bhog is offered seeking blessings and guidance to be successful. However, in the path of knowledge or spirituality, bhog is offered more as a form of love as well as for blessings to establish a closer relationship between Father and child. Bhog in this case is strictly in the form of fruits, sweets, food or any form of gifts.

However, in SM-17-06-05, Shiv Baba reminds us “this custom and system of offering bhog has no *connection* with knowledge or remembrance. You have no connection with anything else. There are just two things: Alpha and Beta, the kingdom. God is called Alpha”.

## **The System of Offering Bhog**

Question: “Why is there the system of offering bhog to God on the path of devotion as well as here? (31.07.06)

Answer: Because this is also giving *regard* to Him. You know that although Shiv Baba is incorporeal and beyond experiencing anything and doesn't eat anything, the fragrance does reach Him. The Father is the Bestower of Salvation for All and the Purifier. Therefore, bhog must definitely be offered to Him

Baba tells you: You can earn an income wherever you go. Whatever you do – eat, walk and move around – simply remember the Father. This is your income. It is even easier for you children! There is no question of *attention* etc. In the Shrinath temple, they sit in remembrance of Shrinath and offer him bhog. That is just a stone idol. To whom should you offer bhog? Only one Shiv Baba has this right. Only He is the Bestower of Salvation for All and the Purifier. The Father says: I do not accept it. You offer Me milk mixed with water. Why do you offer Me this bhog? I am incorporeal and I do not experience anything. Why do you worship Me? You place bhog in front of Me, but devotees offer Me bhog and then they distribute it among themselves and eat it. You know that you must definitely offer bhog to Shiv Baba, and then you can distribute it among yourselves and eat it. This is like giving *regard* to Him. We offer bhog to Shiv Baba; this is Shiv Baba's bhandara. You definitely have to offer bhog to the One whose bhandara this is. Although you offer bhog, it is you children who eat it. This Brahma eats it, but I don't eat it. However, I definitely do take the fragrance. “You have prepared very good bhog.” I have the *organs* to say this. This Brahma can eat it, because this body is his. I simply come and enter him. I just use his mouth in order to make you children pure from impure.”

## **Bhog is offered in Spiritual Consciousness**

Bhog literally means offerings or blessings. In the path of knowledge, bhog offering is conducted in “spiritual consciousness”. It is a very positive spiritual account with God so as to develop many relationships depending on the situation. In the mundane world, people create relationships by inviting each other to partake of a specially prepared meal in a social atmosphere. However in the spiritual path, bhog offering is an expression of respect and love as well as to feel the closeness of relationships towards the Supreme Father as Teacher, Preceptor, Mother, Friend and Beloved among others. Since the Father does not physically partake of the food, He blesses the food spreading the fragrance such that whoever partakes of this food receives blessings and power.

## **Neutralizing Negative Vibrations**

In the purchase of raw material as foodstuff from external sources such as the market, there is need to neutralize the negative vibrations that may have accumulated by people trying to maximize their profits. It is generally believed that because of the greed and corrupt practices from farmers to market dwellers, an unholy atmosphere is generated that accompanies the produce in the form of impure vibrations. To understand this concept of vibrations, just reflect how you feel when you enter a synagogue, mosque or temple compared to other public places such as a pub, bar or even public eating places.

The purification process begins from the moment the thought comes to offer bhog. One must maintain a spiritual consciousness even while purchasing the raw vegetables, fruits or dry goods for cooking. Bhog offering is not a donation; it is the creation of a fortune by planting the seeds of good wishes and pure feelings. Offering bhog is also a form of gratitude. Some offer before an achievement and some after attainment.

## **The Bhog Offering**

1. First the instrument offering the bhog should be seated for at least 10-15 minutes in an effort to stabilize oneself in the angelic subtle stage in complete remembrance and in the company of the Supreme Soul.
2. The intellect of that person should be totally free of other duties and completely surrendered to Bapdada.
3. The first step is to offer the food to the Supreme Father. Secondly, Baba should be asked to bless the food such that whoever eats that food would get spiritual power and be satisfied by just eating a little.
4. The intellects of the instrument person as well as the gathering should be offered to Baba as "Prabhu Prasad". In other words, one should offer oneself to Baba as an obedient and humble instrument to be used as a serviceable and cooperative child in the Father's task.
5. At this point, the relationship of Child and Father should be foremost and your self-respect should emerge to give the additional intoxication of zeal and enthusiasm.
6. Special souls should be remembered with good wishes and pure feelings.
7. All souls of the world should also be remembered in a similar manner.
8. The elements and nature should also be remembered and pure vibrations donated to nature and the environment.
9. And finally, coming to the end, dristi of sakash may be given to the audience as well as those who prepared the food or assisted in providing the food although it is considered as ShivBaba's bhandari.
10. The bhog offered should then be returned and mixed with the rest of the food that was prepared and cooked.

## **Occasions for Bhog Offering**

1. When BapDada is fixed to come to give an avyakt murli, Dadi Gulzar is the instrument who sits for the bhog offering, who is then pulled into trance. Dadi Gulzar explains in Q&A, 29-03-05. "From the beginning I have the experience that whilst Baba is in my body and using the organs of the body that I know nothing of what is happening. Of course the soul is still in the body but the consciousness is merged. Just as in a radio or television there are several channels and just because you are tuned into one channel doesn't mean the other channels are not working. In the same way, when Baba is in the gathering and meeting everyone, my consciousness is switched off at that time. My stage at that time is one of very sweet silence.

It is not that I am lost in Baba's love or experiencing the seed stage, it is just sweet silence. I am lost in that stage and thus when I return I am not tired because I return from a very good stage. During that time I have no awareness of what has happened here. Sometimes people ask whether I would like to hear what Baba is saying. But no, as the benefit of sweet silence is very beautiful for me and I also receive the happiness and blessings that service is happening through my body. I am very content with this and have no questions about it”.

2. Appointed trans-messengers often carry messages to BapDada on behalf of Dadiji. They offer bhog to BapDada and when they return, the “bhog message” is accurately related. There are many bhog messages that describe what transpires when the instruments meet BapDada in the subtle region.

3. Thursday is called Satguruvar and this day is earmarked for showing our respects to the Satguru. Thursday is also known as Brihaspativar. Brihaspati is the teacher of the deities whereas Baba is the Teacher and Satguru for Brahmins. Thursday is the day of blessings of the Satguru and its according to this system that bhog is offered. It's a reminder to become sweet. BapDada has kept the system of bhog on every Thursday so that you can eat something sweet. A sweet mouth means a sweet face.

4. Then on many occasions when there are programmes, or on special occasions, bhog is offered to give thanks or initiate an atmosphere of divine blessings.

5. Bhog is offered to departed souls for thirteen days after cremation of the body. As the departed soul has changed dress and address, you don't know where to contact that soul. Therefore, this is the reason that you offer it through Baba because He knows how to reach that soul. Baba therefore is like the main post office. The departed souls get indirect power and this is how the fragrance reaches that soul. The air carries the fragrance similar to how the air brings the coolness from the sea. Those in the gathering also have to have this awareness as they to are spreading vibrations. Shiv Baba does not eat, it is the Brahmins priest and others who partake of the food.

## Relevance of Offering Bhog

1. Bhog is offered to the Father. God is abhogta or nirlep [beyond experiencing] and so does not eat. He takes the fragrance. It is called Brahma bhojan. Offering bhog is part of a beautiful and unique Brahmin system and it is certainly not considered as a ritual or devotion. It is but a relationship of love of the confluence age. BapDada accepts the fruit of our love with the return of divine love.

It is good to do everything according to the system. This too is a specialty. If you do everything according to the method, you also attain success. To be a Brahmin means to be accurate in every task. Offering bhog is also a discipline and by observing the disciplines, you experience happiness.

2. Whether one is sitting on the gaddi, or sitting in the class as a student, while offering bhog, we not only offer the food in the subtle region but we sacrifice or surrender our weaknesses. We express our love, obedience and gratitude to the Satguru for enabling us to become virtuous and fortunate.

We have to remember Baba and offer bhog to Him. You have to invoke Him. It is as though you sit and eat together. Baba is completely pure. He takes the fragrance only. To offer it to Baba means to eat what has come from Baba. We surrender even ourselves as bhog.

3. The above procedure does not take much time, the rest of the time the intellect tries to maintain the highest stage possible and enjoys the company of Baba. Shiv Baba advises quote "Just offer bhog and come back quickly! To go to Paradise and have visions of the deities is useless. You need a very deep and refined intellect to understand this. The Father says through this chariot: Remember Me! I am the Purifier, your Father. The expression "I eat with You, I sit with You", applies to this time. How could this take place up there? SM 02-12 04"



4. A status is received through studying, not by playing games. The *department* of playing games is separate. That doesn't have any *connection* with knowledge or yoga. To offer bhog etc. is also just a game. The main thing is remembrance. Sm 11.04.06

## **Offering Food to the Bridegroom**

“Baba says: All you have to do is remember the one Bridegroom. All of you are brides. Aren't you ashamed that you eat without offering bhog to this Bridegroom? As well as your Father, this one is your Bridegroom. He asks: Will you not offer food to Me? You should offer your food to Me, should you not? You should first offer food to the one who feeds you. Only after you first offer bhog to Me should you eat in remembrance of Me. This however takes effort. Brahma Baba repeatedly makes this effort. You should eat your food after remembering the Bridegroom. When you remember Him, He takes the fragrance of the food. Therefore you should instill the habit of speaking to the Father in this way.” I will eat only with you. Only when you remember Him will He eat it. He only takes the fragrance anyway, because He does not have a body of His own.... Shiv Baba, my beautiful Bridegroom, You are so sweet. I have been remembering You for a half a cycle. You have now come and met Me. You should also eat what I am eating. It is not enough to remember Him once and then continue to eat your own food and then forget to feed Him. If you forget Him, He cannot take anything. You eat a variety of food, like rice and lentils, mangoes and sweets. It should not that you remember Him at the beginning and then stop. How would He then eat the other things? If your Bridegroom does not eat it, Maya would come in between you and eat it. You can see when Maya eats it; she becomes powerful and keeps defeating you.

You say that I want to eat with you alone and sit with you alone. I eat in remembrance of only You. We know on the basis of this knowledge, that you will only take the fragrance. A bride eats with her bridegroom and a child eats with his or her father. The same happens here.” (SM 8-12-89).

Murli.24.05.07. Achcha. Today is the day to offer bhog. There is also a system of feeding Brahmin priests but that has no connection with knowledge. Here, there is the meeting of the Ocean of Knowledge and the Ganges of knowledge. There, in the subtle region, there is a meeting of you Brahmins and deities. There is no question of becoming confused. The Father says: Continue to break your attachment to your body and bodily

relations. Remember Me alone and your final thought will lead you to your destination. I promise that I will send you to heaven. Ask in *class* every day: Will you make a promise to Shiv Baba? Shiv Baba says: Follow My directions. The Father's shrimat is very well known. Shrimat means elevated directions. The directions of Brahma are also remembered. Shiv Baba, the Father of Brahma, is higher than Brahma. When you sit to have your meals, remember Shiv Baba. He is your *most beloved* Father. It is as though you are eating meals with Him. Through this remembrance, you will receive a lot of strength. However, you children repeatedly forget this. Now Bharat also needs Shiv Baba's instructions because only the Father is the Bestower of Salvation for All and the Purifier. Remember the Father and the inheritance. Maya creates many types of obstacle, but you must not be afraid of her. Knowledge is very easy. However, it does take effort to stay in remembrance and to connect your intellect's yoga to One.

Murli 08.06.07. You children are now changing from dirty to clean. You have the understanding that you cannot eat food cooked by impure people. It is also said: As the food, so the mind. Sin accumulates in those who buy bad things, for those who prepare it and also for those who eat it. The Father explains everything very clearly. You children return after being *refreshed* here.

Murli of 28.06.07: The Father does not give you any difficulties. You may go in an *aeroplane* or go for a drive in a car, but however much you can, take precautions about your diet. You have to give drishti to your food and then eat it, but some children forget to do this. In this aspect, you have to remember the Father or the Bridegroom with a lot of happiness. "Beloved, I am eating this food in remembrance of you, in Your company. You do not have a body of Your own. I will remember You and then eat and You can continue to take the fragrance from it." So when you remember in this way, a habit will be formed and the mercury of happiness will continue to rise. You will then also be able to imbibe knowledge. ... You must take food in a state of great cleanliness and give it drishti. Eat your food in remembrance of the Father and the Bridegroom with a lot of happiness.

Murli of 04.07.07: The Father says: Consider yourself to be a *trustee*. Have the consciousness that you are eating from Shiv Baba's yagya. You must take care of everything. Tamoguni (impure) bhog cannot be offered. People offer pure bhog in temples. Only Vaishnavs (those with a pure diet) offer bhog. All are vicious; how can there be a viceless, elevated body here?



....Today is the day for Brahma bhojan. Shiv Baba does not eat. He is Abhogta (beyond physical experience). Deities like the food of Brahmins, because they become deities through the food of Brahmins. So the food of Brahmins has such great importance. Food has so much effect. If you receive food cooked by strong yogis, your intellect becomes very good. Yogis are needed who stay in remembrance of Shiv Baba throughout the day, who spin the discus and prepare food at the same time. Many remain pure. A widow, a mother or a kumari may be pure, but she should also be yogi. There would be great progress for you if you were to eat food prepared by yogis. 5 to 7 such children are needed. As you progress further, your stage will become like that. You will receive a lot of help in yoga. Children should be such that they prepare food while staying in yoga.

Murli of 05.03.08: It has been explained to you children that you first of all have to offer bhog to Baba and then eat everything because He has given everything to you. So, you first have to remember Him and offer bhog to Him. You invoke Him. Then, it is as though you eat together. Baba is completely pure. We are like natives. When we remember Baba, is it that He sits and eats with us? We cannot call ourselves completely pure. So, would He eat with us natives? He simply takes the fragrance. Simply to take the fragrance is not the same as eating. He simply takes the fragrance. Yes, if some good children who have 75% dharna prepare the food and offer it to Baba, it can be worthy of its fragrance being taken, because Baba is completely pure.

It is not the *law* that He would eat with us impure ones. Would He be able to take that fragrance? Baba says: Why should I take fragrance? I am altruistic. I don't even desire to take any fragrance. I am 100% altruistic. Bhog is taken up above and then the One with Many Forms sits and offers it to the deities. The deities desire to eat Brahma bhojan, so the souls of Baba, Mama and the deities from up above come and sit and eat. However, they will eat with interest when the one who has prepared it is yogi. Even deities praise Brahma bhojan. The Father says: I have come to *serve* you. I am your completely altruistic *Servant*. You may offer Me not only 36, but even 108 varieties of food. Devotees offered food and they distributed and ate it among themselves. God is altruistic but you still have to *offer* it to Him. Big kings etc. never take anything in their own hands. There are many types of king. Some even do take something. Baba had some *connection* with kings etc. We offer bhog to Baba, and we want to claim the kingdom from Baba in order to become the masters of the world. He is the Bestower. All of these things are subtle. Bhog is not taken

anywhere. We just sit here and have visions of Paradise. It is as though we disappear from here. Achcha.

## **The Effect of Food on the Mind**

The method of acquisition of food also contributes to the nature of the food. If the basic ingredients were acquired by unclean wealth or by unlawful means, the food prepared would not be considered as sattvic although it may be prepared under sattvic rites. To illustrate this to the sublime, it is said that a holy man (a Sanyasi) did not accept the sattvic food offered by a farmer simply because his oxen that ploughed the field to grow his crops ate the grass from another field without the permission of the owner. Therefore, unclean wealth used for the upkeep of one's family is considered rajoguni. Wealth obtained by the use of confidential, privileged or proprietary information is considered unclean. Raising a family on rajoguni or unclean wealth is like raising a family of criminals on the sorrow of those who were rightfully denied the opportunity to earn and feed their dependents.

## **Cleanliness, State of Mind and Blessing Food**

Cleanliness before cooking is important. Walking off the street into the kitchen can affect the vibrations of the food. Therefore, observe personal hygiene as well as the hygiene of the surroundings before preparation of meals. Develop a positive attitude towards cooking. Do not cook in anger as the negative vibrations affect the food. Cook in silence and the remembrance of God. This includes the time from preparing the articles of foodstuff, cooking, serving as well as eating in silence. After cooking, take out a small sample in special offering containers and offer same to God. Then return samples offered and blessed to main dish. Any impurities will have been removed and there will be spiritual power in the food. (Excerpt from the Advance Course)

## **Blessing Food in Special Circumstances**

In very special circumstances where you may have to eat food prepared by others. In such a special case, bless the food by sitting in remembrance and giving dristi or pure vibrations to the food. In today's environment, there are many who do not have the facilities, capabilities or wherewithal to provide and prepare their own meals and receive meals in schools and institutions. In this case, the teachers can say a prayer over all the food when it arrives and then supervise the children by saying grace before and after meals as well as encouraging the children to eat in silent remembrance of God.

## **Developing Golden-Aged Food Attributes**

Golden-aged or deity attributes or habits (sanskars) are acquired in the confluence age together with the complete array of sanskars (attributes) to become a deity. Therefore, it is very important that one follow all the requirements from preparation of the raw materials through cooking, serving, eating according to sattvic methods as laid out in the Gita. The practice of eating little with variety and at fixed times are attributes of the golden-aged deities.