

Merits-demerits : Types and effects

Preface

Life is full of *karma*. Consequence of *karma* is inevitable. The consequence of a virtuous *karma* is merit, which in turn brings happiness; whereas, consequence of a bad *karma* is demerit, which in turn brings sorrow. Individuals repeatedly commit sinful acts unknowingly, such as killing of spiders, insects etc. while sweeping the floor with a broom, speaking harshly with others, envying others etc. In short, it is impossible to avoid sinful acts completely during our day-to-day activities. We do see criminals, corrupt people etc. performing a whole lot of sinful acts and yet enjoying luxuries of life. Why do these people not get punished for their sins, is a question that perturbs many. These people are happy because of the merits of their previous birth; however, once the stock of their merits is over, they have to face the consequences of their sinful acts in the form of diseases, poverty, suffering in Hell after death etc. In short, no one can escape demerits. Regretting the sins committed and therefore facing punishment prescribed by *Dharma*, to cleanse the resulting demerit is termed as atonement. This Holy text provides valuable guidance on various reasons for incurring and not incurring demerits, atonement *karmās*, importance of increasing merits and *karmās* that generate merit. To be able to stay in a state of *Sat-Chit-Ānand* by crossing over the bondage of joy-sorrow generated from demerit-merit-oriented *karmās*, *karma* has to be such that it does not generate any consequence. This Holy text also discusses in detail what should be done to avoid the effects of *karma*. We pray unto the Holy feet of Shrī Guru that after reading this Holy text, may the readers benefit from the fresh perspective, and after crossing the bondage of demerits-merits, may they be inspired to perform *sāadhanā* for attaining *Ānand*.

- Compilers

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(An * sign has been put along with important points)

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