

Crossing the Ocean of Material World

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

Last week, in one of the Bhagavatam classes in Shree Shree RadhaNeelMadhav dham in Rajkot, HG Taral Vilochan Prabhu from Australia asked our spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj as to how to perform bhakti under unfavourable conditions.

To his question Gurudev replied as follows - "**A child holding the father's hand can cross even the busiest road easily, because the child has full faith in the father. Similarly we should hold on to the hands of Supreme Father Lord Sri Krishna with full faith - under all circumstances.** Then we can do face any situation. We are thinking that we are in good condition because we have the job. But that is not the case. Our good condition is not dependent on these things. But on our level of surrender and dependence on Krishna." Maharaj was explaining as to how formerly the life was very simple and sublime. There was no dependence on gas/electricity. Only coal and kerosene were required for cooking and that too they used to get two carts full of coal for 2 Rs. But now our life is dependent on so many things. Still we should endeavor only for the minimum requirements and lead a simple life. Instead of placing our faith on the temporary things like job, modern-amenities, etc we should place it on Sri Krishna.

In Srimad Bhagavatam verse 10.14.58 Sri Sukadeva Goswami says

*samāśritā ye pada-pallava-plavaṁ
mahat-padaṁ puṇya-yaśo murāreḥ
bhavāmbudhir vatsa-padaṁ paraṁ padaṁ
padaṁ padaṁ yad vipadāṁ na teṣāṁ*

For those who have accepted the boat of the lotus feet of the Lord, who is the shelter of the cosmic manifestation and is famous as Murari, the enemy of the Mura demon, the ocean of the material world is like the water contained in a calf's hoof-print. Their goal is param padam, Vaikuntha, the place where there are no material miseries, not the place where there is danger at every step.

By holding on to the lotus feet of Sri Krishna we will be able to easily and safely cross over the dangerous ocean of birth and death very easily just like the child crossing the busy road by holding the hands of his/her father.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sudarshana devi dasi.

Ekam Shastram Devaki Putra Gitam

Most respected Vaishnavas,

Hare Krishna. Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada, Srila Gurudeva and Gauranga.

The glories of Srimad Bhagavad Gita is eternal. First time, it was spoken by the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna, during the present creation of the universe, to Sun-god Vivasvan approximately 120,400,000 years ago. In human society, its existence has been for two million years. Then, it was spoken again by the same Supreme Lord Sri Krishna to Sri Arjuna about five thousand years ago in the battlefield of Kurukshetra. In the Hari-Vamsha Puran it is stated,

*vede rāmāyaṇe caiva purāṇe bhārāte tathā
ādāv ante ca madhye ca hariḥ sarvatra gīyate*

In all the Vedas, Ramayana, Puranas, Mahabharata, Lord Hari's glories are sung throughout in the beginning, the middle, and the end.

Since Srimad Bhagavad Gita is one of the sections of Mahabharat (Bhisma Parva), and was spoken by the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna Himself, Srimad Bhagavad Gita is non-different from Him.

Now, due to the influence of Kaliyug and due to the total engagement of our senses into the material enjoyment, we have forgotten the realizations of the importance of not only Srimad Bhagavad Gita, but our Vedic scriptures in general. Our beloved spiritual master His Holiness, Om Vishnu-pad, Paramhansa, Parivrajakacharya, ashtottarshata Sri-Srimad Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj always instructs us to take the shelter of Lord Sri Krishna through Srimad Bhagavatam and Srimad Bhagavad Gita, which is the only mean of protecting ourselves from the material miseries. There is no other way out. I am trying to bring this point to our attention since there is an urgent need to re-establish the glories of our Vedic scriptures in our society, so that we can understand the real purpose of our lives. How much we are successful in the application of the teachings of Srimad Bhagavad Gita in our own lives and how much we are able to influence other people in our society needs to be seriously revisited.

In India, we are teaching our students about the life history of the modern leaders, players and entertainment personalities. We are expecting that following the guidelines from these personalities, our coming generation will lead a peaceful life. However, at least, we know that imperfect examples are destined to lead imperfect society. Still there is a glimpse of ray around the corner that indicates that our Vedic knowledge is the perfect knowledge and finally getting recognition by the Western culture. On the other hand in the western world people have started realising the importance of need of study of Gita and its very interesting and inspiring to know how Seton Hall University has made Gita as a compulsory subject.

Without further redo, please read the recent news article below that will thrill you and motivate you to do something on your behalf to spread the glories of our Vedic scriptures for the benefit of the human society.

<http://www.rediff.com/news/2008/nov/21gita-compulsary-at-seton-university.htm>

The article very nicely describes the reason as to why they wanted to prescribe study of Gita for their students. - "**The university wanted a transformational course that will influence the character and life of its students. So it wanted a course that seek answers to perennial questions like the purpose of life, why are we here, where are we going, etc, as part of the course.**"

Indeed Bhagavad Gita is the all perfect scripture which can provide perfect answers for all the perennial questions. The glories of Srimad Bhagavad Gita has been described in great detail in Sri Padma Puran and Sri Skandha Puran.

However, I would like to quote one shloka here on the glorification this eternal scripture given by Sripad Adi-Shankaracharya:

*ekam śāstram devakī-putra-gītam
eko devo devakī-putra eva
eko mantras tasya nāmāni yāni
karmāpy ekam tasya devasya sevā*

There need be only one holy scripture - the divine Gita sung by Lord Sri Krishna, only one worshipable Lord - Lord Sri Krishna, only one mantra - His holy names, and only one duty - devotional service unto that Supreme worshipable Lord Sri Krishna.

I pray to the lotus feet of our Gurudeva and all Vaishnavas for their blessings, so that I can engage my senses unto the service of the lotus feet of Sri-Sri Radha-Shyam Sundar by spreading His glories.

Hare Krishna.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada, Srila Gurudeva and Gauranga,
Sarvaishwarya Krishna das
Gainesville, Florida.

The Blessings of the Sound Incarnation of Lord Krishna

Dear Vaishnavas,

Hare Krishna. Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

In the 3rd chapter of Srimad Bhagavatam 1st Canto, various incarnations of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna are briefly mentioned. The significant point to note is that at the end of description of all the incarnations including the incarnator Sri Krishna, Srimad Bhagavatam is also mentioned as one of the incarnations of Krishna. This is an important point to note because we easily accept the personal form of Krishna's incarnations such as Rama, Nrsimha, etc but do not give due importance to His literary incarnation. Unless we put our heads into the literary incarnation and try to seriously study the various incarnations of the Supreme Lord, His devotees and their instructions through the transcendental sound vibration, we will not be able to understand the intricate knowledge of the Supreme Lord.

In SB 1.3.40 Srila Suta Goswami very beautifully says,

*idaṁ bhāgavatam nāma purāṇam brahma-sammitam
uttama-śloka-caritam cakāra bhagavān ṛṣiḥ
niḥśreyasāya lokasya dhanyaṁ svasty-ayanaṁ mahat*

This Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the literary incarnation of God, and it is compiled by Śrīla Vyāsadeva, the incarnation of God. It is meant for the ultimate good of all people, and it is all-successful, all-blissful and all-perfect.

In the word-word equivalent, Srila Prabhupada has translated brahma-sammitam as "Incarnation of Lord Sri Krishna". Then in the purport he beautifully writes as follows. "*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the literary incarnation of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and is therefore non-different from Him. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam should be worshiped as respectfully as we worship the Lord. Thereby we can derive the ultimate blessings of the Lord through its careful and patient study. As God is all light, all bliss and all perfection, so also is Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. We can have all the transcendental light of the Supreme Brahman, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, from the recitation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, provided it is received through the medium of the transparent spiritual master.*"

Srila Prabhupada emphasizes the point that the most important requirement for getting all the blessings from Srimad Bhagavatam is through its careful and patient study. Many times, we lack this quality. We rush through and skim on the surface while reading. We do not do deep study of this great literature. As a result, the reciprocation from this sound incarnation of Krishna is also likewise. Secondly, the recitation of Srimad Bhagavatam will give all the transcendental knowledge of the Supreme Lord. Recently we had this wonderful experience in Rajkot when Maharaj asked us all to recite the entire 10th canto and we took a few days to finish the chapters. Even without reading the translation or purport, just the simple recitation gave such a pleasing feeling to ourselves as well as those who heard us even for a little while. This is the first installment of Lord Krishna's causeless mercy.

Srila Prabhupada then concludes this excellent purport thus, "*One can derive from the study of the Bhāgavatam all benefits that are possible to be derived from the personal presence of the Lord. It carries with it all the transcendental blessings of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa that we can expect from His personal contact.*"

If we want the transcendental personal blessings of Lord Sri Krishna, the requirement from our side is to do daily recitation of Srimad Bhagavatam and do a careful and patient study of the deep meanings churned out by Srila Prabhupada in his word-word equivalent, translation and purports.

We sincerely pray to the Supreme Lord and our spiritual master to grant us this mercy of reciting and studying Srimad

Bhagavatam eternally life after life.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Kalacakra Krsna das.

Prasadam is Non-different from Krishna

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

Today we were reciting the 85th Chapter of 10th Canto Srimad Bhagavatam - wherein the pastime Lord Krishna bringing back the six sons of Devaki is narrated. Since Devaki out of motherly affection longs to see the six sons who were mercilessly killed by her brother Kamsa, Lord Krishna brings them back to her - from the abode of Bali Maharaj. When she sees her sons alive, out of motherly affection milk spontaneously flows from her breast and she feeds them. In verse 10.85.55-56, Srila Sukadeva Goswami says -

*pītvāmṛtaṁ payas tasyāḥ pīta-śeṣaṁ gadā-bhṛtaḥ
nārāyaṇāṅga-saṁsparśa- pratilabdhātma-darśanāḥ*

*te namaskṛtya govindaṁ devakīṁ pītaraṁ balam
miṣatām sarva-bhūtānām yayur dhāma divaukasām*

By drinking her nectarean milk, the remnants of what Krishna Himself had previously drunk, the six sons touched the transcendental body of the Lord, Narayana, and this contact awakened them to their original identities. They bowed down to Govinda, Devaki, their father and Balarama, and then, as everyone looked on, they left for the abode of the demigods.

The phrase 'nārāyaṇāṅga-saṁsparśa' is important to meditate in this verse. Drinking the remnants of milk that was drunk earlier by Krishna enabled the six sons to touch the transcendental body of the Lord. Such is the power of Krishna prasadam. Since Krishna's remnants (prasadam) is non-different from Him, honouring prasadam implies getting in touch with Krishna personally. When one honours prasadam, understanding its value and potency with gratitude, respect and faith - then this will immediately remind us about our constitutional position and enrich our devotional service. Since Krishna prasadam is so powerful and potent we should ensure that we prepare, serve and honor it with the right consciousness and not waste even a single morsel of rice. Right from the time when we prepare the bhoga, offer it to Krishna, then serve them to others as well as while honouring them ourselves, we should remember the causeless mercy of the Lord for enabling us to cook, serve and eat His remnants with a thankful heart.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Kalacakra Krsna das and Sudarshana devi dasi.

Elevation to Perfection - Part 2

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble pranams! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva!

Continuing on the topic elevation to perfection based on the nectarean class given by our beloved Gurudev in Singapore based on the verse 3.23.56 Maharaj was super excellently explaining the verse 3.23.56,

*neha yat karma dharmāya na virāgāya kalpate
na tīrtha-pada-sevāyai jīvann api mṛto hi saḥ*

Anyone whose work is not meant to elevate him to religious life, anyone whose religious ritualistic performances do not raise him to renunciation, and anyone situated in renunciation that does not lead him to devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, must be considered dead, although he is breathing.

Maharaj bisected the verse very nicely as follows:

1. How our Karma (work) should elevate to religious perfection.
2. How religious perfection should lead to renunciation.
3. How renunciation should lead to loving devotional service to the lotus feet of the Lord.

1. How our Karma (work) should elevate to religious perfection:

We are all behaving exactly opposite to Srimad Bhagavatam and therefore we can't foresee. If you don't foresee, how your karmas are going to be purified? In the olden days people's karmas were very nice. Everybody was sure that he will get his share of income for sustenance. There was no competition what to speak of cut-throat competition. This competitive attitude was not there, and everybody had full faith in Krishna. Electricity was not there. So, there was no additional magnetic field and people were peaceful. Now in the house we are not peaceful due to the presence of magnetic field. What to talk of house, anything we eat is electricity. The chutney we eat is full of electricity. In this situation it is very difficult to put Srimad Bhagavatam and Srimad Bhagavad Gita into practice. But there is no other way. That's why diseases are increasing. In our times there was only TB/Typhoid. There was no heart disease. Only one or two rich people may have the heart disease. So, there must be fundamentally something wrong or otherwise why we get diseased with so many new diseases with unknown names. One Dr.Coleman has written a book on 'How to save yourselves from doctors killing you'. In US they found out some drug and did not find any disease. They carried the research on how this drug can be applied. They found out that children are restless, and they administered that drug to decrease inattentiveness. Instead of Srimad Bhagavatam (which gives definite result) everyone goes after various medicines. May be in emergency, we may have to take help of these medicines, but so far as possible we should avoid and take the medicine of Srimad Bhagavatam.

The more you follow Srila Prabhupada you will not need anybody else. Please daily go to him and he will lovingly guide you. He has the monopoly. He has done so much that nothing is left to be done by anybody else. If anybody tries to do something, at the best he has to copy him. To that extent, we are very lucky to be with his literature. He could not take out his heart and put it in the books. He was not having any tinge of dishonesty. The more you try to grab another's possession, the more you will be diseased. We have the innate tendency, if I will get something for free, I will take as much as possible. Please try to avoid these things. If you don't have anything to eat, don't eat. But don't grab. To that extent we must be completely renounced. This attitude is not there, because our activities are sinful. '*neha yat karma dharmāya*' is completely absent. Only one-fourth of the sloka, we are not able to follow. For good we have to come to our senses. Ask this question "**When are you going to come to the senses?**". It is getting late. Life is as it is, very flickering. We are alive today, after 1 hour what will happen, we don't know. So why to plan this and that. We should

be completely satisfied with our situation, then our karmas will not have the dishonest tinge.

Honesty is the finest element '*iha*' - '***in this planet***'. If your honesty is more than 100% in your karma, you can see the result. The best result is that you are completely satisfied. That satisfaction will give you nice feeling in your body by which you will be able to inquire about the transcendence. Then we will know about the goal of our life and what is to be done. The art of foreseeing will be there. You will be relieved from your karma because of your honesty. By stopping the work, you will never be relieved. Encourage people to perform karmas in this direction. This is the way for religious perfection.

Maharaj discussed further on the subject matter of how the religious perfection should lead to renunciation. I shall try to post them in the subsequent mails. Please forgive for my inadequacies in not being able to transcribe it perfectly.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sajjana Priya Krishna das

Abu Dhabi.

Tolerance and Pridelessness

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

Few months back, I inquired from Maharaj on how I can practically implement the instruction in *Śikṣāṣṭaka* (verse 3).

*tṛṇād api sunīcena taror api sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena kīrtaniyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

I asked Maharaj how I can be tolerant, free of false pride and be ready offer all respects to others particularly in the workplace where the environment is often not quite conducive to practice these virtues. Maharaj most mercifully accepted my foolish inquiry and gave the most practical instruction straight from the pages of Srimad Bhagavatam (SB 4.11.31 – Svayambhuva Manu advises Dhruva Maharaj to stop fighting).

*saṁyaccha roṣaṁ bhadraṁ te pratīpaṁ śreyasāṁ param
śrutena bhūyasā rājann agadena yathāmayam*

My dear King, just consider what I have said to you, which will act as medicinal treatment upon disease. Control your anger, for anger is the foremost enemy on the path of spiritual realization. I wish all good fortune for you. Please follow my instructions.

In connection with Dhruva Maharaj's appropriate behavior in displaying anger at the miscreants, Maharaj specifically mentioned the story from the purport of a snake who became a devotee after coming in association with Narada Muni. The key instruction from Narada Muni to the snake was not to bite anyone anymore. However, people started mistreating the snake on account of his non-violent stance. When Narada Muni came again to visit the snake, he communicated the actual import of the instruction, "**Don't bite, but do not forget to expand your hood as if you were going to bite. Then they will go away.**"

Maharaj patiently explained to me that we must follow the same example in our daily lives when we are faced with such situations. During Maharaj's recent visit to Singapore, His Divine Grace mentioned how at the end of our lives, we are simply a handful of ash, so there is no need to have any false pride at all.

I pray at the lotus feet of Srila Gurudev that I make an honest attempt to remember this sublime instruction from Maharaj and put it into practice so that I may ultimately be able to chant the holy names of the Lord in the right mood.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Svayam Prakash Krishna das

Singapore.

Elevation to Perfection - Part 3

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble pranams! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva!

Continuing on the topic - "Elevation to Perfection" based on the nectarean class given by our beloved Gurudev in Singapore based on the verse 3.23.56, Maharaj was super excellently explaining the verse,

*neha yat karma dharmāya na virāgāya kalpate
na tīrtha-pada-sevāyai jīvann api mṛto hi saḥ*

Anyone whose work is not meant to elevate him to religious life, anyone whose religious ritualistic performances do not raise him to renunciation, and anyone situated in renunciation that does not lead him to devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, must be considered dead, although he is breathing.

Maharaj bisected the verse very nicely as under:

1. How our Karma (work) should elevate to religious perfection.
2. How religious perfection should lead to renunciation.
3. How renunciation should lead to loving devotional service to the lotus feet of the Lord.

2. How religious perfection should lead to renunciation:

As soon as the karma becomes completely purified and we become relieved from the karmic reactions, then automatically dharma or religious perfection will be attained. There is no need of separate endeavour. Karma should be performed in that way that we are religiously going ahead.

Everything in this world goes up. In the hut, through the hole, all the atoms go up through the sun rays. Whatever is here living/non-living is attracted to Krishna because everything is His energy. But we stop this tendency by our dishonesty and by shirking our own duties. We completely destroy the whole thing. At the most what is likely to happen? you may not be able to get money, or you may not have vehicles/house. Why to stay in three- or five-star apartment, just sleep under million stars with no money. We should never endeavour beyond our capacity. If we have 10Rs, then we should try to do what is possible with Rs.8. That is allowed. Over endeavour always puts you in trouble. Our greedy/fruitive mentality always pushes us to over endeavour. If you want to over endeavour, take Srimad Bhagavatam in your hand and do over endeavour. That is allowed and you will be respected everywhere. In the worldly activities, over endeavour is condemned.

It is better to quit the world than to create dishonesty everywhere. By not following Srimad Bhagavatam we are killing ourselves and we don't know that. Why Krishna has given these instructions. He knows because He has created the planet. This planet is manufactured by Krishna and He has given the booklet in the form of Bhagavad Gita and Srimad Bhagavatam and you will get the good results. But we are so very proud. As soon as He rejects us there is no way to survive. As it is we are in difficulty. Don't add to your difficulties particularly by your dishonest behaviour.

Suppose we are to able to perform honest work then religious life begins. and such religious life should lead to renunciation. We have double R (RR - 1st R for Religious perfection and 2nd R for Renunciation). Religious life must naturally direct us to renunciation. This stage is very difficult because by our nature we are attached. But there is only one way that if you meditate upon transcendence, then sometimes we will be able to do it.

In Bhagavad Gita Krishna says in 10.41

*yad yad vibhūtimat sattvaṁ śrīmad ūrjitam eva vā
tat tad evāvagaccha tvaṁ mama tejo-'mśa-sambhavam*

Know that all opulent, beautiful, and glorious creations spring from but a spark of my splendour.

So much of inconceivable energy and how much great He should be. We should always think about the greatness of the Lord. Because we don't strive for religious perfection, we don't have the tendency to think about Krishna. To just cultivate this tendency, you have to be very honest in the religious path. Otherwise you don't have the peace to think about Him. In no way, our peace of mind must be disturbed. We can't have any peace, unless we follow the recommended path given by scriptures. We try so many ways, but we are not peaceful at all.

Maharaj wonderfully delineated the process of cultivating renunciation. I shall try to post them in the subsequent mails.

It is wonderful that our guru maharaj, is giving us the practical way of devotional service. I pray again and again to the dust of the lotus feet of our Guru Maharaj so that by his divine mercy I will be able to apply it in my life and be really successful in devotional service.

Thank you very much.

Yours in the service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sajjana Priya Krishna das

Abu Dhabi.

Elevation to Perfection - Part 4

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble pranams! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva!

This is the concluding part on the topic -"Elevation to Perfection" based on the nectarean class given by our beloved Gurudev in Singapore based on the verse 3.23.56,

*neha yat karma dharmāya na virāgāya kalpate
na tīrtha-pada-sevāyai jīvann api mṛto hi saḥ*

Anyone whose work is not meant to elevate him to religious life, anyone whose religious ritualistic performances do not raise him to renunciation, and anyone situated in renunciation that does not lead him to devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, must be considered dead, although he is breathing.

1. How our Karma (work) should elevate to religious perfection.
2. How religious perfection should lead to renunciation.
3. How renunciation should lead to loving devotional service to the lotus feet of the Lord.

2. How religious perfection should lead to renunciation.

Maharaj was quoting a beautiful verse from Mukundamala-stotra (verse 14), regarding the supreme greatness of the Lord.

*prthvī-reṇur aṇuḥ payāmsi kaṇikāḥ phalguḥ sphuliṅgo laghus
tejo niḥśvasanamī marut tanutaramī randhramī su-sūkṣmamī nabhaḥ
kṣudrā rudra-pitāmaha-prabhṛtayaḥ kiṭāḥ samastāḥ surā
dṛṣṭe yatra sa tāraḥ vijayate śrī-pāda-dhūli-kaṇāḥ*

Once our saviour has been seen, whole earth becomes no greater than a speck of dust, all the waters of the ocean become mere droplets, the totality of fire becomes a minute spark, the winds become just a faint sigh, and the expanse of space becomes a tiny hole. Great Lords like Rudra and Grandfather Brahma becomes insignificant, and all the demigods becomes like small insects. Indeed, even one particle of dust from our Lord's feet conquers all.

We are all on tottering platform running after fruitive works. Understand the power of the holy names. Nobody was preaching in the past, but everybody was knowing about Krishna's greatness. In kaliyuga we have to convince our mind about the greatness of Krishna. So again, the scriptures are there. Please confirm your own self and make your faith very strong in Krishna and that is required for renunciation. Otherwise you will never renounce. There will be so many tricks of the mind to hold on to our possessions. Till we are alive we may possess something. As soon as we are dead, people will inquire about our deposits. Living entities grab. To avoid these things, it is better not to have anything, or otherwise be magnanimous. It is easy to say, but difficult to follow. But without this there is no other way. Whether you are stingy or magnanimous, you will be forced to leave everything and that is the art of foreseeing.

So, before time affects us, please come to the serious study of scriptures. There is no way to avoid time except devotion. Death does not approach us means, your body will have to go, but you will be at ease and not baffled.

He is so great that with a spark He is maintaining the whole manifestation beyond our power of expression. Hence, He has to be experienced. This experience will be there when there is meditation of His holy names. By thinking about the

greatness of the Lord, He will make us ignore the material formalities or otherwise to chant the names of the Lord in the roads is not possible. We should realize our limited capacity and be humble.

3. How renunciation should lead to loving devotional service to the lotus feet of the Lord.

Once we understand the greatness, we are attracted to Him, and we start worshipping Him. Once this idea is completely fixed in our mind, worship is there. There is no carelessness in renunciation. Everything must be performed immaculately. Prescribed duties must be performed. Don't look for fruitive results. This tendency will give the renunciation. Worship will follow. Otherwise "*jīvann api mṛto hi saḥ*" - "**Although breathing we are dead.**" Don't follow this. **In the end complete satisfaction will be there. Always see that whether the activity is satisfying yourself and other living entities.**

I am very grateful to HG Devakinandan Prabhujī, who gave us Video CD nectar of Srimad Bhagavatam flowing from our beloved Gurudev lotus mouth or otherwise it is not possible to share this rare nectar.

It is imperative to understand that all the lectures of our beloved Gurudev is not merely knowledge but profound realisation and this needs to be shared in this forum and it will serve as the one and only saviour for us and the next generation. I beg humbly that all the devotees who associate with our beloved maharaj to share those profound realisations in this forum for the ultimate benefit of all. Even one percent application of this profound realisation would make our lives successful (both materially and spiritually).

Please forgive me for my inadequacies on my inability to transcribe the nectar of Maharaj perfectly.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sajjana Priya Krishna das
Abu Dhabi.

Power of Time

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

While explaining to His dear devotee Uddhava about the power of "Time", Lord Krishna says in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 11.22.43,

*nityadā hy aṅga bhūtāni bhavanti na bhavanti ca
kālenākṣya-vegena sūkṣmatvāt tan na dṛśyate*

My dear Uddhava, material bodies are constantly undergoing creation and destruction by the force of time, whose swiftness is imperceptible. But because of the subtle nature of time, no one sees this.

In one of the Bhagavatam classes at Shree Shree Radha Neelamadhav Dham, Rajkot our spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami was explaining us about how subtly time works on us each and every of us. Gurudev was giving us the example of the blood reports that are taken. The validity of the results is just for 1 day. Each and every moment, our heart is continuously pumping out blood and there is no way that a report taken on one day to be considered as valid report on the next day. But we foolishly assume that we are hale and healthy now and that we will continue to be so forever. Time is not an Indian officer. Indian officers can be bribed. But Time cannot be bribed. As the saying goes - "Time and Tide waits for none." Our bodies keep changing every moment and before we realise, we have wrinkles on our skin, color of hair becomes white. Time is working subtly on every material object and we should be very conscious of this. This is Krishna Consciousness.

Not only in the above Bhagavatam verse, Krishna has also confirmed in Bhagavad Gita verse 10.30 - "*kālah kalayatām aham*" - "**Among subduers I am time.**" Words from the lotus mouth of Sri Krishna are absolute Truth. So realising the subtle and swift value of time, let us give up our lethargy and procrastinating attitude for doing devotional service. At the present moment, whatever material conditions we are in, whatever health we are bestowed with - is the "BEST" condition to perform bhakti. Let us not give lame excuses that we will start chanting/reading scriptures after such, and such problem gets solved etc - Problems may get solved or even aggravate. But with devotional service we will be able to tolerate them and without devotional service we will only suffer more and more and be completely lost.

So, let us sincerely invest time for Krishna, then He will bestow us more and more opportunities to serve Him irrespective of our material miseries. On the other hand, if we voluntarily do not invest our time for Him, then definitely we would be subdued by Time Personified.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sudarshana devi dasi.

Cleaning to Please the Lord

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,
Please accept my humble pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

In Caitanya Caritamrta, Madhya Lila Chapter 12 - "The Cleansing of The Gundica Temple", Mahaprabhu practically shows us the importance of cleanliness and the method of cleansing - the temple as well as our hearts - for both of them are residence of the Supreme Lord.

Be it our home, or the temple or our hearts we must always keep them clean, free from any kind of contamination. Only when we do so, will our mind be cool, and Krishna would love to reside in such a place. Mahaprabhu did not just delegate the cleaning work to others, but personally cleaned the temple with His own cloth. He appreciated people who worked nicely and also chastised people if they did not pay proper attention. He requested those who cleansed well to teach others also. In this way He encouraged everyone present there to clean the temple to the best of their ability - for the pleasure of Lord Jagannath.

The devotees used hundreds of brooms and hundreds of water-pots to cleanse the temples. One interesting thing to note is through-out the entire cleansing process the conversation between the devotees just involved two words - "Krishna Krishna". -"One person begged for a water pot by chanting the holy names "Krishna, Krishna," and another delivered a pot while chanting "Krishna, Krishna. -Whenever anyone had to speak, he did so by uttering the holy name of Krishna. Consequently, the holy name of Krishna became an indication for everyone who wanted something." By avoiding unnecessary talks and by spiritualising even the minimum conversation required to carry out the service - by chanting the Holy names of Krishna, the devotees cleansed the Gundica temple and its surroundings very nicely.

In Srimad-Bhagavatam (1.2.17), Suta Goswami says:

*śṛṅvatām sva-kathāḥ kṛṣṇaḥ puṇya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ
hṛdy antaḥ-stho hy abhadrāṇi vidhunoti suhṛt satām*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, who is the Paramātmā [Supersoul] in everyone's heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who has developed the urge to hear His messages, which are in themselves virtuous when properly heard and chanted.

Uttering of Krishna's name leads to punya shravana - virtuous hearing - which definitely will lead to punanti - sanctifying the whole cosmos - including our minds. I pray at the lotus feet of Gurudev and Mahaprabhu that I give up my laziness and always sincerely endeavour to cleanse the impurities from my mind and house and make it a suitable place for the Lord to pleasingly stay forever.

Thank you very much.
Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sudarshana devi dasi.

Extending Ourselves

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble pranams! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva!

We were reading from First Canto Srimad Bhagavatam Chapter 8 entitled "Prayers of Queen Kunti". It was really a wonderful chapter with so much nectarean verses spoken by Kunti Maharani and transcendental purport given by Srila Prabhupada. It is the outpouring of a sincere soul from the core of her heart. The main reason for her pure devotion is due to her unflinching faith and willingness to accept the calamities again and again. At the end of the prayers there was a wonderful verse spoken by her which is good for us to meditate and apply in our lives. This verse talks about her broadmindedness. SB 1.8.41 this says,

*atha viśveśa viśvātman viśva-mūrte svakeṣu me
sneha-pāśam imaṁ chindhi dṛḍhaṁ pāṇḍuṣu vṛṣṇiṣu*

O Lord of the universe, soul of the universe, O personality of the form of the universe, please, therefore, sever my tie of affection for my kinsmen, the Pandavas and the Vršnis.

Prabhupada in his nectarean purport states that, "**To cut off all family affection means to broaden the field of activities.** Without doing this, no one can be qualified as a brahmana, king, a public leader, or a devotee of the Lord. The Personality of Godhead, as an ideal king, showed this by example. Sri Ramacandra cut off the tie of affection for His beloved wife to manifest the qualities of an ideal king. Such personalities as a brahmana, a devotee, a king or a public leader must be very broadminded in discharging their respective duties. Srimati Kuntidevi was conscious of this fact, and being weak she prayed to be free from such bondage of family affection."

In the word to word equivalents Prabhupada has mentioned that: visva isa - **Lord of the universe**, vishvatman - **Soul of the universe** and vishva murte - **Personality of the form of universe**.

In essence Kunti Maharani says, "O' Lord you have broadened yourself by becoming the entire universe whereas I have narrowed myself with the tie of affection for Vršnis and Pandavas. It is very imperative that since I am an unflinching servitor please grant me the power to broaden my field of activities by severing the tie of family affection and extend myself to this universe."

Prabhupada supplements the point very nicely in the purport glorifying the Goswamis who left everything in order to complete the mission of the Lord Chaitanya. They were extending themselves for the welfare of the general mass. We see, how do we stand in this process of extending ourselves. I have broadly categorised those extensions as follows.

Extending ourselves in preaching:

But we do not want to extend ourselves at all. We are so much attached to our family, body and ourselves and we do not want to broaden the field of activities. We don't look for new people to preach and extend ourselves. We want always to be in the comfort zone and does not want to sacrifice for the sake of the Lords mission. But however, the Lord should shower all His knowledge, realization and material opulence with our krpana or narrow mentality. It is like giving a rotten lemon to the Lord and asking for the Moon from Him. This is our tendency. This is called grabbing tendency and Maharaj says this will never make us achieve the loving service to the Lord at all.

But Prabhupada and even our own Guru Maharaj who have voluntarily extend themselves for the sake of all the conditioned souls, if they have not broadened their field of activities we would be loitering in the shopping malls and restaurant and waste our life. It is very essential that we should extend our time, energy, wealth and words for the sake of the Lord and He will definitely reciprocate to us by giving us time, energy, knowledge and opulence.

Extending ourselves in serving prasadam and other services:

After the program is over we immediately jump into the prasadam plate and start waiting for somebody to serve and after finishing our prasadam we want to go home and take care of our sleep and our children. We do not care for the devotee who has allowed us to have the program and at least extend ourselves like cleaning, washing vessels etc and serve other devotees.

We don't want to voluntarily do any service and Prabhupada writes in the pages of Srimad Bhagavatam, "**Voluntary service is the only way for perfection**". If we find somebody is doing service then why to exert ourselves, our mind, body, and words. Let him do it and let us enjoy comfortably without straining ourselves.

Extending ourselves in attending programs:

We have got hundreds and thousands of excuses (*nṛṇām santi sahasraśaḥ*) in not able to attend all programs and hear Krishna katha. We give reasons that I have to take care of my husband, children, and Friday is the only day holiday and I have to be with family and enjoy life. We do not want to extend ourselves at all and then we expect Krishna to reciprocate. We don't want to give our valuable time to the Lord, but the Lord should spend His valuable time in thinking of our welfare.

Extending ourselves in voluntarily contributing to the person who is broadening the field of devotional activities:

At least if we cannot do any of the above, we can at least help in the form of financial contribution in this broadening field of activities of transcendental loving service to the Supreme Lord thereby giving opportunities to construct wonderful temple for the Lordship and thereby the burning attention of the non devotees can be extinguished and reawakening of the lost relationship with the Supreme can be established. This also we think, "What will happen if I give money to Krishna?", "Who will maintain my children and my family?". On the other hand, we go to the extent of finding faults that this mission of giving for temple construction is a waste and it should be directed towards humanitarian help only. They fail to understand the deficient conditioned souls can take advantage of those temples and can recognize the authority of the Lord by hearing about Him through authorities in such holy places and can raise their spiritual attributes.

I therefore pray to the Supreme Lord, Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev to shower their causeless mercy on this Krpana mentality (miserly soul) to develop this broad-mindedness and extend myself in this mission by which, provide a chance for engaging in this ultimate transcendental mission.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sajjana Priya Krishna das
Abu Dhabi.

Thinking in Krishna's Dimension

Dear Vaishnavas,

Hare Krishna. Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

The great mahatmas mentioned in the pages of Srimad Bhagavatam think in a totally different dimension than we do. Our way of thinking is based on the foundation that I am right and everyone else is wrong. Whereas the great souls who were very dear to Krishna, thought the other way round, i.e., ***I am wrong and everyone else is right***. Krishna always protects those who think this way. The best example of this kind of thinking is Yudhistira Maharaj. That is why he is widely known as the Personification of Dharma.

At the end of the Kurukshetra battle, Yudhishtira Maharaj became very remorseful for the huge massacre. His remorse was so deep that even Lord Krishna and Vyasadeva could not console him. He was feeling that just to make him the King, so many millions of lives had to be sacrificed. Lord Krishna to make him understand, advised him to meet Bhishmadev who was another great Mahajana.

Normally, when we end up making some mistake, we have to be informed or explained that what we have done is wrong. After all our justifications fail, we will be forced to accept that we are wrong, and we should have done it in the morally right way. Whereas in Yudhishtira Maharaj's case, it was the other way round. He had to be told that he did not do anything wrong and all he did was for the welfare of the entire world.

The reason Yudhishtira Maharaj was thinking in a totally different dimension (transcendental dimension) than ours is because he never kept stock of his good deeds in his memory and at the same time would blow out even a tiny mistake of his. That is why even though for their entire lifetime the Pandavas had to suffer both inside the kingdom and outside in the deep jungles due to the envious deeds of the Kauravas, Yudhishtira never remembered them. Whereas he could not forget the great massacre in the battle. In our case, we will remember all our good things (even deeds which everyone appreciates as good although we might not have done it with a noble intention) for our entire life time whereas all our mistakes we will either cover them up, justify or insist that it was done unintentionally and that they be forgotten.

Finally, Bhishmadev, who himself was suffering in the bed of arrows, had to tell Yudhishtira Maharaj that he did not do any wrong for the amount of sufferings they had to go through was beyond any imaginable levels.

Bhishmadev says in SB 1.9.12,

*aho kaṣṭam aho 'nyāyām yad yūyam dharma-nandanāḥ
jīvitum nāratha kliṣṭam vipra-dharmācyutāśrayāḥ*

Bhishmadeva said: Oh, **what terrible sufferings and what terrible injustices you good souls suffer for being the sons of religion personified. You did not deserve to remain alive under those tribulations, yet you were protected by the brahmanas, God and religion.**

Srila Prabhupada's purport reveals the beautiful meaning behind the powerful words spoken by Sri Bhishmadeva." *Maharaja Yudhishtira was disturbed due to the great massacre in the Battle of Kurukshetra. Bhishmadeva could understand this, and therefore he spoke first of the terrible sufferings of Maharaja Yudhishtira. He was put into difficulty by injustice only, and the Battle of Kurukṣetra was fought just to counteract this injustice. Therefore, he should not regret the great massacre. He wanted to point out particularly that they were always protected by the brahmanas, the Lord and religious principles. As long as they were protected by these three important items, there was no cause of disappointment. Thus, Bhishmadeva encouraged Maharaja Yudhishtira to dissipate his despondency. **As long as a person is fully in cooperation with the wishes of the Lord, guided by the bona fide brahmanas and Vaishnavas and strictly following religious principles, one has no cause for despondency, however trying the circumstances of life.** Bhishmadeva, as one of the authorities in the line, wanted to impress*

this point upon the Pandavas."

The words *vipra-dharma-acyuta-aashrayah* is very important to meditate upon. It is very nicely expanded by Srila Prabhupada in his purport above.

As long as one is,

- 1. Fully in cooperation with the wishes of the Lord*
- 2. Guided by the bona fide brahmanas and Vaishnavas*
- 3. Strictly following religious principles*

....One has no cause for despondency, however trying the circumstances of life.

Yudhishtira and his brothers were following the above rules in their life 100% and hence Lord Krishna was always by their side during all the calamities. That is why Bhishmadev impresses upon Yudhishtira Maharaj, that, in those trying circumstances they were not supposed to be alive, but because they were strictly following the above principles, they were protected by Lord Krishna and ultimately emerged victorious.

I remember the day several years ago, when our Guru Maharaj gave us the above punching statement from Srila Prabhupada's purport and made us all recite and remember those words and practise them in our daily life as well.

If we follow these principles in our lives, there is no way we will become despondent. I sincerely pray to the Supreme Lord and my spiritual master that let us follow these transcendental principles in our life and be satisfied with whatever the Lord is bestowing upon us.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Kalacakra Krsna das.

Ways to Develop Purity

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

About 20 of us from Chennai, had been to Rajkot on 24th of December along with H.G.Kalacakra Krishna das Prabhujis and H.G.Sudarshana devi dasi Mathaji and stayed there for a week. We were fortunate to hear the nectarean lectures of our beloved Guru Maharaj. I would like to share a few things with you all.

Maharaj started the class by stressing the "importance of purity". Time is influential, inevitable and definitely catches us. But purity just defeats time also. Then he explained ways to improve purity as follows.

1. Chanting of the Holy Name:

*na yad vacaś citra-padaṁ harer yaśo
jagat-pavitraṁ pragṛṇīta karhicit
tad vāyasaṁ tīrtham uśanti mānasā
na yatra haṁsā niramanty uṣik-kṣayāḥ*

Those words which don't describe the glories of the Lord, who alone can sanctify the atmosphere of the whole universe, are considered by saintly persons to be like unto a place of pilgrimage for crows. Since the all perfect persons are inhabitants of the transcendental abode, they do not derive any pleasure there.

"By chanting His names the whole universe is purified. Then what to talk of our own life? If we stick to this and be very strict about our own character, then we can win like anything."

2. Leading a Simple Life:

Simple life is always satisfying. There are no needs. If there are no needs, weeds are not there. Otherwise we are killed. Maharaj further indicated the real scenario on how simple life brings happiness. The town where H G Murali prabhujis (one of our Maharaj's disciple) lives in Yugoslavia, there are 500 or 600 Christians. There are 500 or 600 hundred acres of land, they have cows, they do all the agricultural works like tilling of land, farming, cultivating etc and they are very simple. They don't have any connection with outside world. They are very happy. In the midst of Kali yuga muddles there are no electronics. Maharaj insisted that such farm communities must be created by us too.

3. Reduce Artificial Necessities:

We spend more in our sophisticated necessities like AC, Electronic items etc than in food. Food doesn't cost much. Electricity destroys swaas (breathing). It is a terrible thing. Being not satisfied with this we hanker for this or that.

The more we want the more we are entangled. To reduce artificial necessities is also a must in order to continue the purity. Purity will be there only if we don't have any artificial necessities.

4. Daily Hammering with Scripture:

We are fortunate that we are already with scripture which is non-different from Krishna - the highly purifying force. Prabhupada said that everyday Bhagavatam must be studied. So daily hammering with Srimad Bhagavatam should be there and this hammering is only for purity. Otherwise, as soon as we are free, dirty ideas will start in our mind. So, don't give yourself free time. Purity must be maintained.

I humbly bow down unto the lotus feet Srila Gurudeva and Lord Gauranga, so that by their mercy I may practice these golden principles in daily life and develop purity.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Anandamurti Krishna das

Chennai.

The Best Choice

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,
Please accept my humble pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

We always have the choice to go for the good or the bad, depending on the guidelines directed by the Paramatma. Correct alternatives taken by us, at the right time, makes us different from the rest of the world.

We have the choice of being greedy. But "greedy for what?" is what matters to us. Greed for taking Krishna's names and glorify Him and His devotees OR being greedy for the unnecessary things in the world (which doesn't matter to us the least, but we matter for them the most).

Choice for being forgiving or revenging in nature. We can always opt for more forgiving ones rather taking revenge on someone. Thinking bad for someone is always on our minds, but what should make us apart from others, is the act to forget and forgive, which is difficult at start but gradually becomes easy by Krishna's mercy.

Choice is ours that we lament or go on with our future. We keep wasting half of our life span, thinking what we missed or what could have been better. Calculating all the misses and losses, worsens the situation. We have the preference of being austere or being lazy.

Finally Krishna has given us intelligence and independence to think and follow what is the best. It may seem difficult choice, but in the long run, we would definitely realize that every difficult step taken would reap a best result. With patience and tolerance, we can add spiritual assets to our deteriorating lives.

There is a beautiful verse from Bhagavad Gita, wherein Lord Krishna has given Arjuna the little independence to make the best choice. BG 18.63 says,

*iti te jñānam ākhyātaṁ guhyād guhya-taraṁ mayā
vimṛśyaitad aśeṣeṇa yathecchasi tathā kuru*

Thus I have explained to you knowledge still more confidential. Deliberate on this fully, and then do what you wish to do.

yathecchasi tathā kuru - "**As you like, you may act**" indicate that God does not interfere with the little independence of the living entity. Srila Prabhupada strongly emphasises that "By right discrimination, one should agree to act according to the order of the Supersoul."

Arjuna is being directly ordered by the Personality of Godhead to fight. The choice was finally left upon him whether to follow Lords instruction or disobey Him. But finally, Arjuna gathered the courage to go for the right and surrender unto the Supersoul seated within his heart.

What makes pure devotees different from all of us, is all the best and difficult choices that they make initially, following the instructions of Krishna thoroughly.

May Lord Krishna, Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva give the strength and intelligence to do right choice so that I can elevate my miserable condition in all respects.

Thank you very much.
Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Nayana Priya devi dasi

Ajman.

Supreme Lord's Will is Supreme

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,
Please accept my humble pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

Atheistic persons, in order to avoid Krsna consciousness, in order to avoid Krsna, the Supreme Person, they push forward the theory that life is caused by matter. But that is not the fact. It is Krsna who has entered this material world and He is supervising all the actions and reactions of this material world. Therefore, it is moving. Foolish persons, they are thinking that material world is by chance and the prakrti is working automatically. Prakrti is jada. Jada-prakrti. without any sense. The motor car has got the wheels, the machine, everything, but it has no sense. So, unless there is a sensible driver there, it cannot move. But we are so foolishly educated that we do not accept this fact. We say that: "Matter is the cause of life. We do not accept this theory that life is the cause of matter." As soon as they accept that life is the cause of matter, they have to accept God. Immediately. Immediately they have to accept God.

Lord Krsna said in Bhagavad Gita 9.10:

*mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ sūyate sa-carācaram
hetunānena kaunteya jagad viparivartate*

This material nature, which is one of My energies, is working under My direction, O son of Kuntī, producing all moving and nonmoving beings. Under its rule this manifestation is created and annihilated again and again.

It is clearly stated that the Supreme Lord is the Supreme director & Supreme will and the background of this material manifestation, but the management is being conducted by material nature and without the superintendence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, cannot do anything. The Supreme Lord by His mere glance injects all the living entities into the womb of material nature, and they come out in their different forms and species, according to their last desires and activities. He simply glances over material nature; material nature is thus activated, and everything is created immediately according to supreme will. In this context there is a story of Jagannathji. In Puri temple every day at night at the time of Shayan arati, the Lord wears new dress because after closing the Jagannathaji temple the demigods visit the temple. One night when demigods were taking darshan of Lord Jagannathji. Yamaraj saw one bird sitting on one of the pillars. Garuda dev saw Yamaraj looking at the bird and thought that Yamaraj will take the life of this small bird because once Yamaraj drshti is cast on someone, it means he is sure to die. To save this bird Garuda dev took the bird and left him at long distance in a tree hole near Manasarovar in Himalaya and thought that Yamaraj cannot find the bird. After darshan when Yamaraj saw up, the bird was not there he got angry on Jagannathji and said that you tell us to do our work properly and on the other hand you are interfering in our work. I saw a bird who was sitting here, his life had come to an end, but you gave him protection. Then Jagannathji Himself looked into the matter and said that this bird is supposed to die after 2 minutes by snake in a hole on the tree at Manasarovar and Garuda dev kept this bird at the same place. This means everything happens according to Supreme will of the Lord.

I sincerely pray at the Lotus feet of Lord Krsna, Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva to bestow Their mercy upon me so that I can realize the supreme will and employ myself for attaining Krsna consciousness.

Thank you very much.
Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Tushta Krishna das and Suniti devi dasi
Sharjah.

Whom to Invite

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,
Please accept my humble pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

Recently I came across a following story which very nicely tells what level of importance needs to be given to wealth, success, and love. Once a woman came out of her house and saw 3 old men with long white beards sitting in her front yard. She did not recognize them. She said "I don't think I know you, but you must be hungry. Please come in and have something to eat."

"Is the man of the house home?", they asked.

"No", she replied. "He's out."

"Then we cannot come in", they replied.

In the evening when her husband came home, she told him what had happened. "Go tell them I am home and invite them in!" The woman went out and invited the men in.

"We do not go into a house together," they replied.

"Why is that?" she asked.

One of the old men explained: "His name is Wealth," he said pointing to one of his friends, and said pointing to another one, "He is Success, and I am Love." Then he added, "Now go in and discuss with your husband which one of us you want in your home."

The woman went in and told her husband what was said. Her husband was overjoyed. "How nice!!", he said. "Since that is the case, let us invite Wealth. Let him come and fill our home with wealth!"

His wife disagreed. "My dear, why don't we invite Success?"

Their daughter was listening from the other corner of the house. She jumped in with her own suggestion: "Would it not be better to invite Love? Our home will then be filled with love!"

"Let us heed to our daughter's advice," said the husband to his wife. "Go out and invite Love to be our guest." The woman went out and asked the 3 old men, "Which one of you is Love? Please come in and be our guest." Love got up and started walking toward the house. The other 2 also got up and followed him.

Surprised, the lady asked Wealth and Success: "I only invited Love, Why are you coming in?"

The old men replied together: "If you had invited Wealth or Success, the other two of us would've stayed out, but since you invited Love, wherever He goes, we go with him. Wherever there is Love, there is also Wealth and Success!!!!!!"

The word "Love" is being used very loosely and rampantly in this misguided civilization. The point is that love is present, but it is a perverted form of love. Why? Because this material world is a reflection of the spiritual world and thereby everything is topsy turvy and it is not eternal. This does not mean that we don't know how to love and what to love.

In Caitanya-cartitamrta (Madhya 22.107) it is said "Pure love for Krishna is eternally established in the hearts of living entities. It is not something to be gained from another source. When the heart is purified by hearing and chanting, the living entity naturally awakens."

Nectar of Instruction Text 4 shows the right path:

*dadāti pratigrhṇāti guhyam ākhyāti pṛcchati
bhunkte bhojayate caiva ṣaḍ-vidham prīti-lakṣaṇam*

In this verse Srila Rupa Goswami explains how to perform devotional activities in the association of other devotees. There are six kinds of activities :

- 1) Giving charity to the devotees
- 2) Accepting from the devotees whatever they may offer in return
- 3) Opening one's mind to the devotees
- 4) Inquiring from them about the confidential service of the Lord
- 5) Honouring prasada, or spiritual food, given by the devotees, and
- 6) Feeding the devotees with prasada.

Srila Prabhupada in his wonderful purport says: "*The International Society for Krishna Consciousness has been established to facilitate these six kinds of loving exchanges between devotees.*"

He further adds : "*The life of the Krishna conscious society is nourished by these six types of loving exchange among the members, therefore people must be given the chance to associate with the devotees of ISKCON because simply by reciprocating in the six ways mentioned above an ordinary man can fully revive his dormant Krishna consciousness.*"

So Whom should we invite? The answer is we must invite Krishna. Will He come by just mere utterance of invitation? No. We have to invite with LOVE. One and only way is by sincerely calling out

*Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare*

This is the only way to purify our existence. I sincerely pray to our beloved Maharaj to bestow upon me his love and blessings which will allow me to chant lovingly.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sri Ramachandra das

Abu Dhabi.

Importance of Arcanam

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept our humble pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

While explaining about the nine process of devotional service Prahlad Maharaj says in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 7.5.23 as follows..

śrī-prahrāda uvāca
śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ smaraṇaṁ pāda-sevanam
arcanaṁ vandanaṁ dāsyam sakhyam ātma-nivedanam

Prahlada Maharaja said: Hearing and chanting about the transcendental holy name, form, qualities, paraphernalia and pastimes of Lord Vishnu, remembering them, serving the lotus feet of the Lord, offering the Lord respectful worship with sixteen types of paraphernalia, offering prayers to the Lord, becoming His servant, considering the Lord one's best friend, and surrendering everything unto Him (in other words, serving Him with the body, mind and words) — these nine processes are accepted as pure devotional service. One who has dedicated his life to the service of Krishna through these nine methods should be understood to be the most learned person, for he has acquired complete knowledge.

Among the above nine process - **arcanam** means worshiping the Deity. Deity worship is very essential for householders. The bliss and benefit of having Deity at home can only be experienced individually and indeed cannot be expressed in few words. Deities regulate our life and force our dirty, lazy minds to keep things clean. They eliminate the feeling of voidness in the home and our lives and keeps us going at all times. We remember our Maharaj giving the example of how even an adult feel scared to enter a big hall when its dark - whereas if we have Deity of Lord, even a small child enters the hall bravely without any fear. Such is the power and potency of the Deity. The process and mood with which we should worship the Deity is very nicely explained by His Divine Grace in his purport to the above verse.

He says - "*Especially for householder devotees who are opulent in material possessions, the path of Deity worship is strongly recommended. An opulent householder devotee who does not engage his hard-earned money in the service of the Lord is called a miser. **One should not engage paid brahmanas to worship the Deity. If one does not personally worship the Deity but engages paid servants instead, he is considered lazy, and his worship of the Deity is called artificial.** An opulent householder can collect luxurious paraphernalia for Deity worship, and consequently for householder devotees the worship of the Deity is compulsory.*"

Having Deity at home is to revive our lost relationship with the Supreme Lord. So, understanding this, we should serve the Deities with our own endeavor and not employ others for serving Them. If we keep servants for serving our Deities at home, then even after millions of births, we will not be able to revive our relationship with Him. We might very well see that even in case of our own relatives like parents, grand-parents or our children, the loving reciprocation which we experience, the satisfaction which we get when we serve them directly is much more than when we employ care-takers for the same.

Our hunger cannot be satisfied if we ask someone else to eat for us. Similarly we will never remember Krishna - if we keep delegating to others, even the basic service which we are supposed to do Him. Ambarish Maharaj was the king of the whole planet and had so many people under his control. But still He used to clean the temple with his own hands (*karau harer mandira-mārjanādishu* - SB 9.4.18-20), bathe the Deities, offer flowers to Them, perform pooja etc.

We are nothing when compared to Ambarish Maharaj's powerful position. So, let us atleast sincerely endeavor to serve our Deities at home to the best of our capabilities. Indeed, the only way to control our wavering senses, is to engage

them in the service of Deity who is non-different from the Lord of Senses - Hrshikesha.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Kalacakra Krsna das and Sudarshana devi dasi.

Evaporation of Miseries

Dear Prabhujis and Matajis,

Hare Krishna! Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva!

In the second chapter of Srimad Bhagavad Gita, Shri Arjuna is asking Shri Krishna about the symptoms of a transcendently situated personality. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is clearly answering this question by explaining the qualifications of such a personality and I was listening to a lecture given by our beloved Maharaj on one of the qualifications from Srimad Bhagavad Gita 2.56 and I am summarising herewith a few of the points spoken by Maharaj,

*duḥkheṣv anudvigna-manāḥ sukheṣu vigata-spr̥haḥ
vīta-rāga-bhaya-krodhaḥ sthita-dhīr munir ucyate*

One who is not disturbed in mind even amidst the threefold miseries or elated when there is happiness, and who is free from attachment, fear and anger, is called a sage of steady mind.

Maharaj was telling that it is very difficult to come to the conclusion that in both happiness and misery, we should become very steady. It is nearly impossible in this age because this age is particularly meant for activities which are increasing the sense gratification and as soon as there is some impediment into it, we become angry and agitated. Here, Krishna advises us that if we can cultivate Krishna consciousness in our life, then when there is misery, we won't be miserable. One thing we have to understand is that everything is under the control of Krishna and as soon as we remember this control of the Supreme Authority, then whatever comes, we take it as His mercy and He never does anything wrong for us. It may appear to us that this is not good for me, but in the end, it proves to be a very nice thing for us. For a few moments or few months, we may feel what Krishna is doing with me. But later everything becomes clear for us.

Sudama was completely poor and he was an intimate friend of Lord Krishna but he was not at all dissatisfied with his condition and because he was equal minded in poverty too, in the end, Krishna gave him so much that he got all the opulences. On the other side, there were the two sons of Kuvera - Manigriva and Nalakuvera. As we know, rich man's son gets easy money and as soon as the riches are there, and they see that they are going to inherit the father's property then three things follow.

1. *stri* - **illicit connection with women**
2. *dyūtam* - **gambling**
3. *āsavam* - **intoxication**

These three things are there without fail, when easy money is there. Once in order to enjoy, they entered into the Kailasha gardens and were playing in the waters of the lake, completely intoxicated along with some girls. And it so happened by their destiny, that Narada muni passed that way. They were completely shameless and did not even care for Narada muni and they remained naked. Those who drink wine, they completely forget themselves and their lives are described in Srimad Bhagavad Gita 16.7 as,

*pravṛttim ca nivṛttim ca janā na vidur āsurāḥ
na śaucaṁ nāpi cācāro na satyaṁ teṣu vidyate*

Those who are demoniac do not know what is to be done and what is not to be done. Neither cleanliness nor proper behavior nor truth is found in them.

The mentality of persons intoxicated with riches is wonderfully spoken by the Lord in Srimad Bhagavad Gita 16.13-15:

*"The demoniac person thinks: **So much wealth do I have today, and I will gain more according to my schemes. So much is mine now, and it will increase in the future, more and more. He is my enemy, and I have killed him, and my other enemies will also be killed. I am the lord of everything. I am the enjoyer. I am perfect, powerful and happy. I am the richest man, surrounded by aristocratic relatives. There is none so powerful and happy as I am. I shall perform sacrifices, I shall give some charity, and thus I shall rejoice.** In this way, such persons are deluded by ignorance."*

When Narada muni saw that these 2 boys were behaving like trees standing naked, he cursed them to accept the body of the trees. By the causeless mercy of Narada muni, they became the yamalarjuna trees in the courtyard of Nanda maharaj and they were delivered by Krishna. The point is that if we do not behave properly, then we are going to glide down. Intoxicated by riches, if we ignore the saintly elderly persons, then the horrible results await us. That is why Krishna advises us that in miserable conditions we should not be disturbed at all. When we are in nice situations, we should not be elated, as this elation will throw us into bad activities.

Nobody really can escape the miseries and we all have 7 problems (birth, death, old age, disease, adhibautic, adhyatmic, adhidaivic) in front of us. These 7 problems are inevitable and there is no cure for it.

Krishna advises us to get attached to Him and all these miseries even though inevitable become happily bearable. Without Krishna we cannot face the misery. That is why Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Srila Prabhupada insist us that we chant the holy names of Krishna. Communion with the Lord through the transcendental sound vibration is the complete perfect way out of our miseries. If we take advantage of these transcendental vibrations, then we cannot go wrong at all. In the same way, if we learn a few verses and we sing them, we become completely elevated from the material platform to the spiritual platform. As soon as we speak a verse from Bhagavad Gita, we are speaking out Krishna. As soon as we get in touch with the whole spirit Krishna, our mind leaves the limited boundary and there is complete evaporation of miseries.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

Procrastinate and Perish

Dear Prabhujis and Matajis,

Hare Krishna! Please accept my humble obeisances! All Glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva!

In one of the lectures, our beloved Guru Maharaj was insisting the urgency and importance of studying Srila Prabhupada books and I am transcribing a few points from his speech for our benefit. He was telling that we are devotees, and this means that we have to put our heads into these books and read and understand them. If we are not going to study these books, who is going to do it? Srila Prabhupada was waking up at 1.00 a.m. and writing these books. For whom was he doing such hard labour? Supposing it takes a minimum of one month to understand one verse of Srimad Bhagavatam, then there are 18000 verses which means it will take around 1500 years to read and understand only Bhagavatam. Where are 1500 years and what about the other literatures? Unless we use our time very nicely, it is very difficult to go through. Actually, we have the time, but our laziness stops us. This is called as 'Dhirga sutri' attitude.

In Srimad Bhagavad Gita, while describing the worker in the mode of ignorance, Lord Shri Krishna says in 18.28

*ayuktaḥ prākṛtaḥ stabdhaḥ śaṭho naiṣkṛtiko 'lasaḥ
viṣādī dīrgha-sūtrī ca kartā tāmāsa ucyate*

The worker who is always engaged in work against the injunctions of the scripture, who is materialistic, obstinate, cheating and expert in insulting others, and who is lazy, always morose and procrastinating is said to be a worker in the mode of ignorance.

Maharaj explained 'Dirgha-sutri' as meaning a long thread. Supposing the newspapers are lying here, within few minutes we can clear them. But we do not clear it and then every time we see the newspapers, we keep saying, 'it is to be done. Tomorrow I will do it'. Or otherwise we ask so many people to do it. What can be done in three minutes, we keep on postponing to tomorrow and tomorrow never comes. Tomorrow will be today again. This is the long thread and this attitude has to be avoided. That which is to be done, should be done immediately. Procrastination is the thief of time. As soon as we postpone, so much breath is wasted ordering others. It really steals our time.

Srimad Bhagavad Gita gives us the direction. At the moment we are without direction. Then how can we go to the destination? Suppose a steamer is there, there will be a sail. If we open the sail, we will be dragged in the direction of the wind. If the sail is not opened, the boat will go hither and thither. Our sails are completely closed. So, again and again we are in birth, death, old age and disease. There is no sail and we don't have the time to spread the sail. And we do not have time to take advantage of the direction of the wind when it is favourable. At the moment, the wind is favourable to us. There is a guru like Srila Prabhupada and there is incomparable literature with us. The cupboards are full, but we are lamenting. Why? Because our sails are closed. We keep on saying, I will open the sail tomorrow. But who knows, tomorrow, the direction of the wind may change and as soon as the direction of the wind changes, we start blaming the wind. 'Ah! I wanted to open the sail. But the wind is not favourable.' But when it was favourable, why did you not do it? This is procrastination.

Every one of us is a dirga sutri. Unless we are forced, we will not do the material activity and unless we are extremely forced, we will not do the spiritual activities. In the beginning force is required. Srila Prabhupada was very strong and forceful with his disciples. His was a very unique way. He was forceful also and kind also. The urgency is that we should utilise the time when the winds are favourable. Now prasadam is there, bathing facilities are there, bed is there, tables are there, light is there, everything is there but we are procrastinating. Then in miserable conditions we blame the whole world, except us. This tendency has got to be stopped.

Any work has to be done immediately and finished off never to be left for the next second. When you are getting out of the house, if there is any impediment on the pathway, we immediately clear it. We don't step over it and go. If we do that, then again, the next time we get out, the same impediment is there. So better clear it off for once and all. Then we become completely free to be with Srimad Bhagavatam and Bhagavad gita.

Material activities cannot be ignored because in kaliyuga we require to perform them for our maintenance and so many other things. Expertise in material activity is the spiritualization of material activity. Whatever activity we do, that activity has to be performed so very nicely, that the employer or customer whoever it is, should be completely pleased with us. This pleasing effect is Krishna. Bliss is flowing from Him. As soon as we are pleased with the dealings between us, that is Krishna. If we perform the activities very clearly, thinking that we are dealing with Krishna, seeing Krishna everywhere, then the activity becomes relishable. You are happy and the persons who come in contact with you, they are dancing. That is the spiritualization of activities.

In the spiritual activities, because the results are not tangible, we postpone the activity for the whole of our life and the whole lifetime passes away. Procrastination is a thief of our time and a thief has got to be imprisoned so that it doesn't come into our life again. Lord Brahma's life time is only a blink in the eternal time and our lifetime is not even a blink and hence we have to be very serious about these things. Srila Prabhupada has chewed the highly complicated philosophical points and has presented them in a language we can easily comprehend. If we do not go to him, we lose our humanity.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

Bhakti - The Only Way to Realise Krishna

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble pranams! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva!

In our day to day life, we come across so many kinds of incidents both in our lives as well as in the external world. If we try to comprehend the reasons for these things using our mind or try to manipulate why Krishna has allowed these things, it will simply lead to bewilderment. Our senses are limited, and Krishna is unlimited - so we can never judge or ascertain Krishna's actions.

In the 4th Mantra of Sri Isopanishad, it is said,

*anejad ekaṁ manaso javīyo nainad devā āpnuvan pūrvam arṣat
tad dhāvato 'nyān atyeti tiṣṭhat tasminn apo mātariśvā dadhāti*

Although fixed in His abode, the Personality of Godhead is swifter than the mind and can overcome all others running. The powerful demigods cannot approach Him. Although in one place, He controls those who supply the air and rain. He surpasses all in excellence.

There are few points we can learn from the above verse:

i) Although fixed in His abode - It means that though Krishna is fixed in one place, localized and the greatest, He can be simultaneously omni-present. A very good example of this is found when the Lord stood before Kunti mata as she was glorifying him. However, at the very moment, Uttara mata shouted and called out to Krishna as the Brahmastara was about to kill Parikshit Maharaj in her womb. The Lord was still standing before Kunti Mata but simultaneously he covered the child with his own energy and protected Parikshit Maharaj. Also, during His pastimes in Dwaraka with His queens, with His friends in Vrindavan and in so many other places we find the Lord exhibiting His omnipresent nature - though He eternally continues to reside in His Supreme abode. This act of the Lord is inconceivable by mental speculation and unexplainable by material standards. This is due to our limited understanding and potency to understand the Lord's actions.

ii) The personality of Godhead is swifter than the mind and can overcome all others running - Our mind is supposed to be swifter than our actions. But this verse clearly points out Krishna is swifter than the mind. Since Krishna is the Supreme personality of Godhead, He is the fastest and the most excellent. No one is greater or equal to Him. He can do anything He wants. He is the cause of all causes. It is stated by the Lord personally that He is the cause of all the demigods and sages. Even the demigods and great sages cannot understand Krishna as their energies are limited.

Glorifying these potencies of Supreme Lord, Prajapati Daksha prays in Srimad Bhagavatam verse (6.4.29):-

*yad yan niruktaṁ vacasā nirūpitaṁ
dhiyākṣabhir vā manasota yasya
mā bhūt svarūpaṁ guṇa-rūpaṁ hi tat tat
sa vai guṇāpāya-visarga-lakṣaṇaḥ*

Anything expressed by material vibrations, anything ascertained by material intelligence and anything experienced by the material senses or concocted within the material mind is but an effect of the modes of material nature and therefore has nothing to do with the real nature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Supreme Lord is beyond the creation of this material world, for He is the source of the material qualities and creation. As the cause of all causes, He exists before the creation and after the creation. I wish to offer my respectful obeisances unto Him.

In his wonderful purport to the above verse Srila Prabhupada says -"*Daksha very carefully points out that material designations cannot be names of the worshipable Lord: yad yan niruktam vacasaa nirupitam. Nirukta refers to the Vedic dictionary. One cannot properly understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead merely by picking up expressions from a dictionary. In praying to the Lord, Daksha does not wish material names and forms to be the objects of his worship; rather, he wants to worship the Lord, who existed before the creation of material dictionaries and names. As confirmed in the Vedas, yato vaaco nivartante/ apraapya manasaa saha: the name, form, attributes and paraphernalia of the Lord cannot be ascertained through a material dictionary. However, if one reaches the transcendental platform of understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he becomes well acquainted with everything, material and spiritual.*"

In the above verse, Kind Daksha clearly tells us that we cannot understand Krishna through the process of mental speculation or using our mind. If we try to speculate about Him, then Krishna will be illusive to us. The Lord is Supreme Pure, and we are completely impure. The only way we can understand the Lord is through the purificatory process of Bhakti which is non-different from the Lord. So instead of speculating the reasons for each and every happening using our mind, let us simply accept His Supremacy and simply endeavor to act in a manner pleasing to Him.

I pray at the lotus feet of Gurudev and Krishna to engage my mischievous mind unto serving Them by engaging in the purificatory process of bhakti.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Manjari devi dasi

Singapore.

Commanding the Lord

Dear Vaishnavas,

Hare Krishna. Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

The scriptures recommend that we should become the servants of the servant of Lord Krishna. But if we really become servants of the servants, then, instead of us serving the Lord, the Lord serves us beyond all our imaginations. Of course, this is an embarrassment for pure devotees; their motive of service is not to get service from the Lord, but the Lord being bought over by the unmotivated service of His sincere devotees, does anything for their welfare. In Srimad Bhagavatam 1.16.16, there is a list of menial service that Lord Krishna did to the Pandavas which we cannot normally imagine the Supreme Lord to do for anyone.

*sārathya-pāraśada-sevana-sakhya-dautya-
vīrāsānānugamana-stavana-praṇāmān
snigdheṣu pāṇḍuṣu jagat-praṇatīm ca viṣṇor
bhaktīm karoti nṛ-patiś caraṇāravinde*

Maharaja Parikshit heard that out of His causeless mercy Lord Kṛṣṇa [Vishnu], who is universally obeyed, rendered all kinds of service to the malleable sons of Pandu by accepting posts ranging from chariot driver to president to messenger, friend, night watchman, etc., according to the will of the Pandavas, obeying them like a servant and offering obeisances like one younger in years. When he heard this, Maharaja Parikshit became overwhelmed with devotion to the lotus feet of the Lord.

Lord Krishna performed services like:

- 1. Sārathy** - He served as the Charioteer of Arjuna in the Battle. Being a charioteer is one of the most menial service one can do. In the battlefield since the fight will be so intense and fast that the fighter will not have time to tell the charioteer which way to turn. So, many times, the fighter commands the charioteer with signs using his legs hitting the back of the charioteer. Krishna took such a low position of service to serve Arjuna in the battlefield. At the end of every day, Krishna would also feed and bathe the horses and maintain the Rath clean for Arjuna.
- 2. Pāraśada** - Yudhishtira Maharaj wanted the Lord to preside over the Rajasuya ceremony and worship Him. Without any hesitation the Lord accepted the request of the Pandavas and in the process He delivered Sishupala who did not like Krishna being worshiped in that ceremony.
- 3. Sakhya** - The Lord acted as the intimate friend of the Pandavas, especially Arjuna. During informal interactions, Arjuna would often deal with the Lord as if He is his side-kick, but Krishna would always enjoy such informal interactions wherein Arjuna and the other Pandavas would forget the opulence of the Lord and deal with Him as if He is one among them.
- 4. Dautya** - When every attempt failed to stop the war, the Lord volunteered to go to Duryodhana as a messenger on behalf of the Pandavas begging at least 5 villages for them so that there would not be unnecessary loss of lives on either sides. In that process He was even insulted by Duryodhana, but the fact is that the Lord was willing to go to any extent to serve His pure devotees.
- 5. Vīrāsana** - Once the battle is over for the day, both the camps will do strategic planning for the next day's fight. During that time, the Lord would act as a night watchman for the Pandavas camp so that the spies won't sneak in from the opposition camp to learn about their next day's strategy. He was doing this to protect the Pandavas at any cost.

6. Anugamana - Krishna was always following the instructions of Yudhishtira Maharaj, Kunti Maharani, Vidura etc even though He is the almighty Lord.

7. Stavana - Whenever the Lord went to meet the Pandavas, He would say glorifying prayers to them and greet them lovingly, even though it should have been the other way round.

8. Pranāmān - The Lord was offering obeisances to the Pandavas whenever He met them.

He did all these to the Pandavas only because they were malleable to the will of the Lord. They were willing to act in whatever way the Lord desired. The interesting word we should observe in this connection is jagat-pranatim - The whole world is obeying the Lord, but the Lord is obeying His sincere servants.

I have no qualification to expand the meaning for this verse with all the dirt in my heart. Please forgive me for my inebrieties and pray that I will become humble in this lifetime at least once.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Kalacakra Krsna das.

Importance of Recitation

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

Last month when we went to Shree Shree Radha Neela Madhava dham, our spiritual master was insisting on the importance of recitation of shlokas. Maharaj said that recitation has a subtle and sublime effect on us. But we fail to understand the importance of the same and keep ignoring it or do it in a very sporadic and mechanical manner. We also tend to do the recitation in a very whimsical manner - when we are pressed down by problems or when our near and dear ones are sick etc...Such behaviour only depicts our fruitive attitude. Maharaj said that if all the family members are engaged in devotional service, then time should be adjusted in such a way that each member of the family does the recitation for significant time in a day - so that the recitation continues through-out the day in the house. The effect of such auspicious vibration will purify not only our minds - but also the whole environment around us.

We tend to forget the value of these statements. So to hammer this point on our dull brains, Maharaj insisted that whenever we recite Bhagavad Gita and Bhagavatam, we should make it a habit to recite the following two verses along with their translations as they very nicely brings out the glories of recitation. S.B.10.1.4 says,

*nivṛtta-tarṣair upagīyamānād
bhavauśadhāc chrotra-mano-'bhirāmāt
ka uttamaśloka-guṇānuvādāt
pumān virajyeta vinā paśughnāt*

Glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is performed in the parampara system; that is, it is conveyed from spiritual master to disciple. Such glorification is relished by those no longer interested in the false, temporary glorification of this cosmic manifestation. Descriptions of the Lord are the right medicine for the conditioned soul undergoing repeated birth and death. Therefore, who will cease hearing such glorification of the Lord except a butcher or one who is killing his own self?

Srimad Bhagavatam 1.6.25 Srila Narada Muni, while explaining to Vyaasadev about his first meeting with Supreme Lord says,

*etāvad uktvopararāma tan mahad
bhūtaṁ nabho-liṅgam aliṅgam īśvaram
ahaṁ ca tasmai mahatāṁ mahīyase
śiṣṇāvanāmaṁ vidadhe 'nukampitaḥ*

Then the Supreme authority personified by sound, unseen by eyes, yet most wonderful, stopped speaking. Feeling a sense of gratitude, I offered my obeisances unto Him, by bowing my head.

In his purport to the above verse Srila Prabhupada says - "*That the Personality of Godhead was not seen, but only heard does not make any difference. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, produced the four Vedas by His breathing and the Lord can be seen and realised through the transcendental sound of the Vedas. Similarly, the Bhagavad Gita is the sound incarnation of the Lord and there is no difference in identity. The conclusion is that the Lord can be seen and heard by persistent chanting of the transcendental sound.*"

I pray that I remember this instruction of Gurudev and practise it daily in my life and chant the shlokas lovingly for His pleasure.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sudarshana devi dasi.

What is in a Name?

Dear Prabhujis and Matajis,

Hare Krishna! Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva!

It is said that the sweetest sound for any person is the sound of one's own name. Whenever we hear someone talking about us mentioning our name, immediately we become attentive. Nowadays the parents are so crazy to see that their children's name is on the top of the list that the majority of parents name their child beginning with the alphabet 'A' so that their child's name will be in the top of the list at least alphabetically, if not by any other merit. We are mad about numerology and give all kinds of meaningless names to our children without giving proper thoughts. Even if we give them a nice name, we tend to abbreviate it in so many crazy ways and call them in that way. On the day of initiation, we are given a Krishna daasya naama (name of Krishna's servant) and even after being so fortunate, we do not endeavour to remember or call by this initiated name but continue with the karmic name. I came to understand what a great misfortune it is to do like this, after I went through the pastime of Ajamila. We find that Ajamila named his youngest son as Narayana and he was very much attached to this child. Because the child's name was Narayana, the old man always chanted the holy name of Narayana.

While describing the life of Ajamila to Maharaj Parikshit, Sukadev Goswami says in Srimad Bhagavatam 6.1.26 -

*bhuñjānaḥ prapiban khādan bālakaṁ sneha-yantritaḥ
bhojayan pāyayan mūḍho na vedāgatam antakam*

When Ajamila chewed food and ate it, he called the child to chew and eat, and when he drank he called the child to drink also. Always engaged in taking care of the child and calling his name, Naarayana, Ajamila could not understand that his own time was now exhausted and that death was upon him.

Srila Prabhupada writes in his purport to SB 6.1.25 that although Ajamila was referring to the small child and not to the original Narayana, the name of Narayana is so powerful that even by chanting his son's name he was becoming purified. Prabhupada also mentions that *Ajamila was saying, 'Narayana, please come eat this food. Narayana, please come drink this milk.' Somehow or the other therefore he was attached to the name Narayana. This is called ajnaana sukriti. Then in his purport to SB 6.1.26 Srila Prabhupada makes a very very powerful statement which is worth remembering by all of us. **Although calling for his son, he was unknowingly chanting the name of Narayana, and the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is so transcendently powerful that his chanting was being counted and recorded.***

How much kind the Lord is to the conditioned souls like us? This reminds us of the statement by our beloved Guru Maharaj, **'whatever condition you are in, please chant on japa mala beads. If you cannot chant on the beads, then at least chant on your fingers and if you cannot chant on your fingers, at least start chanting and KRISHNA WILL COUNT for you.'**

Ajamila was engaged in so much abominable sinful activities and the question arises in our mind as to how he could name his son as 'Narayana' to become eligible for all this fortune. Srila Prabhupada gives a wonderful explanation in his purport to Srimad Bhagavatam 6.2.32,

*'In the beginning of his life Ajamila was certainly very pure, and he associated with devotees and brahmanas.; because of that pious activity, even though he was fallen, he was inspired to name his son Narayana. **Certainly, this was due to good counsel given from within by the Supreme Personality Of Godhead.** The Lord, who is situated in everyone's heart, is so kind that if one has ever rendered service to Him, the Lord never forgets him. Thus, the Lord, from within, gave Ajamila the opportunity to name his youngest son Narayana, so that in affection he would constantly call 'Narayana! Narayana!' and thus be saved from the most fearful and dangerous condition at the time of his death. Such is the mercy of Krishna. In our Krishna consciousness movement, we therefore change a devotee's name to a*

form that reminds him of Vishnu. If at the time of death, the devotee can remember his own name, such as Krishna dasa or Govinda dasa, he can be saved from the greatest danger. Therefore, the change of names at the time of initiation is essential. The Krishna consciousness movement is so meticulous that it gives one a good opportunity to remember Krishna somehow or other.'

After reading these most powerful words of Srila Prabhupada, our question changes from 'What is in a name?' to 'What is not in a name?'

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

How to Relish Transcendental Vibration?

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

Chanting of the holy names, studying Srimad Bhagavatam and Srimad Bhagavad Gita involves transcendental vibrations. To perceive this transcendental vibration is very difficult for neophytes like me. Many times, we enjoy kirtans sung in new tunes. But when sung in normal tunes we may not. This shows that we are not truly relishing the transcendental vibration of the holy names. This difficulty can be overcome by being satisfied in our material things. In this connection, I would like to share one important shloka which our Guru Maharaj had instructed us when we were in Rajkot last month.

To relish the transcendental vibrations we should remember the verse S.B 8.19.26., so that our mind is focused on the vibrations.

*yadṛcchā-lābha-tuṣṭasya tejo viprasya vardhate
tat praśāmyaty asantoṣād ambhasevāśuśukṣaṇiḥ*

A brahmana who is satisfied with whatever is providentially obtained is increasingly enlightened with spiritual power, but the spiritual potency of a dissatisfied brahmana decreases, as fire diminishes in potency when water is sprinkled upon it.

Tej means spiritual potency. The spiritual potency increases as we are satisfied in our situation. We should be completely satisfied and never blame anything. We are suffering for our own activities which we have done. *bhūñjana evātma-kṛtām vipākam* - (SB 10.14.8) This is our condition. For the reactions of our activities we suffer. Either enjoyment or miserable condition. This is *vipākam* (reactions to our activities). Once we come to this conclusion then we close the material accounts by being satisfied. If we are not satisfied then material accounts continue, but then we don't want to continue our material accounts. It must be stopped or reduced to a minimum. This is **santosh**.

We are waiting to see the Lord at the time of death, whatever condition we are in - whether we are sinful or not. The devotees are not scared of death instead they are happy to see the Lord. That's why their spiritual potency does not decrease. On the contrary, the spiritual potency increases because of santosh. To get santosh we should accept the material things as they are, and again that which cannot be changed should be accepted as such.

In Niti shastras it is mentioned,

*santoṣa triṣu kartavyaḥ sva-dhāre bhojane dhane
santoṣa triṣu na kartavyaḥ svādhyāya japa dānayoḥ*

One should be always satisfied with these three things - their spouse, the food, and the amount of wealth they obtained. One should never be satisfied with these three things - the amount of scriptural study, the amount of chanting and the amount of charity they performed.

In these three things we should be satisfied - *sva-dhāre, bhojane, dhane*. We should be satisfied with our life partner, food and money - For satisfaction gives all opulences. If we are dissatisfied in these three things, then our spiritual potency decreases. This is **asantosh**. Then we start hankering. With this hankering we cannot relish the transcendental vibrations. The gist is that in order to relish the transcendental vibration we should be satisfied completely. These instructions should continuously remain in our mind, so that this material account is completely closed.

I pray to the Lotus feet of our Gurudev, Prabhupada and Sri Krishna that I remain satisfied in all aspects so that I could relish the transcendental vibrations.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Savita devi dasi

Chennai.

"Go Green"

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

Now-a-days we see so many people insisting upon saving the environment, growing more trees, "Go-GREEN", etc. Trees are also part of Krishna's creation and killing them mercilessly is also an offense. Srimad Bhagavatam being amala-puran and practical theistic science for people of all ages - very nicely explains the importance of preserving trees. When Maharaj Parikshit inquired about the potency of the Supreme Lord, by which he brought out the secondary creation, Sukadeva Goswami explained to him about the activities of king Prachinabarhi and his ten sons Pracetas - who were bestowed with responsibility of increasing the population. The Pracetas underwent long austerities under water and when they emerged from water, they saw the entire surface of the world covered by trees. Somehow, they were annoyed by this and using the mystic power gained by their austerities - started burning the trees to ashes using fire coming from their mouth. When Soma - king of the trees and predominating deity of the moon saw their misuse of powers, he advised them very nicely - not to misuse their anger in destruction of trees which are created by Krishna for a very special purpose. In verses 6.4.7 through 15 of Srimad Bhagavatam, King Soma very nicely insists on the importance of trees.

Soma says that duty of government or king is not only to protect the citizens, but also other living entities like animals and trees. No living entity should be killed mercilessly. He also explains how fruits and flowers of trees serve as food for birds, insects - grass and legless entities serve as food for the cows and buffaloes and food-grains serve as food for human-beings. In verse 6.4.12-13 he says,

*tokānām pitarau bandhū dṛśaḥ pakṣma striyāḥ patiḥ
patiḥ prajānām bhikṣūṇām grhy ajñānām budhaḥ suhṛt*

As the father and mother are the friends and maintainers of their children, as the eyelid is the protector of the eye, as the husband is the maintainer and protector of a woman, as the householder is the maintainer and protector of beggars, and as the learned is the friend of the ignorant, so the king is the protector and giver of life to all his subjects. The trees are also subjects of the king. Therefore they should be given protection.

*antar deheṣu bhūtānām ātmāste harir īśvaraḥ
sarvaṁ tad-dhiṣṇyam īkṣadhvam evaṁ vas toṣito hy asau*

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is situated as the Supersoul within the cores of the hearts of all living entities, whether moving or nonmoving, including men, birds, animals, trees and, indeed, all living entities. Therefore you should consider every body a residence or temple of the Lord. By such vision you will satisfy the Lord. You should not angrily kill these living entities in the forms of trees.

If we are unable to help anyone, at least we must refrain from hurting them. So even if we don't plant and grow trees, let us not indulge in the sinful act of killing them but rather protect the existing trees in whatever way we can for His pleasure.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sudarshana devi dasi.

Taking Shelter of Scriptures

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

When we face difficult situations in our lives, and do not know how to handle those situations, we should take shelter of sadhu/spiritual master and submissively inquire from him and learn what needs to be done and what should not be done. During times, when we are not blessed with the physical association of sadhus, we should turn our attention to scriptures bestowed by Supreme Lord, wherein He has very clearly explained the do's and don'ts in our lives. Krishna resides as "mantra-murti" in these shastras and mercifully reciprocates to our queries in mind if we learn them with faith. Srimad Bhagavatam verse 1.1.2 very nicely glorifies the beauty of Bhagavatam and also about the qualifications required for us to understand this great scripture.

*dharmah projjhita-kaitavo 'tra paramo nirmatsarāṇām satām
vedyam vāstavam atra vastu śivadam tāpa-trayonmūlanam
śrīmad-bhāgavate mahā-muni-kṛte kim vā parair īśvaraḥ
sadyo hṛdy avarudhyate 'tra kṛtibhiḥ śuśrūṣubhis tat-kṣaṇāt*

Completely rejecting all religious activities which are materially motivated, this Bhagavata Puraana propounds the highest truth, which is understandable by those devotees who are fully pure in heart . The highest truth is reality distinguished from illusion for the welfare of all. Such truth uproots the threefold miseries. This beautiful Bhagavatam, compiled by the great sage Vyasadeva [in his maturity], is sufficient in itself for God realization. What is the need of any other scripture? As soon as one attentively and submissively hears the message of Bhagavatam, by this culture of knowledge the Supreme Lord is established within his heart.

The quality of the person who will be able to understand the message revealed through the scriptures is very clearly defined in this verse. Only if we are 100% pure in heart - **nirmatsarāṇām** - non-envious, then we would be able to understand the message of Bhagavatam. We would not be able to gain any kind of knowledge or instruction from the scriptures - either by possessing the scriptures at home, or by reading it in challenging mood. Unless we are simple and straight forward in our thoughts, words, and deeds, we will not be able to even touch the scriptures. It is not only important to seek shelter of scriptures, it is equally more important to follow the instructions provided in them.

In verse 16.23 of Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna very nicely explains the position of those who don't follow the scriptural injunctions.

*yaḥ śāstra-vidhim utsrjya vartate kāma-kārataḥ
na sa siddhim avāpnoti na sukhaṁ na parām gatim*

He who discards scriptural injunctions and acts according to his own whims attains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the supreme destination.

In his purport to the above verse, Srila Prabhupada very nicely explains the meaning for whimsical nature and also the result of this attitude - "The word 'kaama-kaaratah' is very significant. A person who knowingly violates the rules acts in lust. He knows that this is forbidden, but still he acts. This is called acting whimsically. **He knows that this should be done, but still he does not do it; therefore he is called whimsical. Such persons are destined to be condemned by the Supreme Lord.** Such persons cannot have the perfection which is meant for the human life."

By the mercy of spiritual master, Srila Prabhupada, Sri Krishna and Srimad Bhagavatam - we are provided with all the

details of what needs to be done and what should not be done. Even after knowing these instructions, if we are lethargic and negligent in following them - then we are digging our own graves. I pray at the lotus feet of Srila Gurudev to bless me to take shelter of the scriptures sincerely and to give up this whimsical nature.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sudarshana devi dasi.

Krishna - The All Wonderful Absolute Person

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

In Srimad Bhagavatam, we find in many places that Krishna is glorified as "*adbhuta karmana*" (one whose actions are wonderful). In the 10th canto, we come across this word when Sri Sukadeva Goswami recites the Lord's pastimes related to the killing of demons like Putana, Dhenukasura, Aghasura etc. A question came up in my mind, "The Supreme Lord is the creator, maintainer and annihilator of this material world and this activity cannot be done by anyone else. He does all this just by His sankalpa. For such a person, it is not at all a difficult task to destroy the demons who are tiny specks in creation. He is the one who gives powers to these demons. Then why He is called '*adbhuta karmana*', just because He kills demons or defeats Jarasandha's army and why Srila Sukadeva Goswami should explain such incidents in great details with great wonder?" It's like glorifying a great boxing champion as wonderful when he kills a mosquito. The person may actually get offended by this glorification(?). However, by the blessings of Maharaj, I came across the answer for the above question in the following shloka of Srimad Bhagavatam (10.50.29),

*sthity-udbhavāntarṁ bhuvana-trayasya yaḥ
samīhite 'nanta-guṇaḥ sva-līlayā
na tasya citraṁ para-pakṣa-nigrahas
tathāpi martyānuvidhasya varṇyate*

For Him who orchestrates the creation, maintenance and destruction of the three worlds and who possesses unlimited spiritual qualities, it is hardly amazing that He subdues an opposing party. Still, when the Lord does so, imitating human behavior, sages glorify His acts.

Though the Lord is all powerful and can do anything He likes, even small (from His point of view) deeds such as killing demons are glorified as wonderful because of the following reasons.

1. For devotees who forget that the Lord is the Absolute Truth (because of their excessive love for Him), these superhuman activities appear wonderful because they see the Lord as their companion and not the Supreme Person.
2. For others who do not recognize Him as the Absolute Truth and consider Him to be just a powerful human being, these activities sound very wonderful because they cannot be imitated by normal human beings.
3. For great sages and scholars, the Lord's activities are wonderful because they are completely spiritual (beyond the material modes) and just by hearing them, one can attain liberation from birth and death. Nowhere, we have the instance of a person becoming liberated by hearing somebody's activities. In Bhagavatam, the pastimes of baby Krishna stealing the butter etc in Vrindavan is described in a few shlokas. Everyday many living entities in this material world steal. But great sages like Sukadev Goswami do not glorify them or record them in the scriptures. Also, we cannot attain liberation by listening to our pastimes.
4. All His activities are wonderful because whatever the Lord does is beneficial to all living entities. When He kills the demons, the demons attain liberation from material sufferings being purified by the Lord's direct touch. People who hear about such activities also become purified and walk straight on the path back to Godhead. In this regard, Srila Prabhupada writes - "*God is Absolute. So even His killing is good. When He becomes angry at someone, even His object of anger is blessed*". So, all His actions are nothing but expression of His compassion towards all living entities. We should submissively study the scriptures with faith to appreciate this fact.

It is because of this reason the Lord makes a solemn declaration in Bhagavad Gita verse 4.9,

*janma karma ca me divyam evaṁ yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti mām eti so 'rjuna*

One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode, O Arjuna.

In this regard Maharaj was explaining to us in Rajkot, "*Why to think about His creation of this world? If we just see our body, we can understand that Krishna is adbhuta karmanah. Our mouth is the most sophisticated plumbing system. It produces the exact amount of saliva required to digest the food. There is food pipe, windpipe inside our body. When I eat and breath at the same time, the food never goes to the windpipe. It is so perfectly arranged. The blood vessels in our body are so much intertwined and they work in perfect co-ordination to ensure continuous pumping of blood throughout our body. In this way, if we just study our body, we can understand that Krishna's acts/creation are wonderful. No one can imitate His actions.*"

All we need to do is to submissively study and hear His glorious activities and by such purification process we can reach His lotus feet

I pray at the lotus feet of Maharaj and Srila Prabhupada so that I will get some taste and faith in listening to the pastimes of the Supreme Lord and get purified.

Thank you very much.

Yours in the service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Narahari Krishna das

Chennai.

No Arguments Against Vedic Literature

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

We were fortunate to have the wonderful association of Maharaj in Rajkot. Maharaj gave very illuminating and wonderful explanation on Srimad Bhagavatam verse 1.6.25,

*etāvad uktvopararāma tan mahad
bhūtaṁ nabho-liṅgam aliṅgam īśvaram
ahaṁ ca tasmai mahatāṁ mahīyase
śīrṣṇāvanāmaṁ vidadhe 'nukampitaḥ*

Then that supreme authority, personified by sound and unseen by eyes, but most wonderful, stopped speaking. Feeling a sense of gratitude, I offered my obeisances unto Him, bowing my head.

Purport: That the Personality of Godhead was not seen but only heard does not make any difference. The Personality of Godhead produced the four Vedas by his breathing, and He is seen and realized through the transcendental sound of the Vedas. Similarly, the Bhagavad Gita is the sound representation of the Lord, and there is no difference in identity. The conclusion is that the Lord can be seen and heard by persistent chanting of the transcendental sound.

Anyone who does the transcendental vibration they will never go wrong. Vibrations are very important. By vibrating the verses of Srimad Bhagavatam and Srimad Bhagavad Gita we can achieve perfection in pronouncing the vibrations. This matter is very much settled by the verse 1.6.25 Vibration is the way to see Krishna. This is settled matter. No arguments. Nirnayam – decided matter. No appeal. If we can develop faith in these transcendental vibrations our devotional service will increase leaps and bounds. We should not object the vedic literature and that is vedic culture. It is called ved vakya which is never to be questioned or argued. Each and every phase of the purport is very important and we have to realize these statements.

The whole Srimad Bhagavatam has got a general purpose – It is included in this verse.

Each and every canto has got a specific purpose – It is included in this verse.

Each and every chapter has got a specific purpose – It is included in this verse.

Each and every verse has got a specific purpose – It is included in this verse.

Each and every word has got a specific purpose – It is included in this verse.

There is no other literature with so much of vast literature available in this planet. It is important to think about these things. Srimad Bhagavatam is exclusively meant for conditioned souls. We are all conditioned souls and also reconditioned. TV/AC/Fridge are reconditioning us always. Therefore, in order to get out of this conditioned and reconditioned life this vedic literature is very important. Nobody can disagree with anything mentioned in Srimad Bhagavatam. We don't require anything else in this world except Srimad Bhagavatam. We have to have unflinching faith in the Vedic literature. By this process we will increase our devotional service.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sajjana Priya Krishna das

Rajkot.

Simplicity

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

In Bhagavad Gita Chapter 13 verse 8 Lord Krishna while explaining Arjuna about what all comprises to be knowledge say,

*amānitvam adambhitvam ahimsā kṣāntir ārjavam
ācāryopāsanam śaucaṁ sthairyam ātma-vinigrahaḥ*

Humility; pridelessness; nonviolence; tolerance; simplicity; approaching a bona fide spiritual master; cleanliness; steadiness; self-control - are some of the important qualities which Krishna is declaring to be knowledge.

Here the quality - *arjavam* is worth meditating. Srila Prabhupada gives very nice definition for this word in his purport to the above verse. He says - "Simplicity means that without diplomacy one should be so straight forward that he can disclose the real truth even to an enemy."

Our life should be simple. The way we think should be simple. Our speech and actions should be simple. Our interaction with other living entities must also be simple. Only when we are in this position, we will be able to peacefully and blissfully perform devotional service. On the other hand if we are having duplicit nature, then we will be constantly meditating on how to revenge/retaliate other living entities and there will hardly be any room for Krishna in our thoughts, heart or even in our homes.

Devotional service is simple for simple-hearted people and complex for the complicated souls. We can see this practically in children. They are innocent and their hearts are not filled with anarthas like us and so they pick up the process of bhakti at a greater speed than compared to us. I was fortunate to have the association of few young devotees from a village near Chennai and I was casually asking each one of them how many rounds they chant - Those devotees were in the age group of 5 to 12 and each one of them were saying 8,12,16 etc. One boy among them was chanting 40 rounds daily. I was simply surprised when he said that. His friend immediately remarked that he spent all his spare time chanting - and that's why he was able to chant at least 40 rounds. Here I was struggling to chant 16 rounds daily and even on days when I had spare time - I didn't bother to chant extra rounds and even when I did, it indeed requires a great effort to convince my obstinate mind to chant those extra rounds - in spite of knowing the importance of Holy Names.

Another practical experience many of us would have experienced is that children learn the shlokas faster than us. Basic reason being the children are more eager and receptive to hear about the Lord whereas our minds are not 100% present there when we do it . We think about different things and engage ourselves superficially in this process. Since we keep complicating our lives with so many things, even after years of practice - we are not able to relish the process of chanting or study of scriptures. So how to improve our fabric of devotional service? Maharaj always insists upon giving this valuable gift of bhakti to the next generation - Reality is he very well knows our complex minds and that's why is insisting on us to take association of simple children and in the process of teaching them shlokas, bhajans etc, we not only get into the habit of studying the scriptures and also practically learn from them how to simply love Krishna. Couple of weeks back in one of the classes, one child was telling me happily that she had invited Krishna for her sister's b'day party. Indeed, Krishna would have been very pleased by her loving gesture and I was just wondering how many times I have missed to talk to Krishna with the same loving mood like her. I thank Gurudev and Krishna for the association of such children and hope that I give away all complex thoughts and approach the Lord with simple heart like these children and perform sincere devotional service.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sudarshana devi dasi.

The Thief of Time

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

In Srimad Bhagavatam, the result of not utilizing time for devotional service to the Supreme Lord Krishna is very emphatically stated in the following verse:

SB 2.3.17

*āyur harati vai puṁsām udyann astaṁ ca yann asau
tasyarte yat-kṣaṇo nīta uttama-śloka-vārtayā*

Both by rising and by setting, the sun decreases the duration of life of everyone, except one who utilizes the time by discussing topics of the all-good Personality of Godhead.

In his transcendental purport, Srila Prabhupada explains: "*This verse indirectly confirms the greater importance of utilizing the human form of life to realize our lost relationship with the Supreme Lord by acceleration of devotional service. **Time and tide wait for no man.** So the time indicated by the sunrise and the sunset will be uselessly wasted if such time is not properly utilized for realizing identification of spiritual values. Even a fraction of the duration of life wasted cannot be compensated by any amount of gold.*"

Very often in devotional service, we always give excuses for not reading Bhagavad Gita and Srimad Bhagavatam. The main reason we give is "time". 'If only I have more time!!'. The fascinating thing that we discover that when we suddenly have "more time", it is quickly taken up. The "new" time we have is somehow eaten up. It's hard to put our finger on it - material society is such that life has become complicated and unnecessarily busy. We rarely have anyone say that they have plenty of time on their hands. We always complain that there aren't enough hours in a day. Every living entity has exactly the same number of minutes - 1,440 minutes in a day. The truth is that everybody wants more time, but everybody has all the time there is. It is the one that the poorest beggar on the street or the most powerful person in the world has exactly the same amount of. Everyone starts each new day with a bag filled with 1440 minutes. The problem is the existence of a "thief" - a thief who steals time from us.

At the start of every new day, a bag full of minutes is delivered to us and at that very moment onwards, the thief of time strikes at our hearts. He will rob us of our valuable time with the Supreme Lord Krishna, to do our daily chanting and reading of scriptures. This thief's name is 'Later', and he has dedicated his 'life' to stealing the living entity's time. Whenever he meets somebody who wants to engage in the process of devotional service, he says, "Very good. But not today. Today you should clean your car, spend time with your family, catch up on your sleep". He will urge you to do anything and everything except devotional service - that comes later! The truth is that there is no way for us to progress in devotional service until we deal with this creature. His power lies in his stealth; if you see him you have him beaten.

Therefore, as our beloved Guru Maharaj says: "**No matter how small a step towards devotional service - start it now and do not delay.**" If the task is too great - break it down into small parts. We must be involved in a daily battle with "later" in devotional service. He must not allow us to be robbed of the chance to engage in the transcendental service of the Lord.

In the Bhagavad-gita (2.40) the Lord has explained such contact in the following words: "**Endeavors in devotional service are never baffled. Nor is there failure. A slight beginning of such activities is sufficient even to deliver a person from the great ocean of material fears.**"

I therefore pray to the Supreme Lord, Srila Prabhupada and Gurudev to utilize whatever time available to engage in the process of devotional service.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Radhika devi dasi

Singapore.

Peace, Opulence and Bliss - Part 1

Dear Prabhujis and Matajis,

Hare Krishna! Please accept my humble obeisances! All Glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva!

Many of us have heard the wonderful explanations and realizations given by our beloved Guru Maharaj on the song '**jaya rādhā-mādhava**'. I was fortunate to hear one of them and I have tried my best to transcribe the same for all our pleasure. I can never convey the mood of Maharaj through my writing which is full of inebrieties and I very much apologise for the same. It is only out of a sincere wish to bring to record the transcendental words of Maharaj, I have made a puny effort.

The kirtans we sing must not be converted into rituals. The importance of feelings when we sing the kirtans is well understood if we understand one supreme truth. Every one of us without exception has to face Yamaraj as our lives are full of sins. Because we have chanted the holy names a bit here and there, we hope that like Ajamila, Vishnu dutas will arrive. We have seen so many people passing away. Some people pass away very calmly and comfortably. They don't feel anything. It is just a gradual change. Some people have to struggle. The end must be very comfortable. This is our endeavour and where there are names of Krishna, being non-different from Krishna Himself, they should spread the peaceful attitude in the whole of life. Passion should be decreased completely to the minimum except that we are showing passionate mood in the service of Krishna. In service we have to be active. Otherwise our whole being must be exhibiting by now complete peace and this is how we try to understand the Supreme Absolute Truth. As soon as we chant the Mahamantra or a few lines of the kirtana, all peace is pervaded. The names of the Lord being completely transcendental, they do not have any material inebrieties in them. The three modes of material nature are completely absent. We are following this culture for the past 25 or 30 years and now is the time our devotional service should mature. Maturity must be exhibited and by understanding these things we can very well exhibit maturity. Even without understanding, the kirtan gives us peace.

We sing the kirtana, '*jaya rādhā-mādhava*' We are very clear in mind that the glorification is the monopoly of the Supreme Absolute Truth. We can never have glorification. We are completely consumed and contaminated by the three modes. Somehow or the other, the major part of the day we should try to come out of the modes and the only way is to glorify the Lord through these kirtans.

We sing '*jaya yashoda nandana*..' and the literal meaning of 'Yasoda' is one who gives us the fame. 'Yash' means 'fame' and this one of the opulences of the Supreme Lord and this opulence we can never have unless we have unflinching faith in the process and thereby in Krishna. We must cultivate unmoving faith. Our constitutional position being parts and parcels of Krishna, there is no other way but to serve the Absolute truth. We may have any one of the relationships with the Lord out of the five relationships. Shantha, daasya, sakhya, vaatsalya and madhurya. All these relationships can very well be realized just by being peaceful. That is the first relationship.

As soon as we see His energies, unknowingly we become peaceful. Suppose we see the mass of water, in beaches, we feel the peace. There is no reason why we should go there but everybody loves to go there. Somehow or the other we are attracted because the mass of water is His energy and not only that, when we deeply think about it, the sea appears calm and this increases our calm attitude. As soon as this calmness is introduced in our lives, nothing disturbs us, and any situation we face, we are cool and there are no ripples in our lives. The unnecessary ripples are caused by the lower modes. There are millions of combinations of the three modes and almost non-stop they trouble us. And every time we have to keep them quiet. This is a continuous endeavour. Srimad Bhagavatam says, '*gr̥ṇataś ca sva-ceṣṭitam*'. We accept by our own endeavour.

'Yashoda' gives us unparalleled fame and every living entity is struggling for that. I want to be famous; you want to be famous, but we do not know that this opulence is given by Mother Yasoda. And why is this opulence given by her?

Because she is the mother of Krishna. And we very well know from our experience that cow can only produce calf. Hog will produce hog. Equal species can have the same type of children of the same species. Yasoda must be belonging to Krishna 's species. Unless she is Krishna's species, He will not accept her as His mother. And Krishna 's species means sat, cit and anand. Eternity is there. Complete knowledge is there and because eternity and knowledge are there, the third thing is bound to be there, and it is bliss.

There is an ocean of difference between happiness and bliss. All the living entities who are completely and constantly in touch with Krishna, through His names, through Srila Prabhupada's literatures and through so much other spiritual infrastructure, their 'yash' or fame increases. We may have riches, but riches and opulence are completely different. We may own so many material things, but opulence means that with all these facilities, we are unflinchingly attached to the devotional service of Krishna. This devotional service is non different from Krishna. In the spiritual world, the process and the goal are the same. We are discussing about Him and he is very well present here and that is why we are keeping quiet and listening. Real opulence means we are saturated with Krishna and this comes by undeviated attention (*ananya-cetāḥ satatam*) and this gives us the opulence of fame. But the conditions required are very serious. In Srimad Bhagavad Gita 8.14, the Lord says,

*ananya-cetāḥ satatam yo mām smarati nityaśaḥ
tasyāham su-labhaḥ pārtha nitya-yuktasya yoginaḥ*

For one who always remembers Me without deviation, I am easy to obtain, O son of Paartha, because of his constant engagement in devotional service.

Each word in the verse being Krishna Himself are very very potent. Our mind has two qualities. Flickering (*cañcalam*) and unsteady (*asthiram*). We have to make it steady. Enough of monkey behaviour we had. Now is the time to make it steady. The mind must cooperate with us. As soon as the mind cooperates with us, and we have unflinching faith in devotional service, then that will force us to be completely steady and peaceful. We are not disturbed by the ups and downs of life. Always there will be some waves of the modes of material nature, but people who are unflinchingly attached to devotional service are not affected, and this is the opulence.

Maharaj went on to explain how the opulence brings us bliss and the realization of Krishna and I shall try to post it in the subsequent mails.

Thank you very much.

Yours in the service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.