

## 108 Ways of Glorifying the Lord - Part 6

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

We have been meditating on glorifying the Lord in the offerings titled, "108 Ways of Glorifying the Lord". In the previous offering, we saw that

1. The Lord can only be known by devotion and faith.
2. The Lord cannot be understood by mental speculation.

We shall continue to meditate on the next glorification.

**Glorification 8 - The Lord is the greatest of all:** It is mentioned in Sri Isopanisad mantra 8:

*sa paryagāc chukram akāyam avraṇam  
asnāviraṇ śuddham apāpa-viddham  
kavir manīṣī paribhūḥ svayambhūr  
yāthātathyato 'rthān vyadadhāc chāśvatībhyaḥ samābhyaḥ*

**Such a person must factually know the greatest of all, the personality of Godhead, who is unembodied, omniscient, beyond reproach, without veins, pure and uncontaminated, the self-sufficient philosopher, who has been fulfilling everyone's desire since time immemorial.**

God is described here as *paribhūḥ*, "**the greatest of all**". No one is greater than or equal to Him. Other living beings are described as beggars who ask goods from the Lord. The Lord supplies the things the living entities desire. If the entities were equal to the Lord in potency, if they were omnipotent and omniscient - there would be no question of their begging from the Lord, even for so-called liberation. Only the Lord is self-sufficient. When Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared on earth five thousand years ago, He displayed His full manifestation as the Personality of Godhead through His various activities. In His childhood, He killed many demons including Aghaasura, Bakaasura, and Sakataasura and there was no question of His acquiring the power from any external endeavor. He lifted Govardhana Hill without ever practicing weight-lifting. He performed the Brahma-vimohana-līla by expanding himself into thousands of gopas and calves. The original gopas and calves were hidden by Lord Brahma in his abode. And by performing this līla Lord Kṛṣṇa even left Lord Brahma bewildered.

In his nectarean lecture on verse *Adi Līla 7.108* of *Caitanya Caritamṛta*, Srila Prabhupada very nicely explains the meaning of greatest. *'It is described in Paraashara-sutra, that the Lord is the greatest in wealth, greatest in fame, greatest in knowledge, greatest in renunciation, greatest in beauty, greatest in strength. One who is greatest in all six opulences is the greatest. The Lord is also smaller than the smallest and bigger than the biggest. The materialistic definition of "greatest" is the sky or a big ocean. We say "greatest" means that sky is the greatest or an ocean is the greatest. But the real idea of "greatest" is that one who can swallow millions of skies or universes within Himself, He is greatest. An ocean in comparison to a universe is a drop of water. And the Lord has millions of universes in his belly, hence He is the greatest. The Vaishnavas see that Krishna has within His mouth, millions of skies. So who is greatest? Krishna is greatest or the sky is greatest? This is the difference between the materialists and Vaishnavas. Just like Krishna, when He was boy, He was eating clay. His mother asked, "Oh, just open Your mouth. I want to see what You are eating." And Krishna showed her that millions of planets and millions of skies are within the mouth. So He is greatest, who can show that "Millions of skies are within Me." He is greatest.'*

We casually say "God is Great", without really understanding the purport of this statement. The Forbes magazine

publishes the richest person in the world every year. And invariably the richest person changes each year and maybe only a few times a particular person's name might be repeated for a few years. The same is the case with other opulences. The strongest person also changes with time, nobody can claim that he or she is the strongest person ever. Even if a certain person can claim to be strongest at a certain point in time, this changes with time and even that person has to succumb to death ultimately. The famous boxing champion Mohammed Ali was recently afflicted with paralysis and without help, he could not even move his hand. During his time he was unparalleled and was never defeated in any boxing match. He was invited for an Olympic opening ceremony as the chief guest. He took a great deal of effort and help to ignite the Olympics torch. Seeing this the reporters asked him, "At one time you used to say I am the greatest of all time and now you don't even seem to be capable of moving your hands on your own, how is this?" In answer to this question, even in a condition of helplessness, Mohammed Ali said, "I am still the greatest of all time". This is our condition in the material world, we are under so much illusion that in spite of getting constant beatings from Maya we still think we are the greatest.

As far as riches are concerned in today's world, it is very flickering and changes constantly. Today's market condition is so volatile that the riches of a person varies every day, in fact, every moment. People lose millions of dollars due to a crash in the stock market. There is always a race for being the richest in the world between various companies. In this regard, two IT companies Microsoft and Oracle are always competing for the 1st position. Microsoft maintains the 1st position most of the time and one such time the stocks of Oracle shot up at such a high that the owner Lary Ellison became the richest person, this news spread like wildfire and he immediately called up a press conference. He was so happy to present that he was the richest person in the whole world. By the time the press conference finished the stock market took such a turn that the shares of Oracle dipped and again Microsoft's owner Bill Gates became the world's richest person. Lary Ellison became morose again. Within a couple of hours, he saw the highs and the lows. This is the nature of the material world, it is very very temporary.

But the opulence of the Lord never decreases even by a bit. Innumerable universes spawn out of the breathing of the Lord but His opulences never decrease even by an ounce. He has millions of Laxmi's at His feet who provide all the riches of the world. That's why the Lord is the greatest of all times.

Krishna willing, we shall continue our journey of glorifying the Lord in the upcoming emails.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Anand Patil,

Wellington, New Zealand.

## Without Krishna we are Living Dead

Dear Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

A few days back we were discussing Srimad Bhagavatam and one of the devotees shared this nice little conversation between Srila Narada Muni and Hanuman. Once Narada Muni met with Hanuman and confronted him by saying, "You are not a devotee!". (*Of course, Narada muni told this in jest and being a pure devotee himself, wanted to reveal the true devotion of Hanuman from his own mouth*). Hanuman was surprised and asked him, how did he come to that conclusion. Narada muni then replied, "According to Vedic injunctions there are six kinds of aggressors and one of them is a person who sets fire to other's house. There are no sins incurred when such aggressors are killed. Such is the gravity of the sins accrued by one who sets fire to other's houses. And when you went to find Mother Sita in Lanka, you set fire to the houses of the Rakshasas on your return. How then can I call you a devotee of the Lord?".

Understanding the real import of Narada muni's charges upon him, Hanuman smiled and said, "*My dear Naradaji, one of the important duties of a Rama bhakta is to take charge of unclaimed dead bodies and perform final rites for those bodies so that they will attain a better life in their next birth. When I went to Lanka I found that in those big palaces nobody was chanting the names of the Lord. And it is said in the shastras that those who do not chant the holy names and fame of the Lord are considered dead bodies. Since they are already dead, in order to release them from their most miserable existence, I burnt all of them along with their palaces. There was only one palace which is that of Vibheeshana from where I could hear the names of Lord Rama's being chanted and hence I left that house alone unburnt.*"

In fact, Hanuman went one step further and made a loud roar which frightened all the resident rakshasas of Lanka. Hearing that fierce roar, many pregnant rakshasi's wombs were aborted. This way Hanuman made sure that in the future also these rakshasa clans does not appear in Lanka and create disturbances.

Narada muni was very pleased to hear this answer from Hanuman and hugged and praised him for his unsurpassable devotion unto Lord Rama.

This beautiful conversation between Srila Narada muni and Hanumanji brings out a very important point i.e., **without chanting the names of the Lord, we are all living dead**. This point is very beautifully delineated in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 10.38.12 spoken by Akrura while he travels from Mathura to Vrindavan in order to bring Lord Krishna and Lord Balaram to Mathura at the behest of Kamsa. This verse reveals five unique transcendental qualities of the words describing the glories of the Lord and also reveals the result of those who are bereft of them.

*yasyākhilāmīva-habhiḥ su-maṅgalaiḥ  
vāco vimīśrā guṇa-karma-janmabhiḥ  
prāṇanti śumbhanti punanti vai jagat  
yās tad-viraktāḥ śava-śobhanā matāḥ*

**All sins are destroyed and all good fortune is created by the Supreme Lord's qualities, activities and appearances, and words that describe these three things animate, beautify and purify the world. On the other hand, words bereft of His glories are like the decorations on a corpse.**

The following are the unique positive results when we chant the holy name, fame, qualities, activities, and appearance of the Lord:

1. *akhila ameeva habhiih* - It **destroys all the sins** of the entire world. There are other processes that may destroy some of the sins but chanting of the Lord's glories is the only process that can destroy all the sins.
2. *sumangalaih* - It creates **auspiciousness and good fortune** all over the world.
3. *praananti* - It **animates/brings life** to the otherwise dead beings of this world.
4. *shumbanti* - It **beautifies** the entire world. (Our spiritual master would say that without performing devotional service, our faces look like rotten bananas. If we perform devotional service our faces will become bubbly like watermelon).
5. *punanti* - It **purifies** the entire world. (Even Narada muni says the same thing to Vyasadev - *jagat pavitram*, it sanctifies the entire universe).

Whereas those words which do not chant the glories of the Lord are considered as *shava shobhanaa mataah* - **decoration on a dead body**. And those who are attracted to the words devoid of the glories of the Lord are as good as dead bodies.

If not for the causeless mercy of Srila Prabhupada and our spiritual master we would not have obtained this greatest boon of devotional service unto the Lord. Let us, therefore, make a sincere attempt to follow their transcendental instructions and rejuvenate our dead life.

Thank you very much

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

## How to Honor one's Guru

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,  
Please accept our dandavat pranams.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada. All glories to the Lotus Feet of Srila Gurudev. All glories to Sri Sri Gauranga.

While meditating on how to give pleasure to Srila Gurudeva and to act in such a way that would please Srila Gurudev "the most", the following verses are worth meditating on.

*brahmovāca*  
*tvayā me 'pacitis tāta kalpitā nirvyalīkataḥ*  
*yan me sañjagr̥he vākyam bhavān mānada mānayan*

**Lord Brahma said: My dear son Kardama, since you have completely accepted my instructions without duplicity, showing them proper respect, you have worshiped me properly. Whatever instructions you took from me you have carried out, and thereby you have honored me.**

In his wonderful purport to the above verse (3.24.12 from Srimad Bhagavatam) Srila Prabhupada, with a lot of transcendental punches very nicely explains the process of honoring one's Guru.

*"Lord Brahma, as the first living entity within the universe, is supposed to be the spiritual master of everyone, and he is also the father, the creator, of all beings. Kardama Muni is one of the Prajapatis or creators of the living entities, and he is also a son of Brahma. Brahma praises Kardama because **he carried out the orders of the spiritual master in toto and without cheating**. A conditioned soul in the material world has the disqualification of cheating. He has four disqualifications: he is sure to commit mistakes, he is sure to be illusioned, he is prone to cheat others, and his senses are imperfect. But if one carries out the order of the spiritual master by disciplic succession or the parampara system, he overcomes the four defects. Therefore, knowledge received from the bona fide spiritual master is not cheating. Any other knowledge which is manufactured by the conditioned soul is cheating only. Brahma knew well that Kardama Muni exactly carried out the instructions received from him and that he actually honored his spiritual master.*

***To honor the spiritual master means to carry out his instructions word for word.***"

So we have to be very careful in executing the instructions received from our Spiritual Master. We should not bring our mind in the equation because then we start cheating (when we follow our mind we actually cheat ourselves only and no one else) as it is made clear in the next verse.

*etāvaty eva śuśrūṣā kāryā pitari putrakaiḥ*  
*bāḍham ity anumanyeta gauraveṇa guror vacaḥ*

**Sons ought to render service to their father exactly to this extent. One should obey the command of his father or spiritual master with due deference, saying, "Yes, sir."** In the purport to above verse 3.24.13 of Srimad Bhagavatam, Srila Prabhupada continues giving special punches giving more clues as to how to become perfect and come out from the clutches of the material world.

*"Two words in this verse are very important; one word is pitari, and another word is guroh. The son or disciple should accept the words of his spiritual master and father without hesitation. Whatever the father and the spiritual master order should be taken without argument: "Yes." There should be no instance in which the disciple or the son says, "This is not correct. I cannot carry it out." **When he says that, he is fallen**. There should be no argument in following their instructions. That is real service to the father and to the spiritual master. Srila Vishvanatha Cakravarti Thakura has stated that the order of the spiritual master is the life and soul of the disciples. **As a man cannot separate his life from his body, a disciple cannot separate the order of the spiritual master from his life. If a disciple follows the instruction of the spiritual master in that way, he is sure to become perfect.** This is confirmed in*

*the Upanishads: the import of Vedic instruction is revealed automatically only to one who has implicit faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead and in his spiritual master. One may be materially considered an illiterate man, but if he has faith in the spiritual master as well as in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then the meaning of scriptural revelation is immediately manifested before him."*

We pray at the lotus feet of Srila Prabhupada that we never lose focus from following the instructions given to us by Srila Gurudev, so that we act in such a way that would please Srila Gurudev the most, through the eternity of our lifetime.

Thank you very much.

Your servants in the service of Srila Gurudev and Srila Prabhupada,  
Krsna Samarpan Krsna Das, Purna Prajna Devi Dasi and Ambarisha Das  
Auckland, New Zealand.

## Sow a Habit - Reap a Character

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In Srimad Bhagavatam, Kamsa's ministers while advising him the need to take immediate action against the enemies, say in verse 10.4.38

*yathāmayo 'ñge samupekṣito nṛbhir  
na śakyate rūḍha-padaś cikitsitum  
yathendriya-grāma upekṣitas tathā  
ripur mahān baddha-balo na cālyate*

**As a disease, if initially neglected, becomes acute and impossible to cure, or as the senses, if not controlled at first, are impossible to control later, an enemy, if neglected in the beginning, later becomes insurmountable.**"

We find that many times doctors say, even for diseases like cancer, etc, that it would have been easier for them to cure if detected at an early stage. The same holds true for habits. If we give way to bad habits (like intoxication, loose-talk, laziness, getting up late, etc) then slowly those habits will drag us down. Habits are hard to break. That is why it is very important to train our senses to be under control from the beginning. The phrase '*yathendriya-grāma upekṣitas*' in the above verse is worth meditating. If we let our senses loose, then it will be very difficult for us to bring them under control. If we don't control the mind and senses by steady intelligence, then they will become our masters and drag us in different directions and ultimately we will suffer the reactions of these bad habits. In fact, our own mind and senses are our worst enemies if we fail to keep them under control. So it is important to habituate our senses to do good things right from the beginning. Habits, whether good or bad, are formed by a process of repetition. We commit an act once, we do it again, we repeat it a third time, and at length, we do it without effort, quite involuntarily. Eventually, a habit becomes a part of our nature and we don't pause to think about why we are doing it. It is, therefore, imperative that we learn to behave correctly and form the right habits when we are young. It is said, "We sow an act, we reap a habit, we sow a habit, and we reap a character." The habits we form at an early age ultimately shape our character.

In this regard, there is a small story. Once there lived a boy called Ramu. One day he stole a book from one of his classmates. Instead of punishing him, his mother appreciated him. She said, "That was so clever my boy." As he grew older and older Ramu came to be known as the village thief. One day the police caught him and he was ordered to be hanged. The day of his execution arrived, and his mother was beating her hands in her chest and was crying. Ramu saw his mother crying in the crowd. He pleaded to the securities to allow him to speak his last words to his mother in her ear. Ramu then bit his mother's ear. Many of the people came and pushed him back and asked him if she was his mother or not. Then he replied, "That lady is my mother, because of her I am going to be hanged now. When I was small I did mischief, without punishing me she encouraged me to do it again and again. If she had corrected and controlled my behaviour at the beginning itself, I would not have to meet my end in this manner."

If wealth is lost, nothing is lost. If health is lost, something is lost. But if character is lost, everything is lost. So we should keep a constant check on our behaviour and remove the weeds of bad habits right from the beginning itself. Else those bad habits will grow so strong that it would be very difficult to uproot them at a later stage.

I pray at the lotus feet of Srila Gurudev and Srila Prabhupada to guide me to realise and recognise the bad habits and to regulate my behaviour.

Thank you very much.

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



## Pin-Prick

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In Srimad Bhagavatam, Srila Narada Muni says a very beautiful verse (10.10.14). If only we understand the real import of that verse we will never dare to give pain to others.

*yathā kaṅṭaka-viddhāngo jantor necchati tām vyathām  
jīva-sāmyam gato liṅgair na tathāviddha-kaṅṭakaḥ*

**By seeing their faces, one whose body has been pricked by pins can understand the pain of others who are pinpricked. Realizing that this pain is the same for everyone, he does not want others to suffer in this way. But one who has never been pricked by pins cannot understand this pain.**

One common thing for all living entities in this world is suffering. For a rich person, maintaining his wealth is a cause of his anxiety and for a poor man to make ends meet will be a great struggle. For a person who has got a job, sustaining the job, growing in his career, etc are a challenge. For a person who is jobless, finding a job itself is a great challenge. For persons who are not married, finding a good life-partner will be a challenge and for married people tolerating and adjusting with the life-partner will be trouble. For people who don't have children, to beget a child would be a great source of anxiety and for those who have children, to bring them up safely, provide a good education, and settling them in life would be a great source of anxiety. So everyone in every stage is experiencing some kind of the pain or other. But most of the time when we interact with living entities, we forget this and end up blaming, scolding, criticising, and fighting with each other. Thereby we are simply adding pain to their already painful existence.

In his wonderful purport to the above verse, His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada very nicely mentions, "*There is a saying, 'The happiness of wealth is enjoyable by a person who has tasted the distress of poverty.' There is also another common saying, vandhyaa ki bujhibe prasava-vedanaa: 'A woman who has not given birth to a child cannot understand the pain of childbirth.' Unless one comes to the platform of actual experience, one cannot realize what is pain and what is happiness in this material world. The laws of nature act accordingly. If one has killed an animal, one must himself be killed by that same animal. This is called maamsa. Maam means "me," and sa means "he." As I am eating an animal, that animal will have the opportunity to eat me. In every state, therefore, it is ordinarily the custom that if a person commits murder he is hanged.*"

There are some very valuable lessons which we need to learn from the above purport.

**1. The happiness of wealth is enjoyable by a person who has tasted the distress of poverty:** Many times when we are having some particular suffering, we become very morose. We wonder why Krishna is doing this to us. As per the example of wealth given here, only when we undergo distress of poverty, we will be able to appreciate the value of wealth. There is also a saying that the value of shade is known only when we are exposed to heat. So if we are deprived of something it is only because the Lord is helping us to understand the value of it, so that when He later bestows the same, we will not land up misusing it.

**2. A woman who has not given birth to a child cannot understand the pain of childbirth:** Srimati Draupadi was ready to forgive Ashvattama, the son of Krpi, who had killed all her five sons while sleeping. Although she was in much pain she told Arjuna, "*My Lord, do not make the wife of Dronacarya cry like me. I am aggrieved for the death of my sons. She need not cry constantly like me.*" This is an amazing act of kindness exhibited by Draupadi Mata. Being a mother herself, she knew how much pain it is, to lose her children. She knew that Krpi is already suffering the loss of her husband Dronacarya and so she did not want to add more pain by killing her son as well. This is a very important

lesson for us to follow. When somebody harms us, our innate nature is to do "Tit for Tat". Even if no-one harms us, we like to harm others. But here we find Mother Draupadi, exhibiting a very wonderful quality of pure devotee, by not counteracting to the offense done by Ashvattama. Another example of this transcendental quality is exhibited by Jesus Christ who was nailed on the cross but still, he prayed to the Lord to forgive those offenders and that they do not suffer for their sins.

**3. If one has killed an animal, one must himself be killed by that same animal:** Hurting does not stop with human beings alone. If we harm/hurt any living entity, we are bound to face the reaction of the same. So meat-eating is very much forbidden. In his unparalleled purport to verse 1.7.37, Srila Prabhupada quotes from Manu Samhita - "*He who gives permission, he who kills the animal, he who sells the slaughtered animal, he who cooks the animal, he who administers distribution of the foodstuff, and at last he who eats such cooked animal food are all murderers, and **all of them are liable to be punished by the laws of nature.** No one can create a living being despite all advancement of material science, and therefore no one has the right to kill a living being by one's independent whims.*"

So we should be very careful not to harm/hurt any living entity by our body, mind, or words. If we are not able to do any good to others, at least we should refrain from doing/thinking/talking bad things for them. As Lord Krishna very nicely advises us in Bhagavad Gita verse 12.15:

*yasmān nodvijate loka lokān nodvijate ca yaḥ  
harṣāmarṣa-bhayodvegair mukto yaḥ sa ca me priyaḥ*

**He by whom no one is put into difficulty and who is not disturbed by anyone, who is equipoised in happiness and distress, fear and anxiety, is very dear to Me.**

I pray to the lotus feet of Srila Gurudev and Srila Prabhupada that I always remember the truth that every living entity is suffering in this world so that I refrain from giving them more difficulty or pain by my thoughts, words, or deeds.

Thank you very much.

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

## Be Chaste to Bhagavatam - Part 1

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

In his Krishna-lila-stava, Srila Sanatana Goswami has written,

*mad-eka-bandho mat-saṅgin mad-guro man-mahā-dhana  
man-nistāraka mad-bhāgya mad-ānanda namo'stu te*

Sanatana Goswami offers his respects to Srimad Bhagavatam, by saying: **O holy Bhagavata, You are my only company, my only friend, and my guru. You are my greatest treasure, my personal savior, the emblem of my highest fortune, the very form of ecstasy. I offer my obeisances to You.**

This verse depicts the life and soul of our most beloved Gurudev HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj. On the occasion of the first disappearance anniversary of our most beloved Gurudev, a program was organized in the Bhaktivedanta hospital in Mumbai, on 25th January 2011. On that occasion, our beloved God brother HG Devakinandan Prabhujis gave an excellent speech sharing his experiences of how our beloved Guru Maharaj relished Srimad Bhagavatam and what are his instructions on the same for all of us to relish Srimad Bhagavatam. The following is a humble effort to transcribe the same for all our benefit.

**1. The Mood of approaching Srimad Bhagavatam:** In Srimad Bhagavatam verse 2.8.2 Parikshit Maharaj makes the following inquiry to Sukadev Goswami.

*etad veditum icchāmi tattvaṁ tattva-vidāṁ vara  
harer adbhuta-vīryasya kathā loka-sumaṅgalāḥ*

The King said: **I wish to know. Narrations concerning the Lord, who possesses wonderful potencies, are certainly auspicious for living beings in all planets.**

PURPORT: "Srimad-Bhagavatam, which is full of narrations of the activities of the Supreme Lord, is auspicious for all living beings residing in every planet. One who takes it as belonging to a particular sect is certainly mistaken. Srimad-Bhagavatam is certainly a very dear scripture for all the devotees of the Lord, but it is auspicious even for the nondevotees also because it explains that even the nondevotees hovering under the spell of material energy can be delivered from such clutches if they hear the narration of the Srimad-Bhagavatam with devotion and attention from the right source representing the Lord by disciplic succession."

This verse, Maharaj explained to us together with the next four verses that come (SB 2.8.3,4, 5 and 6) are seminal verses that Srila Jiva Goswami commented on for the glories of Srimad Bhagavatam. Srila Jiva Goswami emphasized on certain verses in Srimad Bhagavatam to make us understand and appreciate the glories of Srimad Bhagavatam and these verses from 2.8.2 - 6, actually give us in a nutshell, how we can approach Bhagavatam, what mood we should have when we approach Bhagavatam. The starting point we should always remember in Bhagavatam is that in order to really appreciate Bhagavatam, we must be convinced that there is no need for any other scripture or any other recourse or solution except Bhagavatam. That is why in the first canto of the first chapter of Srimad Bhagavatam, right in the beginning, after Sukadev Goswami has glorified Krishna, he then begins by saying in SB 1.1.2:

*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 Purana 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.**

Maharaj emphasized very much that if we are really to be convinced that Srimad Bhagavatam is the one and only way and Sukadev Goswami himself has said very clearly at the start that what is the need of any other scripture for God-realization? So this point is something that devotees must take to heart. Maharaj gave the example that at the beginning of our spiritual life we are compared to be like a man and woman who are looking for a wife or husband in marriage. In the beginning, we may look at so many men or we may look at so many ladies just to decide whom we are going to settle down with. But the moment we have decided the one person whom we are settling down with, then henceforth all other persons we might have seen - we might have seen 100 or 200 people, but all of them are completely erased from our lives and the man and the woman, they become chaste.

**Chastity begins actually not in this material world, but it begins in the spiritual world.** When you read BG 14.26, the word that is very nicely used to describe chastity is avyabhicaarena. The word vyabhicaarena means to be unchaste and avyabhicaarena means chaste and if you read that verse in Bhagavad Gita 14.26:

*mām ca yo 'vyabhicāreṇa bhakti-yogena sevate  
sa guṇān samatīyātān brahma-bhūyāya kalpate*

**One who engages in full devotional service, unflinching in all circumstances, at once transcends the modes of material nature and thus comes to the level of Brahman.**

It means unadulterated and unflinching attachment to devotional service and to nothing else and definitely not to the benefits accruing from devotional service. This point is the same for approaching Srimad Bhagavatam. So Maharaj always emphasized to us that one must become chaste in devotional service and just like a woman is chaste to her husband and she becomes very powerful and a man becomes very powerful because he is chaste to his wife, then how much more we will be imbued with the blessings of Srimad Bhagavatam and Krishna if we become chaste only to Them because Bhagavatam and Krishna are nondifferent.

Krishna willing, we shall continue the transcription of the other points spoken by Prabhuji in the upcoming offerings.

Thank you very much.

Yours in the service of Srila Prabhupada and Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

## Be Chaste to Bhagavatam - Part 2

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

This is in continuation of the previous mail transcribing the speech by HG Devakinandan prabhujji in the Bhaktivedanta Hospital, Mumbai, on the occasion of the first disappearance anniversary of our most beloved Gurudev HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj. In the previous offering we saw the point:

1. The mood of approaching Srimad Bhagavatam: The starting point we should always remember is that in order to really appreciate Bhagavatam, **we must be convinced that there is no need for any other scripture or any other recourse or solution except Bhagavatam.**

We shall continue to see the other points.

2. **The purpose of studying Srimad Bhagavatam:** Sometimes in this material world it is very easy for us to be distracted and because we are trying to find material solutions to the material problems, we do not realize that the material solutions very often become worse than the material problems. That is why Prahlada Maharaj says in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 7.9.17, *duḥkhaśadhaṁ tad api duḥkham* - Although there are many remedies by which to get out of miserable life, any such remedies in the material world are more miserable than the miseries themselves. Even though we may be reading Srimad Bhagavatam, but if we read Bhagavatam to find a solution to our material lives, and if we forget that **the purpose of Srimad Bhagavatam is always to be chaste to Krishna**, then we miss out on the point. One who genuinely wants to serve the Supreme Lord in His form of Bhagavatam, for him, Bhagavatam tells us, all other matters automatically come. The byproducts of bhakti are the temples. The byproduct of bhakti is the people coming to the congregation. The byproduct of bhakti is all the wonderful activities that attract the people, but the actual essence of bhakti is the glorification of the Lord which is done in disciplic succession. In his purport to Srimad Bhagavatam verse 2.8.2, Srila Prabhupada gives a very wonderful formula to approach Krishna. He says that **one should approach Bhagavatam with attention and devotion and hear from the right source in disciplic succession.** This is the magic formula for the starting point of relishing Srimad Bhagavatam. The moment we deviate from this simple following, then like unchaste husbands and wives who look to others and who think perhaps I can derive more pleasure there, then immediately that marriage has not become sacrosanct. It has become touched. It has become impure. That is why Maharaj always told us that when we approach Bhagavatam, the mood to approach Srimad Bhagavatam should be on the very basis that, except for Krishna, there is no one else in our lives. **Bhagavatam is all in all for us. This mood of chastity is the starting point of all attraction.**

3. **The royal road for relishing Bhagavatam:** If you look further down in the verses that come after this, Sukadev Goswami states in 2.8.4:

*śṛṇvataḥ śraddhayā nityaṁ grṇataś ca sva-ceṣṭitam  
kālena nātidīrghena bhagavān viśate hṛdi*

**Persons who hear Srimad-Bhagavatam regularly and are always taking the matter very seriously, will have the Personality of Godhead Sri Krishna manifested in their hearts within a short time.**

This is the way or the royal road to approach and relish Bhagavatam. The first point we should always not forget is to first start hearing. *śṛṇvataḥ*. But how we hear is very important. Srila Prabhupada says, one who hears with sincerity, even though he may not be up to the mark, he may not be qualified, but if he has the qualification of eagerly wanting to hear, earnestly wanting to hear, that person's starting point of Bhagavatam actually begins. Srila Prabhupada writes in his purport to Srimad Bhagavatam verse 1.1.2, "**The desire to sincerely hear is the first qualification.**"

4. **Attention leads to attraction for Bhagavatam**: So if you really want to start to understand how to put Bhagavatam into practice, Maharaj emphasized that we must first give full-hearted attention to Srimad Bhagavatam. Sometimes we are in a hurry. We start reading Bhagavatam and we think, immediately within a few months or a year, we must get taste. But the taste is not there, not on account of anything, but because there is no attention. Kunti Mata prays in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 1.8.42

*tvayi me 'nanya-viṣayā matir madhu-pate 'sakṛt  
ratim udvahaṭād addhā gaṅgevaugham udanvati*

**O Lord of Madhu, as the Ganges forever flows to the sea without hindrance, let my attraction be constantly drawn unto You without being diverted to anyone else.**

*Ananya* means 'except for You, there should be no one else'. Everyone else is there. We have family, we have work, and we have everything. But like how all of you are doing in the Bhaktivedanta hospital, you are putting Krishna in the centre of your operations, Krishna in the centre of your dealings with patients, Krishna as the start of your life, before you begin your day. Just starting the day with Krishna, Maharaj said, and in between remembering Krishna and at the end of the day coming before Their Lordships, seeking pardon that, "*Please forgive me that for the whole day I had to work to keep body and soul together. Now let me glorify You again.*" That mood of always keeping Krishna in the centre, will go a long way to first make us become fixed in being attentive to Krishna. That is why Kunti Mata says, '*matir madhu-pate 'sakṛt*'. She says that first, one must become attentive (*matir*) to Krishna. When you become attentive, then she says, *ratih*(attraction) – after *matih* only there can be *ratih*.

When we asked Maharaj how to start becoming attracted to Bhagavatam. Maharaj said, "**You must be attentive first and then you will become attracted. You should remember. Be attentive to someone and you become attracted to him.**" He gave a simple example. Supposing husband and wife are married and the husband does not pay attention to the needs of the wife. He will never be attracted to her. Similarly, when we were studying, I very well remember, the subjects I paid most attention to, I eventually became attracted to. The subjects I did not want to pay attention to, I lost the taste for it and once I lost the taste for it, I always used to think why I am not doing well? The reason for the lack of performance is because there was no attention. So how can there be an attraction? So there is no quick and easy way to become attracted to Bhagavatam. It is by sitting down and approaching the sound incarnation of the Lord in a serious manner. Maharaj's life was very much like that.

Prabhuji went on to explain how Maharaj was attentive to Srimad Bhagavatam and the same shall be transcribed and offered in the upcoming offerings.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,  
Vaijayantimala devi dasi,  
Abu Dhabi.

### Be Chaste to Bhagavatam - Part 3

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

This is in continuation of the previous mails transcribing the speech by HG Devakinandan prabhujis in the Bhaktivedanta Hospital, Mumbai, on the occasion of the first disappearance anniversary of our most beloved Gurudev HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj. In the previous offerings, we saw what should be our mood to approach Srimad Bhagavatam.

1. The starting point we should always remember is that in order to really appreciate Bhagavatam, we must be convinced that there is no need for any other scripture or any other recourse or solution except Bhagavatam.
2. The purpose of studying Srimad Bhagavatam is to be always chaste to Krishna.
3. The royal road for relishing Bhagavatam is to desire to sincerely hear Bhagavatam.

We also saw how attention leads to attraction for Bhagavatam. Today we will see how Maharaj showed this practically through the example of his own life.

4. **Attention leads to attraction:** Maharaj said that we must be attentive first and then we will become attracted to Bhagavatam. In this offering, we will see how Maharaj's life was one of whole-hearted attention to Bhagavatam.

By the time Maharaj came to London, he was already in his late forties and by then he already had 3 children and he was working to make both ends meet. He was also performing odd jobs here and there and some business because it was not easy. Back home in India, he had 10 brothers and sisters and he was the eldest. His father had given up the household duties and practically renounced the world when Maharaj was only 12 or 15 years of age. He was in Ram mandir just chanting. The whole burden of the family came on Maharaj's head. So Maharaj said every year there was either one daughter to get married or one brother or one sister to arrange the marriage. So where the money was going to come from, Maharaj said, *"I had no idea. But this thing I knew. I knew that whatever I had to do, the first important thing, the root of all things would be first to be with Bhagavatam."* So Maharaj said that every time he was engaged 10,12 or 15 hours at the shop or at his work, what he would do is, he would always carry with him, Bhagavad Gita. Whenever he had free time, according to the free time, he would take out the verses. He would study them.

When he finally met the devotees in London, he thought, how is it that a devotee who is of Western descent knows more about Krishna than I? And I am Gujarati by descent. I should know Krishna. So Maharaj asked him, *"How do you know Krishna?"* He said, *"I know Krishna because I know Srila Prabhupada."* So Maharaj thought, *"I should know who Srila Prabhupada is. Then I will know Krishna."* Also, Maharaj was born in a family of eight generations of Vaishnavas from Pushti marg. So they were worshippers of Laddu Gopal. But after so many readings of Bhagavad Gita and constant reading of Srimad Bhagavatam from youth, Maharaj was always wondering, *"When am I going to have the day when I want to eagerly open Srimad Bhagavatam? When am I going to have the taste?"* So when Maharaj started going to ISKCON Temple, the devotee he actually met first was HG Hare Krishna Prabhu. Such a nice name and that is how Maharaj got introduced to ISKCON.

So from mid '70s onwards, Maharaj started coming to ISKCON in Bury place, London and at the time, he went up to the temple president and said that, *"I am taking Vanaprastha. Now I am winding up my family life. What can I do here?"* So the temple president looked at Maharaj and said, *"Frankly speaking, I do not know what service to give you. You are a bit old to do the menial service."* Maharaj always had problem balancing his feet. His feet were always swollen even in the early days. So he could not stand very long. So the president said, *"If that is the case, you can't even stand and do the aarti because after a while you may just slip and fall. I can't expect you to go out for book distribution because you are a bit old and you will come back. Frankly speaking, what else can I give you? Better you do one thing. You just sit in one corner and read Srimad Bhagavatam and Bhagavad Gita."* So Maharaj thought, that is not a bad idea because

that is the reason why I came here. So there is a pillar in the Soho street temple which is a very famous pillar today. Anyone if you go there and if you ask, tell me the pillar where Maharaj sat. Everyone would point to the pillar. Because, the devotees tell us that for 8 or 9 years, Maharaj would come in the morning and he would take Srimad Bhagavatam book and he would sit just at that pillar and from morning right till shayana aarati he would not move except for some prasadam. He would write pages and pages of diaries. I think we have about 55-60 diaries of Maharaj with us today. Any book that he could get, he would write. Phone books would be used not to write phone numbers, but to write slokas and Maharaj began this practice at that point when he entered into devotional service. He started writing and writing purports. He would write the purports down. He would repeat the verses and he would add one or two lines he thought Srila Prabhupada was writing and that became the essence of relating with Srila Prabhupada through his books. Maharaj did not meet Srila Prabhupada very often. He met him from time to time. But every time Srila Prabhupada met him, he said to Maharaj, "You should take sannyasa because you are a Sanskrit scholar. You have the Vedic tradition. You should preach." Maharaj always said that, "I can't do that because I have family obligations." But Srila Prabhupada always said, "Then alright. You just study my books. Study Srimad Bhagavatam." Maharaj said, "I left behind everything. I decided that Srimad Bhagavatam should become my life." So daily he would write notes and he would study. For 8 or 9 years, all he did was study and be in the kitchen to wash pots and plates and serve the devotees.

One day the temple president did not have anyone to take the class. So they looked around and the temple president said, "You please come and sit down and take the class because there is no one else." Maharaj took the first class he ever took after nine years of study and when he spoke, the devotees in the temple realized that all along all that study has been manifested in his wonderful preaching, and from that time on, Maharaj never stopped preaching and Soho street temple devotees told Bhaktivedanta Manor devotees, "You please call this devotee to speak." Then opportunities followed in Belgium, Holland and other places in Europe and after a while Maharaj became very very sought after for preaching. But Maharaj said, "*All this preaching, was of no value to me, if I did not want to be with Bhagavatam.*" So Maharaj told me always that, "***It does not matter whether you get a chance to preach Bhagavatam or not. That is a by-product and that is up to Krishna. But what is up to you in your hands, is your desire to study Bhagavatam. That is what Krishna wants to see. The more time you put aside for Srimad Bhagavatam, the more time Srimad Bhagavatam puts aside for you.***"

Maharaj famously said, "*If you neglect the pages of Bhagavatam, then pages of Bhagavatam will neglect you. If you neglect your chanting, then chanting will neglect you. It is not the fault of chanting or Bhagavatam. It is that you are lacking attention. So chastity in devotional service is the key for Srimad Bhagavatam and once we have chastity, then there is automatically attention and when there is attention, attraction follows.*"

Krishna willing, the other points Prabhuji spoke, shall be transcribed and offered in the ensuing mails.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi,

Abu Dhabi.



## Be Chaste to Bhagavatam - Part 4

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

This is in continuation of the previous mails transcribing the speech by HG Devakinandan Prabhujis in the Bhaktivedanta Hospital, Mumbai, on the occasion of the first disappearance anniversary of our most beloved Gurudev HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj. In the previous offerings, we saw what should be our mood to approach Srimad Bhagavatam.

1. The starting point we should always remember is that in order to really appreciate Bhagavatam, we must be convinced that there is no need for any other scripture or any other recourse or solution except Bhagavatam.
2. The purpose of studying Srimad Bhagavatam is to be always chaste to Krishna.
3. The royal road for relishing Bhagavatam is to desire to sincerely hear Bhagavatam.
4. Attention leads to attraction.

We will continue the other points.

5. **Pages of Bhagavatam come alive:** Maharaj told us that the moment we are attentive to Krishna, automatically, in due course of time, we ourselves will reject the fruitive intentions for which we come to bhakti. Otherwise, every time we think how do we become unmotivated in our desire to serve Krishna, it is like a dream. Everyone sometimes struggles with motivation. How to become unmotivated? Because in SB 6.16.34 Srila Prabhupada says clearly in his purport that the relationship between uninterrupted and unmotivated devotional service is only one way.

***If we are unmotivated in devotional service, then only can our devotional service be uninterrupted.*** Not the other way around. If we try very hard to be uninterrupted, but the motive is to gain name and fame from Bhagavatam, then Krishna will Himself find a way such that all the attempts we want to preach Srimad Bhagavatam or all the attempts we want to study Bhagavatam, they become frustrated. But for one who approaches Bhagavatam daily, clearly, with a heart that, "*We do not want numbers. We do not want followers. We do not want any big things. But we only want a chance to glorify You, to glorify devotees*", then the pages of Srimad Bhagavatam become alive. Then Bhagavatam is more alive than we are, because we are living dead. Maharaj said, "*Except for Srimad Bhagavatam, we are dead.*" ***Whole day we are not living until we are touching Srimad Bhagavatam. When we touch Bhagavatam, then there is brahma sparshanam.*** Apart from that, we are just going through the routine, and we are going through the rigmarole, but it is not with the heart. So Maharaj emphasized that if we really want, then we must take up this process of becoming fixed in attention and then the motive automatically goes because we are attentive to Krishna.

6. **The litmus test of being with Bhagavatam:** I asked Maharaj once, "what is the test to know that I am attentive in Srimad Bhagavatam?" Maharaj said very simply. "*Two things will come automatically as a litmus test to show that we are actually with Bhagavatam.*"

a) *We will always be self-satisfied.*

b) *We will not be agitated.*

a) **We will always be self-satisfied:** Maharaj says, "It is very easy Devaki, for you to sit down and take a class because you feel glorified. That is the motive. Not that you want to speak on Bhagavatam. But you want, 'Ah! 10-15 people heard me and I am sitting in Vyasaasana and it is very nice.' But you try sitting with Bhagavatam in the four corners of your house, in your room, and study Bhagavatam for two to three hours daily. There is no glamour to it and where there is no glamour, the mind says, 'Shut down. Why waste the time? Better you study Bhagavatam in the presence of others.' When that happens, self-satisfaction is not there. Then we are hankering for glory, we are hankering for name and fame."

Maharaj had this unique quality. Whether there were two persons seated before him or there was a thousand people seated before him, he would take two hours to prepare for Bhagavatam class. He would start the morning after he woke up in the morning. After Mangala Arathi, he would go back to his room and he would take out his notes and he would start writing and preparing for the class. Maharaj told me, "**Never sit and take a class without preparing for the class because we are not at the level where we can speak Bhagavatam with realization.** Rather accept your position that you are nothing and approach Bhagavatam attentively." So Maharaj would write pages and pages and pages of notes. He would sit down for his Bhagavatam class, all prepared like a new person reading Bhagavatam for the first time. He would put everything ahead and when he spoke, he would never look at his notes again. It would all come from his heart. Later he would tell me, "Whatever I wrote was not at all what I spoke. This confirms that whatever we are is nothing and He allows us to speak Bhagavatam in an unadulterated fashion. So self-satisfaction is very important."

Maharaj used to famously say, "**Do not burn your hut while looking at other people's palace.** Whatever is coming to you is coming by Bhagavatam's mercy. How much you earn, how much happiness you have in this world these things should not be confused with Bhagavatam. These things are our own follies. But Srimad Bhagavatam is transcendental. So do not use Bhagavatam to earn these things. Use Bhagavatam to glorify Krishna first and then Krishna will take care of everything else if He so wishes."

The moment we use our prowess to approach Bhagavatam, we have missed the point and we become dissatisfied. We think, "I have to structure the class in a better way. Next time I have to quote more slokas. Next time I have to present it in a certain way." Maharaj said, "*This is not necessary. What is important is always to remember why you are seated here? **You are seated here, and if you can remember Krishna after Bhagavatam, that is a success.** Forget about others. But at least you should remember Krishna.*" So in Rajkot, most of the time there were two people sitting down to hear Bhagavatam class and Maharaj would take 2, 3, or 4 hours classes as if there were an audience of 10000 and at the end of it, he would not even bother to know, how many people came and how many did not come. In Singapore when we started our programs first, there were some problems having programs and very often there will be one or two persons only in the beginning. One time I was very much discouraged and I spoke to Maharaj and asked him, "How to preach Bhagavatam? There are only a few people. So many years we are doing programs. It is discouraging." Maharaj said, "**It is discouraging because you are not approaching Bhagavatam. You are approaching the numbers game. You are approaching how many people should be seated before I give a good Bhagavatam class. It is the other way. It is that you should honour Bhagavatam and Bhagavatam will honour you. If you respect Bhagavatam, Bhagavatam will offer respect to you. This is reciprocation because Bhagavatam is Krishna. Please do not forget this.**"

The source of our income is not the source of our maintenance. For those who are working and studying Bhagavatam, this was what Maharaj always said quoting Srila Prabhupada, "*You remember that maintenance is coming from Bhagavatam. Your income is coming for your sense gratification. If you accept Bhagavatam, then income and everything else will be taken care of by Krishna.*" The doctors, nurses in Bhaktivedanta hospital, you are the best examples. I am sure you could have earned 10 times more anywhere else. But you have put that aside and because you are now flying the flag of Bhagavatam and Bhagavat culture, Krishna is maintaining all of you. You are not dissatisfied. In which hospital we can hear Bhagavatam at this point? It is a dream. And yet the dream has come true because you have put Bhagavatam in the centre. So chastity is the real secret to relishing and chastity starts by

attention and where there is attention, there will be attraction and where there is attraction, the material motives in the heart, to approach Bhagavatam will automatically be rejected. Rejected by whom? Rejected by Srimad Bhagavatam.

Krishna willing, Prabhuji's explanation on the second litmus test of being with Bhagavatam, shall be transcribed and offered in the next mail.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,  
Vaijayantimala devi dasi,  
Abu Dhabi.

## Be Chaste to Bhagavatam - Part 5

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

This is in continuation of the previous mails transcribing the speech by HG Devakinandan Prabhujis in the Bhaktivedanta Hospital, Mumbai, on the occasion of the first disappearance anniversary of our most beloved Gurudev H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj. In the previous offerings, we saw what should be our mood to approach Srimad Bhagavatam.

1. The mood of approaching Srimad Bhagavatam.
2. The purpose of studying Srimad Bhagavatam is to be always chaste to Krishna.
3. The royal road for relishing Bhagavatam is to desire to sincerely hear Bhagavatam.
4. Attention leads to attraction.
5. Pages of Bhagavatam come alive.
6. The litmus test of being with Bhagavatam.

In the last offering, we saw the first litmus test of being self-satisfied. Here we continue the second litmus test.

b) **We will not be agitated:** Maharaj said that those who are agitated, they are not studying Srimad Bhagavatam. They are using Srimad Bhagavatam. If we are really praying and honouring Bhagavatam, we will not become agitated and if we do become agitated on account of onslaughts of material nature, we will automatically have the presence of mind, by the inspiration of the Lord in the heart, to approach Bhagavatam immediately.

In the last few months of his stay in this world, in Nasik, in Bhaktivedanta hospital, Maharaj constantly made us read Srimad Bhagavatam to him. When the pain became too much and whatever medicines were administered, the real panacea that always came was when Maharaj said, "*Chant Bhagavatam.*" So systematically, throughout the night, we would take turns and read Bhagavatam. I recall one late night in Nasik when Maharaj was in and out of consciousness. I thought he was already asleep. So I lowered my tone of Srimad Bhagavatam so that he would take rest. Immediately he opened his eyes and said "Louder! Why are you becoming softer? Are you hungry? Are you sleepy?" And up to then six hours he had not spoken. So I had no idea even that he was conscious at that point. So then I started reading louder and one more time in the hospital, I was chanting Bhishmadeva's prayers. These prayers are very very dear to Maharaj. Maharaj always had a great inclination for Bhishmadev and it is very significant that Maharaj also by Krishna's mercy left in the period of Uttarayana which Bhishmadev considered also most auspicious. Maharaj moved from Suite 1 to Suite 2 to Suite 3 and 4 every time he moved in and out of the hospital. So when he finally came to the last one where he ended his time, when we entered there, there was one photo above the bed and it was Krishna in His Leela of Rathaangapaani and in Srimad Bhagavatam you know that Krishna in that picture is carrying the chariot wheel and He is rushing towards Bhishmadev and when we saw Bhishmadev's picture and said to Maharaj, Maharaj laughed and said, "Now is the time to end everything because I am like Bhishmadev. We played musical chairs. Krishna made us move from room to room, but He made me end up in this room with Bhishmadev." One night, when Maharaj was in deep sleep, I was chanting Bhishma's prayers. At one point one of the slokas I started chanting and I was going to end it, when I had a bit of a choke in the throat and Maharaj caught up immediately and he ended the last two lines for me and he said, this is very nice verse and he went to sleep again. I thought, 'This is really amazing!' Maharaj was following every verse as I was speaking it and externally I had no idea that he was actually awake. No idea. And after he heard the verse, I had no way of communicating with him either because he refused to speak.

In the last few days when he withdrew his senses, including the sense of speaking, he did tell me 2 or 3 months ago that, "It is my desire that at the end I should only have my sense of hearing intact. I pray to Krishna that Krishna would allow me to hear Bhagavatam and hear the Holy name" and he gave me the benediction that, "If you come and it is

my time, then you do one of two things only. You chant the Holy names or read Bhagavatam." So I said, "How will I know which one to do?" and Maharaj said, "*At that time whatever that comes will come naturally because the Holy name is nondifferent from Bhagavatam.*" And at that time when Maharaj was leaving, it was 2.00 p.m when I came into the hospital and at that time Maharaj's movements were erratic. His breathing was very difficult and he was very up and down, up and down. But at that point in time, he cast very loving glances at all of us. We had the picture of Shri Radha Neel Madhav, his beloved deities in Rajkot. We had the picture of Shri Radha Gopinath and Srila Prabhupada. His eyes kept moving from the side of the bed where the deities were, to the other side where we were and he held our hands in such a way, not as if he was in difficulty, but as if he was consoling us. He kept pressing, releasing, pressing, releasing. He kept touching our heads. We thought we should be doing that for him because he is the one in difficulty. But he kept doing it to us.

About 3.00 or 3.10 p.m. as we kept chanting the Holy names of the Lord, Maharaj's breathing changed. Instead of being irregular, it became extremely regulated and at that point of time, HG Vaishnava Seva Prabhu who was there throughout the three months that Maharaj left Rajkot and winded up his time, very very loyal servant to Maharaj, he was there and he alerted me and he said Maharaj's breathing has changed. So at that point in time, Maharaj's hands became very tight. He no longer stroked us. Now he held my wrist very tightly. So we started chanting stronger and at that point of time, myself, Vaishnava Seva Prabhu, and Sundara Gopal Prabhu we heard this very strong rumbling sound in Maharaj's stomach and just two days ago, I was reading a purport in SB 2.2.21. In the purport, Srila Prabhupada writes extensively of how a devotee, a bhakti yogi at the end of his life, is automatically given the strength by Krishna to control his life air without separate effort so that the life air does not move out of the mouth but it actually moves out from the top of his head. I just read that and left it. When the rumbling sound started in Maharaj's stomach, something hit me because I and Vaishnava Seva Prabhu had read the purport and we looked at each other. We thought, 'Is something going to change now?'

At that point in time, the sound of the air started moving. We could actually hear it start from the stomach right up to the throat. At the point, when it reached his throat, Maharaj's facial features changed. He suddenly closed his mouth extremely tightly. Before that he was chanting and chanting and then all of a sudden he closed his mouth very tightly. He clamped it. He did not have his dentures with him and it was a tight clamp. His eyes became very wide and he looked very piercingly at Shri Radha Neel Madhav. Then again he looked at all of us and at that point of time, we heard the sound and then it disappeared and then Maharaj opened his mouth and because we were next to him, and we were bending down, we could see that his tongue was moving vigorously chanting, '*Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare / Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare.*' So at that point in time, he took one very long breath, second, a long breath and third shorter breath, and then his face took on a countenance I can't describe it to you. Those who worked with Maharaj and knew him, there were times when Maharaj became very grateful or humbled before the Lord's presence and he had an expression he would have at that point and the same expression came on him now. Before that he was very strong and controlled and then he became extremely peaceful and he looked very humbled. At that point in time, he took his fourth breath, and then everything became very still. Before the four breaths were taken, when he was closing his mouth, he became so still that at that point in time, I thought that Maharaj has left us. I started saying, Hare Krishna! Hari bol!. At that point in time, I could not grieve but I felt so... I do not know the word. I felt so happy and transcendently proud to see that Maharaj has shown us how to live in this world, as he has done for 90 years and now he was showing us how exactly to leave this world and as he was leaving, I remember saying to everyone that he is with us and he is preparing and we should do our part because Maharaj always told us that no one person can go back to Krishna alone. He always said, "Devaki, when the right time comes, I will hold your hand and you hold mine and we will help each other to go back." So I remembered that and I thought what did Maharaj want me to do now? He encouraged me throughout my life to take up Bhagavatam. The least we can do now is to reciprocate with our loving spiritual master. So we chanted more, there was a Mataji who was reading Bhagavatam behind and at that point in time, the atmosphere became very glorious and Maharaj took his last breath.

Krishna willing, we shall continue to offer the other points spoken by Prabhuji in the upcoming mails.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,  
Vaijayantimala devi dasi,  
Abu Dhabi.

## Recipient of Mercy

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

*'sādhu-saṅga', 'sādhu-saṅga' — sarva-śāstre kaya  
lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva-siddhi haya*

**The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment's association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success.**

When we introspect each of our own life's Krishna has been extremely merciful to us and has given us so many moments of association of many wonderful sadhus. But we haven't yet attained the stage of perfection yet. Indeed, by the causeless mercy of Guru and Krishna, we have taken to the path of bhakti. We are chanting Mahamantra, offering prayers and bhoga to Lord, honouring prasadam, studying scriptures. But still, we are very far from the path of pure love. Srila Prabhupada in his purport to verse 1.8.29 of Srimad Bhagavatam very nicely mentions that "*Lord's mercy upon the fallen souls is equally distributed and He has nobody as the object of specific favor neither He has anybody as the specific object of hostility... He is undoubtedly known as partial to His pure devotees but in fact, He is never partial as much as the sun is never partial to anybody. By utilising the sun rays sometimes even the stones become valuable while a blind man cannot see the sun although there are enough sun rays before him. Darkness and light are two opposite conceptions in relation to the sun rays but it does not mean that the sun is partial in the matter of distributing its rays. **The sun rays are open to everyone but it depends on the capacity of the receptacle.***"

The following pastime from Sripad Ramanuja Acarya will further clarify our doubts. Once Sripad Ramanuja acharya was walking with his 5 sannyasi disciples. On the way, they came across a pond and Ramanuja Acarya he threw some mahaprasadam into the pond. The fishes in the pond ate the mahaprasadam and then immediately the fishes attained 4 handed forms and went back to Godhead. The disciples were shocked to see this and they inquired their guru about it. Ramanujacarya answered, "You've seen the power of taking mahaprasadam." The disciples replied, "But we are taking your mahaprasadam daily, and this is not happening to us." Ramanuja said, "*These creatures have no free will, and therefore make no offense. Nor do they doubt the transcendental power of mahaprasadam. So they get full benefit at once. **But you with your free will and human intelligence make offenses and are lacking in faith, and thus you hinder your own progress.***"

So definitely the verdict of shastras is never false. A moment's association with pure devotees, honouring of mahaprasadam, etc makes a great impact on us, provided we also receive it with proper respect and humility. Recently we were watching one of the speeches given by Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple, wherein he was mentioning how during his early days when he was a drop-out from college, he used to walk 7 miles every week to Hare Krishna Temple to honour Sunday feast prasadam. He had a very genuine appreciation for prasadam and was mentioning that it was wonderful. In spite of becoming a billionaire, he gratefully remembered and appreciated the prasadam. We could see that prasadam did have a nice impact on his life, for he further spoke about how every one of us must remember death. He said, "Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I have ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything, 'all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure, these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart...If you live each day as if it was your last, someday you'll most certainly be right. It made an impression on me, and since then, for the past 33 years, I have looked in the mirror every morning and asked myself: "If today were the last day of my life, would I want to do what I am about to do today?" And whenever the answer has been 'No' for too many days in a row, I know I need to change something." These are pretty much, what we learn from Bhagavad Gita and Bhagavatam. Our beloved spiritual master, HH

Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj always says, "**Remember your last day and then you will behave in a sane manner.**"

So the point is, as Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita verse 4.11, "*ye yathā mām prapadyante tām̐s tathaiva bhajāmy aham*" - "**As all surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly.**" Attaining love for Godhead simply just not depend on the number of moments of association and number of times we had prasadam or mahaprasadam. It depends on our faith, surrender, offenseless attitude. We have also practically seen that so many devotees who had very brief or little association with His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada, during his physical presence in the world, have now become powerful preachers in the mission of Lord Caitanya, simply because of their faith and offenseless surrender to His Divine Grace.

So Guru and Krishna will reciprocate to us depending on our level of surrender. They are never partial in giving instructions or service. The onus is on us to change our behaviour and become suitable recipients of Their mercy.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,  
Tushta Krsna Das and Suniti Devi Dasi,  
Sharjah.



## Be Chaste to Bhagavatam - Part 6

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

This is in continuation of the previous mails transcribing the speech by HG Devakinandan Prabhujis in the Bhaktivedanta Hospital, Mumbai, on the occasion of the first disappearance anniversary of our most beloved Gurudev HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj. In the last mail we saw the following points:

1. The mood of approaching Srimad Bhagavatam
2. The purpose of studying Srimad Bhagavatam
3. Royal road for relishing Bhagavatam
4. Attention leads to attraction for Bhagavatam
5. The pages of Bhagavatam come alive
6. The litmus test of being with Bhagavatam

We shall continue further in this offering.

7. **The spirit of hearing Bhagavatam with eagerness:** Maharaj's last instructions to me in Oct /Nov 2009 were, "**If you really want to love me, then please become attentive to Bhagavatam. In the pages of Bhagavatam, Krishna will appear and when He appears, I am also with you, but the moment the platform of Srimad Bhagavatam is lost, then you and I cannot connect after I leave. But if you are with Srimad Bhagavatam always, despite all your inebrieties, then be assured that you will hear me even faster than you would now when you pick up the phone and you hear my voice.**" From this, I have come to realize how much Maharaj relished Srimad Bhagavatam. He always insisted, *shrnvatah* – **hear with eagerness**. Maharaj said, "We always say that we can progress only if we hear from advanced devotees." But Maharaj made a bold statement. He said, "Who is a pure devotee? In this world, how can we tell who is a pure devotee? Srila Prabhupada was asked in London how will we know who is a pure devotee and we should hear Srimad Bhagavatam from him? Srila Prabhupada responded, '**Except for you everyone else is a pure devotee.**' If you have that spirit, of hearing Srimad Bhagavatam, then it does not matter who you are hearing it from. If he is speaking even one line of Srila Prabhupada's purport you hear it, go home and get more nourished."

Maharaj made us do an experiment in Singapore. The next time a Srimad Bhagavatam speaker comes, you walk into the temple blindfolded, you sit down blindfolded, you just put the head down and hear the speaker and after hearing the speaker blindfolded, you would realize that you had never been more attentive to Bhagavatam than the day you were blind-folded. But you take off that blind-fold and you sit down and hear the speaker and you say, "ah! This Prabhu gives a nice class. So I should hear. This Prabhu is not very eloquent. I should not hear. This Mataji, maybe not so realized. This sannyasi, very powerful." The moment the mind starts differentiating, then we are in trouble and we cannot hear Bhagavatam. But when we accept that except for us, everyone else is a better devotee, then with that spirit, when we approach Bhagavatam, our Supreme father becomes extremely happy because you have approached with the spirit of glorifying the speaker in the vyasasana and all other devotees. And then all knowledge and all experience are revealed to our hearts.

8. **Seva without Bhagavatam is social service:** Maharaj said, "Do not ever be caught up in trying to make Srimad Bhagavatam into material science. Bhagavatam is entirely transcendental. Maya will give you every favorable argument not to sit down and study Bhagavatam, but initially, you start 15 minutes alone. Then increase to half an hour. Maya will give you all the favorable arguments. You start having ants under your dhoti, and you want to jump up and do something and say, 'I have to do Seva. I have to do this. I have to do that.' But seva without Bhagavatam is social service. Duster in one hand and Srimad Bhagavatam in the other, then that becomes devotional service."

You remember the glory of King Prataparudra in Chaitanya Charitamrta. He tried so hard to take darshan of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. He went through the mercy of Nityananda Prabhu and he could not get darshan. He went through Ramananda Raya and he could not get darshan. He sought the blessings of Sarvabhauma Bhattacarya. He came close but he could not get darshan. But what really really melted Mahaprabhu's heart, Srila Prabhupada says in Chaitanya Caritamrita, is the day when he took up the broom and in front of Lord Jagannath, before His chariot festival, he swept the floor. Today we sweep the floor because we are VIPs. But when Prataparudra actually swept the floor then, it was astounding. A king so humble that he could sweep the floor. When Mahaprabhu saw that, His heart started melting. Then what did Prataparudra do? He finally got a chance to serve Mahaprabhu in disguise when He went to the garden for resting after Rathayatra. In disguise, he came and started massaging Mahaprabhu's feet. Maharaj said, "That was service but for the platform of service what was the basis? The basis was he started chanting prayers from Srimad Bhagavatam." He sang SB 10.31.9:

*tava kathāṁṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam  
kavibhir iḍitam kalmaṣāpaham  
śravaṇa-maṅgalaṁ śrīmad ātataṁ  
bhuvī grṇanti ye bhūri-dā janāḥ*

**My Lord, the nectar of Your words and the descriptions of Your activities are the life and soul of those who are always aggrieved in this material world. These narrations are transmitted by exalted personalities, and they eradicate all sinful reactions. Whoever hears these narrations attains all good fortune. These narrations are broadcast all over the world and are filled with spiritual power. Those who spread the message of Godhead are certainly the most munificent welfare workers.**

The moment Mahaprabhu heard this, combined with the service of Prataparudra, Mahaprabhu then gave him full mercy and He embraced Prataparudra and that is the perfection of one's existence. **So if you want Srimad Bhagavatam to embrace you, then you first become attentive to your service, become attentive to Srimad Bhagavatam and become very diligent to study and leave everything else to Krishna and be chaste to Srimad Bhagavatam. No one and nothing else should occupy the core of our hearts but Srimad Bhagavatam.**

Krishna willing, the other points spoken by Prabhuji shall be transcribed and offered in the upcoming mails.

Thank you very much.

Yours in the service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

## Be Chaste to Bhagavatam - Part 7

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

This is in continuation of the previous mails transcribing the speech by HG Devakinandan Prabhujis in the Bhaktivedanta Hospital, Mumbai, on the occasion of the first disappearance anniversary of our most beloved Gurudev HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj. In the last mail we saw the following points:

1. The mood of approaching Srimad Bhagavatam
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5. The pages of Bhagavatam come alive
6. The litmus test of being with Bhagavatam
7. The spirit of hearing Bhagavatam with eagerness
8. Seva without Bhagavatam is social service

We shall continue further in this offering.

9. **Srimad Bhagavatam builds the temple:** Above everything else, Maharaj is known for his personal nature. Maharaj had no secretaries. So he only had his mobile with him. You could call him 24x7 and he would pick up the phone and if you ask, "Maharaj, I read this verse and I could not understand this", he would get the verse, he will read it and he would give a 15-minute private one to one nectarean lecture on the verse. On the other side, in Rajkot and Dwaraka, we would be in the middle of something very big for temple construction and Maharaj would tell, "Stop everything now! I want to speak Srimad Bhagavatam." Everything will stop. We would ask Maharaj, "We have to do all this work", and Maharaj would show Bhagavatam and say, "**This is building that (temple). Do not forget that. Not Lakshmi. Not anything. It is Srimad Bhagavatam.**"

10. **Get wedded to Srimad Bhagavatam:** We called Maharaj for everything. Devotees called Maharaj when they had problems with their wives and matajis called Maharaj when they had problems with their husbands. In London, Maharaj was the most famous sannyasi because all conflicts between husbands and wives, Maharaj was sent. When I went to London, when Maharaj had a stroke in 2000, so many people came whom I did not know. They all came and said, "If not for your Guru Maharaj, our marriage would have gone. He would spend hours and hours with us telling us to put Bhagavatam in the centre." Maharaj always said, "**Get married to Srimad Bhagavatam even if you are married to each other.**" *When I got married in front of Maharaj in Dwaraka in 1997, he took both me and my wife aside and told me, "Promise one thing now. Promise me that you will be married to Srimad Bhagavatam first and not to each other. Just promise me in front of the fire that it is Srimad Bhagavatam you are getting married to and you get married to Dwaraka and Rajkot Seva and never leave."*

11. **Be encouraged in devotional service by study of Bhagavatam:** Maharaj would always tell us on thing. *"Have courage son! Have courage daughter!" He gave the perfect formula. He said, "What does Srimad Bhagavatam say about the material world? Material nature is temporary. Your body is temporary. So how can your difficulties be permanent? Think about it. You go around preaching that your body is temporary. And are you not very happy that your difficulties are also temporary? Forget about the difficulties. Just be with Krishna. Smile."* This is another thing he wanted us to do. He got angry with us when we did not smile. He threatened us in Singapore, *"I won't come to Singapore, because I see everybody is looking depressed. Why is depression the monopoly of Singapore?" He said, "No more. If you come, you have a watermelon face. I do not want rotten banana face."* And really right till the end, when he saw devotees coming till the last time, despite all the pain

he had, he would prop himself up with a smile, make everyone laugh, and got everyone to study Srimad Bhagavatam. This loving and encouraging nature of Maharaj is one thing we take with us.

He was very simple in his approach. One time a mataji came to him and told him, "*Tulasi Maharani is not growing well. It must be my lack of devotion.*" Maharaj said, "*It could be that there is not enough Sun. **Do not take so many things to heart. Be encouraged in devotional service. Be courageous. As it is, your problems drag you down. Why to become discouraged and add another problem to your already existing problem?***" That way he propped us up always.

Krishna willing, the other points spoken by prabhuji shall be transcribed and offered in the upcoming mails.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi,

Abu Dhabi.

## Be Chaste to Bhagavatam - Part 8

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

This is the concluding part of the previous mails transcribing the speech by HG Devakinandan Prabhujis in the Bhaktivedanta Hospital, Mumbai, on the occasion of the first disappearance anniversary of our most beloved Gurudev H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj. In the previous offerings we saw the following points:

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6. The litmus test of being with Bhagavatam
7. The spirit of hearing Bhagavatam with eagerness
8. Seva without Bhagavatam is social service
9. Srimad Bhagavatam builds the temple
10. Get wedded to Srimad Bhagavatam
11. Be encouraged in devotional service by the study of Bhagavatam.

12. **Bhagavatam is the best medicine:** Before he was leaving from here, he said that he wanted to make the statement that I am not leaving a hospital. I am actually leaving the dham. Let it be known throughout the spiritual world. This is our way. We die on the battlefield. And I really want to thank Shyamlal Prabhu because he was the doctor in charge of Maharaj and Maharaj gave him help. Shyamlal Prabhu's nature was such that only he can convince Maharaj to take medicine. Otherwise in our time for the last 20 years of being with Maharaj no doctor has succeeded in giving medicine to him. Very often Maharaj would say, *"You take your medicine and you go to hell. But I am not taking the medicine."* In London when Maharaj had the stroke, he was supposed to take this Warfarin, which is supposed to be useful for clotting, and that night, the doctor in charge, a young Indian girl came to this hospital ward and I was with Maharaj. She said, *"Dear sir, you have to take this Warfarin, otherwise you are in difficulty."* He said, *"Look at me! I think I am in less difficulty than you are."* (laughter). *"Your doctors are going to kill me before the disease kills me. Don't kill me before I am killed. Why to speak of death before the death comes? You are speaking like Maya devi."* And this girl did not have a clue what Maya was. (laughter). He said, *"You are like Maya. Do you know what Maya means?"* She said, *"I don't know"*. Then he said, **"Maya is like a rich brahmachari's son, drinking water in a mirage"**. (laughter). He said, *"Do you have any clue what I am talking about?"* She said, *"No"*. He said, **"In a mirage there is no water. And brahmachari doesn't have a son."** (laughter). *"Now I have no disease and you are telling me that if you don't take this you will die."* Then he asked, *"What is your name daughter?"* And she said, *"My name is Maya"* (huge laughter). He said, *"I am going to chant and read Bhagavatam and tomorrow morning when you come I will be alive. Let's hope you are alive!"* (laughter) The whole night we read Bhagavatam. Whole night Maharaj kept pushing us, *"Read Bhagavatam, Read Bhagavatam."* 4.30 in the morning, with the stroke, he pushed us to sing samsara dhaava. In the morning she came for her last round. Maharaj was up, to show her that he was alright he started doing exercises, moving his hands and legs. The stroke was on the right side and he started moving it, he started kicking his legs, he kicked me once or twice. And he told her, *"See mata, I am stronger than you are. Mayadevi, now you please leave."*

So Maharaj's history with hospitals and doctors is very bad. But Bhaktivedanta hospital was different. He said that it is a dham. Your love and care is what Bhagavatam is all about.

13. **Srimad Bhagavatam is all about love and care and good behaviour:** When I wanted to change my habits

when everything else failed, Maharaj would only trap me in one way. He would say, "If you really love me, my son, then you stop this." Then I realized now that I cannot get out of that. If I claim to love him and I do not change myself, then I am a hypocrite. And that is how he changed almost all of us with his love. Love and care are what Srimad Bhagavatam is about. **Finally, there must never be a disconnect between reading and studying Srimad Bhagavatam and behaviour.** Maharaj said, "What is the point if you are a great pandit of Srimad Bhagavatam, but you do not have the qualities of a devotee. If you are not loving in your dealings, what is the point of stopping eating meat, when your tongue is speaking harsh words and is just like another slaughterhouse? It cuts through people just as good as people cut through meat and eat that. What is the difference? We have left the grosser form of anti-Vedic behaviour and now we have brought that subtle form of anti-Vedic behaviour into our lives minus Bhagavatam. So, reflect on your behaviour as you study Srimad Bhagavatam. The more anti-Vedic we are, the more Srimad Bhagavatam is just a sacrificial ceremony. It is an altar on which we want our name and fame but the more we become humbler, the more we are guided by Srimad Bhagavatam, the more the devotees become inspired just to be in the presence of such devotees. Such devotees may not be able to study sloka after sloka. But Krishna says, *teṣāṁ satata-yuktānām bhajatām prīti-pūrvakam*. On the basis of your loving approach to Srimad Bhagavatam, Srimad Bhagavatam would reveal everything that needs to be revealed."

14. **Be chaste to Bhagavatam:** We have to just become chaste to Bhagavatam and that is all. Do not be diverted. Remember the Pandavas and Kauravas, when they were young, in Mahabharata, they were supposed to shoot arrows as a test on a tree which had a bird and they had to hit the eye of the bird. Yudhishtira starts first. Dronacarya asks, "What do you see?" He says, "I see the trunk, I see the tree." Dronacarya told him, "You have failed the test. You please sit down." Next comes Duryodhana. He is always trying to go one up against the Pandavas. Now he thinks, 'May be Yudhistira did not describe it enough.' So when Dronacarya says, "Aim at the target and tell me what do you see?" Duryodana says, "I see the leaves, I see the flowers, I see the sky, space, the three worlds," and Dronacarya says, "You have definitely failed." At the end, when Arjuna comes forward, Dronacarya asks him, "What do you see?" Arjuna says, "Gurudev, I see the eye." Drona asks, "Now what do you see?" He says, "I see only the eye." Drona says, "No, no. There must be something else. Tell me what do you see?" Arjuna says, "Gurudev, there is only the eye." Drona smiles and says, "Now you shoot the arrow." And the arrow finds the mark.

Maharaj loved this story because this is the example of chastity. **What do we see? We should see Srimad Bhagavatam. What do we see in people? We should see the hand of Krishna in people. What do we see in life? We should see the hand of Krishna in our life. What do we see in our difficulties? We should see the hand of the Lord making us remember Him in difficulties. This is Srimad Bhagavatam.**

I want to read the note that HH Kavichandra Maharaj gave me last year when our Guru Maharaj left and he said, "You should remember your Maharaj in this way". I think it is very helpful for all of us because the day is going to come in our lives when our spiritual masters will wind up their pastimes. And at that point of time, instead of dropping into discouragement we should become even more fired upon the platform of devotional service. Because that would really really please them.

One is H D G Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Maharaj's homage on the disappearance of H D G Bhaktivinod Thakur and the other is Gaur Kishore das Babaji Maharaj. To H D G Bhaktivinod Thakur he wrote, "**Today is one of great happiness and not slightest grief. Today our master has entered the eternal pastimes of the Lord. Now it is our duty to remember his eternal position, name, qualities, form and pastimes. Henceforth we will follow in his footsteps even more concentrated.**"

To H D G Gaura Kishore das Babaji Maharaj he wrote with all the humility of one really in separation, "**Now who will chastise me to make me understand the truth as it is? To whom will I show my articles and books? Who will take pleasure in my writings and encourage me to continue? Who will take pleasure in hearing about the preaching work and increasing splendour of the Dham and our service to it?**"

HG Devakinandan Prabhuji thanked the doctors, nurses and other devotees in the Bhaktivedanta hospital from the bottom of his heart for all the solace, encouragement, strength, wonderful service, inspiration and the loving dealings they gave, when our beloved Guru Maharaj was leaving. He expressed his eternal indebtedness to them. He said that Maharaj came to the hospital not for the medicines but for the consciousness in the hospital which is the sure cure for all diseases. Maharaj said that he wanted to make a statement to show that it does not matter where we go, but wherever there are devotees, wherever there is Krishna consciousness, then that place is as good as any other in this entire universe, to leave our body. Let us help each other to be with Srimad Bhagavatam and to be chaste to Srimad Bhagavatam and that is the only way we can please our beloved Gurudev.

Our heartfelt thanks to HG Devakinandan Prabhuji for sharing these precious realizations and instructions of Maharaj.

His Holiness Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj Gurudev ki Jai! His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada ki jai!

Thank you very much.

Yours in the service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi,

Abu Dhabi.

## Obedience Leads to Purification - Part 1

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

We were discussing the following verse from Srimad Bhagavatam 3.11.11, during the Mangala arati program in Abu Dhabi.

*tayoḥ samuccayo māsaḥ piṭṛñāṁ tad ahar-niśam  
dvau tāv ṛtuḥ ṣaḍ ayanam dakṣiṇam cottaram divi*

**The aggregate of two fortnights is one month, and that period is one complete day and night for the Pitaa planets. Two of such months comprise one season, and six months comprise one complete movement of the sun from south to north.**

Here we see that the sun is moving according to the wheel of time - kaala-cakra which in turn is working under the direction of the Lord. This is described very wonderfully in Sri Brahma samhita (5.52):

*yac-cakṣur eṣa savitā sakala-grahāṇām  
rājā samasta-sura-mūrtir aśeṣa-tejāḥ  
yasyājñayā bhramati sambhṛta-kāla-cakro  
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi*

**The sun, who is the king of all the planets, full of infinite effulgence, the image of the good soul, is the eye of this world. I adore the Primeval Lord Govinda in pursuance of Whose order the sun performs his journey mounting the wheel of time.**

The reason the sun is effulgent is because the sun works under the order of the Time which is the representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This complete obedience to the master is a very important quality we should learn and imbibe from the sun and if we perfectly realize our positions as servants of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His representative, the spiritual master, we will also become effulgent like the sun. Since the sun satisfies the order of time, he is being worshiped. In Srimad Bhagavatam verse 7.12.11 it is stated *guru-vṛttir vikalpena - to follow the orders of the spiritual master*. Srila Prabhupada states in the purport, "*In spiritual life, one must conduct one's whole life under the guidance of the guru. Only one who executes his spiritual life under the direction of the spiritual master can achieve the mercy of Krishna. yasya prasaadaad bhagavat-prasaadah... **If one desires to advance in spiritual life but he acts whimsically, not following the orders of the spiritual master, he has no shelter.**" Our beloved spiritual master H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in his class on SB verse 1.9.31, quotes the wonderful purport to verse 1.5.24 of Srimad Bhagavatam wherein Srila Prabhupada has very nicely said - "**Without being self-controlled, without being disciplined and without being fully obedient, no one can become successful in following the instructions of the spiritual master, and without doing so, no one is able to go back to Godhead.**" Maharaj insisted that obedience is a must. When we obey, we will advance in life. As soon as there is a challenging attitude, we forget about the progress. The dictionary meaning of the word obedience is - *compliance with an order, request, or law or submission to another's authority*. It is possible to obey authority if we develop the following three qualities:*

1. **Gentle**
2. **Submissive**
3. **Malleable**



We can remember these three qualities with the acronym **GSM**. Just like how **G**lobal **S**ystem for **M**obile communication, referred to as GSM is used to communicate with others, the communication system to approach our **G**lorious **S**piritual **M**aster is to be **G**entle, **S**ubmissive, and **M**alleable.

1. **Gentle** : HG Devakinandan Prabhuji in one of his lectures in Abu Dhabi explained the quality of being Gentle in an excellent way. Srimad Bhagavatam 1.1.8 says:

*vettha tvam saumya tat sarvam tattvatas tad-anugrahāt  
brūyuh snigdhasya śiṣyasya guravo guhyam apy uta*

**And because you are submissive, your spiritual masters have endowed you with all the favors bestowed upon a gentle disciple. Therefore you can tell us all that you have scientifically learned from them.**

Srila Prabhupada writes in the purport, "*It is essential, therefore, that a disciple be very much obedient and submissive to the bona fide spiritual master. Srila Suta Goswami fulfilled all these qualifications as a disciple, and therefore he was endowed with all favors by his learned and self-realized spiritual masters such as Srila Vyasadev and others.*" Maharaj says to be gentle means to possess the following qualities.

**G - Grave:** In order to be grave, Maharaj says that we have to remember the graveyard every day because that is the place we are finally going to go. The sun always remembers that all its effulgence is coming from the Lord and is simply obeying the orders of the Lord and thus is grave. The sun does not say that "Today I am feeling lazy. Let me rise at 9.00 a.m." The sun remembers that any time it does not obey the orders of the Supreme Lord, he would lose his opportunity to serve the Lord, and hence he remains grave always. We should also realize that Krishna is the Supreme controller and we are under His complete control. So we should also remain grave and alert in doing our service unto Him. If we are not grave, then we cannot be gentle.

**E - Equipoised:** One must be equipoised. The sun gives its light to all the places, to the rich or the poor, to the foolish or the intelligent, the valley or the mountain, in an equipoised manner. It does not discriminate. This absence of discrimination is an important quality we have to cultivate and see every living entity as a part and parcel of the Supreme Lord.

**N - Nothing:** We must understand that we are nothing and we have nothing. The sun evaporates the water from the ocean and rivers but ultimately helps to give it all back in the form of rain. Another point to be noted is that the sun evaporates water which is not potable but gives it back as pure rainwater.

**T - Tolerant:** Those who are tolerant, automatically they are gentle. During the time of an eclipse, the Rahu planet covers the sun fully. The sun accepts his position and tolerates even though the Rahu planet is insignificant in comparison to the sun.

**L- Learned:** All knowledge is revealed to one who is tolerant. The sun God is learned because Krishna gave him the knowledge of Bhagavad Gita so many millions of years ago.

**E - Enough:** We have to ultimately come to the conclusion that, "Everything that I have is enough. I do not need anything more." Even though the sun is evaporating and taking away all the water, he does not keep all the water with him. The sun is satisfied in its own position as the Lord's servitor.

Maharaj says, "once you are gentle, you can become submissive or otherwise it is not possible." The explanation on the other two qualities of being submissive and being malleable shall be offered in the ensuing mail Krishna willing.

Thank you very much.  
Your humble servant,  
Sajjanapriya Krishna das,  
Abu Dhabi.

## Obedience Leads to Purification - Part 2

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

This mail is in continuation of the previous offering on "Obedience Leads to Purification", wherein we were discussing on Srimad Bhagavatam verse 3.11.11. In the last offering we saw that in order to obey the instructions of our spiritual master, we have to acquire the three qualities of being Gentle, Submissive, and Malleable. We saw the explanation of the quality of being gentle. In this offering, we will see the other two qualities.

2. **Submissive:** Sun is very submissive to Supreme Lord. That's why he is performing his duty religiously for millions of years. Sun never questions as to why he should rise in the east every morning and set in the west every evening. Since Krishna has asked him to do that way, he simply submissively follows the order of the Lord. Similarly, we should also simply surrender and submissively serve our spiritual master. HG Devakinandan prabhujī in one of his lectures explained the meaning of becoming submissive to our spiritual master. "What we are doing for Maharaj is not important. What is important is whether we are ready to hear and obey Maharaj. If we try to suggest so many things to our Guru, with our own intelligence and logical arguments, we are destroyed. We want things our way. But devotional service is all about putting aside our things and letting the spiritual master become important. Obedience to Guru and Krishna is paramount. Writing is clear when the slate is fresh. When we approach the Lord or the spiritual master with a written slate, it becomes very hard. Maharaj says, 'You can be a rascal; you may not have any knowledge of the scriptures; you may not have material education; no money nothing. I am not interested in those things. If you obey me cent percent, that is all I want. That is enough. You leave Krishna to me and I will handle Krishna on your behalf.'"

3. **Malleable:** To be malleable means to be flexible. We say that certain metals are malleable and ductile. This is not being rigid in our behaviour and attitude. We can see that the sun is very malleable to the will of the Lord. In wintertime the Sun has to set early and during summer time it has elongated hours. But it does not complain and rebel about these changes in timings. The sun just obeys the orders of the Lord being very malleable. In Srimad Bhagavatam verse 3.11.11, we can see the sun is moving from south to north and it never says that it will move from East to west or southwest to south east etc. Suta Goswami while explaining the glories of Parikshit Maharaj's rule to the sages, says in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 1.16.16.

*sārathya-pāraśada-sevana-sakhya-dautya-  
vīrāsanānugamana-stavana-praṇāmān  
snigdheṣu pāṇḍuṣu jagat-praṇatīṁ ca viṣṇor  
bhaktīṁ karoti nṛ-patīś caraṇāravinde*

**Maharaja Parikshit heard that out of His causeless mercy Lord Krishna [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.**

In his purport to the above verse Srila Prabhupada, very nicely glorifies the devotional mood of Pandavas as follows - "The Pandavas were so malleable to the will of the Lord that they could sacrifice any amount of energy for the service of the Lord, and by such unalloyed determination they could secure the Lord's mercy in any shape they desired." The word "snigdhesu" which means "**malleable to the will of the Lord**", is worth meditating in the above verse. Malleability means to be flexible/compliant to will of Lord - In simpler words, to be completely surrendered to Lord's will and accept whatever situation, He may put us in. Our normal tendency is to become rebellious whenever things go against our expectations. We wonder why the Lord puts us in such terrible situation. We don't allow Krishna to take

control of us and the situation. We try to manipulate things so that the situation becomes favorable to us. We can see in our practical life also that a malleable person is easily accessible and approachable whereas a rigid personality is not loved by every one. If we are not malleable it becomes difficult to win the love, trust, and confidence of the people around us. If we do not develop the three qualities of being gentle, submissive and malleable, then the result is very nicely depicted in the following verse from Srimad Bhagavatam 3.1.41:

*saumyānuśoce tam adhaḥ-patantam  
bhrātre paretāya vidudruhe yaḥ  
niryāpito yena suhṛt sva-puryā  
aham sva-putrān samanuvratena*

**O gentle one, I simply lament for he [Dhrtarashtra] who rebelled against his brother after death. By him I was driven out of my own house, although I am his sincere well-wisher, because he accepted the line of action adopted by his own sons.**

This verse gives the three reasons for the fall down of Dhrtarashtra (*adhah patantam* - fall down)

a. **Not obeying the order of spiritual master:** Vidura was always counseling his brother, but Dhrtarashtra never followed his repeated instructions. Dhrtarashtra acted whimsically neglecting the order of his spiritual master, Vidura. The moment we are not gentle, we will not be obeying the instructions of our spiritual master.

b. **Leniency towards his sons:** The moment we are not submissive to our spiritual master we become submissive to our senses, mind, and intelligence who are our own sons. Dhrtarashtra accepted the line of action adopted by his own sons (*sva putraan samanuvratena*). Out of too much affection for his sons on account of the bodily conception of life, he accepted the dictations of his crooked and envious sons and he did not correct their behaviour. Thus he has deviated away from a very important duty as a father. Our sons are mind, false ego, and intelligence and we are very lenient and submissive to them instead of being submissive to our spiritual master. The result is we forget the instruction of the spiritual master and we are listening to our subtle body, mind, intelligence, and false ego. They are our sons and we are servants of them. This is very dangerous and this leniency leads to distress.

c. **Rejecting the association of devotees:** If we are not malleable then we reject the association of devotees. Dhrtarashtra revolted against the sons of his dead brother, Pandu, and rejected them. Thus, in essence, he has rejected the association of devotees and thus he has done a vaishnava aparadh - offense at the lotus feet of the Vaishnavas (Pandavas) and this has ensured his fall down.

Once we are gentle, submissive, malleable leading to obedience to the instructions of our spiritual master, the result is purification of existence. Once we are purified, then we become like the sun. Then even though we are in collaboration with the matter, we are not affected. Dirt, sewage, seawater all are absorbed and purified (*apaapa viddham*) and the result is pure rainwater. Similarly, if we ignore the bad qualities in others and we really give devotional service to others, then others will also get purified. These things are to be meditated upon again and again and applied in our lives. Just like the GSM (Global Service for Mobile communication) connection enables us to contact anybody in any part of the world without any restriction, in the same way, the GSM connection of being **G**entle, **S**ubmissive, and **M**alleable to our **G**lorious **S**piritual **M**aster will enable us spread the message of Krishna consciousness in a pure way, all over the world without any restriction. Acaryas like Srila Prabhupada and our beloved Maharaj are perfect examples in front of us.

Thank you very much.  
Your humble servant,  
Sajjanapriya Krishna das,  
Abu Dhabi.

## Stay Away from Anger

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

When Dhruva Maharaj's brother Uttama was killed by one of the Yakshas, Dhruva became very angry and he declared war against all the Yakshas and not started killing them. He was not satisfied by just punishing the person who killed his brother alone. This kind of wholesale attack is not approved by Manu, the father and lawgiver of the human race. He, therefore, wanted to stop his grandson Dhruva from continuing to kill the Yaksha citizens who were not offenders. Manu knew that Dhruva Maharaj is a very nice devotee of the Lord. Due to his strong determination and devotion, he was able to have darshan of Supreme Lord within a short span of time itself and that too when he was a small child. But now if he falls prey to anger and commits offences, his goal of going back home to Godhead would be unnecessarily delayed. So out of compassion, while advising Dhruva Maharaj, Svayambhuva Manu says in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 4.11.32

*yenopasṛṣṭāt puruṣāl loka udvijate bhṛśam  
na budhas tad-vaśaṁ gacched icchann abhayam ātmanaḥ*

**A person who desires liberation from this material world should not fall under the control of anger because when bewildered by anger one becomes a source of dread for all others.**

In his wonderful purport to the above verse Srila Prabhupada says, "A devotee or saintly person should not be dreadful to others, nor should anyone be a source of dread to him. If one treats others with nonenmity, then no one will become his enemy. There is the example, however, of Jesus Christ, who had enemies, and they crucified him. The demonic are always present, and they find fault even in saintly persons. But a saintly person never becomes angry, even if there is very great provocation."

Our beloved spiritual master H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj says that word anger is just one letter short of danger and it indeed causes a lot of danger, not just to people around us, but to our own selves. In one of his diaries, Maharaj writes that - "*He conquers the world, who patiently puts up with the abuse of his neighbour. He who controls his anger as a horseman controls his unruly horse is indeed a charioteer and not he who merely holds the reins, but lets the go hither and thither, wherever it wanted. He who sheds his anger just as a snake its slough is a real hero. **He who is not moved despite the greatest torments inflicted by others will realise his aim.** He who never gets angry is superior to the ritualist who faithfully performs for a hundred years, the sacrifices ordained by the scriptures. Servants, friends, brothers, wife, children, virtue and truth, all abandon the man who gives way to anger."*

Our ultimate aim of life is to go back to Krishna and so we should not be distracted by petty quarrels that occur in this world. Holding a grudge is letting someone live rent-free in our head. We waste our time, energy and ultimately land up contaminating our minds and lives by thinking and doing bad things to others. Instead, if we simply forgive and forget, our mind will be free of bad thoughts and we will have more time and energy to focus ourselves on the real aim of our lives. Since we are living in the material world and are subjected to modes, our only armour of protection is shelter at the lotus feet of Guru and Krishna. When we sincerely surrender to Them, they will give us the sanity to learn the lessons of life, even under difficult situations - to tolerate, to forgive and forget. Dhruva Maharaj accepted the advice of Svayambhuva Manu and stopped fighting and so at the end of his life, he attained the goal of his life. So for our own well-being, we should stay away from anger, simply tolerate, forgive and forget the wrongdoings of others and just move on.

Thank you very much.

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

## Attaining Sanctity by Devotional Service

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

While explaining the glories of Maharaj Ambarish to Parikshit Maharaj, Sukadeva Goswami says in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 9.4.26:

*sa ittham bhakti-yogena tapo-yuktena pārvivaḥ  
sva-dharmeṇa hariṁ prīṇan sarvān kāmān śanair jahau*

**The king of this planet, Maharaja Ambarisha, thus performed devotional service to the Lord and in this endeavor practiced severe austerity. Always satisfying the Supreme Personality of Godhead by his constitutional activities, he gradually gave up all material desires.**

Maharaja Ambarish was king of the whole planet. But still, he took pleasure in personally serving the Deities, serving the devotees, cleaning the altar, etc. There would have been so many servants at his disposal. But still, he underwent severe austerities and satisfied the Supreme Lord by his activities. Our beloved spiritual master, H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj says that if we ask servant to clean the temple and serve the Deity, then the servant will go back to Godhead and we will be staying back. Indeed Maharaj practised what he preached. Even at the age of 88 years, when his body was not co-operating, Maharaj used to wipe the window panes of the temple hall in Sri Sri Radha Neel Madhav Dham, Rajkot, without waiting for anyone else to join. He also says that we should recite scriptures like Bhagavad Gita and Bhagavatam for the pleasure of the Supreme Lord and should not employ professional reciters or recorded tapes for the same. So as far as our body and health allow us, we should try to do whatever service we can for the Lord, without any lethargy.

Madhavendra Puri, after receiving transcendental orders from his beloved Gopala Deity, traveled thousands of miles just to collect sandalwood by begging. Although Madhavendra Puri was hungry, he would not beg food to eat. This renounced person carried a load of sandalwood for the sake of Sri Gopala. Without considering his personal comforts, Madhavendra Puri carried about 35 kgs of sandalwood and eight ounces of camphor to smear over the body of Gopala. This transcendental pleasure was sufficient for him.

The words '*sarvaan kaamaan shanair jahau*' in the above verse means '**to gradually give up all varieties of material desires**'. It is practically very difficult to give up material desires on our own. But devotional service is such a sublime process that even if we have many anarthas in us, simply by performing the devotional service, we will be purified without any other extraneous endeavor. In the purport to verses 1.16.26-30 of Srimad Bhagavatam, Srila Prabhupada very nicely glorifies the process of devotional service - "***The transcendental service of the Lord is itself a transcendental benefit for the devotee, and therefore the devotee has nothing to expect from the Lord.***"

So we should be very thankful to Guru and Krishna for whatever service They are bestowing us and should serve them to the best of our ability, without being complacent or lethargic.

Thank you very much,

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Kalacakra Krsna das and Sudarshana devi dasi.

## Let Krishna Take Charge - Part 1

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

We in Abu Dhabi were really fortunate to have the association of our beloved God brother HG Devakinandan Prabhujis from Singapore last week. He gave very powerful and instructive classes to inspire everyone in pure devotional service. This offering is the transcription of the Bhagavatam class taken on 14th October morning on Srimad Bhagavatam verse 4.20.31

*tvan-māyayāddhā jana īśa khaṇḍito  
yad anyad āśāsta ṛtātmano 'budhaḥ  
yathā cared bāla-hitam pitā svayaṁ  
tathā tvam evārhasi naḥ samīhitum*

**My Lord, due to Your illusory energy, all living beings in this material world have forgotten their real constitutional position, and out of ignorance they are always desirous of material happiness in the form of society, friendship and love. Therefore, please do not ask me to take some material benefits from You, but as a father, not waiting for the son's demand, does everything for the benefit of the son, please bestow upon me whatever You think best for me.**

This is a very very important verse from Srimad Bhagavatam because in this verse, Srila Prabhupada explains in the purport and Prthu Maharaj prays very wonderfully that the most important thing we must understand in our relationship with Krishna is the following two things.

1. The reason we are not peaceful and really happy is because we are separated (*khanditah*) from Krishna because of the fact that we chose to be independent.
2. The best and the easiest way to connect with Krishna is to pray to the Lord that, "please do not ask me to take material benefits from You."

We shall see the explanation of both these points.

1. **Separation from Krishna:** As Prthu Maharaj points out in this verse, the reason why we are not peaceful, why we are not in real happiness, is because we are *khanditah*, we are separated and we are separated from Krishna not on account of anything else except the fact that we chose to be independent and because of our choosing to be independent, we have forgotten our real constitutional position. It is just like someone who wakes up in a dream thinking him to be someone else. But factually speaking, when he comes out of the dream, then he actually realizes he has a whole new different identity. This is the difficulty the living entity faces in the material world and it is very nicely stated in the pages of Bhagavatam that the reason why we are actually having this forgetfulness is not that just we are forgetting. When we forget something, Bhagavatam tells us, the real reason for the forgetfulness is, frankly speaking, **we have chosen to be independent**. There is a nice verse in SB 6.9.25, where the Devatas are praying to Krishna.

*ya eka īśo nija-māyayā naḥ  
sasarja yenānusṛjāma viśvam  
vayaṁ na yasyāpi puraḥ samīhataḥ  
paśyāma liṅgam ṛthag īśa-māninaḥ*



**The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who created us by His external potency and by whose mercy we expand the creation of the universe, is always situated before us as the Supersoul, but we cannot see His form. We are unable to see Him because all of us think that we are separate and independent gods.**

This is the reason why we have forgotten our constitutional position. There is nothing else. Bhagavatam says except for the fact that as the Devatas are praying in this verse, "Krishna, You are the only one. You are so kind. Actually, You are the only one who is creating this universe and yet out of Your causeless mercy You have given us the potency as if we look like we are the controllers and creators of the material universe. We become little mini Gods, so to speak, but because we think we have become so powerful, we do not realize that because of that *vayam na yasyaapi purah samihatah* – because of the tendency to think that we can create, that we are powerful, that tendency has made us think that we are actually independent". Srila Prabhupada writes in the first line of the purport that, '*Here is an explanation of why the conditioned soul cannot see the Supreme Personality of Godhead face to face.*' The demigods themselves admit in the verse that, 'the reason why despite the fact that You have given us so much, we still cannot approach You is on account of our mentality that we are separate.'

Once the son thinks that he is separate from father, that son always thinks he is more powerful. The natural tendency for a son who thinks, I know better than father is that, "I have my own world. I can do my own things. I do not need father. Father is old fashioned." How many times we have been in situations when we were young and we saw our father thinking that he is our only hero. When we went to school and met friends, we thought friends are better heroes. Then we saw teacher and thought that teachers know much better than father. When we got older, we thought, father, is outdated. He does not know this. He does not know that. He is not keeping with the times. He is speaking always of those days and those days and those days are not here. Now we are married and we have our children, we begin to think, "father used to say this, father used to say that .... But foolishly I used to think I know better than father". And now our children are telling the same thing that, "you are outdated. You do not know anything."

This verse is very easy for us to understand because Bhagavatam is so practical that it brings us the examples that we can see immediately. Every one of us either has been a father or will be a father or has a father. So how many of us can escape from this? We all know how our fathers had been our well-wishers and very often we go out there and try to do something of our own. That is our independence. We do not realize that father was waiting and very often even though we do not want to admit it, our fathers know our demands, and they know our nature much better than we would care to admit. So in the same way, Prthu Maharaj is saying this prayer, and the devatas are praying in the sixth canto, "because we have thought we are independent, therefore we cannot see Krishna."

***So if you want to have a darshan of Krishna, the first thing you must start to do is to completely depend on Krishna.*** This is the key.

Prabhuji went on to explain the way to be completely dependent on Krishna and the result of that and the same shall be offered in the upcoming mails, Krishna willing.

Thank you very much,  
Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,  
Vaijayantimala devi dasi,  
Abu Dhabi.

## Let Krishna Take Charge - Part 2

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

This is in continuation of the previous offering transcribing the wonderful class by HG Devakinandan Prabhujis in Abu Dhabi on Srimad Bhagavatam verse 4.20.31.

In the last offering, we saw that the reason we are not peaceful and really happy is because we are separated ( *khanditah*) from Krishna as we chose to be independent. Because of this, we are unable to have darshan of Krishna and so if we want to have darshan of Krishna, the first thing we must start to do is to completely depend on Krishna. In this offering we shall see the explanation of this point and the others that enable us to see Krishna.

a) **Complete dependence on Krishna:** To the extent we depend on Krishna, to that extent we lose our independence. Losing independence in the material world is a bad word. But losing independence in the spiritual world is very nice. This is the opposite. In the material world, when one loses his independence, he is considered weak. But in the spiritual world, when one submits to Krishna, he becomes advanced. This is the first thing we must do. So this *khanditah* is keeping us from seeing Krishna. We think we are seeing Krishna and so we are not separated from Him. But what Prthu Maharaj is saying is, the separation does not come when we have His darshan. *We can see Krishna but if the eyes that are seeing Krishna, are not anointed with submission and love, then that seeing is superficial.* Because the moment we leave this hall, then what happens is we do not see the hand of Krishna in our lives. We do not see His hand in all the parts and parcels of our life. When that happens, factually speaking, we have not taken darshan of Krishna. That is why there is a difference in Sanskrit between the words *pashyati* which means 'to see' and *darshan* or *ikshanam*. When one takes *ikshanam* of Krishna, then he takes audience of Krishna. That means he has invited Krishna in his life and at every stage of his life, he tries to see the hand of Krishna. This is the mood of a great devotee and the advantage of one who does not want to be separated from Krishna is that he becomes peaceful. This is the key.

b) **Being in line with Krishna:** In Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.14 Narada Muni advises to Vyasadev:

*tato 'nyathā kiñcana yad vivakṣataḥ  
pṛthag dṛśas tat-kṛta-rūpa-nāmabhiḥ  
na karhicit kvāpi ca duḥsthitā matir  
labheta vātāhata-naur ivāspadam*

**Whatever you desire to describe that is separate in vision from the Lord simply reacts, with different forms, names and results, to agitate the mind as the wind agitates a boat which has no resting place.**

The verse tells us very nicely that if we do not want to be disturbed, then whatever vision that Krishna has, we have to follow according to that vision. That is the key. So whenever devotees become disturbed, please there is no one to blame. Don't blame your bosses; don't blame your wives; don't blame your husbands; don't blame the children; don't blame the circumstances; don't blame anything. The only reason why we are disturbed is only that we are not in line with Krishna. *Being in line with Krishna means being in line with His devotees also because Krishna is never alone.* Krishna means Krishna and His devotees. So to the extent, we are with Krishna and the devotees, Bhagavatam tells us that we will not be separated. This *khanditah* will not be there. But the moment we think that our thinking is different from Krishna's thinking, then we are in trouble. That is why Srila Prabhupada writes in the purport so nicely that frankly speaking, Krishna is taking care of everything. There is nothing that we have to take care of. Whatever we lack, Krishna has given and whatever we have, Krishna will preserve. *yoga kshemam vahaamy aham* - The only thing is whether we can qualify to have this '*ananyaas cintayanto maam*' - **worshiping Krishna with exclusive devotion** - that is the only fact that is within our hands. Everything else is in Krishna's hands. Krishna is giving us free food, He is

giving us free lodging, He is giving us free air. All the animals who are not devotees so to speak, are all surviving because they are fully dependent on Krishna. It is only when we start thinking, 'I don't need Krishna', then we become disturbed. Sometimes in devotional service, when we become proud of our prowess in devotional service, it can become very easy for us to be in the disguise of devotees. But factually speaking, we are not really dependent on Krishna. Because otherwise why will we be still disturbed in devotional service? This point is very important for us to remember.

Prabhuji went on to explain how we become separated from Krishna and the same shall be transcribed and offered in the next mail, Krishna willing.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,  
Vaijayantimala devi dasi,  
Abu Dhabi.

### Let Krishna Take Charge - Part 3

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

This is in continuation of the previous offerings transcribing the wonderful class by HG Devakinandan Prabhujis in Abu Dhabi on Srimad Bhagavatam verse 4.20.31.

In the last offering, we saw that the reason we are not peaceful and really happy is that we are separated (khanditah) from Krishna as we chose to be independent. Because of this we are unable to have darshan of Krishna and so if we want to have darshan of Krishna, the first thing we must start to do is to:

- a) Completely depend on Krishna and then
- b) Be in line with Krishna

The other point we have to understand and practice in order not to be separated from Krishna is not to run after material happiness and we shall see that in this offering.

c) **Not to run after material happiness:** Prthu Maharaj in this prayer in Bhagavatam says that "the thing that separates me from You is when I become too much attached to society, friendship and love." These are the three things that everybody is looking out for. But they don't realize that by running after these material items, they don't become happy. Factually speaking, the material solutions are very often worse than the material problems themselves. Prahlada Maharaj says, '*duhkhaushadam tad api duhkham*'. Prahlada Maharaj makes a very wonderful observation that anytime we try to run after material happiness, we do not realize that an equal and if not more of material misery is just coming next door. We don't realize that. We think that every time we find a solution to any problem we have, if it is not with Krishna, that problem will become worse than the problem itself. In Srimad Bhagavatam 7.7.42, Prahlada Maharaj says:

*sukhāya duḥkha-mokṣāya saṅkalpa iha karmināḥ  
sadāpnotīhayā duḥkham anīhāyāḥ sukhāvṛtāḥ*

**In this material world, every materialist desires to achieve happiness and diminish his distress, and therefore he acts accordingly. Actually, however, one is happy as long as one does not endeavor for happiness; as soon as one begins his activities for happiness, his conditions of distress begin.**

This verse we should remember. Why? Because Prahlada Maharaj makes a very very important observation. He says every materialist in the world, what is he looking for? Every materialist in this world desires to achieve material happiness and frankly speaking, we also have come to Krishna consciousness because we want find some happiness and there is nothing wrong in trying to find happiness. Bhagavatam tells us that there are only two kinds of people who do not want to be happy in this world. One must be a mad man and second must be a dead man because only dead people will not be able to say that they want to be happy. If we ask anybody in this world, 'what is the aim of your life?', finally after telling all his/her ambitions and everything finally he/she will end by only one point, that he/she wants to be happy. There is no one in this world who does not want to be happy. So everybody wants happiness. But Prahlada Maharaj says the materialist who does not want Krishna, he thinks that he can achieve happiness and by doing so he can diminish his distress. He thinks that 'By being happy I will be less sad.' But Prahlada Maharaj says, **as long as we do not endeavor for material happiness, we are happy. As long as we do not desire to run after material happiness, up to that time, we are actually happy, which means that the moment we begin our activities for happiness, Bhagavatam tells us, that day our conditions of distress begin. This is a secret.** Not many people actually contemplate on this point. The day we start trying to be happy in this world

separately from Krishna, that day all our problems begin. The day we start our life, always seeing the hand of Krishna, on that day, material happiness and material distress, they won't touch us. Only peace and bliss are there in devotional service.

There is a nice example from the shastras. There was one brahmana. He wanted to go for the yatra. So he was going up the hill and the temple was at the top. So as he goes up the hill, he is praying to Lord Ram, "My dear Lord, it is very difficult to climb up. I am very tired. So please help me, my Lord. Try and find some way so that I don't have to climb. Please arrange some transport." Krishna is very kind. So before the brahmana made a turn, suddenly the brahmana saw a merchant bringing a horse. The merchant was not seated on the horse but was bringing the horse with him. The merchant looked at the brahmana and said, "My dear brahmana, you must be tired. So perhaps it will be better if you can take this horse and then you can go up." Brahmana said, "Krishna is very kind. I asked and He has immediately given." So he thanked the merchant and took the horse. As he was going, just hardly 100 metres he has moved, suddenly the horse stopped and refused to move. So the brahmana got down and thought why is the horse not moving? "How am I to make it move?" Then he realized when he looked closely that the horse was not a male horse but a female one and it was just about to give birth. That is why the merchant was offloading the horse. The brahmana thought that the merchant was very kind but the merchant had another idea. So now before he knew it, the female horse gave birth and there was a baby horse. Now the female horse refused to move because the mother won't move without the child. So the brahmana was thinking, how do I get the horse to move so that I can get on the horse and eventually go on the yatra. Thinking and thinking, he decided to carry the baby and walk in front of the mother. The mother will look at the baby and start walking. When the mother starts walking we can achieve some aim. So he carries the baby and walks a few metres and what happens? The horse moves. Brahmana becomes very happy. Ah! The horse is moving now! And he moves like this all the way till the end of the yatra. In the end, he stops and puts down the baby horse and the brahmana thinks, "I started this pilgrimage to see the Lord. Half the way through, I decided a little bit of material happiness and comfort won't hurt. The material happiness and comfort came in the form of the horse. But instead of solving my problem, it added to my problem. Foolishly, I did not remember Krishna on the way in the yatra. I was thinking about what was the solution to make the horse move, forgetting the solution was actually to take darshan of the Lord. And in the end, I was not only walking all the way up but I had the added burden of carrying another horse."

This is the foolishness of our living conditions that we complicate our life so much to that point that instead of actually remembering the goal, we become destructive by so many things. Bhagavatam tells us that by the time we come back to understand what the goal of life is, the time is up. But that time Krishna is forgotten. We become remorseful, we regret, and unfortunately because of friendship, love, and society, again we forget Krishna and again we continue. This is our foolishness. So this friendship, love, and society they are helpful to the extent they are used in the service of Krishna. That is why Prthu Maharaj said that if we have our families, in whatever station of life we may be, the important thing now we should ask ourselves when we leave today is, '*How am I seeing the hand of Krishna in my life, how have I included Krishna in my life, and not how I have been separated from Krishna*'. The moment there is separation, the material happiness engulfs us and with material happiness, the conditions of distress they all start. So that is the first point of the verse that we should be very careful not to separate ourselves from Krishna.

Prabhuji went on to explain the second part of the verse and that is allowing Krishna to take charge and the same shall be transcribed and offered in the ensuing mail, Krishna willing.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,  
Vaijayantimala devi dasi,  
Abu Dhabi.

## Let Krishna Take Charge - Part 4

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

This is in continuation of the previous offerings transcribing the wonderful class by HG Devakinandan Prabhuji in Abu Dhabi on Srimad Bhagavatam verse 4.20.31.

In the last offerings, we saw that the reason we are not peaceful and really happy is that we are separated (*khanditah*) from Krishna as we chose to be independent. Because of this we are unable to have darshan of Krishna and so if we want to have darshan of Krishna, we should do the following:

- a) Completely depend on Krishna and then
- b) Be in line with Krishna
- c) Not to run after material happiness.

In this offering, we shall see the second and concluding part of the verse.

2. **Let Krishna Take charge:** Now the best and the easiest way to connect with Krishna is given in the second and concluding part of the verse and that is why Prthu Maharaj prays in this beautiful prayer, "Please do not ask me to take material benefit from You." He is praying very hard for it. Now as devotees, very often we all have some material desires in our heart but Sukadev Goswami tells in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 2.3.10:

*akāmaḥ sarva-kāmo vā mokṣa-kāma udāra-dhīḥ  
tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena yajeta puruṣaṁ param*

**A person who has broader intelligence, whether he be full of all material desire, without any material desire, or desiring liberation, must by all means worship the supreme whole, the Personality of Godhead.**

This is an important verse for us to bear in mind when we read Srimad Bhagavatam verse 4.20.31 because the question can be raised that if we should not be asking Krishna for anything then why Sukadev Goswami is saying, "if you have a desire, you should ask Krishna." The overriding principle for devotees is first, not everyone can be born and become overnight pure devotees. We are all struggling. Frankly speaking, at the beginning of our connection with Krishna, it is better to include Krishna in every facet of our life than to be totally divorced from Krishna. I know a devotee, who when he first started devotional service, always used to tell us that whenever he wanted to pray for something material, he would go somewhere where devotees do not see him, pray to some Devata to please give him the material desire and after that he would come to Krishna and say, "I prayed for something but I am not telling you what it is!" But Krishna knows everything. Whoever that we are praying to, apart from Krishna, can only give us what Krishna has put for us. They can only facilitate. They can't go beyond that. So frankly speaking, Sukadev Goswami and all the acharyas are putting forward to us that even if we have something in our mind, better we tell to father than to tell uncles. Uncles may confuse us. But father is only one. So we should always be with father. Uncles may be there. Sometimes they may guide us. We must respect them, but uncles can never become father and father should not be demoted to become uncle. This is the relationship between us and Krishna. If we have that mood, then we should slowly, as time goes, absorb the mood of Prthu Maharaj because how long we are going to ask Krishna for the material things, when we know that actually, the material things don't bring us happiness. If we want Krishna to take charge, we should realize the following

- a) The three results of being engaged in Krishna's service.
- b) Unmotivated devotional service leads to uninterrupted devotional service.

- c) Our main aim should be to glorify the Lord.  
d) We should take pleasure in others doing devotional service.

We shall see the explanation of the above points.

- a) The three results of being engaged in Krishna's service: We know that when we are in the congregation of devotees, right now, three things cannot touch us. It is very nicely stated in SB 4.30.35:

*yatreḍyante kathā mṛṣṭās tṛṣṇāyāḥ praśamo yataḥ  
nirvairam yatra bhūteṣu nodvego yatra kaścana*

**Whenever pure topics of the transcendental world are discussed, the members of the audience forget all kinds of material hankering, at least for the time being. Not only that, but they are no longer envious of one another, nor do they suffer from anxiety or fear.**

- (i) When you are hearing Bhagavatam, **there is no material hankering**. Whatever hankering we have, they are outside this door. We may be hungry for prasadam, but that is acceptable. Apart from that, nothing else is there.

- (ii) **We are not envious of each other** when we are listening to Bhagavatam. We are not envious of each other when we are doing service for Krishna. Why? Because we have no time to be envious. For us to be envious, we must have time. As Maharaj used to say, to fall sick also we need time. We need time to fall sick, we need time to see the doctor; we need time to take medicine. Devotees do not give time for themselves to be envious of each other. Imagine this was a wedding function. In a wedding function, everybody is looking at each other, how nicely he is dressed, how is he talking. At weddings, it is all social. But here we are all gathered. But frankly speaking, nobody is looking at each other. Everybody is concentrating on Krishna Katha. So the point is when we are with Krishna, there is no envy.

- (iii) **There is no fear**. *Na udvegah* - otherwise every day in this material world, our constant companion is fear. Fear that something will happen; fear that we will lose something.

Prabhuji's explanation on the other points shall be transcribed and offered in the upcoming mails, Krishna willing.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,  
Vaijayantimala devi dasi,  
Abu Dhabi.

## Let Krishna Take Charge - Part 5

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Gurudev!

This is the concluding part of the previous offerings transcribing the wonderful class by HG Devakinandan Prabhujis in Abu Dhabi on Srimad Bhagavatam verse 4.20.31.

In the last offering, we saw that best and the easiest way to connect with Krishna is given in the second and concluding part of the verse and that is why Prthu Maharaj prays in this beautiful prayer, "Please do not ask me to take material benefit from You." Thus we pray to Krishna to take charge. If we want Krishna to take charge, we should realize the following:

- a) The three results of being engaged in Krishna's service
- b) Unmotivated devotional service leads to uninterrupted devotional service
- c) Our main aim should be to glorify the Lord
- d) We should take pleasure in others doing devotional service

In the last offering, we saw the explanation of the first point. We shall see the explanation of the other points here.

b) Unmotivated devotional service leads to uninterrupted devotional service: If we really want to take this wonderful prayer in SB 4.20.31 to heart, then we should remember what Prthu maharaj says - "**Krishna, You please arrange in such a way that I will not ask any material benefits from You.**" We may not have the strength. But if Krishna wants, He can give us the strength. If Guru wants, he can give us the strength. All we should do is maam icchaaptum dhanjaya. We should desire. Nothing is in our hands. The only thing Krishna has given us is the aspect of desire. It is only up to us to desire. If we desire, "**Let me not ask anything material. Let me be always like an obedient son or daughter, always leaving it to the father**", then we will find that our life in devotional service will become very peaceful. Otherwise our life in devotional service is mixed. We come to Krishna consciousness but there is some motive and we want something from Krishna. Because we want something from Krishna which is not spiritual, our devotional service is interrupted. That is why ahaituky apratihata is very important. To the extent our motive is only to glorify Krishna, to that extent, Krishna will always arrange that we perform continuous devotional service. To the extent that we have a motive other than glorifying Krishna, we find always there is a disruption in devotional life. Our minds will give some excuses. "Why should I come for the program? Why wake up for Mangala arati? This week if I don't study Srimad Bhagavatam, that's okay. One day let me take a break. Let me apply for leave from Bhakti. Whole year I am working hard in devotional service. Surely I am entitled to some material enjoyment." We don't realize that the moment we do that, then we are not peaceful. We are separated. We end by remembering a similar prayer from another great devotee and he is Citraketu maharaj. He factually says the same thing very beautifully in SB 6.16.46:

*viditam ananta samastam  
tava jagad-ātmano janair ihācaritam  
vijñāpyam parama-guroḥ  
kiyaḍ iva savitur iva khadyotaiḥ*

**O unlimited Supreme Personality of Godhead, whatever a living entity does in this material world is well known to You because You are the Supersoul. In the presence of the sun there is nothing to be revealed by the light of a glowworm. Similarly, because You know everything, in Your presence there is nothing for me to make known.**

Here Bhagavatam gives us a very very graphic image. In the presence of the sun, what light can a glow-worm give? In the night, glow worms give nice light. But in the presence of the sun, the glow worm loses the potency. In the same



way, he says, because you know everything Krishna, nothing is to be made known. This should be our mood.

c) Our main aim should be to glorify the Lord: Whenever we come before Krishna, our mood should be as stated in SB 10.1.4:

*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?**

This is the only reason we come to the program. Not for anything else except to glorify Krishna. That should be our only motive for bhakti. Do not be resentful, but pray to Krishna as Prthu Maharaj is praying, "**Let me please have the desire that someday somehow I should become an instrument only to glorify You.**" Otherwise, we come to the program to glorify ourselves. Because when we come, we want someone to say "very nice to see you." I give class and when I leave, I want 10 people to tell me, "Prabhu, it's a very nice class". Then I pretend to be humble and say, "Nothing Prabhu." But in my heart, I say it was a very nice class. So these are not the reasons why we come for bhakti. The only reason why we are born to become devotees is to glorify Krishna. It is stated in the pages of Bhagavatam, instead of keep on asking the father, why don't we just glorify the father? By glorifying the father, the father becomes much more pleased because He knows we are sincere to understand His greatness. That is all we should be doing. Nothing else.

d) We should take pleasure in others doing devotional service: Let us end by remembering the wonderful prayer of Kunti Mata in SB 1.8.36:

*śṛṅvanti gāyanti grṇanty abhīkṣṇaśaḥ  
smaranti nandanti tavehitam janāḥ  
ta eva paśyanty acireṇa tāvakam  
bhava-pravāhoparamam padāmbujam*

**O Krishna, those who continuously hear, chant and repeat Your transcendental activities, or take pleasure in others' doing so, certainly see Your lotus feet, which alone can stop the repetition of birth and death.**

Kunti Mata tells us the real solution to absorb Prthu Maharaj's prayer. The automatic way not to be separated from Krishna is to continuously hear about Krishna, continuously chant about Krishna, and continuously repeat Krishna's glories and other devotee's glories. If we can't do all these, at least we should become nandanti – take pleasure in others repeating Krishna's glories. Otherwise, that part becomes very difficult for us because if someone glorifies Krishna, or does something wonderful in devotional service, we want to shoot the person down. But when we are doing it, we expect everyone to lift us up. When someone is doing very nice in devotional service, then our mood should be, "I am inspired by your devotional service." But still what happens is we say, "he or she is doing nice bhakti, but then....". When we see the faults in others, it is as good as seeing those faults in ourselves. Guru Maharaj always told me, "**Devaki, it takes a good thief to know another thief. So if you catch someone stealing, don't blame that other person. You must come to understand that you can actually recognize his stealing propensity because you have become expert at it yourself.**"

So take pleasure - ***nandanti*** - in other's devotional service. In that way, we become peaceful. When we do that, what do we see? We see Krishna's lotus feet and how do we see it? By Krishna's mercy. Because father knows what is best for this son. Father will give darshan when the son is ready to perform glorification of father and when one sees Krishna's lotus feet, then Bhagavatam tells us that it stops the repetition of birth and death and once it stops our being born and our dying, then our happiness with our eternal father becomes eternal.

Prabhuji ended by saying that we should not make this hearing into a ritual. Don't come because you have to come. Come because you want to glorify Krishna. Then whatever that we hear will never go to pass as a formality but it will become part of our life. What is the value of devotional service, if we do not practice it?

We thank HG Devakinandan Prabhuji for explaining this wonderful prayer and let us make our best endeavor to practice these instructions.

Thank you very much.

Yours in the service of Srila Prabhupada and Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

## Chastity in Devotional Service

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

While narrating how Supreme Lord Krishna protected Pandavas and Uttara from the brahma-astra released by Ashwattama, Suta Goswami says to the sages headed by Shaunaka Muni in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 1.8.17 as follows:

*brahma-tejo-vinirmuktair ātmajaiḥ saha kṛṣṇayā  
prayāñābhimukhaṁ kṛṣṇam idam āha pṛthā satī*

**Thus saved from the radiation of the brahmaastra, Kunti, the chaste devotee of the Lord, and her five sons and Draupadi addressed Lord Krishna as He started for home.**

In the word to word equivalents, Srila Prabhupada translates the word *satī* as "**chaste, devoted to the Lord.**" In his wonderful purport to the above verse, His Divine Grace further explains the meaning of chastity. "*Kunti is described herein as satī, or chaste, due to her unalloyed devotion to Lord Sri Krishna...A chaste devotee of the Lord does not look to others, namely any other living being or demigod, even for deliverance from danger. That was all along with the characteristic of the whole family of the Pandavas. They knew nothing except Krishna, and therefore the Lord was also always ready to help them in all respects and in all circumstances. That is the transcendental nature of the Lord. He reciprocates the dependence of the devotee. One should not, therefore, look for help from imperfect living beings or demigods, but one should look for all help from Lord Krishna, who is competent to save His devotees. Such a chaste devotee also never asks the Lord for help, but the Lord, out of His own accord, is always anxious to render it.*"

In the incident of Ambarish Maharaj and Durvasa Muni, we find that when Durvasa Muni sent the fiery demon to kill Maharaj Ambarish, the king remained cool and calm and just remembered the Supreme Lord. He didn't even ask the Lord for any help. But Lord was very much anxious to save His dear devotee and so instructed Sudarshana cakra to punish Durvasa Muni. Durvasa Muni, on the other hand, was not as chaste as Ambarish Maharaj in his devotion to Supreme Lord and so he ran to Brahma, Shiva, and everywhere to get rid of the Sudarshana cakra. At last, being guided by them, he takes shelter of Lord Vishnu who makes him realise his mistake of offending a pure devotee of the Lord.

Our beloved spiritual master, H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj always insists that we must be dependent on Krishna at all times. We should simply do our prescribed duties to the best of our ability and always take shelter of the Supreme Lord. Maharaj says, "**Our business is to just chant Krishna's names and Krishna's business is to handle our problems.**" In this regard, Maharaj used to quote one instance from the Mahabharata war, when Bhishmadev promises to Duryodhana that he will kill at least one of the Pandavas in the war on the subsequent day. On hearing the news, Krishna becomes very anxious as to how to protect Pandavas from Bhishmadev. But Arjuna remains very calm and composed. When Krishna asks him as to why he is not worried, Arjuna replies, "*As long as You are worried about us, there is no need for us to worry about anything.*" To that extent, the Pandavas were completely dependent on the Lord. Both Kunti and Pandavas were always facing some problem or the other in their life. But never did they complain or grumble to the Lord. They continued their service to the Lord with full faith, in all circumstances and this chaste attitude pleased the Lord very much.

His Divine Grace mentions in purport to verse 1.8.8 of Srimad Bhagavatam - "*All the members of the family of the Pandavas were completely dependent on the protection of the Lord, and therefore the Lord protected all of them in all circumstances. The Lord protects everyone, but one who depends completely upon Him is especially looked after by the Lord. The father is more attentive to the little son who is exclusively dependent on the father*"

."

I pray at the lotus feet of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev so that I remember these wonderful souls and make a genuine effort to always be a chaste devotee of the Lord.

Thank you very much.

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

## Good Leads to Good

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

While remembering the glories of Lord Sri Krishna, Uddhava says to Viduraji in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 3.2.23:

*aho bakī yaṁ stana-kāla-kūṭaṁ  
jighāmsayāpāyayad apy asādhvī  
lebhe gatim dhātry-ucitām tato 'nyam  
kaṁ vā dayāluṁ śaraṇam vrajema*

**Alas, how shall I take shelter of one more merciful than He who granted the position of mother to a she-demon [Putana] although she was unfaithful and she prepared deadly poison to be sucked from her breast?**

One thing we can notice in common between Lord Rama and Lord Krishna when They appeared in this world is that the first demon They killed was a she-demon. As Rama, He killed demoness Tataka and as Krishna He killed Putana. What is the reason behind this commonality? Women, in general, are very compassionate in nature and when they turn demoniac, Lord makes sure to fix them right in the beginning itself as otherwise, they will because of more and more unwanted demoniac living entities. Also of all the living entities, the child is the most innocent and should be handled with extreme love and care. Normally even the most demoniac person will have a natural feeling of love for any child, more so for a mother. So in Putana's case, it was exactly the contrary, a person who was supposed to be kind to others became extremely envious towards children who are simply innocent and who should be shown, motherly love. Hence Krishna could not tolerate that and decided to deliver her. But the glory of the Lord is that even when He punished Putana, still He observed one 'so-called' good quality in her and gave her the topmost position in the spiritual world. This is the inconceivable kindness of the Supreme Lord.

Putana was a huge ugly she-demon. She knew that if she went to the house of Nanda Maharaj in that form, she will not be able to gain entry or approach baby Krishna. So she constantly meditated on the movements of gopis, the way they speak, the way they dress, the way they walk and eventually she changed herself in the form of a beautiful gopi and then entered Vrindavan. Lord Krishna saw this spec of good quality in her and decided to grant her the best benediction. Our beloved spiritual master H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj says how simply by meditating on good, we will ultimately become good. In this regard, Maharaj used to give us an example of Ravana. When Ravana went to propose to Mother Sita in Ashoka Vana, she refused to marry him. So when Kumbhakarna advised him to use his mystic powers and go in the form of Lord Rama, Ravana said that it is not possible because to take the form of Lord Rama, he has to meditate on Lord Rama and His qualities. But, the moment he meditates on Lord Rama, Sita looked like his mother and so he could not approach her with evil intentions. Similarly, we find that Putana, simply by meditating on the gopis of Vrindavan, was able to get the form of a beautiful gopi. Usually, when people try to hurt us, we tend to retaliate and we don't have the heart to reciprocate to them in a kind manner. But here we find how the Supreme Lord is extremely merciful that even though Putana came with the intention to kill Him, He bestowed her with the position of mother. If the Lord's reciprocation for even a small attempt of Putana is this what to speak of His reciprocation to those who are genuinely good throughout their lives.

So the lessons we can learn from the above pastime are:

- a) Whenever we are hurt by others, we should try to meditate on their good qualities. By doing so we can get rid of the hatred on them.
- b) We should give up revengeful attitude and see Krishna's hands even when others hurt us, and reciprocate by doing

good to them. If we cannot do good to them, at least keep quiet and wish good for them.

c) When bad thoughts and ideas try to capture our minds, we should re-direct it by taking shelter of good persons and good thoughts.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Kalacakra Krsna das and Sudarshana devi dasi.

## Devotional Service Fulfills All Our Desires

Dear Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

There is a general misconception among people that if we do too much of devotional service, it will take away all our material opulences. Infact there are a lot of mistaken ideas especially in India that worshipping Krishna will take away our wealth, opulence etc. These misconceptions seem to have arisen from a few instances in the shastras where the Lord's devotees seem to be suffering and impoverished from an external point of view. One of the instances is when Bali Maharaj is transcendently cheated and deprived of his wealth by Vamanadev. At that time the Lord, to begin with, says to Lord Brahma (SB 8.22.24) that "**Because of material opulence a foolish person becomes dull-witted and mad. Thus he has no respect for anyone within the three worlds and defies even My authority. To such a person I show special favor by first taking away all his possessions.**"

One may immediately question from this statement of the Lord that why should we spend so much time and energy in devotional service just to get rid of our hard earned wealth and opulences? But we should see that the Lord is not worried about our wealth, name and fame, but the pride (damba) arising out of it. So in order to vanquish that pride, He takes away the source of that pride from us. But as soon as we become humble, He bestows more opulence than what we deserve, as He showed in the case of Bali Maharaj by giving him the Bila svarga and Himself becoming his security guard. Hence in SB 8.22.26, He qualifies His above statement further, "**If a human being is born in an aristocratic family or a higher status of life, if he performs wonderful activities, if he is youthful, if he has personal beauty, a good education and good wealth, and if he is nonetheless not proud of his opulences, it is to be understood that he is especially favored by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.**"

So Krishna is not bothered about our wealth and opulence *if we are not claiming proprietorship over it*. That is why He says that if a devotee continues to enjoy his opulences or gets them back after losing, *it is His very special mercy*. Infact being the husband of the Goddess of fortune, He would be able to bestow upon us both material and spiritual benedictions beyond our imagination. As practising devotees we are always challenged with this question by materialists that why Krishna is not keeping His devotees in good condition? Infact this question is not a modern day one but rather an age old question. Hence through the shastras we can understand the answer to this question.

There is another incident in Mahabharata: When Yudhishtira Maharaj became the king of Indraprastha and decided to perform the Rajasuya yajna, he requested the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna to become the chief of the yajna and accept the agra-puja, the first worship. One may wonder, why should Yudhishtira Maharaj being a devotee of Lord Krishna perform an yajna which is meant for mundane opulence and even ask Lord Krishna to preside over it? Foreseeing that this question will be asked, Yudhishtira Maharaj himself gives two reasons as to why he would like to perform the yajna. He says in SB 10.72.4-5:

*tvat paaduke aviratam pari ye caranti  
dhyayanti abhadra nashane shuchayo grnanti  
vindanti te kamala naabha bhavaapavargam  
aashaasate yadi ta aashisha isha naanye*

**"Purified persons who constantly serve, meditate upon and glorify Your shoes, which destroy everything inauspicious, are sure to obtain freedom from material existence, O lotus-aveled one. Even if they desire something in this world, they obtain it, whereas others—those who do not take shelter of You—are never satisfied, O Lord."**

*tad deva-deva bhavatas caranaaravinda  
sevaanubhaavam oha pashyatu loka eshah  
ye tvaam bhajanti na bhajanty uta vobhayeshaam  
nishthaam pradarshaya vibho kuru-srnjayaanaam*

**"Therefore, O Lord of lords, let the people of this world see the power of devotional service rendered to Your lotus feet. Please show them, O almighty one, the position of those Kurus and Srnjayas who worship You, and the position of those who do not."**

We hear a beautiful explanation of Yudhishtira Maharaj's first reason paraphrased by Srila Vishwanatha Chakravarthi Thakura: "We feel no great urgency to perform the Rajasuya sacrifice, nor do we have any personal interest, since we are already seeing Your lotus feet and by Your boundless mercy have been taken into Your personal association. But in this world there are some whose hearts are contaminated and who thus think You are not the Supreme Personality of Godhead but an ordinary man. Or else they find fault with You and even criticize You. This is an arrow piercing our hearts. Therefore, to extract this arrow from our heart, we must call to this place—on the pretext of the Rajasuya—Brahma, Rudra and other wise brahmacharis and demigods who reside in each of the fourteen planetary systems. When such an exalted congregation has assembled, it will be incumbent upon them to first arrange for the agra-puja, or the first worship for the most worthy person present. And when they are directly shown that You, Lord Krsna, are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the arrow piercing our heart will be removed."

Srila Prabhupada then paraphrases the second reason for Yudhishtira Maharaj's decision: "*I also want to show the world the difference between accepting You as the Supreme Personality of Godhead and accepting You as an ordinary powerful historical person. I wish to show the world that one can attain the highest perfection of life simply by taking shelter at Your lotus feet, exactly as one can satisfy the branches, twigs, leaves and flowers of an entire tree simply by watering the root. Thus, **if one takes to Krsna consciousness, his life becomes fulfilled both materially and spiritually.**"*

The conclusions of the acaryas are very powerful and brings to us the right understanding of the mood of a pure devotee of the Lord. They don't want to do anything for themselves. But at the same time they cannot tolerate any offence or disrespect at the lotus feet of the Lord. The general mass of people avoid devotional service stating all kinds of useless reasons. Unless they are given the assurance that their material opulence will be intact (and grow more and more) by doing devotional service, they won't be convinced to take up devotional service. Therefore, to bring them to the path of bhakti somehow or other, great mahatmas like Yudhishtira Maharaj and Srila Prabhupada want to show them practical proofs.

Let us try to see the shastras through the transcendental eyes of acaryas like Srila Vishwanatha Chakravarthi Thakura, Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev and show the practical solution to the general public, by preaching devotional service through practice.

Thank you very much.

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



## A Chance to Continue Service

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

Today is the auspicious day of Govardhan pooja. The entire wonderful pastime of Krishna lifting the Govardhana hill and the circumstances leading to the same and the purpose of the pastime is so beautifully portrayed in one single verse by

Sukadev Goswami in Srimad Bhagavatam 10.26.25:

*deve varṣati yajña-viplava-ruṣā vajrāsma-varṣānilaiḥ sīdat-pāla-pāśu-striy ātma-śaraṇam dṛṣṭvānukampy utsmayan  
utpāṭyaika-kareṇa śailam abalo līlocchilīndhram yathā bibhrad goṣṭham apān mahendra-mada-bhit prīyān na indro  
gavām*

**Indra became angry when his sacrifice was disrupted, and thus he caused rain and hail to fall on Gokula, accompanied by lightning and powerful winds, all of which brought great suffering to the cowherds, animals and women there. When Lord Krishna, who is by nature always compassionate, saw the condition of those who had only Him as their shelter, He smiled broadly and lifted Govardhana Hill with one hand, just as a small child picks up a mushroom to play with it. Holding up the hill, He protected the cowherd community. May He, Govinda, the Lord of the cows and the destroyer of Indra's false pride, be pleased with us.**

Our beloved spiritual master, H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj being a true *rasika* (in full knowledge of the mellows) and *bhaavuka* (expert and thoughtful) used to always wonder which literature in the world other than Bhagavatam can give such a graphic description of a full pastime in just a few lines? We have seen the various pastimes in Bhagavatam of so many demons being sent by Kamsa to kill Krishna and we see that they have all been killed by the Lord. Here we see in this pastime that Indra has committed a grievous offence of attacking and trying to destroy the whole of Vrindavana which is the life and soul of Krishna (Krishna calls the cowherd community as *mat parigrahaṁ* - "**My own family**" ) and we find that Indra, the administrative demigod is not killed but is being forgiven by the Lord and being given another chance of service. The reason we can see is that Krishna regarded Indra as a deviant son and devotee who is to be corrected. This is clear from Srimad Bhagavatam verse 10.25.17 where Krishna says on seeing the onslaught of hail and blasting wind which is the work of Indra,

*na hi sad-bhāva-yuktānām surāṇām īśa-vismayaḥ  
matto 'satām māna-bhaṅgaḥ praśamāyopakalpate*

**Since the demigods are endowed with the mode of goodness, the false pride of considering oneself the Lord should certainly not affect them. When I break the false prestige of those bereft of goodness, My purpose is to bring them relief.**

Srila Vishvanatah Cakravarthi Takura commenting on this verse writes that Krishna speaks this verse with the intention that, "I am not going to completely crush this weak Indra out of spite, but I will correct this fault pride which has arisen in My devotee." Maharaj always says that all the prayers offered by various devotees in Srimad Bhagavatam are very important but more important than the prayers, are the verses that are spoken just before the prayers which make us come to the mood of the prayers and also the verses that are spoken by the Lord in reply to those prayers. In this pastime, we see that after Indra offered nice prayers to the Lord in the 27th chapter of Tenth canto, Krishna speaks three verses which are real gems. They are all worth remembering by all of us.

SB 10.27.15: **"The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: My dear Indra, it was out of mercy that I stopped the sacrifice meant for you. You were greatly intoxicated by your opulence as King of heaven, and I wanted you to always remember Me.**

"

Here Krishna very clearly reveals the purpose of stopping the sacrifice supposed to be offered to Indra and that is out of mercy to Indra that he should not become intoxicated by his opulence and forget Krishna. Indra himself admits in his prayers that when the sacrifice was disrupted he became fiercely angry because of false prestige and he tried to destroy Krishna's cowherd community with severe rain and wind. Just like a doctor diagnoses and treats the sickness of a patient, and just like a caring father corrects his son, Krishna acted in a way to correct Indra for his own good.

SB 10.27.16: **"A man blinded by intoxication with his power and opulence cannot see Me nearby with the rod of punishment in My hand. If I desire his real welfare, I drag him down from his materially fortunate position."**

SB 10.27.17

*gamyatām śakra bhadraṁ vaḥ kriyatām me 'nuśāsanam  
sthīyatām svādhikāreṣu yuktair vaḥ stambha-varjitaiḥ*

**Indra, you may now go. Execute My order and remain in your appointed position as King of heaven. But be sober, without false pride.**

Having said in SB 10.27.16 that He can drag down a person from a materially fortunate position if He desires the real welfare, Krishna advises Indra in the next verse to just go and carry on his service in his appointed position. This means that Krishna does not dismiss Indra from his service for this offence, but just forgives him and gives him another chance to continue his service, but He sends him away with a word of advice and that is to **be sober without false pride**. Here Krishna uses the word "vaḥ" two times while referring to Indra. *Vaḥ* is a plural form but that is used for Indra and from this we have to understand that this instruction is for all of us who all have some appointed positions under the Supreme Lord. We are committing so many offences in the course of our devotional service, but with all that, if we are still able to continue to attend the programs, continue to read Bhagavatam, continue to serve devotees, continue to chant our rounds, continue to have darshan of the deities, then we have to realize that it is purely out of the causeless mercy of the Lord, just like a loving parent always giving us another chance to correct ourselves. This does not mean that we can endlessly continue with our false pride. It does not mean that we are never going to learn our lessons. We have to remember that Krishna is standing near us ready with the rod of punishment (*danda paanim*). How much time will it take Him to just use it? So we should always remember Krishna's advice to be sober and without false pride and repent by chanting the following prayer offered by Indra in SB 10.27.8:

*sa tvam mamaiśvarya-mada-plutasya  
kṛtāgasas te 'viduṣaḥ prabhāvam  
kṣantuṁ prabho 'thārhasi mūḍha-cetaso  
maivam punar bhūn matir īśa me 'satī*

**Engrossed in pride over my ruling power, ignorant of Your majesty, I offended You. O Lord, may You forgive me. My intelligence was bewildered, but let my consciousness never again be so impure.**

I pray that I should not be like animal which is stubborn in nature. The moment after the master beats the animal it again commits the same offence. I pray at the lotus feet of Girivaradhaari to purify me of this animalistic tendency within me.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi,

Abu Dhabi.

## Be Grateful to the Mercy

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

Whenever Lord Krishna performs any pastime, He does it for multiple reasons. In Damodar lila we find that Lord breaks the butter pot, feeds the monkeys, allows Yashoda Mata to tie Him by ropes of love and also delivers the sons of Kubera, Nalakuvera and Manigriva who were cursed by Narada Muni and were thus standing as Arjuna trees for so many years. Lord Krishna says in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 10.10.25:

*devarṣir me priyatamo yad imau dhanadātmajau  
tat tathā sādhaiṣyāmi yad gītaṁ tan mahātmanā*

**Although these two young men are the sons of the very rich Kuvera and I have nothing to do with them , Devarshi Narada is My very dear and affectionate devotee, and therefore because he wanted Me to come face to face with them, I must do so for their deliverance.**

To see Krishna face to face or to be touched by Supreme Lord is not possible for ordinary souls like us who are intoxicated in materialistic way of life. The sons of Kuvera were so much intoxicated that they did not even bother to pay respect to Narada Muni, who is a very dear devotee of the Lord. The Lord actually tolerates any offence done to Him. But He never tolerates any offence done to His devotees. That's why Lord Krishna is saying in the above verse that He had the least thought of either giving darshan or liberation for the sons of Kuvera. So simply to keep the promise of His dear devotee Narada, Lord delivered them.

Few days ago a senior devotee was sharing an incident about how city-authorities were catching street dogs to ensure public safety. There were few dogs which were roaming around them. But they were not being captured. So when the devotee went and inquired as to why they were not capturing the dogs, they replied that few people had requested that they were taking care of the dogs and hence those dogs need not be captured. He related how just like those dogs were saved by the mercy of those people, we are saved by the mercy of our spiritual masters. Even though we are filled with so many anarthas, Guru mercifully gives us a chance to perform devotional service and reach Supreme Lord, by initiating us. But if we remain complacent and lazy, even after initiation, then we will continue to remain like street dogs and will always be prone to attacks of maya.

In his wonderful purport to the above verse Srila Prabhupada writes, "If one seeks the favor of a devotee instead of directly asking favors from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one is very easily successful. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura has therefore recommended: *vaishnava thaakura tomaara kukkura bhuliyaa jaanaha more, krsna se tomaara krsna dite paara. **One should desire to become like a dog in strictly following a devotee.*** Krishna is in the hand of a devotee. *adurlabham aatma-bhaktau.* Thus without the favor of a devotee, one cannot directly approach Krishna, what to speak of engaging in His service."

Just like how dogs are faithful and loyal to their masters, we should also be truthful and loyal to our Guru and sincerely follow his instructions. That is the only hope for us to be delivered from the dark world of neiscence.

I pray at the lotus feet of Srila Gurudev and Srila Prabhupada that I always remember their causeless mercy and remain loyal and grateful to them.

Thank you very much,

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sudarshana devi dasi.

## Disinfection by Deity Darshan - Part 1

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

The following is the transcription of the class by HG Devakinandan Prabhujī in Abu Dhabi on 16th Oct 2011 on Srimad Bhagavatam verse 6.16.31 when king Citraketu takes darshan of the Lord.

*tad-darśana-dhvasta-samasta-kilbiṣaḥ  
svasthāmalāntaḥkaraṇo 'bhyayān muniḥ  
pravṛddha-bhaktiā praṇayāśru-locanaḥ  
prahṛṣṭa-romānamad ādi-puruṣam*

**As soon as Maharaja Citraketu saw the Supreme Lord, he was cleansed of all material contamination and situated in his original Krishna consciousness, being completely purified. He became silent and grave, and because of love for the Lord, tears fell from his eyes, and his hairs stood on end. With great devotion and love, he offered his respectful obeisances unto the original Personality of Godhead.**

Srila Prabhupada very nicely writes very nicely in the purport, "*The word tad-darshana-dhvasta-samasta-kilbishah is very important in this verse. **If one regularly sees the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the temple, one will gradually be disinfected of all material desires simply by visiting the temple and seeing the Deity** . When one is freed from all the results of sinful activities, one will be purified, and with a healthy mind, completely cleansed, he will increasingly make progress in Krishna consciousness."*

One thing we should remember is that just like every aspect of devotional service is purifying, we must never take for granted the fact that we have deities and that we are worshiping them. We have so many wonderful deities and so many wonderful paraphernalia for worshipping them. Our beloved Guru Maharaj liked the above-mentioned verse very much and he found the purport to be very important. He liked the word disinfected in the purport and he said some nice points on the verse which are worth remembering. The most important thing we should never forget is that the deity is nondifferent from Krishna. So if we have a deity in our house we should really factually believe that the deity is Krishna. How do we know if we are behaving in such a way that we believe that the deity is Krishna? Maharaj said, "*It is an easy test. Actually if somehow or the other Krishna is really present before us in whatever form we believe Him to be, how would we behave?*" In the same way, we should never think for a moment that the deities are just there and that they are the representations of Krishna. To say that they are representations of Krishna is to become impersonalist. Maharaj said the following about the deities which are worth remembering.

1) **Whimsical approach to deities to be avoided:** Srila Prabhupada gives the example of the postman and the post box. He said that if the deities have come with the blessings of the parampara, with the blessings of the spiritual master, with the blessing of the devotees, then the deities are considered to be authorized. Maharaj says, *"If out of our own whims and fancies, we decide that we need a deity now, then it is like somebody going out to get a dog and make it a pet and saying, 'now I have a pet dog.'*" That whimsical approach to deities should always be avoided. If you make your own post box and post the letter will never reach the desired destination. But if you go to a designated post office and post the letter, you know for sure, within a few days, the recipient will receive the letter. That should be how we should conduct our devotional service." Whenever we are in the mood of speculation, whatever we perform or do cannot be backed up or authorized by Bhagavatam, by our spiritual master, by Bhagavad Gita or by the senior devotees or by the system of Parampara. Then that post box is made by us and the post box is not going to help us in the least. It will only serve as a form of sense gratification. So when we worship deities, we must be very sure that we are worshiping them not because They are here to serve our desires but because we are here to serve Their transcendental desires. It must be the opposite.

2) **Deity is non-different from Krishna:** Maharaj's nature is to see the good things in everyone. So even though Swami Vivekananda did not perform any direct devotional service, Maharaj appreciates the following conversation between Vivekananda and an impersonal saint. Once Swami Vivekananda was about to go and speak in the International congress of religion in Chicago. He went to see the saint and this saint asked him, "How you will you present Hinduism?" So at that point in time, Vivekananda said, "I will present Hinduism first and foremost by making people understand that there is one Supreme Lord." That saint said, "God is formless. So how can you say that there is one Supreme Lord?" Then Vivekananda said that the form of the Lord in the temple is the form of the Lord. It is non-different. The saint said, "That cannot be, because if that is the case, then the Lord is like an ordinary man sitting amongst us as stone." Then Vivekananda went to see a picture of that saint on the wall. He took that picture and smashed it on the floor. When he did that, the saint got very upset. He said, "How can you just take my picture and throw it on the floor?", Vivekananda said, "It is not you. It does not have any relevance to you. It is only a picture." The saint said, "It is non-different from me. By throwing the picture, you have insulted me." Swami Vivekananda said, "If just the picture of a person who is mortal can make a person feel so much that he thinks he is with the picture, then how much must the Supreme Lord be the same as the form that He intends to manifest?" So this point Maharaj appreciated very much in the pastime of Swami Vivekananda.

Prabhuji went on to explain how deity worship equals to behavior and the same shall be transcribed and offered in the next mail.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,  
Vaijayantimala devi dasi,  
Abu Dhabi.

## Begging for the Mercy

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

Today is the auspicious occasion of "*Tirobhava*" festival of Jagat Guru His Divine Grace Srila A C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. In the book, "Gaudiya Vaishnava Samadhis", HH Mahanidhi Maharaj nicely mentions how the "*aavirbhava*" and "*tirobhava*" festival of great Vaishnavas are both equal and auspicious. Their appearance and disappearance are compared with that of the sun. When sunsets in a place, it does not mean that the sun does not exist anymore. It simply means that it has risen in some other place. Likewise, when the Vaishnava saint enters the aprakat (unmanifested) form in this material world, he simply manifests before the Sri Sri Radha Krishna in the spiritual world. So when there is *tirobhav* in the material world, there is *aavirbhavin* spiritual world and vice-versa. So both *aavirbhava* and *tirobhav* occur simultaneously and are equally auspicious. As our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj says, "**To develop a relationship with someone, we need to spend time with them.**" So simply by spending time with Srila Prabhupada's books, reading about him, hearing his Vani in his lectures and conversations, we will be able purify our existence and have an eternal connection with him. So let us today meditate on a few of the qualities of His Divine Grace and purify our existence. As Srila Bhaktivinod Thakura eloquently says,

*He reasons ill who says that Vaishnavas die,  
When thou art living still in sound!  
The Vaishnavas die to live, and living try  
To spread the holy name around.*

Indeed His Divine Grace is eternally present in his Vani and books and is guiding so many suffering souls all over the world, even after his apparent physical absence. Just by observing the revolution which Srila Prabhupada is doing on this world's misdirected civilisation, including our own lives, we can understand that all these things are due to his purity of sadhana and devotion. It was a life-time preparation amidst so many troubles and challenging situations.

In her book "Our Srila Prabhupada - A Friend to all", HG Mulaprakrti Mataji very nicely mentions about the memories shared by the pujari from Advaita Acarya's house in Shantipura. In 1980, the pujari came to Mayapur temple and shared with devotees about how Srila Prabhupada even in the 1940s and 50s, when he was still in grhastha ashram, used to visit Advaita-Bhavan once or twice in a month, wearing white dhoti-kurta, during the weekends and used to sit and chant with great devotion and gravity, with tears in his eyes and voice choking, for very long hours. Then he will always thank the pujari for his wonderful service in Advaita Bhavan before leaving the place.

Then in August of 1965, the pujari noticed that Srila Prabhupada again visited that place in saffron clothes and was weeping more unabashedly and was chanting the Holy names with eyes closed in concentrated devotion. Once he completed chanting and thanked the pujari, the pujari asked him about his identity. Then His Divine Grace replied with tears in his eyes, "*I am an unworthy disciple of His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Siddantha Sarasvathi Thakura, Srila Prabhupada, my divine master. I have been coming here for such a long time because my gurudeva has given me an impossible mission. His desire was for me to go across the ocean to the Western countries and spread the sublime teachings of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. There are countless souls there who have never heard about Sri Sri Radha Krishna and so they are suffering greatly. I do know how this mission of his will be successful, so I have been coming here to this special house of Advaita Acarya, where he, Nityananda Prabhu and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu would gather together to plan the sankirtan movement. It was here that they launched the inundation of love of God that swept India and continues to this day. Thus I have been praying very earnestly here that they will all give me their mercy that somehow they will empower me and guide me. I want to satisfy my gurudeva's desire, but I am feeling unqualified to do this. Tomorrow I am leaving for Calcutta to go upon a ship across the ocean to America. I do not know what will befall me there, but I am praying most earnestly here for help*

."

Then His Divine Grace sought for blessing and left the place. The pujari was simply moved by his sincerity and determination. Years later when devotees from Western countries visited Advaita Bhavan and gave a "Back to Godhead" magazine, the pujari on seeing the picture of Srila Prabhupada in it could realise that it was none other than his friend, Srila Prabhupada who had actually accomplished the impossible mission of his Gurudeva. The pujari further said, "I saw that it was indeed he, starting alone and without pretense, who had accomplished this glorious miracle against all odds."

Of the many lessons which we can learn from the life of His Divine Grace, one of the most important lessons we need to learn from the above incident is that we should always earnestly and sincerely pray for the mercy of previous acaryas and should ***always keep alive the intense desire to serve the spiritual master***. Although his spiritual master had given instructions to him to preach in the west in the 1930s itself, Srila Prabhupada could make that dream come true only in the 1960s. But throughout the entire span of 30 years, he did not let the fire of desire to serve his spiritual master to go down or become dejected about not being able to put it into action immediately. He kept on increasing the spark of his desire to serve his spiritual master by his pure sadhana and earnest prayers to previous acaryas and hence even though he was in the late sixties, he could still make such wonders. It is definitely not possible to imitate such great souls. But let us take inspiration from His Divine Grace and remember the truth that we may not be fortunate to have the physical presence of spiritual masters and acaryas with us all the time. But we should always remember their instructions and beg for their mercy so that by their mercy we become useful instruments in their hands and fulfill their desire to serve Srila Prabhupada and Sri Sri Radha Krishna in this lifetime itself.

Jagat Guru His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada Tirobhava ki Jai! Srila Prabhupada ki Jai! Srila Gurudev ki Jai!

Thank you very much.

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

## Disinfection by Deity Darshan - Part 2

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

This is in continuation of the previous offering transcribing the class by HG Devakinandan Prabhujis in Abu Dhabi on 16th Oct 2011 on Srimad Bhagavatam verse 6.16.31 when king Citraketu takes darshan of the Lord. In the previous offering we saw the following points:

1. Whimsical approach to the deities is to be totally avoided.
2. Deity is non-different from Krishna.

In this offering, we shall see how Deity worship equals to behaviour.

3. **Deity worship equals to Behaviour:** When Citraketu Maharaj saw Krishna, he saw Krishna with all his heart. He did not see Krishna on the basis of philosophical speculation and that is why Srila Prabhupada says that the moment one takes darshan of Krishna, '*tad darshanaat*', then the real test of our seeing Krishna is seen in the transformation of our behaviour. If the behaviour does not change and the deities are there and year after year we are not making improvement in devotional service, then we are not really seeing the deities. We may be seeing the deities with our material eyes, but we are not taking darshan of Them. Darshan of the deity is different from just seeing. That is why the word is darshan. Otherwise, if we do not take darshan of the deities then it means we are not changing our behaviour. Bhagavatam must equal to behaviour and deity worship must also equal to behaviour. It is the same. Here when Citraketu Maharaj took darshan of Krishna, immediately a few things happened to his behaviour. Bhagavatam tells us that he became **silent and grave**. These are the two qualities that we must have if we are truly worshipping Krishna. If we are really worshipping and taking darshan of the deities every day, then we must check ourselves and ask whether we are silent in behaviour and whether we are grave in behaviour?

Maharaj said silent does not mean we just sit there and keep quiet. **Silent means that we preach and we speak only of Krishna**. We do not speak nonsense in front of deities. Otherwise, that means deity is not deity. That means for us, Krishna is not actually alive. This deity form is only brass. It has no value. Whatever we speak before the deities, is how we must behave before the deities. The first thing we must know is that we must become silent. In families, if we have deities in our room or hall with TV etc it will be terrible. Maharaj said, "*With the deities, if we are turning on the television, with the deities we are talking nonsense; with the deities, we are fighting. That means deity is not present before you. The deity may be there, but factually speaking, Jagannath has run away from the house. Why? Because there is no behaviour. There is no translation of theory into practice.*" So silence means we should speak Krishna Katha or we should make determined plans on how to preach or if we have to conduct our family life in front of the deities it should be of the standard which is required in Vedic culture. That is very important. That is the meaning of silence.

Maharaj also gave a deeper meaning to silence. He said, "**silence means the ability to tolerate the material desires that come into our heart because** in the purport, Srila Prabhupada writes that when one sees the deity regularly, one will gradually be disinfected of all material desires." The two words we must remember are '**regularly and gradually**'. When we regularly see Krishna, gradually He will disinfect us."



4. **Disinfection by deity darshan:** If we regularly use soap, we will be disinfected. In the same way, if we regularly take darshan of Krishna, what will happen is, we will be disinfected of all the material desires in our hearts. The root cause of all our problems is the desires because if we never had a single desire in our heart, we would never have to take human birth again. This human body is the product of desires. This is what Rshabha deva says in Srimad Bhagavatam 5.5.4:

*nūnaṁ pramattaḥ kurute vikarma  
yad indriya-prītaya āpṛṇoti  
na sādhu manye yata ātmano 'yam  
asann api kleśada āsa dehaḥ*

**When a person considers sense gratification the aim of life, he certainly becomes mad after materialistic living and engages in all kinds of sinful activity. He does not know that due to his past misdeeds he has already received a body which, although temporary, is the cause of his misery. Actually the living entity should not have taken on a material body, but he has been awarded the material body for sense gratification. Therefore I think it not befitting an intelligent man to involve himself again in the activities of sense gratification by which he perpetually gets material bodies one after another.**

What is the definition of sinful activities? Srila Prabhupada says that when one conducts a sinful activity, it is defined by not remembering Krishna. **Any activity that does not make us remember Krishna, is defined as sinful.** What an amazing definition of sin. In the entire world and all the religions, nobody has defined sin as Srila Prabhupada has done. So every time we take up an activity, even amongst the devotees, which does not make us remember Krishna, that activity is sinful. That is why we are engaged in deity worship, the test of our deity worship is found in our speech. What we speak is a true indication of how we worship the deity. If we speak non-sense, and everything and anything except Krishna, then the deity worship is really just sense gratification. But if we are always speaking Krishna Katha, reading Srimad Bhagavatam, studying very hard, then automatically one can tell that we are really disinfected from material desires.

Maharaj said, *"If you really want to know how you are worshipping the deity at home, please examine your own behaviour first. There must be a direct relationship between deity worship and behaviour because 90% of our behaviour is dictated by our material desires. **Every time we have a desire, we behave in a certain way. If the desire is to serve Krishna and His devotees, we are disinfected. If the desire is to show our name and fame, then we are infected. We cannot be silent. We will talk. Whatever that comes out of the tongue is going to be painful, going to be sharp, going to be harsh and instead of causing peace amongst the devotees, it will cause agitation and disturbance of the mind. That shows that we are not really taking darshan of Krishna.**"* We are just putting Him up there, taking nice pictures of Him, changing shrngaar just like we change clothes for our pets. Nowadays pets wear dresses. Dogs wear trousers, bows and one time we were taking a walk along the beach and Maharaj saw this and he was shocked and said nowadays even dogs are being dressed and they are dressed more decently than human beings. So Maharaj said, *"Do not make your deity into a pet. Oh! The shrngaar is very nice! So I am doing nice deity worship. No."* When Maharaj takes darshan of the Deities, he used to see Them and if the shrngaar is very nice but the mood was not right, Maharaj will say, *'the shrngaar is not nice'*, because Maharaj connected deity worship to the behaviour of the person worshipping the deity, not what was put on the deity. Maharaj said, *"Whatever shrngaar that is put on the deities looks nice because of the deity. It is not that if you put a nice mukut or crown the deity looks very nice. Please correct your attitude. The mukut looks nice because it is on the deity and not vice versa. So if we put a wonderful looking shrngaar it does not mean the deity looks nice. It just means the shrngaar looks nice because of the deities. This is the way to become **grave.**"*

Prabhuji went on to explain how the gravity in our devotional service is manifested and the same shall be transcribed and offered in the next offering, Krishna willing.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,  
Vaijayantimala devi dasi,  
Abu Dhabi.