

Sink the Truth in the Heart - Part 4

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in conclusion of the partial transcription of nectarean Bhagavatam class given by our beloved spiritual master H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj on Srimad Bhagavatam verse 3.9.5 in Sri Sri RadhaNeelMadhav dham, Rajkot. In the previous offering we heard the following points from Maharaj:

1. We must digest the shlokas and not just 'know' them.
2. We must be attached to Lord's lotus feet and not to our funeral ceremony and samadhi.
3. We should keep devotional service simple and not complicate it with electronic items.
4. Things perceived through mind are illusion.
5. Smell the aroma of Bhagavatam through the ears.
6. Minimise your necessities.

Now let us continue to hear more nectar from Maharaj.

7. **Fill the ears with Krishna-katha:** We should try to habituate ourselves to smell the aroma of lotus feet through our ears. *tasmīn mahān-mukharitā madhubhic-caritra- pīyūṣa-śeṣa-saritaḥ paritaḥ sravanti* - This nectar is flowing like a river. That nectar, we should try to smell through the ears. The constitution of the ear is worth understanding. Three parts of ear we have. One is outer ear, which does the work of disc. You know telephone tower, it uses a disc. So outer ear just performs the work like that disc. And it is a very expert arrangement of the disc. Our material disc is like a saucer. Ear is not like a saucer. There are different depths and different instruments are there to accept the different waves. Please understand this. Spiritual knowledge cannot be sucked by disc, but could be captured only by the ears. Aroma cannot be smelled by ear if it had shape like disc. Ear has a definite constitution and because of the curves present in it, different reactions to the waves of the sound is going on. Every sound has a different reaction. If wife comes, without seeing we know that wife has come, because we are familiar with that sound wave. The thing is we immediately recognise all our familiar sounds. In the same way, the transcendental sound vibrations have different effects and those sound vibrations are subtle. Subtle vibrations goes through the channel, that is the middle part of the ear. It is like a tube. In that channel also, there are thin hairs, which filter the sound again, the transcendental sound also. Then in the end part again we have a tiny hair which react according to sound vibration. They send the pleasing signal or unpleasing signal, either we are happy to hear or we are not happy to ear. And these signals all goes on very subtly and every second of our existence, these reactions are going on. And we are now just thinking about one organ which is created by Krishna. And without His attention, by His energies, these organs are running. So why can't we get attached to these things than to get attached to things which are not going to take us anywhere really?

Whether we have a big hall or small hall, whether there is hut or no hut, why we are worrying about these things? The whole world is completely misdirected. Prabhupada very nicely says that Bhagavatam is meant to create a revolution in the impious life of the world's misdirected civilization. The whole civilization is misdirected. Can we not understand these things and propagate to the best of our ability? May be hearers will not be there. Hearers will never be there.

Our expectation is not for the hearers. We go on for our own understanding. And please try to keep your eyes open and your hearts completely open wide, to imbibe these vibrations, which are coming from Prabhupada's books. Please try to utilize those vibrations and try to scrutinize. As soon as scrutinization is there, the essence will go inside. And this is attachment. This attachment must increase. Otherwise we are wasting our time. **Please not for any other living entity, for our own sake, we have to do these things. Otherwise we are really wasting our existence.**

8. **Read and Write:** We should not "Maya"ise the things. We should "Krishna"ise the things. This is the way to

'Krishna'ise. It is very easy for me to say. But every second of our existence is a test. That is why constant vibrations should go on. Prabhupada realised this and that's why he has given us Bhagavatam classes, Bhagavad Gita classes in the morning and evening, in between seva, chanting, distribution of books. Write something about it or think about it. Don't waste your time unnecessarily. Please have a Bhagavatam set with you, Prabhupada's set. And you will require years together to understand that. So write something. **Always read and write. Read and write. Please, even if one verse you have to prepare, write it. So that you will have some reference for reading.** We may read and forget. Writing will give you the reminders. Notebook, I can take anywhere. Whole set, I cannot take anywhere. And even if I have computer, I have to find out the plug and this and that. So computers are also useless. But your diary will be useful. So please prepare notes in your diaries. Don't study without the diary. And you should write. Once when I was reading from my diary, one devotee asked me, "Maharaj, Can I xerox your diary?" I told him, "*You may xerox, but you will not understand anything, because that is my preparation.*" **So please don't xerox anybody else's diary. You prepare your own diary. You will have to study yourself. You know what is to be understood. Krishna is situated in everyone's heart. So according to your tendency He will show you the mercy. He will give the intelligence to write. So please by your own hand writing, you should do it and don't delay these things and then aroma will come from there.** I have taken notes since 1970 and even now when I read those notes, I get so many nice verses, stories, everything is there. Please try to maintain these things. In future we will not be habituated to write. So continue writing habit. So everybody should see that you are writing by pens or pencils or whatever. **Use nice diaries, nice handwriting and make it clear, so that anybody reads, they will understand** . Jai! Srila Prabhupada ki Jai!

Our heartfelt thanks to Maharaj for these practical instructions and we pray at his lotus feet that we practise the same in this life.

Thank you very much.

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

Is Krishna Partial? - Part 1

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

When something untoward happens in our lives we always question Krishna, "Why me?". We then think that may be Krishna is partial to some persons and inimical to some others. Canto 7 of Srimad Bhagavatam, which is called "The Science of God", commences with the very same questions from Parikshit Maharaj to Sukadeva Goswami. He asks why the Supreme Personality of Godhead, although equal to everyone, became partial for the sake of Indra and kill his enemies? Maharaj Yudhishthira similarly questions Narada Muni how Sisupala and Dantavakra receive the mercy of the Lord and attain sayujya mukti even when they were so envious of the Lord and were always blaspheming Him from their very childhood whereas King Vena was sent to hell for blaspheming the Lord. Let us contemplate on the responses of Sukadeva Goswami and Narada Muni to these questions with the vivid examples they give to prove the position of Krishna towards everyone.

1. **Lord Vishnu is transcendental to material qualities:** Srimad Bhagavatam vesre 7.1.6 gives the first clue to the answer. It says,

*nirguṇo 'pi hy ajo 'vyakto bhagavān prakṛteḥ paraḥ
sva-māyā-guṇam āviśya bādhya-bādhakatām gataḥ*

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vishnu, is always transcendental to material qualities, and therefore He is called nirguna, or without qualities. Because He is unborn, He does not have a material body to be subjected to attachment and hatred. Although the Lord is always above material existence, through His spiritual potency He appeared and acted like an ordinary human being, accepting duties and obligations, apparently like a conditioned soul.

All the material sufferings in the form of happiness and miseries is because we have accepted the material body and Krishna being unborn and having a spiritual body, cannot be affected by the material modes. Just as in the case of Lord Rama, He appeared to grieve so much when Ravana abducts Sita but, at the same time, He gives up Sita at some words of a simple washerman. So it is clear that He is above the modes and not affected by them. But He accepts and acts apparently like an ordinary human being. This is the completeness of the Lord. He can do anything, whether material or spiritual. So when He kills demons it is His mercy, when He protects demigods it is His mercy. Everything is His mercy. In Bhagavad Gita Chapter 6, from verse 37 to 43, when Arjuna asks the doubt what happens to the unsuccessful transcendentalist who falls down due to worldly mindedness, Krishna replies that he is given chance again in his next life to continue the process to make further progress to achieve complete success and attain the supreme goal.

From material point of view also, if we see the 12th chapter of Canto 6 of Srimad Bhagavatam, Indra was never free of anxiety whereas Vrtrasura was always at peace even when he was defeated in the battle and that is why he was liberated. Indra wanted all opulence and the Lord granted him his wish, but anxiety is part of the bargain. Even after killing Vrtrasura he wants to kill the 49 Marut ganas. In the purport of SB 6.12.8, Prabhupada writes that actually Indra is asura and Vrtrasura is sura. So actually if we see, it is Vrtrasura who was favoured by Krishna by giving him liberation rather than Indra who is never free from anxiety.

The material qualities sattva guna, rajo guna and tamo guna belong to the material world and do not touch the Supreme Lord. SB 6.4.29 says,

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

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

He is '*guṇāpāya*', the cause of the annihilation of everything made of material modes of nature. Thus Krishna is never influenced by the material qualities. Therefore there is no question of partiality in the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

We will continue with more reasons to support why Krishna is not partial to anyone in the subsequent offerings on the subject.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,
Uma Prathap
Abu Dhabi.

Our Attitude towards Devotional Standards - Part 1

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In Srimad Bhagavad Gita 3.30 Lord Krishna demands,

*mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi sannyasyādhyātma-cetasā
nirāśīr nirmamo bhūtvā yudhyasva vigata-jvaraḥ*

Therefore, O Arjuna, surrendering all your works unto Me, with full knowledge of Me, without desires for profit, with no claims to proprietorship, and free from lethargy, fight.

Here Krishna talks of three kinds of renunciation or tyaga:

1. **Karttva buddhi tyaga** - Giving up of the idea that, 'I am the doer': Here Krishna says, '*mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi sannyasyādhyātma-cetasā*' - '**Surrender all your works unto Me, with full knowledge of Me.**' Srila Prabhupada writes in the purport that the Supreme Lord is the soul of all souls; therefore, one should depend solely and wholly on the Supreme Soul without personal consideration.

2. **Phala tyaga** - Renunciation of the fruits of activities: *nirāśīr* - Srila Prabhupada writes that *nirāśīr* means that one has to act on the order of the master but should not expect fruitive results. The cashier may count millions of dollars for his employer, but he does not claim a cent for himself.

3. **Mamata tyaga** - Renunciation of the attitude that, 'everything is mine': *nirmamo* - Prabhupada writes that one has to realize that nothing in the world belongs to any individual person, but that everything belongs to the Supreme Lord. That is the real purport of *mayi*, or "Unto Me." And when one acts in such Krishna consciousness, certainly he does not claim proprietorship over anything. This consciousness is called *nirmamo*, or "Nothing is mine."

The Lord says that all the above three renunciation has to be executed throwing off all reluctance, feverish mentality and lethargy (*vigata-jvaraḥ*). The moment we hear this, we are overwhelmed by the lofty standards placed by Lord Krishna before us. Srila Prabhupada writes in the purport that, "*This verse clearly indicates the purpose of the Bhagavad-Gita. The Lord instructs that one has to become fully Krishna conscious to discharge duties, as if in military discipline. Such an injunction may make things a little difficult; nevertheless duties must be carried out, with dependence on Krishna, because that is the constitutional position of the living entity.*"

When the standards are too lofty and unrealistic according to our estimation, then we react in either of the two ways as mentioned below:

1. **We become resentful**: One is that we become resentful or we reject the injunction feeling that it is highly impractical and impossible. This is basically because of our envious nature (*asuya*). We are not accepting our constitutionally subordinate position and we start questioning why should Krishna only enjoy? Why not me? This is because the sense of enjoyment spirit has been current a very long, long time, owing to material association. This leads to resentment and rejection of the standards of devotional service. Here we remember the story of the fox rejecting the grapes as sour just because it could not reach them.

2. **We feel helpless, hopeless and depressed**: Another kind of reaction when we find the standards unattainable is, we develop a deep sense of helplessness, hopelessness and defeat. We become too depressed that we give up the enthusiasm to serve Krishna. We say, "I am too fallen. I cannot follow all this." We become too morose or discouraged in devotional service. We may drift into an impersonal consciousness or give up devotional service to the Lord. This is

basically because of the lack of faith in devotional service (ashraddha). Our idea is that, 'my conditioning by these tendencies is more powerful than the redeeming mercy of Krishna and His devotional service.' Thus we become self centered and 'I' conscious instead of Krishna conscious. Both the above tendencies cheat us of spiritual advancement.

The way to overcome these two tendencies is very wonderfully described by the Lord in Srimad Bhagavad Gita 3.31 and we shall see the same in the ensuing mail, Krishna willing.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

Our Attitude towards Devotional Standards - Part 2

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In the last offering we saw that when the spiritual standards are unattainable by us,

1. We become resentful and reject the standards or
2. We feel helpless, hopeless, defeated and depressed and lose our enthusiasm to serve the Lord.

In order to overcome resentment and hopelessness as described above, Lord Krishna speaks in BG 3.31,

*ye me matam idam nityam anutiṣṭhanti mānavāḥ
śraddhāvanto 'nasūyanto mucyante te 'pi karmabhiḥ*

Those persons who execute their duties according to My injunctions and who follow this teaching faithfully, without envy, become free from the bondage of fruitive actions.

Here the two important words are 'śraddhāvanto' - '**with faith and devotion**' and 'nasūyanto' - '**without envy**'. We saw that we are not following the standards because we are envious leading to resentment and because we are faithless leading to hopelessness and defeat. Therefore Srila Prabhupada very compassionately writes in his purport to BG 3.31 that, "*In the beginning of Krishna consciousness, one may not fully discharge the injunctions of the Lord, but because one is not resentful of this principle and works sincerely without consideration of defeat and hopelessness, he will surely be promoted to the stage of pure Krishna consciousness.*" The Lord Himself encourages the living entities in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.20.27-28,

*jāta-śraddho mat-kathāsu nirviṇṇaḥ sarva-karmasu
veda duḥkhātmakān kāmān parityāge 'py anīśvaraḥ
tato bhajeta mām prītaḥ śraddhātur dṛḍha-niścayaḥ
juṣamāṇas ca tām kāmān duḥkhodarkāmś ca garhayan*

Having awakened faith in the narrations of My glories, being disgusted with all material activities, knowing that all sense gratification leads to misery, but still being unable to renounce all sense enjoyment, My devotee should remain happy and worship Me with great faith and conviction. Even though he is sometimes engaged in sense enjoyment, My devotee knows that all sense gratification leads to a miserable result, and he sincerely repents such activities.

It is very nicely mentioned in the purport on what should be our feeling when we are unable to attain the spiritual standards.

The word dṛḍha-niścayaḥ ("Steadfast conviction") indicates that in any circumstance a devotee is completely determined to go on with his prescribed duties for Krishna. Thus he thinks, "By my previous shameful life my heart is polluted with many illusory attachments. Personally I have no power to stop them. Only Lord Krishna within my heart can remove such inauspicious contamination. But whether the Lord removes such attachments immediately or lets me go on being afflicted by them, I will never give up my devotional service to Him. Even if the Lord places millions of obstacles in my path, and even if because of my offenses I go to hell, I will never for a moment stop serving Lord Krishna. I am not interested in mental speculation and fruitive activities; even if Lord Brahma personally comes before me offering such engagements, I will not be even slightly interested. Although I am attached to material things I can see very clearly that they lead to no good because they simply give me trouble and disturb my devotional service to the Lord. Therefore, I sincerely repent my foolish attachments to so many material things, and I am patiently awaiting Lord Krishna's mercy

."

In an athletic hurdle race, to overcome the hurdle, sometimes we step back and increase the momentum so that we may cross over the hurdle. In the same way, in our devotional life also, instead of feeling resentment and hopelessness, we should try to take a step back in the sense that we should sometimes try to contemplate within ourselves internally and try to find out the anarthas within us and make efforts to get rid of them by improving and increasing the momentum of our saadhana. The Lord again assures in SB 11.20.29,

*proktena bhakti-yogena bhajato māsakṛn muneḥ
kāmā hṛdayyā naśyanti sarve mayi hṛdi sthite*

When an intelligent person engages constantly in worshiping Me through loving devotional service as described by Me, his heart becomes firmly situated in Me. Thus all material desires within the heart are destroyed.

Thus by engaging in the process of loving devotional service two things are assured.

1. **Non envious nature which rids us of being resentful:** By serving the Lord, one becomes strengthened in the conviction that Sri Krishna is the only actual enjoyer and all others are meant to share the Lord's pleasure through devotional service.

2. **Faith which rids us of hopelessness:** When one is constantly engaged in the devotional service of the Lord by hearing and chanting the Lord's transcendental glories with firm faith, he gets relief from the harassment of material desires. Instead of becoming discouraged we faithfully wait for the process of devotional service to naturally purify the heart of all contamination. By faithful hearing of the mercy and glories of the Lord one will gradually be freed from all material desire and clearly see at every moment the utter frustration of sense gratification. Chanting the glories of the Lord with firm faith and conviction is a tremendously powerful spiritual process that enables one to give up all material association.

Let us always try to remember the following lines from the purport to SB 11.20.29, "*There is actually nothing inauspicious in the devotional service of the Lord. Occasional difficulties experienced by a devotee are due to his previous material activities. On the other hand, the endeavor for sense gratification is completely inauspicious. Thus sense gratification and devotional service are directly opposed to each other. In all circumstances one should therefore remain the Lord's sincere servant, always believing in His mercy. Then one will certainly go back home, back to Godhead.*"

Thank you very much.

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

"Not Necessary" Means Expensive

Dear Vaishnavas,

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

The following is my notes from His Holiness Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj's Srimad Bhagavatam classes 2.3.12 and 5.18.3 given in London on October 26 and 27, 2007. As we know, Maharaja always stresses that we practically apply the Bhagavatam's teachings. Now, by the mercy of the devotees, may that practical meaning also dawn to us.

*jñānam yad āpratinivṛtta-guṇormi-cakram
ātma-prasāda uta yatra guṇeṣv asaṅgaḥ
kaivalya-sammata-pathas tv atha bhakti-yogaḥ
ko nirvṛto hari-kathāsu ratim na kuryāt*

Transcendental knowledge in relation with the Supreme Lord Hari is knowledge resulting in the complete suspension of the waves and whirlpools of the material modes. Such knowledge is self-satisfying due to its being free from material attachment, and being transcendental it is approved by authorities. Who could fail to be attracted?

Maharaja instructed us to learn this verse, including the translation.

Reading from the purport: "...For a devotee, all mundane activities, social and political, become unattractive, and in the mature state such a devotee becomes uninterested even in his own body, and what to speak of bodily relatives. In such a state of affairs one is not agitated by the waves of the material modes."

Maharaja made the point that we should not artificially struggle to get something. Because that which is already easily available to us by the grace of the Lord, that is all we actually need in life. He made a comparison between what is freely available, like breathing and chanting, versus expensive things like liquor. "That which is required is provided in plenty by the Lord. No charge, because its natural! 'Not necessary' means expensive. That is the temporary nature of this material world. We have to be controlled. It is easy to understand these verses, but we have to also engage ourselves in these topics of Bhagavad-gita and Srimad Bhagavatam and practise them, otherwise we'll be lost to the material whirlpool."

Maharaja quoted from Bhagavatam 1.1.10 purport: "Overeating, over-sense gratification, overdependence on another's mercy, and artificial standards of living sap the very vitality of human energy."

We come together for this (Srimad Bhagavatam), otherwise no need even. This is the way to study Bhagavatam. Getting into the verse and finding the practical meaning. We should always THINK about it. So that we can actually apply the Bhagavatam principles to today's situation. Otherwise, for people in general, the whole thing will be out-dated.

Srila Prabhupada mentions in his purport to Srimad Bhagavatam verse 5.18.3, "*Material happiness means to have good facilities for eating, sleeping, sexual intercourse and defense. Within this world, the materialistic person lives only for these four principles of sense gratification, not caring for the impending danger of death. After his father's death, a son tries to inherit his money and use it for sense gratification. Similarly, one whose son dies, tries to enjoy the possessions of his son. Sometimes the father of a dead son even enjoys his son's widow. Materialistic persons behave in this way. Thus Sukadeva Goswami says, "How wonderful are these pastimes of material happiness transacted by the will of the Supreme Personality of Godhead!" In other words, materialistic persons want to commit all kinds of sinful activities, but without the sanction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, no one can do anything. Why does the Supreme Personality of Godhead permit sinful activities? The Supreme Lord does not want any living being to act sinfully, and He begs him through his good conscience to refrain from sin. But when someone insists upon acting sinfully, the Supreme Lord gives him the sanction to act at his own risk (mattaḥ smṛtir jñānam apohanaṁ ca, Bg.*

15.15). *No one can do anything without the sanction of the Lord, but He is so kind that when the conditioned soul persists in doing something, the Lord permits the individual soul to act at his own risk.*"

Maharaja said, *"Obedience is very important. For example, when the son is obedient to his father he gets all his needs provided. Therefore, we should always be obedient to the Bhagavad Gita and Srimad Bhagavatam principles (which is non-different from Krishna) - then everything will be provided. But as soon as we are rebelling, everything is destroyed."*

Let us be able to realize that materialistic pursuits, which are any undertakings done not for the spiritual master's pleasure, are all unimportant, expensive and a waste of time. The dictionary meaning of the word "Material" is "Of substantial import", but for the devotees of Krishna it is just the opposite. It is not substantial.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Amogha-drk Krishna das

Copenhagen, Denmark.

Is Krishna Partial? - 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 titled, "Is Krishna partial?", wherein we were meditating on responses from Sukadev Goswami and Narada Muni to Parikshit Maharaj and Yudhishtir Maharaj on this topic. In the previous offering we saw that,

1. Krishna is transcendental to material modes and hence He is impartial.

Let us now see the next argument put forth by Sukadev Goswami to clarify the position of Krishna as impartial.

2. **The prominent mode becomes victorious:** The activity of each living entity depends on the mode in which they predominantly operate. In Srimad Bhagavatam 7.1.8, Sukadev Goswami says,

*jaya-kāle tu sattvasya devarṣīn rajo 'surān
tamaso yakṣa-rakṣāṁsi tat-kālānuguṇo 'bhajat*

When the quality of goodness is prominent, the sages and demigods flourish with the help of that quality, with which they are infused and surcharged by the Supreme Lord. Similarly, when the mode of passion is prominent the demons flourish, and when ignorance is prominent the Yakshas and Raakshasa flourish. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is present in everyone's heart, fostering the reactions of sattva-guna, rajo-guna and tamo-guna.

From the above, it is very clear it is not that whoever is in sattva guna will always be victorious. It is not that Krishna is always partial to the demigods and they are always victorious. The whole material creation is divided in the three gunas. Even the eighteen puranas are divided according to the three gunas. So also the human society is divided into shudras in the mode of ignorance, vaishyas and kshatriyas in the mode of passion and brahmanas in the mode of goodness. And each varna and ashrama has its own prescribed duties according to the mode they are situated. When the demigods who are supposed to be in the mode of goodness perform their prescribed duties correctly, the mode of goodness becomes prominent and they flourish, they become victorious; otherwise they fall down. For instance when Indra disobeyed his spiritual master, the demigods fell down and they were defeated whereas Bali Maharaj followed his spiritual master's instructions and was victorious and conquered the three worlds. As Srila Prabhupada writes in the purport, "Everyone works under the influence of the various modes of material nature, and when the various modes are prominent, the demigods or demons appear victorious." The interaction of these modes brings about the prominence of one or the other guna and therefore when the demigods and demons fight, the demigods are victorious because of the prominence of the sattva guna and vice versa. However, this is not the partiality of the Supreme Lord.

How to recognize the manifestation of the different qualities in us can be found in verses 14.11 to 14.13 of Bhagavad Gita. **"The manifestations of the modes of goodness can be experienced when all the gates of the body are illumined by knowledge. O chief of the Bharatas, when there is an increase in the mode of passion, the symptoms of great attachment, uncontrollable desire, hankering, and intense endeavour develop. O son of Kuru, when there is an increase in the mode of ignorance, madness, illusion, inertia and darkness are manifested. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is present in everyone's heart, simply gives the results of the increase in the various qualities, but He is impartial. He supervises victory and defeat, but does not take part in them."**

To summarize, it is the prominence of different modes that influence us to act in particular ways thus:

Goodness: All the gates of the body are illumined by knowledge, happiness and cleanliness.

Passion: Attachment, uncontrollable desire, hankering for sense gratification, intense endeavor.

Ignorance: Madness, illusion, inertia and darkness.

Krishna willing, we will see more of proofs of Krishna's impartiality in the ensuing offerings.

Thank you very much.

Yours in the service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Uma Prathap

Abu Dhabi.

The Secret of Relishing Bhagavatam - Part 1

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

The following is a transcription of the class delivered by HG Devakinandan prabhujī in Sydney on Srimad Bhagavatam 1.3.44,

*tatra kīrtayato viprā viprarṣer bhūri-tejasaḥ
aham cādhyagamaṁ tatra niviṣṭas tad-anugrahāt
so 'ham vaḥ śrāvayiṣyāmi yathādhītaṁ yathā-mati*

O learned brahmanas, when Sukadeva Goswami recited Bhagavatam there [in the presence of Emperor Parikshit], I heard him with rapt attention, and thus, by his mercy, I learned the Bhagavatam from that great and powerful sage. Now I shall try to make you hear the very same thing as I learned it from him and as I have realized it.

This verse is very instructive because it tells us how to study Srimad Bhagavatam and very often we may take it for granted that Srimad Bhagavatam is available and sometimes we may read Srimad Bhagavatam but the taste for Bhagavatam and the joy and bliss of being fixed in Srimad Bhagavatam may not be there and the reason for that is described in the purport to this verse.

1. **We should hear Bhagavatam from a bonafide source:** This is the starting point. Srila Prabhupada writes in the purport to SB 1.3.44, "*One can certainly see directly the presence of Lord Sri Krishna in the pages of Bhagavatam if one has heard it from a self-realized great soul like Sukadeva Goswami. One cannot, however, learn Bhagavatam from a bogus hired reciter whose aim of life is to earn some money out of such recitation and employ the earning in sex indulgence. No one can learn Srimad-Bhagavatam who is associated with persons engaged in sex life. That is the secret of learning Bhagavatam. Nor can one learn Bhagavatam from one who interprets the text by his mundane scholarship. One has to learn Bhagavatam from the representative of Sukadeva Goswami, and no one else, if one at all wants to see Lord Sri Krishna in the pages. That is the process, and there is no alternative* . Suta Goswami is a bona fide representative of Sukadeva Goswami because he wants to present the message which he received from the great learned brahmana. Sukadeva Goswami presented Bhagavatam as he heard it from his great father, and so also Suta Goswami is presenting Bhagavatam as he had heard it from Sukadeva Goswami." So the first step of the formula to know Bhagavatam is to hear from the acharyas in the parampara or disciplic succession. If we do not know who is coming from parampara, all we have to do is we hear from Srila Prabhupada, and our spiritual masters.

2. **We should hear Bhagavatam with rapt attention:** In the purport, Srila Prabhupada writes, "**One should hear with rapt attention from the real person, and then he can at once realize the presence of Lord Krishna in every page. The secret of knowing Bhagavatam is mentioned here. No one can give rapt attention who is not pure in mind. No one can be pure in mind who is not pure in action. No one can be pure in action who is not pure in eating, sleeping, fearing and mating. But somehow or other if someone hears with rapt attention from the right person, at the very beginning one can assuredly see Lord Sri Krishna in person in the pages of Bhagavatam.**"

Here the word 'niviṣṭa' is used in the verse. It means fully attentive. When something is heard in a rapt manner, it means the sense of urgency is born in the heart. When one hears Srimad Bhagavatam with the sense of urgency, knowing that any time our life can end, then that attention becomes very fixed. If we sincerely believe that today we will not die, then we cannot be attentive to Srimad Bhagavatam. If we are fully conscious of the fact that at any time

we may go, then our attention becomes rapt.

When someone pays attention to something, where does his mind go? The mind goes to the subject he is paying attention. If a person does not pay attention, then he is seated here, but his mind is everywhere and anywhere except here. This is the nature of the mind. The mind is so expert that it can divide you into pieces. So if we want to be attentive, Srimad Bhagavatam tells us we must be '*tivrena*', meaning we must be one-pointed. **Only when you are attentive to Srimad Bhagavatam, will you become attracted to Bhagavatam.** Two 'A's always remember - **A**ttention and **A**tttraction. We are always wondering how to have taste for Bhagavatam. Before attraction can come, we must become attentive. If you are attentive in your service to the deities, then the deities will give you the mercy to be attracted to Them. This is the reciprocation between the Deity and the living entity. One cannot artificially induce attraction. If you artificially induce attraction to read Bhagavatam, for a while it is colorful but when you go back home, you cannot put Bhagavatam into practice. It was all in the air and the sky. This happens with the professional reciters of Bhagavatam who sound very pleasing to the ears, but we are unable to understand and realize Bhagavatam. We are here to realize that our time is short and we must become attentive to Bhagavatam. In the school, whenever we were attentive to any subject, we did well in it and most of the times we developed attraction for it. When there is no study or no attention, how can there be attraction? So for us to become attracted to the pages of Bhagavatam, Suta Goswami is giving the clue - **to be rapt in attention.** If you are rapt in attention (*matih*) it leads to attraction (*ratih*). If you become *matir Krishna*, you become *Krishna rati* and if you become *Krishna rati* (attracted to Krishna) your *gati* - destination will definitely be Krishna. That is why *matih* must come first, *rati* comes next and then *gati*.

We shall see the other points in the ensuing offerings, Krishna willing.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

The Secret of Relishing 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 offering transcribing the class by HG Devakinandan prabhujji on Srimad Bhagavatam 1.3.44. In the last offering we saw that,

1. We should hear Bhagavatam from a bonafide source.
2. We should hear Bhagavatam with rapt attention.

Here we see the other points,

3. **We should hear Bhagavatam submissively:** The best way to be attentive is to be submissive. Only when you are submissive to your teacher, you will be attentive to what he or she is speaking. If you are not submissive but challenging, whatever your teacher speaks, for the sake of challenging you will fight. The more you fight, the less attention you pay to the subject and the less attention you pay to the subject, the less attraction you will ever have for the subject. This is the reason we must be submissive. In the material world, if we are submissive in a corporate structure, it is taken as a sign of weakness. We say we will be eaten up. But in spiritual world it is the exact opposite. **The more submissive one is, more the fruits of ripened devotional service will manifest.** Srila Prabhupada gives the example of a tree with ripened fruits. It always bends low because of the weight of the ripened fruit. A tree without any fruit stands high because there is nothing there. So whenever we are not submissive, the false pride makes us stand up very straight and we challenge the authorities and when we challenge, we cannot concentrate on what the message is. **Concentration equals to attention. When there is no concentration, there is no attention; when there is no attention, forget about attraction.** Then Srimad Bhagavatam remains just as a book. After a while all other motives to read Bhagavatam come. Except the motive of glorifying Krishna there should be no other motive in our heart to read Bhagavatam. If you read Bhagavatam to learn shlokas, you are on the wrong track. Srimad Bhagavatam will give you all the knowledge to learn shlokas, but we will never be able to act on the shlokas.

What is the point of learning so many verses if our behaviour does not change? Guru Maharaj always said that **90% of Bhagavatam involves change of our behaviour. Only 10% is Krishna katha.** Every prayer every devotee speaks in Srimad Bhagavatam is about how the character of the devotee must come to the standard that Krishna wants. In the absence of good behaviour, we are doing disservice to Srila Prabhupada and Srimad Bhagavatam because the main purpose of our wearing dhoti and tilak is to change our consciousness. **Consciousness change means character change.** Whatever we were before, we must try to change and whatever is the standard of devotional behaviour we must try to imbibe. If with Srimad Bhagavatam we cannot change the behavior, we have lost the race. **If Bhagavatam changes our character, then it is a sign that we have heard Bhagavatam attentively and submissively. This is the litmus test.** The sages in Naimisharanya request Suta goswami to speak Bhagavatam and they give the reasons on why they want him to speak in SB 1.1.8,

*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.

The sages say that Suta Goswami is gentle in behaviour. This is the hall mark of a devotee. A devotee is never harsh. Devotees do not lose temper. Devotees do not shout. Devotees do not scream. This harshness is the trait of demoniac

nature. In Srimad Bhagavad Gita 16.4, the Lord mentions that the quality of harshness (*paarushyam*) belongs to demons. The quality of gentleness is the asset of the devotees. We cannot be artificially gentle. You will find, no matter what you do, if your sadhana is not up to the mark, you can behave as if gentle, but at some point Krishna will expose the temper within us. Suta Goswami was gentle because he was submissive to the acharyas. We cannot say that, 'I will be submissive only to spiritual master and do not care for the devotees.' Once when Srila Prabhupada was asked how to define a pure devotee to whom we must be submissive, Srila Prabhupada said, "*Except for you, everyone else is a pure devotee.*" The mood Srila Prabhupada was trying to cultivate in us is that we should not see the faults in the devotees. A gentle disciple is submissive not only to his guru, but he sees all other devotees to be more advanced than him genuinely. He feels that he can learn from every devotee atleast one aspect of Krishna consciousness. He believes sincerely that every devotee is a gem and when he sees the goodness in other devotees, he extracts the best in the other devotees and he learns. That submissive nature will make him endowed. What is endowment fund? Technically speaking it is a fund we do not have right to, but that is given to us out of mercy, so to speak. When someone is endowed with something, it is considered to be mercifully given. You have plenty of that you should not have or that which exceeds your quota. So the blessings of spiritual master, when they are pleased with the submissive and attentive disciple, those blessings will transform into an endowment of bhakti. So the sages at Naimisaranya tell Suta Goswami that he has the qualification to speak on Bhagavatam as he is endowed by his spiritual masters.

We shall see the other points in the ensuing offering, Krishna willing.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

The Secret of Relishing 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 offering transcribing the class by HG Devakinandan prabhujji on Srimad Bhagavatam 1.3.44. In the last offering we saw that,

1. We should hear Bhagavatam from a bonafide source.
2. We should hear Bhagavatam with rapt attention.
3. We should hear Bhagavatam submissively.

Here we see the other points,

4. We should depend on the mercy of Krishna and Guru: Srimad Bhagavatam tells us Suta Goswami felt that he cannot explain Bhagavatam unless he has the mercy of Krishna and Guru (*tad-anugrahāt*). This is the way to successfully study Srimad Bhagavatam. Mercy does not mean we ask, "Prabhu, give me mercy." We are habituated to do that. So what is the meaning of mercy? The meaning of mercy in the context of Srimad Bhagavatam is that, without the mercy of Krishna, we cannot understand a single page of Srimad Bhagavatam. If we think we can understand Bhagavatam on the strength of our brain power and our mental speculation, then we become professional reciters of Srimad Bhagavatam. But we have to sincerely understand that, "Unless and until Guru and Krishna invest on me all knowledge, I cannot understand Bhagavatam." For a devotee who is *prīti-pūrvakam* - who is engaged in loving devotional service, then Krishna says *dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ* - "I give the understanding". This understanding is the understanding of Bhagavatam.

5. We should realize Bhagavatam: Srila Prabhupada writes in the purport to SB 1.3.44 that, "*Simple hearing is not all; one must realize the text with proper attention.*" If I just speak what I hear and I do not act on it, then I cannot realize Srimad Bhagavatam. The word, 'realize' starts from the word real. Real means reality. Only if you put something on the ground, does it become reality. If we go back home after hearing Bhagavatam, to study Srimad Bhagavatam, then there is realization. That is why Sukadev Goswami and Suta Goswami are great devotees because not only did they hear Sirmad Bhagavatam, but after having heard it, they applied it practically into their lives, they gained experience from it and then they spoke about it and shared it with others. You can tell the difference when a speaker is living Bhagavatam and he is just speaking Bhagavatam. Srila Prabhupada always said we may not know how to cook nice kichdi, but we know how to taste kichdi and tell about it. You cannot cheat the public. If we really want to spread Krishna consciousness, if we really want to become Srila Prabhupada's soldiers, the first thing we must do is to realize. Not to just hear, but after hearing, put it in our heart and act on it. This is the mood of hearing.

6. We should be anxious to receive the message of Bhagavatam: Srila Prabhupada says in his purport to SB 1.1.2 that we should be very anxious to hear Bhagavatam. We are always anxious to hear everything else except Bhagavatam. Not only must we be anxious, but Srila Prabhupada writes very beautifully in the purport, "*Without undergoing the different stages of realization set forth in the Vedas, one can be lifted immediately to the position of paramahansa simply by agreeing to receive this message.*"

What a wonderful statement! All we have to do is to become agreeable to Bhagavatam and anxious to hear it. That is all. Just agree to sit down and hear Bhagavatam and you can become paramahansa. So do not become disagreeable. Do not challenge Krishna. Do not challenge devotees because devotees are walking Bhagavata and please always serve the devotees. **There is a direct link between service to devotees and attraction to Srimad Bhagavatam. The more we serve with love and without motive, you will find you are naturally attracted to Srimad Bhagavatam.** You will find all the shlokas of Srimad Bhagavatam will be revealed in your mind. You will

find all the important solutions given in Srimad Bhagavatam and you can act on it.

7. **We should be chaste to Bhagavatam**: We should be chaste to Srimad Bhagavatam. It is always stated in vedic culture that a lady must be chaste to her husband and a husband must be chaste to his wife. It is known as *avyabhicāreṇa*. It is already stated in Srimad Bhagavatam, *kiṁ vā parair?* - "**What need is there for any other scripture?**" Why to go for any other books when we have, Bhagavatam, Bhagavad Gita, Chaitanya Charitamrita and all of Srila Prabhupada books. Chastity means one may have so many occupational engagements, but always remember daily that we have only one Supreme master and that is Sri Krishna. We have one supreme process and that is the process of devotional service and we have only one business and that is to glorify Krishna.

We shall see the other points in the ensuing mail, Krishna willing.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

The Secret of Relishing 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 offering transcribing the class by HG Devakinandan prabhujji on Srimad Bhagavatam 1.3.44, wherein Prabhujji was explaining the way to approach, study and relish Srimad Bhagavatam.

8. We should follow three ways to remember and study Bhagavatam: The three ways are mentioned in SB 12.13.18 - *tac chr̥ṇvan su-paṭhan vicāraṇa-paro*.

a) **tac chr̥ṇvan** - the first thing is we hear. When we want to hear, we must first start by hearing submissively. Open your heart to hear Srimad Bhagavatam.

b) **su-paṭhan** - After hearing, simply repeat it. Suta Goswami's great qualification is not his scholarship, not his memory power, but simply that he repeated exactly what Sukadev Goswami spoke. Not only do they repeat like a parrot, they repeated it by realization. When you repeat something after you have acted on it, then whatever we speak will have potency. Otherwise it will not touch the heart of the listeners. How powerful Suta Goswami must have been when he sat in the forest of Naimisaranya? They had only one qualification. No changing. No addition. No subtraction. No multiplication. No division. If the acharyas made a full stop, they repeated the full stop. If the acharya made a comma, they repeated the comma. That is how we must learn Srimad Bhagavatam. **Do not paraphrase Srimad Bhagavatam. Do not learn Srimad Bhagavatam the way you want it to be learnt. Learn Srimad Bhagavatam the way Srila Prabhupada and the acharyas have given us.** When Caitanya Mahaprabhu was asked why He was just chanting the Holy names of the Lord, why He was not speaking philosophy, Caitanya Mahaprabhu replied, "*My spiritual master told me, 'you are such a fool that you please just chant the Holy names and do nothing else'.*" Caitanya Mahaprabhu, who is non different from Krishna, could have sat down and repeated Srimad Bhagavatam to the whole universe. But instead He taught the world how to be a perfect disciple and a perfect listener. Whatever Guru has given as his instructions, we simply have to follow. We do not have to adjust the instructions. We do not have to modify the instructions. After Guru Maharaj has given instructions, we must not let our mind say, 'Guru Maharaj's instruction is not absolute. Now we can put it according to time, place and circumstances.' If Guru Maharaj wanted to give instructions according to time, place and circumstances, he would have told you. But because we lack faith, we adjust. If we really touch our hearts, those who follow the instructions of the spiritual master 100%, like Sukadev Goswami, Suta Goswami, Parikshit maharaj, Srimad Bhagavatam is always open to them. Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur Maharaj gave this very nice example.

A king used to maintain a group of monkeys for providing entertainment for his sons. The monkeys were very nicely fed with sumptuous delicacies everyday. The leader of the monkeys was well-versed in the scriptures of such wise personalities as Sukracarya, Brhaspati and Canyaka, and he used to teach the other monkeys these scriptures. There was also a pack of sheep in the kings palace and the little princes used to ride them for fun. One of those sheep was very fond of eating anything from the palace kitchen. The cooks in the kitchen had to beat the sheep quite often to prevent it from causing mischief. The monkey leader thought that this kind of behaviour every now and then may result in something disastrous for the monkeys in the long run. The sheep are extremely gluttonous and the cooks, on the other hand, are very adept in beating the sheep with whatever they find at hand. In case the cooks any time start hitting the sheep hit a burning stick from the fire, then the furry body of the sheep would surely start burning. When such a burning sheep starts running around in frenzy and by chance enters into the nearby horse stable, then the hay inside will catch on fire and the entire stable along with it's horses will be a blazing fire in no time. One ancient expert Salihotra, who is well versed in animal husbandry prescribes that burns on horse flesh can be healed by animal skin obtained from monkeys. Accordingly, the king will have the monkeys killed. Apprehending thus, the wise old monkey leader called along all the monkeys confidentially and told them about the possible danger. But the young ones didn't

listen. So the old monkey left for the forest alone. After few days, whatever the old monkey had predicted took place and as the young monkeys lost their lives simply because they disobeyed the elder's advice.

This story is allegorical of how the proud disciples of a genuine spiritual master do not want to accept his instructions per se, but they use their mental speculation and their mental gymnastics to find a way out of the solutions genuinely offered by guru. Those who disobey the orders of the acharyas, they will always be in trouble. That is why we always have difficulty in reading Srimad Bhagavatam, because we do not have the mentality that this is what would please our Guru Maharaj, Krishna and Srila Prabhupada. When you try to do an action in your life that pleases devotees and Krishna, what comes? Mercy comes. That is how we attract the mercy of the Lord. Mercy is already flowing, but is it the fault of the mercy that the ground on which it is flowing is hard, stony and infertile? We have no one to blame if we cannot ingest Srimad Bhagavatam in our lives because,

-Attention is not there.

-Rapt attention is not there.

-Submissiveness to being attentive is absent.

-Submission to the spiritual master is not per se.

-We have no concept that except for Krishna's mercy, we cannot study Srimad Bhagavatam.

This is *su-paṭhan*. It means we actually hear and we repeat. We realize what we repeat and act on it and live our life based on it. If we do this, then the final product, Srimad Bhagavatam tells us is *vicāraṇa-paro*.

c) ***vicāraṇa-paro*** – We scrutinizingly analyze and ingest what we have repeated. This is the mood of one who studies Srimad Bhagavatam. Never study Srimad Bhagavatam like a professional reciter. Do not study Srimad Bhagavatam because you have to study it. If we have that mood, it is same as coming before Their Lordships in the morning and saying, "Krishna, I am a pujari. I have to wake You up." In this mood, Krishna does not want to wake up. We will never wake up because we will perpetually be ignorant. But if we sincerely pray to Krishna before we sleep in the night that, "Krishna, You please as Supersoul, wake me up for Mangala arati so that You can then allow me to have Your darshan." Then why will not Krishna wake you up for Mangala arati? Similarly we pray, "Krishna, You are non-different from Srimad Bhagavatam. You please give me a chance to study Srimad Bhagavatam." When you sincerely pray for the mercy of Srimad Bhagavatam, do you really think Krishna will deny us that mercy? Why would He? ***For a sincere aspirant, Krishna is always available***. This is the mood of a Bhagavata. So the secret of studying Srimad Bhagavatam is clear.

We shall see the other points in the ensuing offering, Krishna willing.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

The Secret of Relishing 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 offering transcribing the class by HG Devakinandan prabhujji on Srimad Bhagavatam 1.3.44, wherein Prabhujji was explaining the way to approach, study and relish Srimad Bhagavatam. We saw the first eight points till now and we will see the subsequent points in today's offering.

9. **We should reject the material intentions**: All the above ways can only be successful if we remember one more point and that is in SB 1.1.2,

*dharmah projhita-kaitavo 'tra paramo nirmatsarāṇām satām
vedyaṁ vāstavam atra vastu śivadaṁ tāpa-trayonmūlanam
śrīmad-bhāgavate mahā-muni-kṛte kiṁ vā parair īśvaraḥ
sadyo hṛdy avarudhyate 'tra kṛtibhiḥ śuśrūsubhis 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.

In the first verse of Srimad Bhagavatam, Sukadev Goswami makes it clear who is Supreme. It is Krishna. We are not the supreme. Do not dictate to Srimad Bhagavatam, but be dictated by Srimad Bhagavatam. Do not try to dominate Srimad Bhagavatam, but be dominated by Srimad Bhagavatam. Do not try to conquer Srimad Bhagavatam, but be conquered by Srimad Bhagavatam. This is what the first verse is telling us. How do we get conquered by Srimad Bhagavatam? By accepting that Krishna is *satyaṁ paraṁ dhīmahi*.

Now that we know who is supreme, what must we do? That is stated in the second verse of Bhagavatam. If you want to approach the Supreme, you do only one thing. You please reject all activities that appear religious, but tinged with material intentions. As long as we have even a tinge of material motive, we cannot approach Srimad Bhagavatam with attraction. This cannot be compromised. This is the standard the acharyas have given us. Why? We may ask why Krishna is so strict. It is not that He is strict. He is setting us standards to purify ourselves. If we have even the slightest motive in our heart, you may study Bhagavatam, but you cannot realize Bhagavatam. The less motive that is in the heart, the easier it is to become attracted to Srimad Bhagavatam. So it is not the fault of Bhagavatam that we become fruitive when we sit down with Bhagavatam. It is not the fault of Bhagavatam that we think, "Now it is enough. Now we should do something else." It is not the fault of Bhagavatam when we say, "Prabhu, when I read Bhagavatam, I do not understand many times." It is a fact that there is motive when we sit to read Bhagavatam. ***If our only motive is to glorify Krishna and glorify devotees, then the pages of Srimad Bhagavatam will come alive.*** Srila Prabhupada will speak to us and all the blessings of the acharyas will be upon us. That is why Srimad Bhagavatam is as good as magic. It is magical because Krishna is Yogeshwara. He is a master mystic. He can make Srimad Bhagavatam come alive because He is non-different from Bhagavatam and all we have to do is to follow the process. Nothing else.

10. **We should understand that Srimad Bhagavatam is centered on hearing**: In Srimad Bhagavatam 3.9.5, Lord Brahma prays,

*ye tu tvadīya-caraṇāmbuja-kośa-gandharī
jighranti karṇa-vivaraiḥ śruti-vāta-nītam
bhaktyā grhīta-caraṇaḥ parayā ca teṣāṃ
nāpaiṣi nātha hṛdayāmburuhāt sva-puṃsām*

O my Lord, persons who smell the aroma of Your lotus feet, carried by the air of Vedic sound through the holes of the ears, accept Your devotional service. For them You are never separated from the lotus of their hearts.

Brahmaji says that we can smell the aroma of the lotus feet of Krishna only on the strength of hearing the glories of Krishna. Our eyes are judgmental and hence are dangerous and so more than seeing, hearing is important. We should hear from all the devotees sitting in Vyasasana and not judge the devotee and even if he speaks two lines from Srila Prabhupada's purports, that lecture is a success. In Srimad Bhagavatam verse 3.9.11 a few verse later, Brahmaji goes on to say how we can have darshan of Krishna by hearing,

*tvam bhakti-yoga-paribhāvita-hṛt-saroja
āsse śrutekṣita-patho nanu nātha puṃsām
yad-yad-dhiyā ta urugāya vibhāvayanti
tat-tad-vapuḥ praṇayase sad-anugrahāya*

O my Lord, Your devotees can see You through the ears by the process of bona fide hearing, and thus their hearts become cleansed, and You take Your seat there. You are so merciful to Your devotees that You manifest Yourself in the particular eternal form of transcendence in which they always think of You.

We shall see the other points in the ensuing mail, Krishna willing.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

The Secret of Relishing Bhagavatam - Part 6

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is the conclusion of the series titled "The Secret of Relishing Bhagavatam" which is a transcription of the class by HG Devakinandan prabhuji on Srimad Bhagavatam 1.3.44. In the previous offerings we saw that,

1. We should hear Bhagavatam from a bonafide source.
2. We should hear Bhagavatam with rapt attention.
3. We should hear Bhagavatam submissively.
4. We should depend on the mercy of Krishna and Guru.
5. We should realize Bhagavatam.
6. We should be anxious to receive the message of Bhagavatam.
7. We should be chaste to Bhagavatam.
8. We should follow the three ways to study Bhagavatam.
9. We should reject the material intentions.
10. We should understand that Srimad Bhagavatam is centered on hearing.

11. **The scientific process by which hearing Bhagavatam can become realization:** This process is given in three verse of SB 2.8.4, 5 and 6 and it is very important that we remember these verses,

*śṛṇvataḥ śraddhayā nityaṁ gṛṇataś 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.

Here the emphasis is on *sva ceshtitam* – **seriously by one's own endeavor**. Endeavor must be there if you want to approach Srimad Bhagavatam because Krishna is available free but He is not cheap. And when we sincerely endeavor to approach Srimad Bhagavatam, Krishna enters through our ears in the form of sound vibration and sits in the lotus of our hearts,

*praviṣṭaḥ karṇa-randhreṇa svānām bhāva-saroruham
dhunoti śamalam kṛṣṇaḥ salilasya yathā śarat*

The sound incarnation of Lord Krishna, the Supreme Soul [i.e. Srimad-Bhagavatam], enters into the heart of a self-realized devotee, sits on the lotus flower of his loving relationship, and thus cleanses the dust of material association, such as lust, anger and hankering. Thus it acts like autumnal rains upon pools of muddy water.

The lotus flower on which Krishna sits in our heart is actually our loving relationship with Him. When we take up Krishna consciousness our room is full of dust, but because the dust is very settled and it is so dirty, we think the room is clean. We are so used to the dirt in the room that it appears to be normal. That is a very bad sign. But when Krishna settles in the heart, the dust has to fly. When the dust is flying, we feel that all the trouble in the world is coming only when I have taken up reading Srimad Bhagavatam. Actually the trouble is not because of reading Bhagavatam. We are just beginning to see what is already been there but we were not able to see, because we became so used to it all. But now He is giving you the eyes to see because you started hearing Srimad Bhagavatam. So devotees are not to get discouraged when difficulties come. The difficulties are the cleansing process, the vaccuming service the Lord is doing

in their hearts. So we should not wilt away during difficulties but instead we should become fixed up that we are on the right track. This way our heart will become cleansed. The next verse says what happens to the devotee whose heart is thus cleansed by the process of bhakti,

*dhautātmā puruṣaḥ kṛṣṇa- pāda-mūlaṁ na muñcati
mukta-sarva-parikleśaḥ pānthaḥ sva-śaraṇaṁ yathā*

A pure devotee of the Lord whose heart has once been cleansed by the process of devotional service never relinquishes the lotus feet of Lord Krishna, for they fully satisfy him, as a traveler is satisfied at home after a troubled journey.

When our heart is thus cleansed by the process of devotional service, we thoroughly relish it no matter what happens in our life, and we will never even once think of leaving the shelter of Lord Krishna's lotus feet. This is the stage when our hearing of Bhagavatam gets transformed into realization.

12. **Srimad Bhagavatam is the practical way to attract Krishna's mercy:** In the relationship with devotees, the center should be Bhagavatam and Krishna. Whenever there is social intercourse between devotees (*bhūtānām yan mithaḥ kaliḥ*) they fight. Intimacy in devotee relationship means throwing Bhagavatam out. Keeping Sirmad Bhagavatam in the center means genuine friendly relationship between devotees. Srimad Bhagavatam even has impact in our relationship with family, with devotees and Krishna. Thus Srimad Bhagavatam is the most practical way to attract Krishna's mercy.

13. **The practical way to study Bhagavatam:** While describing the life of Svayambhuva Manu, Srimad Bhagavatam says in 3.22.35,

*ayāta-yāmās tasyāsan yāmāḥ svāntara-yāpanāḥ
śṛṇvato dhyāyato viṣṇoḥ kurvato bruvataḥ kathāḥ*

Consequently, although his duration of life gradually came to an end, his long life, consisting of a Manvantara era, was not spent in vain, since he ever engaged in hearing, contemplating, writing down and chanting the pastimes of the Lord.

This is the only verse where Srila Prabhupada is giving us a direct hint on how to study Srimad Bhagavatam. First we hear and then we contemplate on what we hear and then cement it by writing it down and then speak about it. This is a very practical way.

Our heartfelt thanks to HG Devakinandan prabhuji for revealing the secret of receiving Srimad Bhagavatam in our hearts.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

Is Krishna Partial? - 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 offering titled, "Is Krishna Partial?" wherein we were meditating on responses from Sukadev Goswami and Narada Muni to Parikshit Maharaj and Yudhishtir Maharaj on this topic. In the previous offerings we saw that,

1. Krishna is transcendental to material modes and hence He is impartial.
2. The prominence of goodness, passion and ignorance decides the victory.

Today let us see what more points Sukadev Goswami gives Parikshit as proof that Krishna is impartial,

3. Everyone enjoys the fruits of his qualitative activities (karma): We have to accept the fact that we enjoy fruits of our own activities. Whether I am enjoying or suffering, it is due to my karma only. That means I should not blame anybody. When something happens to us, first blame goes to the Lord, "O Krishna, why have You done to me?" However, if we can simply accept this one statement one hundred percent in our life, we will never be complaining and we are pacified. That is why H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj would always say that if we apply this one quality of blaming ourselves instead of blaming others, then our life will be successful. In this regard, Maharaj quotes a very powerful and practical verse from the shastras,

*sukhasya duḥkhasya na kopidātā
parodadātīti kubuddhireṣā
purākṛtam karma sadaiva bhujyate
dehin kvacin nistara yat tvayā kṛtam*

No one is the cause of our happiness and distress. Only a foolish person thinks that the miseries are given by others. We always enjoy happiness or distress based on our previous karma. So, as long as one is embodied, he has to patiently tolerate the results of his past karma and by this way he can get rid of it.

4. Krishna responds according to one's receptiveness: We are part and parcel of Krishna and so we have His characteristics in minute quantities. But because we are conditioned so much by the material modes, even the pleasure potency of the Lord becomes troublesome for us. A very good example for this is our lack of interest to take up the study of Bhagavatam and Bhagavad Gita seriously as Maharaj always wanted us to. The fire of sattva guna, rajo guna and tamo guna is burning in all of us, in different proportions. Depending on the proportion of these gunas within us, our receptiveness to understand Krishna differs. When a log of wood is wet, it will not catch fire easily. But if the wood is dry, immediately with a spark, it will catch fire. Same way, if we are covered by the lower gunas, the sattva guna which is also present within us will not be effective. But if we are clean, we become a recipient of Krishna's favor. Less intelligent men take this as partiality of Krishna. This is completely a misconception. This is not Krishna's partiality but it is His response to the proportion of our sincerity to understand Him. We have live examples before us of acaryas like Srila Prabhupada and many of his disciples like H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj who were so much favoured by the Lord, not because He was partial towards them but because they dedicated their lives for Him and Krishna had no other choice but to reciprocate, showering His mercy upon them.

H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj took up devotional service just by listening to a Bhagavatam lecture of Prabhupada. One day in Oxford Street he saw some westerners singing "Hare Krishna" and dancing in the street. He saw the devotion in them and he was very much attracted and he went to the temple in Bury Place near the British Museum and there he heard from a young devotee from Amsterdam, H G Hare Krishna Das. Maharaj is coming from a very very

traditional Vaishnava family in India and he himself was a sanskrit scholar. But he was listening to the young boy, younger than his son, speaking Srimad Bhagavatam and in his eagerness in hearing Bhagavatam and due to his natural humility, he was so deeply impressed that this devotee was speaking with so much conviction! It was a very moving experience for Maharaj and he asked, "How did you learn this?" and Hare Krishna Prabhu told that, "I am simply repeating the words I have read in the books of my spiritual master HDG AC Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada." From then on Maharaj was completely absorbed in studying Srila Prabhupada's books for hours together and preaching his message all over the world for the rest of his life. As it is mentioned in SB 7.1.9,

*vyotir-ādir ivābhāti saṅghātān na vivicyate
vidantya ātmānam ātma-stham mathitvā kavayo 'ntataḥ*

The all-pervading Personality of Godhead exists within the heart of every living being, and an expert thinker can perceive how He is present there to a large or small extent. Just as one can understand the supply of fire in wood, the water in a waterpot, or the sky within a pot, one can understand whether a living entity is a demon or a demigod by understanding that living entity's devotional performances. A thoughtful man can understand how much a person is favored by the Supreme Lord by seeing his actions.

Prabhupada gives a nice example in the purport that a teacher instructs the student if the student is capable of taking more and more instructions. Otherwise, in spite of being instructed by the teacher, the student cannot make strides in his understanding. This has nothing to do with partiality. Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita verse 10.10, "**To those who are constantly devoted to serving Me with love, I give the understanding by which they come to Me.**"

This indicates that Krishna is prepared to give bhakti-yoga to everyone, but one must be capable of receiving it. That is the secret. Thus when a person exhibits wonderful devotional activities, a thoughtful man understands that Krishna has been more favorable to this devotee. Srila Prabhupada went to America at the age of 69. Until then, he was making his foundation so strong that within the short span of ten years he could establish Krishna Consciousness throughout the world. There were many people who discouraged him from boarding the ship to America at that age but still he did not budge an inch from his determination. By his unflinching determination and dedication to serve the instructions of his spiritual master, he was favored by the Lord to achieve overwhelming success in his mission. Thus we can understand that Krishna responds according to the degree of our surrender.

Krishna willing, we will see more proofs of Krishna's impartiality in the ensuing offerings.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Uma Prathap

Abu Dhabi.

Is Krishna Partial? - 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 offering titled, "Is Krishna Partial?" wherein we were meditating on responses from Sukadev Goswami and Narada Muni to Parikshit Maharaj and Yudhishtir Maharaj on this topic. In the previous offerings we saw that,

1. Krishna is transcendental to material modes and hence He is impartial.
2. The prominence of goodness, passion and ignorance decides the victory.
3. Everyone enjoys the fruits of his qualitative activities (karma).
4. Krishna responds according to one's receptiveness.

Now let us see the influence of time factor upon us.

5. **Time's influence is impartial:** Sometimes time is favourable and sometimes it is unfavourable. Sometimes the time factor acts in the favour of the demigods and sometimes in favour of demons as well. In SB 7.4.26, Krishna advises demigods to wait till time is favourable for them. So they had to go on hiding. H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj gave a nice lecture on the influence of time upon every one, irrespective of whether he is a pious person following the religious principles or not. The following is an excerpt from his lecture.

"This is what Krishna is suggesting to the demigods. Once there was a great fight between the demigods and demons. It was so very hard that the demigods had to disappear, had to become invisible. If the demons see the demigods, they will kill them. The demigods were forced to be invisible, to the extent they were defeated. So the demigods went to Vishnu and prayed, "Lord, what is our mistake we are defeated like this?" So Krishna advised them that, "Time is not favourable to you at the moment." In our lives also things are not many times favourable. Vishnu advised them that, "Because time is not favourable to you, you please agree to the proposal put forward by danavas, You should agree. SB 8.6.24, '*yūyam tad anumodadhvam*' means 'time is not favourable for you'. '*yad icchanty asurāḥ surāḥ*' - 'therefore you should accept.' It is the order of Krishna. "You accept." It is not, "Please accept." No, no please. That is the practical way.

When the time is not favourable we should have to be dependent on them. And whatever they say we agree. So the time is not favourable. The Jews were fighting from the beginning with the Muslims. So once they conquered Mecca also. Mecca and Madina are their pilgrim places. So they were under the control of the Jews. The Muslims requested them, "Please just give us the two places so that we can carry out our pilgrimage, and the rest of it you can have it." So somehow they agreed. "All right. These two villages you take." So they had to accept that and the whole of Arabia came under the control of the Jews. Because at that time, time was not favourable to them. So they had to agree to the proposal of the Jews. This is very practical. Otherwise you are wiped off. In our lives also the time goes on changing. Many times it is favourable and many times it is not favourable. 'Not favourable' is always longer than favourable. **If time is the representation of Krishna then we have no other way but to go to Krishna to make the time favourable. He can make it, we can't do anything about it. So it is His weapon. So we have to go to Him. That is why the awareness of Krishna consciousness is required.** Otherwise we need not worry about this Krishna consciousness. In SB 1.9.14 and 15, Bhishmadev says in the very famous verses,

sarvaṁ kāla-kṛtaṁ manye bhavatām ca yad-apriyam
sapālo yad-vaśe loko vāyor iva ghanāvaliḥ
yatra dharma-suto rājā gadā-pāṇir vṛkodaraḥ
kṛṣṇo 'strī gāṇḍivam cāpaṁ suhṛt kṛṣṇas tato vipat

In my opinion, this is all due to inevitable time, under whose control everyone in every planet is carried, just as the clouds are carried by the wind. O how wonderful is the influence of inevitable time. It is irreversible - otherwise, how can there be reverses in the presence of King Yudhisthira, the son of the demigod controlling religion; Bhima, the great fighter with a club; the great bowman Arjuna with his mighty weapon Gaandiva; and above all, the Lord, the direct well-wisher of the Pandavas?

In the purport Prabhupada writes, "*The inevitable kaala, or time, controls even the action of the air and other elements. Everything, therefore, is controlled by the supreme kaala, a forceful representative of the Lord within the material world. Thus Yudhisthira should not be sorry for the inconceivable action of time. Everyone has to bear the actions and reactions of time as long as one is within the conditions of the material world. Yudhisthira should not think that he had committed sins in his previous birth and is suffering the consequence. Even the most pious has to suffer the condition of material nature. But a pious man is faithful to the Lord, for he is guided by the bona fide brahmana and Vaishnava following the religious principles. These three guiding principles should be the aim of life. One should not be disturbed by the tricks of eternal time. Even the great controller of the universe, Brahmaji, is also under the control of that time; therefore, **one should not grudge being thus controlled by time despite being a true follower of religious principles...** Despite the power of pious acts, the power of personalities, the power of expert management and the power of weapons under the direct supervision of Lord Krishna, the Pandavas suffered so many practical reverses, which can only be explained as due to the influence of kaala, inevitable time. Kaala is identical with the Lord Himself, and therefore the influence of kaala indicates the inexplicable wish of the Lord Himself. **There is nothing to be lamented when a matter is beyond the control of any human being.**"*

So Maharaj's solution to difficulties arising due to the influence of inevitable time is, "*Keep quiet and go on (with your devotional service), these things (our difficulties) will also go on according to their own way and disappear one day.*"

Krishna willing we shall continue more on this topic in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Uma Prathap

Abu Dhabi.

Is Krishna Partial? - Part 5

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In the previous offerings on this topic, "Is Krishna Partial?", we saw some of the reasons to prove that Krishna is impartial to every one and He treats every one alike. We saw that,

1. Krishna is transcendental to material qualities.
2. The prominent mode becomes victorious.
3. Everyone enjoys the fruits of his qualitative activities (karma).
4. Krishna responds according to one's receptiveness.
5. Time's influence is impartial.

Now let us continue with the same discussion and see more reasons to prove that Krishna is impartial.

6. Krishna is not under the time factor and therefore impartial: In Srimad Bhagavatam verses 7.1.11 and 12 Sukadeva Goswami tells Maharaj Parikshit,

*kālaṁ carantaṁ sṛjatiśa āśrayaṁ
pradhāna-pumbhyāṁ nara-deva satya-kṛt
ya eṣa rājann api kāla īsitā
sattvaṁ surāṅikam ivaidhayaty ataḥ
tat-pratyanīkān asurān sura-priyo
rajas-tamaskān pramiṇoty uruśravāḥ*

O great King, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the controller of the material and spiritual energies, who is certainly the creator of the entire cosmos, creates the time factor to allow the material energy and the living entity to act within the limits of time. Thus the Supreme Personality is never under the time factor nor under the material energy. O King, this time factor enhances the sattva-guna. Thus although the Supreme Lord is the controller, He favors the demigods, who are mostly situated in sattva-guna. Then the demons, who are influenced by tamo-guna, are annihilated. The Supreme Lord induces the time factor to act in different ways, but He is never partial. Rather, His activities are glorious, therefore He is called Urushrava.

In the purport Srila Prabhupada gives a very nice example of an electrician to prove the impartiality of Krishna. *An electrician connects both a heater and a cooler to the same electrical energy. The cause of the heating and cooling is the electrician's manipulation of the electrical energy according to his desire, but factually the electrician has nothing to do with causing heat or cold, nor with the enjoyment or suffering that results. In the same way, when the demi gods are favoured and the demons killed, it is not His partiality but the influence of the time factor.*

7. Krishna is not only impartial but very merciful as well: As it is said in above Srimad Bhagavatam verse 7.1.12, Krishna is called Urushrava, because He is most merciful and His activities are glorious. When He kills the demons, they always attain higher position. In the case of Sishupala, the Lord exhibited His impartiality even when killing him in the arena of the Rajasuya yajna performed by Maharaja Yudhisthira by giving him saayujya mukti. Srila Prabhupada writes in the purport of SB 7.1.16 that, '*Sishupala was neither a jnaani nor a bhakta yet simply by envy of the Lord he attained an exalted position by merging into the Lord's body. This is the Lord's mysterious mercy to Sishupala.*' It is said in Manu Samhita that when a murderer is killed by the king, it is actually the king's mercy upon the murderer, saving him from various kinds of sufferings due the reactions of his sinful activity. Similarly Krishna, the supreme judge

and supreme controller, is in fact merciful when He kills His enemies.

In SB 7.1.20, Srila Prabhupada writes that the shastras give evidence that if one blasphemes the Supreme Lord, his punishment is to remain in hellish life for millions of years more than one suffers by killing many brahmanas. Also in Bhagavad Gita verses 16.18-20 Krishna clearly tells Arjuna that demons who are envious of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are perpetually cast into the ocean of material existence into various demoniac species of life and never reach Krishna, instead they gradually sink down into the most abominable type of existence. However Sishupala instead of entering hellish life, attained saayujya mukti. This is because Sishupala and Dantavakra were former associates of Krishna and by Krishna's arrangement they had to take three births in the material world as demons before they go back to Vaikunta. So they had to take birth as Hiranyaksha and Hirayakashipu in their first birth, as Ravana and Kumbhakarna in their second birth and in their last birth they were born as Sishupala and Dantavakra and they went back to Godhead after being killed by Krishna Himself.

In case of Putana who came to kill Him, He killed her but gave her the exalted position of His mother in Vaikunta. The superfluous act of killing her did not diminish the Lord's impartiality. Prabhupada writes in Krishna Book that Putana came to kill Krishna but because He sucked her milk, she was immediately purified and her dead body attained a transcendental quality. She attained salvation because she gave milk to Him. So what can be said of those who are affectionate to Krishna in the relationship of mother, who with great love and affection always serve Him, the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the Supersoul in every living entity? It is concluded therefore, that even a little energy expended in the service of the Lord gives one immense transcendental profit. This is explained in Gita verse 2.40, '*sv-alpam apy asya dharmasya trāyate mahato bhayāt*' - **"Devotional service in Krishna consciousness is so sublime that even a little service rendered to Krishna knowingly or unknowingly gives one the greatest transcendental benefit."**

However, for a devotee, he does not aspire for liberation. His only aim is to serve Krishna wherever he is. In the purport of BG 8.27, Srila Prabhupada writes that for a devotee, by being absorbed in Krishna consciousness and thus being always dovetailed in His service, his path to the spiritual kingdom is safe, certain and direct. We know Srila Prabhupada himself, in his old age when he could have stayed on in Vrindavan and attained mukti, he travelled to America to be with hippies and spread the message of the Lord. He can be called the modern age Narada Muni who travels the three worlds to spread the message of Sri Krishna. To a devotee, it does not matter whether it is hell or heaven so long as he can serve the Lord.

Krishna willing, we will continue with discussions on the same topic in the forthcoming offerings.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Uma Prathap

Abu Dhabi.

Is Krishna Partial? - Part 6

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In the last five offerings we have seen the below points to prove the impartiality of Krishna.

1. Krishna is transcendental to material qualities.
2. The prominent mode becomes victorious.
3. Everyone enjoys the fruits of his qualitative activities (*karma*).
4. Krishna responds according to one's receptiveness.
5. Time's influence is impartial.
6. Krishna is not under the time factor and therefore impartial.
7. Krishna is not only impartial but very merciful as well.

Now we will continue with more evidence of His impartiality.

8. Krishna is unaffected by dualities like blasphemy or prayers: Krishna does not feel pleasure or pain when He is blasphemed by His enemies or praised with prayers by His devotees. In answer to Maharaj Yudhishtira's question to Narada Muni about why Sishupala received saayujya mukti even when he was always envious of Krishna from his very childhood and always blasphemed the Lord, Narada Muni responds in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 7.1.25,

*yan-nibaddho 'bhimāno 'yam tad-vadhāt prāṇinām vadhaḥ
tathā na yasya kaivalyād abhimāno 'khilātmanaḥ
parasya dama-kartur hi himsā kenāsyā kalpyate*

Because of the bodily conception of life, the conditioned soul thinks that when the body is annihilated the living being is annihilated. Lord Vishnu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the supreme controller, the Supersoul of all living entities. Because He has no material body, He has no false conception of 'I and mine.' It is therefore incorrect to think that He feels pleasure or pain when blasphemed or offered prayers. This is impossible for Him. Thus He has no enemy and no friend. When He chastises the demons it is for their good, and when He accepts the prayers of the devotees it is for their good. He is affected neither by prayers nor by blasphemy.

We are affected when someone disrespects us or we are pleased when we are praised. This is due to our ignorance. What is our ignorance? The ignorance is that we do not know ourselves factually. We think we are so and so, we attach ourselves with our body, our family, our possessions, our status in society, relatives and everything else but Krishna. The moment we realize that we are not this body, we are free. If we link to the second chapter of Bhagavad Gita, where Krishna talks to Arjuna about saankhya yoga, that the soul is immutable, it cannot be destroyed, it has no death, it lives forever, we realize that soul is not affected by anything as it is part and parcel of Krishna and Krishna is not affected by praise or blasphemy. He does not look at what we give Him, He looks at our bhaav, how many times we utter His name. Because His names are as purifying as the Lord Himself, it will purify us.

We have taken this material body to suffer, *dukkhalayam asasvatam*. The reality that we are not this body, has to be drilled into us time and again. Even when we are in devotional service we are affected by the bodily concept of "Me" and "Mine". The basic reason is not keeping Krishna in the center of all our relationships and activities. Our relationship with everyone has to be changed and it should be based on the understanding that we are all parts and parcels of Krishna. The moment this happens, our relationship with Krishna is established again. We are now not thinking about Him at all. He is with us but we are not with Him. Deity worship is a process by which we can re-establish our

relationship with Him. In olden days, all the activities of the household were centered around the Deity of the house and people considered the Deities as the owner of the house. Same way if all our activities and relationships with others are also centered around Him, then all our sufferings will vanish. All the pain is for the body, not for the soul. Because our soul has associated with this body and identified itself with it, we feel all the sufferings and are affected by praise, chastisement, blasphemy, etc.

As stated in Bhagavad Gita verse 13.3, Krishna is within our hearts as Paramatma, together with the individual soul. But He is detached from all the activities of the body and mind. If we can be detached from the activities of the body like the Supersoul and instead offer all the fruits of the activities to Krishna, we also will be unaffected by praise or blasphemy by others just as the Lord is unaffected by praise or blasphemy. However when the devotee offers nice prayers to Him, the devotee is benefited because it gives him pleasure thinking of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And when the enemy of the Lord blasphemes Him, the Lord is very kind and because he is always thinking of the Lord, he also benefits. Either through enmity or friendship if a conditioned soul thinks of the Lord, he becomes attached to the Lord and thus receives great benefit. When the Lord punishes a person like the demon, it is for his ultimate good. For example He punishes him for one life by putting him in a lower species, and when the soul gets over the habit of blaspheming and the soul becomes completely pure, the Lord takes him back to Godhead.

Krishna willing, we will discuss further points in the next mail on this topic.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Uma Prathap

Abu Dhabi.

108 Ways of Glorifying the Lord - Part 18

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 last few offerings, we were seeing few of the glories of Lord mentioned in Srimad Bhagavad Gita. We now move on to the next glorification.

Glorification 29 - Lord is glorified as Madhusudana: In Srimad Bhagavad Gita verse 1.35, the Lord is addressed as Madhusudana. He is primarily referred so because He killed the demon Madhu. In fact He is addressed Madhusudana in many places in the Bhagavad Gita (verses 1.35, 2.1, 2.4, 6.33 and 8.2). In the purport to Bhagavad Gita verse 2.1, Srila Prabhupada very nicely describes the significance of Arjuna calling Krishna as Madhusudana. He says, "*Lord Krishna killed the demon Madhu, and now Arjuna wanted Krishna to kill the demon of misunderstanding that had overtaken him in the discharge of his duty.*" Srila Baladeva Vidyabhushana comments that the use of this particular name implies that Krishna can kill grief of Arjuna just as He had killed Madhu in the past.

Srila Prabhupada writes in Srimad-Bhagavatam (7.9.37 purport), "*The Supreme Personality of Godhead in His transcendental form is always ready to give protection to His devotees. As mentioned herein, the Lord in the form of Hayagriva killed two demons named Madhu and Kaitabha when they attacked Lord Brahma. Modern demons think that there was no life in the beginning of creation, but from Srimad-Bhagavatam we understand that the first living creature created by the Supreme Personality of Godhead was Lord Brahma, who is full of Vedic understanding. Unfortunately, those entrusted with distributing Vedic knowledge, such as the devotees engaged in spreading Krishna consciousness, may sometimes be attacked by demons, but they must rest assured that demoniac attacks will not be able to harm them, for the Lord is always prepared to give them protection.*"

Hence one of the important understanding we get from the name Madhusudana is that the Lord always protects us by destroying the enemies in our devotional service. Our enemies are in the form of our doubts, misunderstanding, grief and so many other anarthas. These anarthas bewilder us and are like stumbling blocks in our path of bhakti. But as Srila Prabhupada assures all these demoniac thoughts will be wiped out if we take shelter of Lord. Thus remembering this name of Krishna always gives us a lot of courage in performing our devotional service with full enthusiasm.

Srila Sridhar Swami gives some extra sweetness to this sweet name. He says that the name Madhusudana does not only mean "He who defeated the demon Madhu," but it also means "He who defeats honey [madhu] in sweetness." He defines the name thus: "False ego is as sweet as honey and resides in the heart of everyone, making one forget his own identity. It intoxicates everyone. He who destroys false ego with the torchlight of knowledge is called Madhusudana." By extension, the word madhu refers to both the bumblebee and Krishna. Just as bees tend to enjoy the honey of the lotus, Krishna enjoys the honey of His devotees' love. But for that to happen, we need to become sweet in our behavior in devotional service and also with every living entity who interacts with us.

Let us pray to the Lord that He protect us in all circumstances and destroy our false ego in order for us to selflessly serve Him and His devotees.

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

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Anand Patil,

Pune.

108 Ways of Glorifying the Lord - Part 18

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 last few offerings, we were seeing few of the glories of Lord mentioned in Srimad Bhagavad Gita. We now move on to the next glorification.

Glorification 29 - Lord is glorified as Madhusudana: In Srimad Bhagavad Gita verse 1.35, the Lord is addressed as Madhusudana. He is primarily referred so because He killed the demon Madhu. In fact He is addressed Madhusudana in many places in the Bhagavad Gita verses 1.35, 2.1, 2.4, 6.33 and 8.2. In the purport to Bhagavad Gita verse 2.1, Srila Prabhupada very nicely describes the significance of Arjuna calling Krishna as Madhusudana. He says, "*Lord Krishna killed the demon Madhu, and now Arjuna wanted Krishna to kill the demon of misunderstanding that had overtaken him in the discharge of his duty.*" Srila Baladeva Vidyabhushana comments that the use of this particular name implies that Krishna can kill grief of Arjuna just as He had killed Madhu in the past.

Srila Prabhupada writes in Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.9.37 purport, "*The Supreme Personality of Godhead in His transcendental form is always ready to give protection to His devotees. As mentioned herein, the Lord in the form of Hayagriva killed two demons named Madhu and Kaitabha when they attacked Lord Brahma. Modern demons think that there was no life in the beginning of creation, but from Srimad-Bhagavatam we understand that the first living creature created by the Supreme Personality of Godhead was Lord Brahma, who is full of Vedic understanding. Unfortunately, those entrusted with distributing Vedic knowledge, such as the devotees engaged in spreading Krishna consciousness, may sometimes be attacked by demons, but they must rest assured that demoniac attacks will not be able to harm them, for the Lord is always prepared to give them protection.*"

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Let us pray to the Lord that He protect us in all circumstances and destroy our false ego in order for us to selflessly serve Him and His devotees.

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

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Anand Patil

Pune.

Menial Service Attracts the Lord

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

We always say that devotional service means that we should be ready to do any type of menial service in order to attract the mercy of the Lord. Voluntary endeavour is the only way to attract the mercy of the Lord. In the corporate world if we tend to do menial work in office, we are considered to be fit to do only lower level jobs and not fit for doing top management job. But the spiritual world is completely opposite of the material world. The devotional service is absolute and there is no difference between one service and another. But we carry the wrong mentality of thinking that anybody who is preaching is senior and anybody doing pujari or cleaning service is lower. This mentality we inherit from our material life and carry it over to the spiritual life and therefore we judge devotees based on that. Anybody who is preaching in Vyasasana is considered to be elevated and anybody who is doing menial service of cleaning is considered to be low. This mentality of discrimination kills our devotional service. Srimad Bhagavatam 3.15.21, decimates this type of discriminating mentality and confirms that in order to attract the mercy or grace of the Lord even Goddess Lakshmi has to be engaged in menial service,

*śrī rūpiṇī kvaṇayatī caraṇāravindam
līlāmbujena hari-sadmani mukta-doṣā
saṁlakṣyate sphaṭika-kuḍya upeta-hemni
sammārjatīva yad-anugrahaṇe 'nya-yatnaḥ*

The ladies in the Vaikuntha planets are as beautiful as the goddess of fortune herself. Such transcendently beautiful ladies, their hands playing with lotuses and their leg bangles tinkling, are sometimes seen sweeping the marble walls, which are bedecked at intervals with golden borders, in order to receive the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The word *yatnaḥ* ("**Very much careful**") is very important to understand. The goddess of fortune is very careful in sweeping the floor even-though there are millions of servants in Vaikuntha planets. What to speak of Lakshmi, even the Lord as Varaha went inside the deep ocean of garbodhaka to take out the earth from the slush and He did not appoint 100 servants to take the earth from the slush. He did it on His own. It is very important that we should be ready to clean our own altar, our own house instead of delegating the service to others by justifying that we are engaging them in devotional service. But the Lord is very intelligent. He gives His extra mercy to the devotee who is doing the menial service and not to the one who is only engaging others in the service. If the situation is such that there are so many services to do and many devotees are available for service, then we can humbly request the interested devotees to perform certain services. At the same time, we should also make sure that we don't remain idle. When we are engaging others in different services, we should keep ourselves also engaged in some service or other. That way we can become source of inspiration to others. We can learn from the example of Caitanya Mahaprabhu Himself, when He was cleaning the Gundica temple. By seeing His intense desire to clean the residence of the Lord, everyone else also got the taste for cleansing and the result was a joyous combined service to the Lord.

Similarly, sometimes, we tend to think that our preaching is our mercy to the devotees but we fail to understand that our preaching service itself is the causeless mercy of the Lord bestowed upon us. If Krishna decides, He can stop our speech in a moment or stop the audience from hearing us. Devotional service is not only *kīrtanam* that we think, "I will only preach and talk and everyone should do *śravaṇam*." *śravaṇam* is applicable for us also. That is the reason *śravaṇam* comes first and then kirtanam next. Prahlad knew that this misconception will creep in and hence he is very careful in speaking in Srimad Bhagavatam as '*śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ*' and not '*kīrtanam śravaṇam viṣṇoḥ*.'

The main reason for engaging in the menial service of the Lord is to understand our insignificant position as the

servant of the servant of the Lord and be humble. Humility is not to broadcast in public about being humble but we should be just humble in our behaviour. Rupa Goswami one of the topmost devotee exhibits his humility by submitting to Lord Chaitanya by holding straw in the teeth, then what is our position? Therefore it is very important as we become so called senior in terms of no. of years, to always understand and realize that we are nothing in front of our spiritual master and Srila Prabhupada and what to talk about the Supreme Lord.

Therefore I pray sincerely to the Supreme Lord, Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev to make me understand my position as their insignificant servitor and digest in my life the wonderful verse spoken by King Kulashekara Alwar in Mukunda Mala strotra verse 25,

*maj-janmanaḥ phalam idam madhu-kaitabhāre
mat-prārthanīya-mad-anugraha eṣa eva
tvad-bhṛtya-bhṛtya-paricāraka-bhṛtya-bhṛtya-
bhṛtyasya bhṛtya iti mām smara loka-nātha*

O enemy of Madhu and Kaitabha, O Lord of the universe, the perfection of my life and the most cherished mercy You could show me would be for You to consider me the servant of the servant of the servant of the servant of the servant of the servant of Your servant.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Sajjanapriya Krishna das

Abu Dhabi.

Is Krishna partial? - Part 7

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

We will continue our journey through the First Chapter of Seventh Canto of Srimad Bhagavatam where glorious and very powerful spiritual masters like Sukadev Goswami and Narada Muni are answering the doubts of great disciples like Parikshit Maharaj and Maharaja Yudhisthira about whether Krishna is partial to some and inimical to others. In the previous offerings we saw that the following are some of the points put forth by these stalwarts to progressively prove the impartial nature of Krishna,

1. Krishna is transcendental to material qualities.
2. The prominent mode becomes victorious.
3. Everyone enjoys the fruits of his qualitative activities (*karma*).
4. Krishna responds according to one's receptiveness.
5. Time's influence is impartial.
6. Krishna is not under the time factor and therefore impartial.
7. Krishna is not only impartial but very merciful as well.
8. Krishna is unaffected by dualities like blasphemy or prayers.

We will now continue to learn more proofs of Krishna's impartiality.

9. Krishna reciprocates irrespective of the way we approach: Irrespective of the way one approaches Krishna, He treats everyone alike. More than the type of relationship one cultivates towards Him, it is the intensity of our feeling, *bhaava* that is more important to Him and He reciprocates according to the proportion of that intensity. That is why He states in BG 9.26, "If one offers Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit or water, I will accept it." Krishna does not need anything as He is self-sufficient, yet He accepts anything that is offered to Him with genuine love. He looks at the *bhaava* behind the offering. In SB 7.1.26 Narada Muni tells Maharaja Yudhisthira,

*tasmād vairānubandhena nirvairēṇa bhayena vā
snehāt kāmēna vā yuñjyāt kathañcin nekṣate pṛthak*

Therefore by enmity or by devotional service, by fear, by affection or by lusty desire - by all of these or any one of them - if a conditioned soul somehow or other concentrates his mind upon the Lord, the result is the same, for the Lord, because of His blissful position, is never affected by enmity or friendship.

a. **Devotion out of enmity:** From the two examples of Putana and Shishupala, which we have seen in our earlier offerings, it is clear that Krishna is definitely unaffected when an enemy thinks of Him unfavourably or by his anti-devotional service. He offers His benediction to such inimical conditioned souls the same way He favours a pure devotee of His. He only looks at the intensity with which the conditioned soul thinks about Him. Shishupala thought of Krishna as his enemy from the very beginning of his life and he chanted the holy names of the Lord constantly though it was with an inimical attitude. The constant chanting of the holy names purified him. This is the potency of the Holy names. As Caitanya Mahaprabhu says in His śikṣāṣṭakam, "O my Lord, Your holy name alone can render all benediction to living beings, and thus You have hundreds and millions of names, like Kṛṣṇa and Govinda. In these transcendental names You have invested all Your transcendental energies. There are not even hard and fast rules for chanting these names. O my Lord, out of kindness You enable us to easily approach You by Your holy names, but I am so unfortunate that I have no attraction for them."

Srila Prabhupada writes in the purport of SB 7.1.26 that *if even a blasphemer can be freed from his sinful activities by chanting the holy names of the Lord, freedom is certainly assured for a devotee who is always favourable to the service of the Lord. By rapt attention fixed upon Krishna, one is purified and thus one is delivered from material life*

b. **Devotion without envy:** The word *nirvaira* means 'without envy' and Srila Prabhupada in the word to word equivalent has beautifully translated it as 'by devotion.' People who are non-evilous can easily approach Krishna. Since Sanjaya was non-evilous Krishna allowed him to meet him, even when he was having private discussions with Arjuna. No one else were allowed. But Sanjaya was allowed, because he had this devotional attitude of *nirvairēṇa*.

c. **Devotion out of fear:** Sometimes we cry out to Krishna when we are in fear or in danger. Our chanting gets intensified when we are in danger. HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj once joked about his experience when he boarded a dilapidated "Sunflower Airlines" flight to go from one island of Fiji to another and the aircraft was in such a pathetic condition that as soon as the flight took off he started chanting intesnely as he had never done before. He explained the point that the best way to chant nicely is to remember our last day. We have instances from Mahabharat and Bhagavatam where devotees cry out to Krishna helplessly in fear and Krishna rescues them. Draupadi when she was being disrobed in Duryodana's court, she called out to Krishna thus,

*śaṅkha-cakra-gadā-pāṇe dvārakā nilayācyuta
govinda pundarīkākṣa rakṣa mām śaraṇāgatam*

We also have the heart felt prayers of Uttara when Ashvatthaama's brahmastra try to kill the baby in her womb, SB 1.8.9,

*uttarovāca
pāhi pāhi mahā-yogin deva-deva jagat-pate
nānyam tvad abhayam paśye yatra mṛtyuḥ parasparam*

and of Arjuna when the Brahmastra approached him, SB 1.7.22,

*arjuna uvāca
kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa mahā-bāho bhaktānām abhayaṅkara
tvam eko dahyamānānām apavargo 'si saṁśṛteḥ*

Each time Krishna gave mercy and protected whoever called out to Him out of fear.

d. **Devotion out of affection:** When Lord Krishna went to Vidura's house, Vidura overwhelmed by affection to the Lord unknowingly offered him skin of banana instead of the fruit. But Lord accepted his offering with great satisfaction.

e. **Devotion out of lusty desire:** The purest *maadhurya bhaava* of the gopis for Krishna was also recognized and accepted by Krishna. The gopis used to go to Krishna in the dead of night even against the chastisement of their relatives, husbands, brothers and fathers. One gopi who was locked up by her husband to prevent her from going to Krishna, left her body so that she can be with Krishna. The hunch-back woman Trivakra is another example of how one can satisfy Krishna even through lusty desire.

Krishna willing, we will see in the ensuing offering why Krishna accepts even contaminated and perverted devotion, how the process of purification from material contamination happens and the best attitude we must cultivate towards Krishna.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Uma Prathap

Abu Dhabi.

Is Krishna partial? - Part 8

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

The Lord is described as *sarva-bhūtātma-bhūtaṁ* and *praśāntaṁ sama-darśanam*. He is the Supersoul in all living entities. He is equipoised in all circumstances and is equally disposed toward everyone. Yet unintelligent persons, because of imperfect vision and influenced by material qualities, imposes material qualities upon Krishna and claim that He is partial and envious. Sukadev Goswami and Narada Muni refute this and give wonderful arguments to prove the impartiality of Krishna. We have seen in the previous offerings on this subject, some of their arguments. They were,

1. Krishna is transcendental to material qualities.
2. The prominent mode becomes victorious.
3. Everyone enjoys the fruits of his qualitative activities (*karma*).
4. Krishna responds according to one's receptiveness.
5. Time's influence is impartial.
6. Krishna is not under the time factor and therefore impartial.
7. Krishna is not only impartial but very merciful as well.
8. Krishna is unaffected by dualities like blasphemy or prayers.
9. Krishna reciprocates irrespective of the way we approach.

We will now continue to learn more proofs of Krishna's impartiality.

10. **Constant remembrance of Krishna purifies the motives:** In Srimad Bhagavatam verse 7.1.30, Narada Muni tells us the different ways in which we can concentrate our mind on Krishna and become eligible for His mercy,

*kāmād dveṣād bhayāt snehād yathā bhaktyeśvare manaḥ
āveśya tad-agmaṁ hitvā bahavas tad-gatiṁ gatāḥ*

Many, many persons have attained liberation simply by thinking of Krishna with great attention and giving up sinful activities. This great attention may be due to lusty desires, inimical feelings, fear, affection or devotional service. I shall now explain how one receives Krishna's mercy simply by concentrating one's mind upon Him.

We may approach Krishna with different feelings, like anger, fear, lust, affection or devotion. He accepts all of them and when we are always in constant remembrance of Him, fully absorbed in Krishna consciousness, the material part of our desires get vanquished and what remains is only our pure, undiluted and spiritual attachment for Krishna. So when the so called enemies of Krishna like Sishupala or Kamsa meditate on Krishna twenty four hours a day with envy, the envy within them is vanquished by Krishna and what remains is just the remembrance of Krishna twenty four hours a day, making them eligible for mukti.

Bhagavatam gives a very vivid example of this philosophy in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 7.1.28 and 29,

*kīṭaḥ peśaskṛtā ruddhaḥ kuḍyāyām tam anusmaran
samrambha-bhaya-yogena vindate tat-svarūpatām
evaṁ kṛṣṇe bhagavati māyā-manuja īśvare
vairēṇa pūta-pāpmānas tam āpur anucintayā*

A grassworm confined in a hole of a wall by a bee always thinks of the bee in fear and enmity and later becomes a bee simply because of such remembrance. Similarly, if the conditioned souls somehow or other think of Krishna, who is sac-cid-aananda-vigraha (Brahma Samhita 5.1), they will become free from

their sins. Whether thinking of Him as their worshipable Lord or an enemy, because of constantly thinking of Him they will regain their spiritual bodies.

In the purport to above verse Srila Prabhupada says, *Lord Krishna appears within this material world for two purposes - paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām, Bhagavad Gita 4.8, to protect the devotees and annihilate the demons. By constant thinking of Krishna, both the demons and devotees attain liberation from the clutches of material maya.* In the purport to SB 7.1.30, Prabhupada quotes Srimad Bhagavatam verse 10.33.39 where it is said that *if a bona fide listener hears of Krishna's pastimes with the gopis, which seem to be lusty affairs, the lusty desires in his heart, which constitute the heart disease of the conditioned soul, will be vanquished, and he will become a most exalted devotee of the Lord. If one who hears of the gopis' lusty behavior with Krishna becomes free from lusty desires, certainly the gopis who approached Krishna became free from all such desires.*

In this way, in whatever way we desire Krishna and concentrate our mind upon Him, we become purified and are benefited by attaining liberation. Srimad Bhagavatam verse 7.1.31 clearly clarifies this further,

*gopyaḥ kāmād bhayāt kaṁso dveṣāc caidyādayo nṛpāḥ
sambandhād vṛṣṇayaḥ snehād yūyaṁ bhaktyā vayaṁ vibho*

My dear King Yudhishtira, the gopis by their lusty desires, Kamsa by his fear, Sishupala and other kings by envy, the Yadus by their familial relationship with Krishna, you Pandavas by your great affection for Krishna, and we, the general devotees, by our devotional service, have obtained the mercy of Krishna.

All of them receive different types of liberation according to their intense desire. It can be merging with the Lord which is 'Sāyujya mukti', residing in the same loka as the Lord which is called 'sālokya mukti', to get the same form as the Lord, which is 'sārūpya mukti', to be an associate of the Lord which is called 'sāmīpya mukti' and to have the same opulence as the Lord which is called 'sārṣṭi mukti'. The gopis because of their very intense love for Krishna became the most beloved devotees of the Lord. The devotees of the Lord become the constant companions of the Lord unlike the inimical Kamsa etc who merge with the Brahman.

Krishna willing, we will continue on this topic in subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Uma Prathap

Abu Dhabi.

Is Krishna Partial? - Part 9

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in conclusion of series of discussions we had about the impartiality of the Supreme Lord towards all living entities in this material world. Due to our ignorance, we consider the Lord to be partial. These general doubts we nurture in our hearts are vanquished by Sri Sukadev Goswami and Sri Narada Muni in the first Chapter of the Seventh Canto of Srimad Bhagavatam. Their arguments to prove the impartial and merciful nature of Krishna. The points discussed in previous offerings on this subject and can be briefed as follows,

1. Krishna is transcendental to material qualities.
2. The prominent mode becomes victorious.
3. Everyone enjoys the fruits of his qualitative activities (*karma*).
4. Krishna responds according to one's receptiveness.
5. Time's influence is impartial.
6. Krishna is not under the time factor and therefore impartial.
7. Krishna is not only impartial but very merciful as well.
8. Krishna is unaffected by dualities like blasphemy or prayers.
9. Krishna reciprocates irrespective of the way we approach.
10. Constant remembrance of Krishna purifies our motives.

Seeing how impartial Krishna is, how very merciful and how He reciprocates with love and kindness irrespective of our own motives, we will see in this concluding part, how we should ideally be situated in our devotion towards Krishna, how we can achieve undeviated attention for Krishna and how to continue this unflinching attention to ultimately join Him in Golok to eternally serve Him with love and faith.

11. **Performing favorable devotional service:** This is the best way to save ourselves. From all the above arguments to prove the non-dual position of Krishna towards everyone, it should not be concluded that we can be inimical to Krishna and be envious of Him. The shastras say, '*ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ prātikūlyasya varjanam*'. We should reject unfavourable activities and accept only favourable devotion of the Lord. If we are inimical to the Lord, we will surely be punished for at least one birth until we are purified to go back to Godhead. Srila Prabhupada quotes Madhvācārya,

*karmaṇā manasā vācā yo dviṣyād viṣṇum avyayam
majjanti pitaras tasya narake śāśvatīḥ samāḥ*

One should not blaspheme Lord Vishnu through one's mind, words or actions, for a blasphemer will go to hellish life along with his forefathers.

This is a very powerful statement, we are condemning our forefathers as well to hellish life when we decide to be inimical to the Lord. We must not compare ourselves to Sishupala and Dantavakra, because they are actually exalted personalities, eternal associates of the Lord who have accompanied the Lord to assist Him by nourishing His wonderful pastimes when the Lord descends to this material world. Ideally, we must be always fully absorbed in the thoughts of Krishna twenty four hours a day favorably, in one of the favorable *rasas* - *dāsya-rasa*, *sakhya-rasa*, *vātsalya-rasa* or *mādhurya-rasa*. If we can remember Him in this way, without deviation, He is easy to obtain as Krishna Himself tells in Bhagavad Gita verse 8.14 - "**For one who always remembers Me without deviation, I am easy to obtain, O son of Prtha, because of his constant engagement in devotional service.**"

The following are some of practical tips which H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj gives us to be continuously engaged

in Krishna consciousness twenty four hours a day in spite of our very hectic material schedule.

a. **Be busy in Krishna's service:** If we are always with Krishna then maya cannot touch us. So it should be our endeavor that we should not be free any time. As soon as the mind is vacant it is workshop, and it is devil's workshop. It will create havoc. Your life will be completely destroyed if you keep your mind vacant. That prescribed duty should be transformed into the worship of the Lord. Then only there is some chance of our continuous association with Krishna. And if it is continued association then naturally the maya cannot attack you. Many times those activities become the impediment for our continuous association with Krishna. We should perform prescribed duties and we should worship the Lord by our own karma, by our own activities.

b. **Be honest:** We must be very honest in the dealings. This is the first symptom of a devotee to perform the activities. If we are honest and if we remember Krishna then while performing our duties also we can be elevated.

c. **Nityam bhāgavata-sevayā:** At the moment our devotion is to the material things. That devotion should be cleverly transformed to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and that requires association, very nice association of the devotees. *If you neglect any day to associate or hear Srimad Bhagavatam class then you are completely gone.* Unless you attend the classes, unless you render the service to the pure devotees, it is impossible to have bhakti in our existence.

d. **Fill your mind with Krishna-katha:** Always your mind must be full with Krishna katha, the topics of Krishna and then maya cannot really come near you. When the field is dry, the weeds grow and the rice plants which we wanted to grow, it doesn't grow. Exactly this is the same condition of our mind. Till the mind is full of Krishna katha the bhakti creeper grows and as soon as the mind is dry, there is no Krishna katha then bhakti creeper stops growing and the weeds in the form of different desires they grow. And then they take us in their directions. So our mind should be full of Krishna katha so that bhakti creeper grows and other desires they don't grow. They don't have any capacity to grow with Krishna's topics. We have to hear about Krishna, the Supreme Person and if you can hear about Krishna, then what is the result? Bhakti, devotional service sprouts out. You know utpadyate is a very nice word. If you put the seed into the land and water it, slowly the plant comes out, sprouts out and then it becomes a nice plant and then maybe a tree and this is how the devotional creeper grows on increasing till we attain Goloka Vrindavan. And this is the way, the watering of that plant is devotional service and that devotional service should be always regarding the Supreme Person and if it is so, then definitely in your life you will have devotional service towards the Lord. And once you are engaged in the devotional service, then what is the effect of the devotional service is explained in the last part of the Srimad Bhagavatam verse 1.7.7 - *śoka* means lamentation, *moha* means illusion and *bhayā* means fear. These three words are the symptoms of our material disease. Once we are sufficiently woken up from these material diseases, no one can harm us, no situation can trouble us.

e. **Be Satisfied with whatever Krishna gives:** Dhruva Maharaj when he went to forest, he was only young boy you know, and then he thought that this eating comes in between my devotional service and me, so he stopped eating. Then he thought that drinking water also comes in the way, so he stopped drinking water. And he thought then breathing is coming in my way, so he stopped breathing. (Maharaj laughs). This is the way. We become completely satisfied. Whether there is food or not we are satisfied. Whether there is water or not we are satisfied. Only we are dissatisfied if we cannot chant Lord's names. That is our great dissatisfaction. If we are with the Lord then a, b, c, d or whatever it is we are completely satisfied. This should be our nature.

Let us pray at the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord and our spiritual masters, Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev that we develop this unflinching faith and love that will make us eligible to serve Them eternally, wherever we are.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Uma Prathap

Abu Dhabi.

Submission Leads to Ripened Devotional Service

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In order to progress in spiritual life, we must always be submissive to Guru and Krishna. It is not that we remain submissive until we get initiation and then behave as per our own whims. In order to show us how we should behave to elders and Guru, Lord has personally taught through His example whenever He appeared in the world. The Supreme Lord Krishna who is fully cognizant (past, present and future), and fully independent is so submissive to His spiritual master, elders. The Lord is called adbhuta karmana. His activities are always wonderful and bewildering to us. As a Paramatma, He knows everything but still he consults his ministers and elders. This is completely bewildering to our tiny mind and intelligence.

In Srimad Bhagavatam 10th Canto 70th chapter, once a messenger came to Dwaraka and addressed the Lord that 20000 kings were jailed by Jarasandha and they are suffering heavily. They wanted relief from Jarasandha. The Lord heard it patiently. The Lord consulted with the subjects on how to attack Jarasandha and his kingdom. At that point of time, Narada Muni came to the palace of the Lord and the Lord welcomed and glorified Him wonderfully with full submission to him. Then the Lord enquired from Narada Muni about the welfare of the Pandavas and what they are doing. It appeared as if the Lord was diverting the palace subjects of Dwaraka from Jarasandha problems to Pandavas. But it is not so as we can see the pastime ahead. Narada Muni stated that Yudhishtir Maharaj has decided to perform Rajasuya Yajna and he wanted the Lord to be the chief guest and requested the Lord to be present for the Yajna. Before the arrival of Narada muni, the subjects, ministers were thinking about how to attack jarasandha and kill him. But now the subject matter is changed by Narada muni by stating about the Pandavas' Raja suya sacrifice and the Lord should be present in the sacrifice as the chief guest. How the Lord handled the situation is excellent. He consulted with Uddhava who was the chief Minister of the kingdom. The Lord addressed a beautiful verse in submission to Uddhava, His minister, SB 10.70.46,

śrī-bhagavān uvāca

*tvam hi naḥ paramaṁ cakṣuḥ suhr̥ṇ mantrārtha-tattva-vit
athātra brūhy anuṣṭheyaṁ śraddadhmaḥ karavāma tat*

The Personality of Godhead said: You are indeed Our best eye and closest friend, for you know perfectly the relative value of various kinds of counsel. Therefore please tell Us what should be done in this situation. We trust your judgment and shall do as you say.

The Supreme Lord says that, "I shall do as you say", to Uddhava. How much of submission to his own minister. Why we are hankering to submit to our ego, mind and intelligence instead of the good Lord. It is our foolishness and nothing else. We want things to happen according to our plan, our wishes, as per our tiny mind and intelligence and our sense gratification. So we don't want to submit to Guru and elders.

How Uddhava, a pure devotee of the Lord, responded to Him is also wonderful to ponder. After that Uddhava understood the Lord's mind and submitted as follows. "O Lord, as the sage advised, You should help Your cousin fulfill his plan for performing the Rajasuya sacrifice, and You should also protect the kings who are begging for Your shelter. Only one who has conquered all opponents in every direction can perform the Rajasuya sacrifice, O almighty one. Thus, in my opinion, conquering Jarasandha will serve both purposes. By this decision there will be great gain for us, and You will save the kings. Thus, Govinda, You will be glorified. The invincible King Jarasandha is as strong as ten thousand elephants. Indeed, other powerful warriors cannot defeat him. Only Bhima is equal to him in strength. He will be defeated in a match of single chariots, not when he is with his hundred military divisions. Now, Jarasandha is so devoted to brahminical culture that he never refuses requests from brahmanas. Bhima should go to him disguised as a

brahmana and beg charity. Thus he will obtain single combat with Jarasandha, and in Your presence Bhima will no doubt kill him."

Does the Supreme omniscient Lord not know all these above? But still He consults his minister. This is the lesson we have to learn from the good Lord. Irrespective of who we are it is always wise to consult devotees and take their confidence and thereby win the hearts. But demoniac people like Ravana and Duryodhana were dictators and they don't want to hear anything from anybody. Ravana told his subjects that, "*I will never listen to anybody especially regarding release of Sita.*" In the end he was destructed. Destruction is waiting for us if we are not willing to submit to our Spiritual master and Krishna.

The more submissive one is, more the fruits of ripened devotional service will manifest. The more we are submissive, the more we become gentle and the more we become gentle, the more we are favoured by the spiritual masters in all respects.

I therefore pray to the Supremely wonderful Lord, my spiritual master and Srila Prabhupada to give me the mercy that I will always submit myself at their lotus feet and their plan and obtain the mercy of Krishna consciousness.

Thank you very much.

Your humble servant,

Sajjanapriya Krishna das

Abu Dhabi.

Always Have Auspicious Desires

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

There is no end of fulfilling our material sense desire. Everyone has to engage himself in service of others. Hence serving our own sense desire keeps us engaged in serving our material senses. A person should find the means to end this whirlpool of desires by which he is caught in the material sense gratification. Soul suffers in repeated cycle of birth and death in the Lord's material energy. While contemplating the objects of the senses, a person develops attachment for them. From such attachment comes lust, then anger, illusion, bewilderment of memory and loss of intelligence, and then one falls down into the cycle of birth and death. In this context there is a very instructive story.

Once Narada muni was traveling and he met a beggar on the way. The beggar asked Narada muni for some charity in his begging bowl. Narada muni said, "I myself am penniless but I can help you get charity from another person." He then took the beggar to Kuber and asked him to give some donation. Kuber was surprised that Narada muni had to bring the beggar all the way for some insignificant charity, but nevertheless he took some lakshmi from his treasury and filled the bowl. But to his surprise the bowl became empty. He again took many more jewels, gold, precious gems etc one by one but everytime he was filling the bowl, it was becoming empty again and again. It came to a point that Kuber's treasury was almost exhausted and Kuber being completely bewildered asked what material the begging bowl is made off. When *Narada muni turned the begging bowl upside down, he found that the bowl is nothing but the human skull*. The greedy desires of the man cannot be fulfilled even if the wealth of the entire universe is given as charity to them.

In Srimad Bhagavad Gita 2.55 Lord Krishna says,

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
prajahāti yadā kāmān sarvān pārtha mano-gatān
ātmany evātmanā tuṣṭaḥ sthita-prajñas tadocyate*

The Blessed Lord said: O Partha, when a man gives up all varieties of sense desire which arise from mental concoction, and when his mind finds satisfaction in the self alone, then he is said to be in pure transcendental consciousness.

H H Mahavishnu Goswami maharaj nicely explained on above verse class at Abu Dhabi that any thing anti-Krishna creates misery. In sleep also we should recite these verses. The subject matter is to be understood and put into practice. We should come to the right path. *kāmā* should be under complete control. We are here to fulfill our material desires; no need to hide this fact and unless we exhaust we can't move, like a car without petrol. In the path of salvation we have to get out of this material existence that is, '*mano-gatān*', which is dangerous. When we desire for Krishna, it is auspicious desire. Everything else is inauspicious. So whatever we desire it should be for Krishna's pleasure. *Srimad Bhagavad Gita teaches us how to stay and Srimad Bhagavatam teaches us how to die*. Srimad Bhagavat gita gives us an idea of facts We are in hellish (concocted) condition of life in this planet. We are living worse than useless life. Wherever Krishna is there, purification is there and it results in pure state of soul. Purified mind never comes unless we go behind extremely purified mind that is Krishna. If we come out of the material consciousness and stay with the purified mind of Krishna, then we can be satisfied.

Satisfaction comes only when we serve Lord Sri Krishna. Devotee gets satisfied and experience bliss in serving the Lord. One should practice Krishna consciousness and follow the four regulative principles. We sincerely pray at the lotus feet of Lord Krishna, Srila Prabhupada and Gurudev to bestow their mercy upon all of us so that we can have auspicious desires only all the time.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Tusta Krishna das and Suniti devi dasi

Sharjah.

Value of Human life

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This human form of life is very rare to achieve. After going through 84 lakhs species of life and by the supervision of the Lord we get this human form and after getting the human form also, most of us spend the life without any knowledge of spirit soul. As a result we again get into the cycle of birth and death. As our beloved spiritual master H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj says, "*Atleast one time we have gone through 84 lakhs species and therefore this human form should not be frittered away uselessly.*" But the irony of the situation is that sometimes, even in the process of devotional service, we bring our mentality of social gathering, without understanding the urgency of quickly getting out of the clutches of material world. We simply get carried away by the modes and our inherent tendencies and frivolously waste our precious time in not making our lives Krishna conscious. In the pretext of devotional service, we remain conscious of ourselves, our family, instead of being conscious of how to serve Lord and His devotees.

Devotional service means glorification of Supreme Lord. Our fabric of devotion will improve day by day only when we perform service to glorify Lord and not for our own name and fame. When we perform service in this mood, then we will get the taste of real nectar of Krishna consciousness. We should remember this profound statement of Maharaj - "*No expectation is the perfect lubrication for all our relationship in the material world.*" This statement is wonderful to ponder over and if we can ingest this one statement in our lives then our whole gamut of our lives will change. Expectation kills our devotional service.

Lord Brahma warns sternly in Srimad Bhagavatam 3.15.24, the potency of material energy which submerges us in the ocean of material modes and sense gratification and eludes us to utilize the human form of life in real Krishna consciousness.

*ye 'bhyarthitām api ca no nṛ-gatiṁ prapannā
jñānaṁ ca tattva-viṣayaṁ saha-dharmaṁ yatra
nārādhanaṁ bhagavato vitaranty amuṣya
sammohitā vitatayā bata māyayā te*

Lord Brahma said: My dear demigods, the human form of life is of such importance that we also desire to have such life, for in the human form one can attain perfect religious truth and knowledge. If one in this human form of life does not understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His abode, it is to be understood that he is very much affected by the influence of external nature.

Srila Prabhupada warns and cautions in the purport that, "*It is not possible to go back to Godhead in one life, but in the human form one should at least understand the goal of life and begin Krishna consciousness.*"

Srila Prabhupada is insisting us that we should atleast understand the goal of life and begin Krishna consciousness. We can never blame our situations and others for not performing bhakti. In this rare opportunity of human birth, even after getting this priceless jewel of bhakti, if we misuse our time, then the fault lies with our ourselves. Krishna consciousness is a fact and that is natural but we are acting as Krishna consciousness and therefore it is artificial. Why it is not natural because we have not adapted and adopted the principles in our day to day lives therefore Krishna consciousness is always remaining a mystery for us. The more we read Srila Prabhupada's books, the more we can understand that we are insignificant and we have not moved an inch in Krishna consciousness. We have not started the journey of Krishna consciousness yet. This is not for getting dejected in devotional service, but understand the reality of the truth. We should feel the urgency of this life which is already passing away imperceptibly. Since we are in a helpless situation we should pray intensely to Supreme Lord just like how in a helpless mood, King Kulashekara alwar

with great devotion offers the below prayer to Supreme Lord in Mukunda mala stotra verse 49,

*tat tvam prasīda bhagavan kuru mayy anāthe
viṣṇo kṛpām parama-kāruṇikaḥ khalu tvam
samśāra-sāgara-nimagnam ananta dīnam
uddhartum arhasi hare puruṣottamo'si*

O Supreme Lord, O Vishnu, You are the most compassionate. So now please show me Your favor and bestow Your mercy upon this helpless soul. O unlimited Lord, kindly uplift this wretch who is drowning in the ocean of material existence. O Lord Hari, You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

I pray sincerely to the Supreme Lord Krishna, Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev to give me the real understanding of Krishna consciousness and not get bogged down by material modes of nature.

Thank you very much.

Your humble servant,

Sajjanapriya Krishna das

Abu Dhabi.

Fire of Bhakti - Part 1

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

The following is a humble effort to transcribe a nectarean class given by our beloved spiritual master H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London.

1. **With Krishna we are heroes, without Him we are zeroes:** We must always do our prescribed duties. *karma* should be in the devotional way. If you do that then you are completely safe in the society. If you don't do that, then you are a failure. *paraabhava dhaavat adhabha jaato yaavad na jijnaasa aatma tattva* - Self realisation is very much required. **If you don't take efforts for self-realisation, till that time, you are completely defeated - paraabhava.** Why do you want to be defeated? Why? Why? why to be defeated? Instead we should always be glorious. No defeat. And to be glorious, we should follow the foot-steps of how the gopis glorified Krishna, SB 10.31.1,

*gopya ūcuḥ
jayati te 'dhikam janmanā vrajaḥ
śrayata indirā śaśvad atra hi
dayita dṛśyatām dikṣu tāvakās
tvayi dhṛtāsavas tvām vicinvate*

The gopis said: O beloved, Your birth in the land of Vraja has made it exceedingly glorious, and thus Indirā, the goddess of fortune, always resides here. It is only for Your sake that we, Your devoted servants, maintain our lives. We have been searching everywhere for You, so please show Yourself to us.

Parābhavas tāvad abodha-jāto. We don't want defeat. Till you are ignorant you will be defeated. If you don't want defeat, then you don't have to be ignorant. Ignorance has got to be dissipated and how to do it? The gopis are showing the way. They are saying the reason why the Vraja bhumi is glorious. - *jayati te 'dhikam* - "This tract of Vraja land is becoming glorious more and more always." *janmanā vrajaḥ* - "Because of Your appearance in this land." Otherwise Vrindavan is also piece of land like any other place with trees and water. But it is glorious because of Krishna's appearance. Similarly if you also want your life to be glorious, then you should have appearance of Krishna in your life. **As soon as you have appearance of Krishna in your life, your life will be completely glorious.** *jayati te 'dhikam janmanā vrajaḥ* - As soon as Krishna appears in your life, vraja - then you will do vraja - start walking. Throw all your motorized vehicles. This is the main thing. You go to Vrindavan. Even now people walk. The more you are Krishna conscious, the more you will walk and you won't mind the weather or anything. This is the main thing to be understood.

And as soon as the appearance of Krishna in your life, then somebody will recognise that this is a godly person and they will not touch or harm you at all. You will not be affected by *tiraskṛtā vipralabdhāḥ śaptāḥ kṣiptā hatā api*, SB 1.18.48. Srila Prabhupada has given very nice example and we should remember these examples. There are electric wires available in the electric shop. There are big bundles of wire. We buy it and take it and twist it and cut it. Why? Because the wire is not connected to the power-house. As soon as the same wire is connected to the power-house, nobody will touch it. Why? Because the wire is connected to powerhouse. **Similarly the reason why people dare to criticise you, defame you, hurt you, is because you are not connected to your power-house (Krishna).**

You are still simple wires. As soon as you are connected to Krishna, nobody will touch you or harm you. This is really the way. In Dwarka we had so many difficulties. But we don't do anything except devotional service. Nothing else. Now we have started reading Bhagavatam most of the time during the day. We are doing this for more than one and half years there. So everyone in Dwarka know that, "These people are straight-forward. They are not politicians and they don't go to this president or collector." We don't go to anyone. But everybody come to our place.

We don't require to go anywhere and our work is done. They know that these people don't do anything else except glorifying Krishna. This is great fame - *jayjaykaar* - '*jayati te 'dhikam janmanā vrajaḥ*'. This is how Bhagavatam has to be put into practice. As long as you don't apply Bhagavatam in life then you are defeated. As soon as you apply Bhagavatam then there is no *parābhavaḥ* - no defeat.

Krishna willing, we shall continue with more nectar from Maharaj in the subsequent offerings.

Thank you very much.

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

Fire of Bhakti - 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 transcription of Maharaj's nectarean class in London on the topic, "Fire of Bhakti". In the previous offering we heard from Maharaj that,

1. With Krishna we are heroes; without Krishna we are zeroes.

Now let us continue to hear more nectar from Maharaj as he continues to explain the other lines in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 10.31.1,

2. Fortune and Bliss follows when you are with Krishna: As soon as you have Krishna in your life, '*śrayata indirā śaśvad atra hi*', then Lakshmi is always near you. Don't worry about Lakshmi. We want to catch Lakshmi. But we don't want Narayan. Lakshmi cannot stay without Narayan. This is the main thing. So please don't worry about Lakshmi. If you don't worry, then She will definitely be there. Once there was Lakshmi's Svayamvar. Her father wanted to get her married. In olden days there was selection of grooms. It was a big occasion. Swayam-var means She wanted to select the husband on her own (svayam). So all over the planet, it was a big occasion that, "Lakshmi is going to marry". So all the candidates were invited. Everybody wanted Lakshmi. So they all came with nice dress and ornaments and crowns and turbans. There was a big crowd sitting on the chairs. Everybody wanted to marry Lakshmi. So Lakshmi thought, "I will marry that person who doesn't want me." She came out with the garland and everybody were bowing their heads so that she will put the garland around their neck. Lakshmi walked straight. Krishna came. He had a flute, turban, wearing a cow-herd dress, no ornaments, nothing. He was not sitting in the chair also. He was just sitting under a tree and playing the flute. Lakshmi said, "That person is good for me, because He doesn't want me. So she walked all the way and garlanded Krishna. This is how *śrayata indirā śaśvad atra hi*. Then the gopis sing, '*dayita dṛśyatām dikṣu tāvakās*', - "We are so very devoted to You, so please dayita, give us Your audience - *dikṣu tāvakās*. We are just beggars, begging for your audience. We are chanting your names, singing your glories, we are devoted to Bhagavatam, our life is organised as per instructions of Bhagavatam and am just waiting for your audience. So please Krishna come." Why? *tvayi dhṛtāsavas tvām vicinvate* - "Our *āsava*, our life is meant for you. Don't you have mercy. Our life is dedicated for you. why are You keeping Yourself away?" - the gopis, pray to Krishna. *gaubhiḥ bhakti rasam pibati iti gopiḥ*. - Every sense was dedicated to Krishna. Their eyes were dedicated to Krishna. Their hands, ears and everything were dedicated to Krishna. This is the way to get near to Krishna. And as soon as you get near to Krishna, you are very happily situated. Please make the best use of your life to come to this point. Hare Krishna. Jai Srila Prabhupada ki Jai!

If you people want to ask any questions you may ask now. (Following is transcription of questions which devotees asked and the practical answers given by Maharaj for the same.)

Devotee: How to protect ourselves from Maya?

Maharaj: Please ignore maya. Do your duties carefully. Then maya will not affect you.

Devotee: What about taking care of children?

Maharaj: Children - you have to take care. That is not maya. **Please don't consider it as maya. It is not maya. It is your devotional service.** You should feed them nicely, take care of them, keep them clean. See Krishna in your children. Till that time you should not worry about worship also. Children have to be looked after. You cannot leave your children. **Maya will not affect you, when you do every activity with devotion.** You should take care of children also with devotion. Whatever you do, dedicate it for Krishna. Then Maya will never touch you.

Krishna willing, we shall continue to hear more nectar from Maharaj in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

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

Fire of Bhakti - 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 transcription of Maharaj's nectarean class in London on the topic, "Fire of Bhakti". In the previous offering we heard from Maharaj:

1. With Krishna we are heroes; without Krishna we are zeroes.
2. Fortune and bliss follows when we are with Krishna.
3. Taking care of children is devotional service and we should not be negligent in that service.

Now let us continue to hear more nectar from Maharaj as he continues to give practical instructions,

4. **Spiritualise your work:** Don't worry about future (*bhaviṣyam*). Don't lament about the past. Use your present.

*gate śoko na kartavyo bhaviṣyam na cintayet
vartamāneṣu kāleṣu pravartante vicakṣaṇāḥ*

Intelligent people always use their present time. We have got this hour with us and the best way is to utilize the hour either in material life or fully engrossed in spiritual life. These are the two things to be done. And material life also, if you do with a spiritual touch, then you will be a successful materialist. Because therein also you are dealing with living entities. Have some nice feeling with living entities, because our philosophy says and it is a fact that everyone is part and parcel of Krishna. So why to cheat anybody and everybody? Those who are businessmen, they can fix their profit percentage. Those who are working for others try to do nice work for them. **This is how in your action, karma, bhakti should be inculcated.** And you will be liked by everybody, liked by your employer, liked by your customer. (Maharaj refers to a devotee who does catering) She prepares first class prasadam. She can serve the public at large through her cooking. She is doing it as a business and that business should be combined with devotional service. Then it doesn't remain business or material activity. It becomes spiritual activity. This is the beauty of it.

5. **Stick to Bhagavad Gita and Bhagavatam:** I was very fortunate to stay in Soho street temple. They didn't allow me to do anything. (Maharaj was significantly old when he joined the temple. Due to his physical constraints, he was not considered for physically intense services by the temple management) So I was reading Prabhupada's books. That I wanted you know, because whole of life, I was reading, but I was reading non-sense. (Maharaj points to HG Navadip Prabhu) Navadip prabhu was witness because he was pujari there. So he was looking at my one volume Bhagavatam and he was telling appreciatively, "How is it going? How is it going?". I remember he was appreciating me like that. **And the more we read, it is surely going to come out. You cannot digest spiritual things. Once you take in, it has got to come out, because when it comes out, you solidify your spiritual knowledge more than by keeping quiet. So this is the beauty of spiritual knowledge. Please stick to Bhagavad Gita and Bhagavatam. Everything is given there and after that whatever intelligence is required is given by Krishna.** *teṣāṃ satata-yuktānām, bhajatām prīti-pūrvakam, dadāmi buddhi-yogaṃ taṃ.* Krishna says, "Those who are *satata-yuktā*, always engaged in My service, *dadāmi buddhi-yogaṃ*, I give them the devotional service and the linking intelligence, *yena mām upayānti te*, by which they can come to Me." Please don't waste your time and do these things very nicely.

Krishna willing we shall continue with more nectar from Maharaj in the subsequent offerings.

Thank you very much.

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

Fire of Bhakti - 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 transcription of Maharaj's nectarean class in London on the topic "Fire of Bhakti". In the previous offering we heard from Maharaj:

1. With Krishna we are heroes; without Krishna we are zeroes.
2. Fortune and bliss follows when we are with Krishna.
3. Taking care of children is devotional service and never neglect them.
4. Spiritualise your work.
5. Stick to Bhagavad Gita and Bhagavatam.

Now let us continue to hear more nectar from Maharaj,

6. **Potency of Mahamantra:** (One devotee asked Maharaj as to what to do when elders who have faith in other demigods, don't take up to chanting, that too when they are in final stages of life, in the death-bed. Maharaj gave this wonderful instructive reply for the same.) If you are not able to make them understand the importance of them chanting the holy names, if they are not in a position to understand, in that stage, the best way is that we go and chanting for him or her. **You go on chanting when you are near her or him and you do whatever you want him or her to do.** Because at the last moment it is very difficult to change. Only some very very rare fortunate soul might change at the last moment. Even if someone is worshiping demigods with faith, whatever benefits they get, are bestowed by Krishna only. In Bhagavad Gita verse 7.22, Krishna says, *mayaiva vihitān hi tān* . He says that, "I am giving that". He further says in verse 9.23 of Gita, "**Those who are devotees of other gods and who worship them with faith actually worship only Me, but they do so in a wrong way...**", but it is *avidhi-pūrvakam* - "It is not sanctioned by Me." **If he or she hears the mahamantra then there is 100% chance that he/she will be liberated.** So please chant Mahamantra nicely.

7. **Be fiery in bhakti:** (One devotee inquired about how to do bhakti in old age and the condition of old people in old-age homes in London. Maharaj gave the following powerful reply for the same.) I have seen that old people are more happy in these places than their homes. They are situated nicely here. They are taken care very nicely here than at their homes. The government is more Krishna conscious here. **But the thing is Kaliyuga increases for those people who are not Krishna devotees. For those who are Krishna devotees, for them it is all Satyayuga. If your mind is not engrossed in Krishna conscious activities then it is Kaliyuga.** Otherwise there is no Kaliyuga. Even then Krishna might want to test you. So you may perform devotional service, and even then there might be Kaliyuga situations around you. But the Krishna conscious men or women, doesn't pay attention to it at all. We just ignore it. So many things come into our mind. We might want to own the Buckingham palace. But it is not possible. So we ignore the idea. If Kaliyuga items come in front of you, just ignore it. Don't mind it. **Somebody might scold you or hurt you or criticise you. No counteraction. If your behaviour is like this, then Kaliyuga will not touch you, because you are fiery in your devotional service.**

Prabhupada always says this, "*If it is a live wire, then no body can touch it. If it is a dead wire, then anybody can catch it and cut it and twist it.*" Our life also, when it is without connection to our power-house - Krishna, then anybody can cut or kill us. But if you are fiery, then people will not dare to touch, but provided we are fiery in our Krishna conscious activities and eventually the age is bound to come in everybody's life time, when you won't be able to do anything. You will get pension or house from government. But you don't know what to do within four walls, and eventually you go mad and then you are sent to mental hospital. **So instead of going and squeezing ourselves in the mental hospitals and associating with mad people, it is better to increase Krishna conscious association and keep Bhagavad Gita and Bhagavatam. That is more than enough for this life time at least. Please concentrate on these things**

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Krishna willing we shall continue with more nectar from Maharaj in the subsequent offerings.

Thank you very much.

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

Fire of Bhakti - 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 transcription of Maharaj's nectarean class in London on the topic, "Fire of Bhakti". In the previous offering we heard from Maharaj:

1. With Krishna we are heroes; without Krishna we are zeroes.
2. Fortune and bliss follows when we are with Krishna.
3. Taking care of children is devotional service and never neglect it.
4. Spiritualise your work.
5. Stick to Bhagavad Gita and Bhagavatam.
6. Potency of Mahamantra.
7. Be fiery in bhakti.

Now let us continue to hear more nectar from Maharaj,

8. **Way to get liberation:** (One devotee asked Maharaj about how we can get liberation? Will performance of pious activities lead to liberation In reply Maharaj started to explain by singing a beautiful Gujarati bhajan of Narasi Mehta, a great devotee of Lord Krishna.),

*bhūtal bhakti padārath moṭu brahmalokmā nāhī re
puṇya karī amarāpurī pāmyā ante chorāśīmāhī re*

Doing devotional service on this earth is a great fortune (big thing), this is not available in heavenly planets. By doing pious activity one can achieve heavenly planets (Amarapuri) but they finally have to pass through 84 lakh species again.

Sometimes what happens, there is not enough understanding (knowledge) and we don't want to take next birth. Then people donate for digging a well, or give some lakshmi for this program and that program and then feel that they will be freed from their karmas by doing this. Many times we request them to chant and we request them to donate lakshmi for this Rathayatra. They will say, "Take this donation and leave us alone." For them there is no other choice but to be in the circle of 84,00,000 births again. In the second para liberation (moksha) is explained very nicely,

*harinā jan to mukti na māge, māge janmojanm avatār re
nit sevā nit kirtan ochchhav, nīrakhvā Naṅdkumār re*

Devotees do not desire for liberation. They ask birth after birth human form to do always devotional service, always kirtan, always taking darshan of Nanda Kumar.

Everyday we need to serve Krishna, everyday kirtan is required and we must celebrate festivals. In Dwarka still it is good till date. Now they are establishing a big refinery in Dwarka so we don't know how long our culture will survive? The big demon in the form of refinery has attacked there. Till date they celebrate festivals everyday. Festival of putting flags on top of the temple, festival of Bhagavat Saptah for eight days and lots of other festivals. Day and night they play drums (Nagara). We must increase celebration of all the festivals related to Krishna. We organize Rathayatra in Dwarka once in a year and big crowd is gathered. Around 200 people come from Bombay and some from other places and around 500 people is gathered there. So we need to book guest houses and owners (local residents) of guest houses eagerly wait for these kind of festivals. They often ask when rathayatra is going to take place.

Otherwise normally their guest houses are empty. That's why they ask everyday (laughter). It is his self interest. By doing this he remembers Krishna and asks when Lord Jagannath's rath will go on yatra? So we must celebrate all festivals. This time we are thinking of grand celebration for Janmasthan. There is Gomati river in Dwarka. Gomati Ganga. When there is high tide in Gomati we shall take Radha-Shyamsundar on yatra and if we do this kind of celebration then millions of people will gather there. It is very blissful to celebrate such festivals. This is the main thing. We must celebrate all festivals. We should celebrate festivals related to acharyas or great devotees or Lord's incarnations. If we celebrate all these festivals then we will get liberation (mukti).

True meaning of liberation is to get mukti from doctors, Get mukti from this microwave, get mukti from refrigerator, get mukti from this bed. You want to have foam bed when you have back pain. Then you will have more back pain. Then you go to doctor and he will say "Put these wooden planks on the bed." You will say, "But we have this nice floor." But the doctor will say, "No, no, no this is advancement. This is orthopedic bed." You will have to suffer from back pain and moreover you will have to spend 1000 pounds for this orthopedic bed. And then again they will do operation. You will be asked to sit in the wheel chair. The welfare officer will come and ask, "How are you?" You proudly say, "I am alright" (laughter). Oh, you are sitting on the wheel chair and cannot even walk but you say, "I am alright." Then welfare officer will ask, "You can claim benefit out of this." Man, first they cut you and now when you are in wheel chair they give you benefit. And this is called, 'welfare state.' There is nothing like 'welfare state' in this world. (laughter) Our Vaid (Ayurvedic doctors) they never cut. If you are going to die, they will let you die. But there is nothing like this 'welfare state'. Few relatives come. They take you to cremation ground. They will burn you and then they will take tea and go back. Nowadays they don't take bath in Ganges but take tea. There is no water in Ganges (laughter). We are going in a very wrong direction. There is no other meaning of 'mukti'. We have to come out from all so called advancement. Buy dhoti. Leave trousers for sometime. Wear dhoti. "*harinā jan*" - Devotees of lord Hari - they don't care about clothes, trousers, shirts or dhoti - *harinā jan to mukti na māge, māge janmojanm avatār re* - **Devotees do not desire for liberation. They ask birth after birth human form to do always devotional service, always kirtan, always taking darshan of Nanda Kumar. Our life is sinful and we never stop doing sins. So our next birth is certain. So atleast we must pray, "Please Lord give me Your mercy, even if I will take the next birth, please engage me in Your devotional service."**

Krishna willing we shall continue with more nectar from Maharaj in the subsequent offerings. Maharaj had spoken in Gujarati in many places in this lecture. Our heartfelt thanks to HG Govindang Prabhuji and HG Tungabhadra Mataji for translating the same in English.

Thank you very much.

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

A Dream Journey of Enchanting Engagements

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

A friend once had to undertake an over the night journey to reach a beautiful resort set off amidst an idyllic ambience. Hence the friend boarded a luxury train that had an air-conditioned salon with in-house facilities for watching an assortment of movies, browsing the web and also with attendant on call to take care of his personal needs like providing him with snacks and drinks and many other such facilities. So after the carnival of the all-engrossing enchanting engagements through the day, he had a very sound sleep in the train that night. On the next morning on reaching his destination, he felt that the entire journey itself was very comfortable and further went on to mull as to what was the point in getting down at the terminal point. Thinking so, he again booked himself in the same train for the return back to the starting point and continued with his journey to return to the place of origin without ever getting down at the designated destination.

This may sound funny, but when we try to give it a thought, we realize that most of us are sailing in the same boat. This human body is the vehicle which the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna has provided for us to reach the ultimate destination (*param dhāma*) of Goloka Vrindavan. The body is the means to achieve the ultimate goal, but unfortunately we take the human body itself to be the be-all and end-all in itself. However we do have to take proper care of the body as well as the so-called relationships attached to this body, but with the realization that the body is actually meant for a higher purpose (*śarīramādyam khalu dharma sādhanam - Body is an instrument for executing Dharma*).

We should not be so much engrossed with this body, which is like a machine or vehicle for travel, that we keep taking birth after birth without coming off the repeated cycle, just as to continue to travel in the same vehicle for the luxury and the comfort it offers without getting down at the desired destination, illusioned by an idea that the journey itself is more pleasant than the ultimate destination. However nice it might be one cannot be on a solo joyous sojourn forever and will have to understand that he has to brace himself up for getting off at the designated destination to return back home for a solemn reunion with the near and dear ones longing for such a blissful occasion. Our correct approach towards this body is very wonderfully portrayed in SB 11.9.25,

*deho gurur mama virakti-viveka-hetur
bibhrat sma sattva-nidhanam satatarty-udarkam
tattvāny anena vimṛśāmi yathā tathāpi
pārakyam ity avasito vicarāmy asaṅgaḥ*

The material body is also my spiritual master because it teaches me detachment. Being subject to creation and destruction, it always comes to a painful end. Thus, although using my body to acquire knowledge, I always remember that it will ultimately be consumed by others, and remaining detached, I move about this world. in the purport it is very nicely mentioned.

In the purport it is very nicely mentioned that, "*The words 'yathā tathāpi' are significant in this verse. Although the body bestows great benefit by enabling one to learn about this world, one should always remember its unhappy, inevitable future. If cremated, the body is burned to ashes by fire; if lost in a lonely place, it is consumed by jackals and vultures; and if buried in a luxurious coffin, it decomposes and is consumed by insignificant insects and worms. Thus it is described as pāraḥ, "Ultimately to be consumed by others." One should, however, carefully maintain bodily health to execute Krishna consciousness, but without undue affection or attachment. By studying the body's birth and death, one can acquire virakti-viveka, the intelligence to detach oneself from useless things. The word 'avasita' indicates conviction. One should be convinced of all the truths of Krishna consciousness.*"

Krishna Himself is seated in the heart of all the living entities, the prodigal ones, and directing the journey of return back home to the most idyllic place where there is no misery and no danger (*padam padam yad vipadam na tesam*), SB 1.2.17,

*īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānām hṛd-deśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati
bhrāmayan sarva-bhūtāni yantrārūḍhāni māyayā*

The Supreme Lord is situated in everyone's heart, O Arjuna, and is directing the wanderings of all living entities, who are seated on a machine, made of the material energy.

But just as the friend of this narration we are enamored and swayed and as a sequel entrapped by the many engrossing engagements as to be completely illusioned and as to be at a loss even to remotely understand or appreciate the lasting bliss that can be attained by arriving back home under the aegis of a beloved father. The excursion of engaging engrossments should not become one of endangering entrapment. Our journey should always be guided by the message of the Acharyas and Krsna, who Himself is directing our wanderings.

With humble prayers to Krsna to ensure that I don't get foxed by the many allurements of the way on the journey back home and continue to remain focused on the ultimate objective of reaching the supreme destination acting under His direction.

Thank you very much.

With humble obeisances at the lotus feet of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Malathy Vivek

Abu Dhabi.