

Glories of Srimad Bhagavatam - Part 37

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled 'Glories of Srimad Bhagavatam'. In the previous offering we saw how after hearing Srimad Bhagavatam Dhundukari was released from his ghostly form and began to glorify Srimad Bhagavatam. Now we shall continue further. Dhundukari says in shloka 64-65 of fifth chapter of Uttarakhanda about how knots of attachment get cut by hearing Srimad Bhagavatam.

*jaḍasya śuṣka-varṁśasya yatra granthi-vibhedanam
citram kim u tadā citta-granthi-bhedaḥ kathā-śravāt
bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiś chidyante sarva-śaṁśayāḥ
kṣīyante cāsyā karmāṇi saptāha-śravaṇe kṛte*

If the knots in insentient object like bamboo could break by hearing Srimad Bhagavatam for seven days, then there is no wonder if such hearing of Bhagavatam could cut into pieces the knots of material attachment. When one hears to Srimad Bhagavat saptāh the knots of ignorance present in the heart are broken, all misgivings are cut to pieces. The chain of fruitive actions is terminated.

In Srimad Bhagavatam lecture given on verse 1.2.15 in Srila Prabhupada says very nicely explains the word granthi. Granthi means knot. His Divine Grace says how when we are bound by ropes, we will not be able to move independently, similarly we are bound by laws of material nature. To get ourselves free we use knife to cut the ropes. So to free ourselves from the bondage of material nature also we require a knife. His Divine Grace very nicely says what is that knife. "*Therefore this is the process, yad-anudhyāsinā, you have to take one knife. This is knife. What is that? śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ [SB 7.5.23]. This is knife. If you want to get rid of this entanglement of material existence, one body after another, then this is the only instrument by which you can unknot the knot and come out of the entanglement. Chindanti. This very word is used, chindanti: 'It cuts'.*"

Srimad Bhagavatam is full of glories of Lord and His devotees. So by hearing Srimad Bhagavatam definitely all kinds of knots will be cut. Not only the life of Dhundukari, but we could see how Srila Prabhupada has also been helping millions of souls to cut the knots of material attachments, through the sword of transcendental knowledge in the form of Srimad Bhagavatam.

Jai Granthraj Srimad Bhagavatam ki Jai! Srila Prabhupada ki Jai! Srila Gurudev ki Jai!

Krishna willing we shall try to meditate on further glories of Srimad Bhagavatam the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sudarshana devi dasi.

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This is in continuation of the previous offering titled '**Glories of Srimad Bhagavatam**'. In the previous offering we saw how after hearing Srimad Bhagavatam Dhundukari was released from his ghostly form and began to glorify Srimad Bhagavatam. Now we shall continue further.

While Dhundukari was glorifying Bhagavatam in this manner, an aerial car came for him along with Vishnudutas. When Dhundukari boarded the aerial car, Gokarna asked the Vishnudutas a very interesting question. "There are so many sinless souls in this village who attended this Bhagavata Saptah. But how come there is only one aerial car that has come? Why is there a difference in treatment for them? O beloved servants of Sri Hari, can you please explain us the reason for the same?" The Vishnudutas gave them a beautiful response for this question. In shloka 71 of the fifth chapter of Uttara khanda of Padmapurana the Vishnudutas say,

*śravaṇasya vibhedena phala-bhedo 'pi samsthitah
śravaṇam tu kṛtam sarvair na tathā mananam kṛtam 71
phala-bhedas tato jāto bhajanād api mānada*

The difference in treatment is because of the difference in hearing of Srimad Bhagavatam. Though all the people present here, had heard Bhagavatam, the intensity of hearing was not the same for all. That is the reason for the difference in reward, although everyone had heard Srimad Bhagavatam.

This is very important point to meditate. Many a times even after knowing the glories of devotional service, we do it mechanically without faith or care. Such faithlessness and careless attitude will naturally delay our path of progress. Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita verse 4.11, "ye *yathā māṁ prapadyante tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham*" - "**As all surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly.**" Dhundukari although had led a very sinful life in the past and had attained the ghost body, now when he heard that hearing Srimad Bhagavatam is the only hope for him to get rid of his ghostly form, he heard Srimad Bhagavatam for seven days and seven nights continuously with deep concentration. Due to his faith and intense hearing of Srimad Bhagavatam Dhundukari was blessed with opportunity to go to Lord's abode and have His darshan. Srimad Bhagavatam verse 2.8.4, Parikshit Maharaj says,

*śṛṇvataḥ śraddhayā nityam grṇataś ca sva-ceṣṭitam
kālena nātidīrghena bhagavān viśate hr̥di*

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.

Parikshit Maharaj also heard Bhagavatam for 7 days and could reach the abode of Lord. His Divine Grace very nicely mentions in the above purport that people like Parikshit Maharaj at least knew that they will die after 7 days. But for us death can come any moment. So remembering our last moment, we should endeavour every day to engage in hearing Srimad Bhagavatam **attentively and with faith**. Then by the mercy of Guru and Krishna, we are sure to reach the abode of Supreme Lord.

Krishna willing we shall try to meditate on further glories of Srimad Bhagavatam in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

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

Stay Away from Envy

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

Envy is a great foe even to strong kings who were devoured by it. We see in our daily life when the neighbour is more opulent, others feel envious of them. It begins right from our childhood, At school we feel envious of other students who are very brilliant and talented. Politicians and merchants feel envy on their counterpart over their fast growth. We even have so many instances wherein family members kill each other out of envy. In Mumbai there was an instance where in a younger brother cruelly shot his elder brother, as the elder brother became very popular and the younger one could not tolerate his popularity. Envious persons being entangled in abominable sins and end their life unhappily. Following verse from Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 5, Chapter 18, text 9 depicts as to how a Vaishnava is to lead a peaceful life bereft of enviousness:

*svasty astu viśvasya khalāḥ prasīdatām
dhyāyantu bhūtāni śivam mitho dhiyā
manāś ca bhadram bhajatād adhokṣaje
āveśyatām no matir apy ahaitukī*

May there be good fortune throughout the universe, and may all envious persons be pacified. May all living entities become calm by practicing bhakti-yoga, for by accepting devotional service they will think of each other's welfare. Therefore let us all engage in the service of the supreme transcendence, Lord Sri Krishna, and always remain absorbed in thought of Him.

Our natural tendency is that we pray only for our well-wishers, near and dear ones etc. But in the above prayer we find how Prahlad Maharaj is praying for the welfare of all living entities. Prahlad Maharaj infact prayed to Lord Narasimhadev to liberate even his envious father Hiranyakashipu who had tried to kill him many times. Srila Prabhupada in his unparalleled purport very beautifully mentions how there are two kinds of envious living entities, one is snake and another is man like Hiranyakashipu. Snakes harm other even when it is not being disturbed by them and so are envious people who simply trouble others for no reason. His Divine Grace further says, "The difficulty is that the khala (envious living entity) is rarely pacified. One kind of khala, the snake, can be pacified simply by mantras or by the action of a particular herb (mantraushadhi-vashah sarpah khalakena nivaaryate). An envious person, however, cannot be pacified by any means. Therefore Prahlada Maharaja prays that all envious persons may undergo a change of heart and think of the welfare of others. If the Krishna consciousness movement spreads all over the world, and if by the grace of Krishna everyone accepts it, the thinking of envious people will change. Everyone will think of the welfare of others."

Whenever we feel envious of others, then we can understand that we are not yet in the path of Krishna consciousness. Envyng others means we are envying Krishna because whatever talents or ability or opulence is present in others, the source of all those things are Krishna. Let us pray to the Lord to bring that change in our hearts so that we always wish and pray for the well-being of all and together engage in devotional service unto Him.

Hare Krishna.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Shyamsundar das

Vrindavan.

Glories of Srimad Bhagavatam - Part 39

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled '**Glories of Srimad Bhagavatam**'. In the previous offering we saw how Vishnudutas arrived to take Dhundukari to Vaikuntha. When Gokarna inquired as to why others assembled there did not have the privilege to get an aerial plane and travel to Vaikuntha, the Vishnudutas began to explain the reason for the same. The first point they mentioned was about the difference in the intensity and faith with which Dhundukari heard Srimad Bhagavatam and the way others did. Now we shall continue further.

The Vishnudutas further explained the mood in which scriptures needs to be read and heard. Spiritual wisdom which is not firmly rooted, hearing scriptures without interest, counsel received with doubting mind and muttering of sacred text with restless mind is all fruitless. In shlokas 75-76 of the fifth chapter of Uttara khanda of Padma purana, the Vishnudutas further say,

*hatam aśrotriye dānam anācāra-hataṁ kulam
viśvāso guru-vākyeṣu svasmin dīnatva-bhāvanā
mano-doṣa-jayaś caiva kathāyām niścalā matiḥ
evam ādi kṛtaṁ cet syāt tadā vai śravaṇe phalam*

For one who has faith in the words of spiritual master, who is thoughtful of his insignificant position, endeavours to subjugate the deviating mind and devotedly hears Srimad Bhagavatam with faith and attention, their hearing of Srimad Bhagavatam will be effective. When all of you hear Srimad Bhagavatam in this mood again, then you are sure to reach Lord's abode.

The Vishnudutas also added that Krishna will personally come to take Gokarna to Goloka for he had been instrumental in helping others to hear Srimad Bhagavatam. Saying so Vishnudutas left for Vaikuntha along with Dhundukari. When the people in the village heard this, they again gathered in the month of shravan and engaged themselves in hearing of Srimad Bhagavatam with devotion. At the end of 7th day, Lord Sri Hari came personally along with His associates and took Gokarna to Goloka along with all the living entities who had heard Bhagavatam from him. Due to the mercy of pure devotee like Gokarna, not only the pious human-beings, even shudras and dogs all were able to board the aerial car along with Gokarna and go to Goloka. Such is the power of Bhagavatam, person Bhagavata and hearing of Bhagavatam. Granthraj Srimad Bhagavatam ki Jai!

In Srimad Bhagavatam verse 1.3.44, Suta Goswami says to the sages of Naimisaranya about his own experience of how he had heard Srimad Bhagavatam. Krishna willing we shall try to meditate on this verse in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

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

Glories of Srimad Bhagavatam - Part 40

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled '**Glories of Srimad Bhagavatam**'. In the previous offerings we had heard about the conversation between Sanatkumaras and Narada Muni about the glories of Srimad Bhagavatam, hearing of Bhagavata Saptah, how Bhakti and her sons Jnaana and Vairaagya got rejuvenated by hearing Srimad Bhagavatam from Narada Muni. We also heard the narration of the story of Gokarna by Sanatkumaras and were able to get a glimpse of the glories of this great Purana.

In Srimad Bhagavatam verse 1.3.44, Suta Goswami says to the sages of Naimisaranya about his own experience of how he had heard Srimad Bhagavatam. We shall try to meditate on this verse in this offering.

*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.

There are four very important words in the above verse *niviṣṭaḥ*, *tat anugrahāt*, *śrāvayiṣyāmi* and *yatha adhītaṁ yathā-mati*. Srila Prabhupada has wonderfully translated these words and has revealed how Bhagavatam should be heard and how it should be spoken as well.

His Divine Grace translates *niviṣṭaḥ* as '**being perfectly attentive**' and *tat anugrahāt* means '**by his mercy**'. Sri Sukadeva Goswami says in this verse that he heard with rapt attention and by the mercy of Sri Sukadeva Goswami he was able to understand Srimad Bhagavatam. So our personal endeavours and mercy of bonafide acharya will help us to understand this glorious scripture. For us the mercy is already flowing through in the form of realised translations done by Srila Prabhupada, his vāni and through his many wonderful disciples who are carrying on his mission even after his physical absence. In his matchless purport to above verse His Divine Grace says, "**Simple hearing is not all; one must realize the text with proper attention. The word niviṣṭaḥ means that Suta Goswami drank the juice of Bhagavatam through his ears. That is the real process of receiving Bhagavatam. 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.**"

Our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj says that "*Just like how mother makes the food very soft and easy for small baby to take, Srila Prabhupada has chewed the nectar of Srimad Bhagavatam and all we need to do is just drink it. But we are so very rascals that we don't want even to drink it.*" So drinking hear refers to *niviṣṭaḥ* - drinking the juice of Bhagavatam through our ears.

Krishna willing we shall continue to meditate more on this verse in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

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

Glories of Srimad Bhagavatam - Part 41

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in conclusion of the previous offerings titled '**Glories of Srimad Bhagavatam**'. In the previous offering we were meditating on Srimad Bhagavatam verse 1.3.44 wherein Suta Goswami says to the sages of Naimisaranya about his own experience of how he had heard Srimad Bhagavatam.

*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.

Suta Goswami said how attentive hearing and mercy of Vaishnavas help one to understand Srimad Bhagavatam. Srila Prabhupada has wonderfully translated *shraavayishaami* in the above verse as '**shall let you hear**'. He has passed on the message "As It Is", without any misinterpretation. Srila Prabhupada's translation of scriptures is exactly as per this verse. That is why his writings have touched millions of souls across the globe. His writings were expressions of his transcendental ecstasy. He never thought that he is writing these books. Many a times when His Divine Grace was asked as to how he is able to read his own books many times, Srila Prabhupada said that it was Krishna who has written these books through him and that is why he is able to enjoy the same with great relish.

Our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj says that he would spend hours preparing for every class. But as soon as he sits on the Vyasan, the points which comes in the class are all from Krishna and many times it might not even include any of the points which Maharaj had prepared in his notes. In essence Maharaj taught by his own practice that we need to sincerely prepare for hours for every single class. Then Krishna speaks through us during the class.

The words *yathaa adhitam yathaa-mati* means '**as far as I have realised**'. Realised souls are those who don't merely study scriptures. They don't simply talk. But they walk the talk as well. Scriptural study combined with practical application of the teachings in daily life leads to realisation. Every time we apply what we study in scriptures in daily life, we get newer realisations. Srila Prabhupada very nicely says what would be the effect of hearing from such realised souls. "**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.**"

The glories of Srimad Bhagavatam are unlimited like the Supreme Lord as it is non-different from Supreme Lord. In conclusion let us remember the verse Srila Narada Muni says in Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.38:

*iti mūrty-abhidhānena mantra-mūrtim amūrtikam
yajate yajña-puruṣaṁ sa samyag-darśanaḥ pumān*

Thus he is the actual seer who worships, in the form of transcendental sound representation, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vishnu, who has no material form.

Let us offer our respectful obeisances and heart-felt gratitude to Supreme Lord Krishna who has mercifully appeared

through the pages of Srimad Bhagavatam, Srila Vyasadev for compiling it, Srila Prabhupada, Srila Gurudeva and all the Vaishnavas for teaching us the way to enjoy this glorious scripture in our life-time.

Granthraj Srimad Bhagavatam ki Jai! Srila Prabhupada ki Jai ! Srila Gurudev ki Jai!

Thank you very much.

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

Home Away from Home

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

Yesterday one devotee was sharing with us about how causeless is the mercy of Srila Prabhupada. **His Divine Grace has indeed built a home in which the whole world can live.** That devotee hails from Punjab and he was telling how, no matter wherever we travel across the globe, we always feel at home when we enter temple and associate with devotees. By mercy of Srila Prabhupada we get warm reception, we get wonderful darshan of Deities, Krishna prasadam, opportunities to serve and associate with devotees, so much so we never feel that we are in a foreign country. If not for His Divine Grace's arrangement, any travel outside our homeland would have been a lonely and miserable experience.

He then said how once he and his family had travelled to Prague in Czech Republic to attend his brother's wedding. As soon as they reached the airport, he wanted to go to ISKCON temple there and have darshan of the Deities. His family members were not encouraging his idea and they wanted him to travel along with him straight to the wedding hall. In spite of the chastisements from family members, he tried to check with airport officials by showing them the address of the ISKCON temple. But none of the officials there could help him, due to language issues. He then decided to go along with his family to the wedding. As they approached the wedding hall, he could hear the sound of kartals and mrdanga. His family members smiled at him and this devotee happily entered the temple first thanking Krishna for revealing His presence. As soon as he entered the temple and had darshan of Deities, he just called out the devotees and invited them to come over to his brother's marriage. The devotees happily accepted the invitation and did a wonderful sankirtan in the wedding. Neither his brother, nor the bride's family expected it as it was neither a part of their tradition and nor it was planned by them. But at the end of the program everyone who attended the wedding were happy to have the devotees there.

The incident which this Prabhujis shared has many nice lessons for us to learn. He gave first priority to see Krishna. Krishna was pleased with his sincere desire that although he didn't know where the temple is located, Krishna arranged to have the wedding hall very near to the temple. Secondly not only did this devotee want to have darshan of Krishna in first place, but he wanted to use every available opportunity to distribute the Holy Names to all. So although he had never interacted with devotees in Czech temple, nor he knew language - still Hare Krishna Mahamantra and Srila Prabhupada broke all language and other barriers for him and the temple devotees just came to the wedding as soon as he invited them. In material relationships we observe so much formalities. We don't go to a place when we get invitations with such short notice. But spiritual relationship is transcendental because everyone wants to just glorify Krishna. Having sankirtan in the wedding indeed is the best auspicious wedding gift which this devotee could give his brother and all the family members. He wanted to glorify Krishna and Krishna took care of making everyone happy.

Personally I could say that had it been a wedding in my family, I would have hesitated so much even to suggest the idea of having kirtan during the marriage function, thinking that relatives might not like it, object it, etc..and would have even thought to give first priority to attend the wedding and then later go to temple. In the process of speculating what others will say and think, we forget Krishna, we forget that Krishna should be given first priority and as a result lead a life of anxiety. But when we keep Krishna in the center and give Him first priority, everything else falls in place. As in the above incident, we find that all the other family members who were not so favourable to devotional service were also very pleased in the end to hear the devotees chanting Hare Krishna during the wedding. All we need is just faith and surrender and eagerness to glorify the Lord. **If we do our best, Krishna does the rest.** Indeed Krishna assures us in Bhagavag Gita 4.11 - *ye yathā māṁ prapadyante tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham* - "**As all surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly.**"

Jagat Guru Srila Prabhupada ki Jai!

Hare Krishna.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sudarshana devi dasi.

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 1

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

The following is a humble effort to transcribe one of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9.

This chapter titled, "**The Passing Away of Bhismadev**", Chapter 9 in Canto 1 of Srimad Bhagavatam is a very important chapter. As soon as we think about Bhishmadev we have to remember that in his life, beginning of his life, he has sacrificed his own enjoyment for his father's enjoyment. And then again for continuing the dynasty, he sacrificed again and again, so many times. The incident in Mahabharat is worth knowing about Bhishmadev. Bhishmadev was the son of Ganga, Ganges. There is a story that Santanu the father of Bhishmadev, in his previous life, he was a great king known as Mahabhisa. Formerly the kings were rshi also, sages also. So he had gone to the heavenly planets and he met king Indra at that time. And when he met Indra, Ganges had also gone there and somehow or the other, they had a loving glance at each other. And the demigods knew this and Ganges was cursed to come to the material world and take the human form and marry Santanu, who was that king in the previous life.

So because she was cursed, she had to take birth as Ganga in the mortal world, *mṛtyu loka* and eventually Santanu met her on the bank of the river. So again they fell in love and eventually she married. But while marrying Bhishmadev's father, she made one condition that he should never ask her anything, why she is doing or how she is doing. This was the condition. She said, "If you don't follow this condition, the day you don't follow, I will leave."

The king agreed because he wanted to marry Ganga and he said, "I will not tell you anything. You do whatever you like and I will never object to it." So they stayed very happily and one by one they had 8 sons. And every time the son was born, she will take the son and throw it in the Ganges. The king controlled up to 7 sons. You can see that the king was powerful person, but he was helpless, because every time the son was born, Ganga will take away the son and throw it in the river Ganges. He had to keep quite, but it was very painful. He was jubilant when the son was born, but soon the son disappeared and he became miserable. But even then he continued as that was the condition. He knew that if he tells her anything, she will quit. He continued like this for 7 sons and the eighth son was Devavrat, Bhishmadev.

So when he was born, again she started to go towards the river and this time, the king could not control himself and asked, "Are you a demon? What kind of demon you are?" Then she replied that these sons were the eight Vasus who were cursed to be born one after the other and die immediately. So she had to throw them away. Then she added, "This eighth son had to survive as he had to lead a long life in this planet. But since you have broken the condition, I have to go." The king was very much pained as he did not want to lose Ganga. But she was out of his hands. This is how in our life also fate plays very important part. **Fate never tolerates that everything should go alright. That is the quality of fate or bhāgya.** Bhāgya will never allow you to be cent percent happy. That is bhāgya. It will always add a bitter drop to a very nice cup full of joy. It will always add a bitter thing and when the bitter thing is added, we don't like it. But we don't know the nature of fate. In this material world fate is one of the instrument of Krishna.

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more about Bhishmadev from Maharaj in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sudarshana devi dasi.

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 2

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offering we heard from Maharaj about the birth of Bhishmadev and how by influence of fate his father King Santanu had to be separated from his wife Ganga. Now let us hear further.

1. **Fate cannot be changed:** Fate is one of the instruments of Krishna and it is very forceful. The fate of Dasaratha was to die without his son. That was his fate because he had killed Shraavan. These stories are very true. They are facts. Dasarath was king. Not only king, but father of the Lord. And Lord can do anything if He wants. He could have increased his lease that till He came back from the forest he remain alive and then in front of Lord Ram he could have died. But no. Fate was that it he has to die in the absence of his son as he had killed Shraavan. He was cursed by the parents of Shraavan that, "As we are dying without our son, you will also die without your son." **So you can change anything and everything. But the fate cannot be changed. This is very correct.**

And this is how Santanu also lost Ganga. Just because he uttered one sentence and the condition was broken. And as soon as the condition was broken, she said that, "This son belongs to you. But because he is young, I will take the son with me. I will educate him to become a very nice king and continue your dynasty. And as soon as he becomes 16 years old, by that time, he will complete all his education which is required for the king and then I will hand over the son to you." This is how she promised and she vanished. And the king was all alone in the forest. He had to come back alone. He was very morose. He could not do anything. And in this condition he passed 16 years.

2. **Use Lone time in Krishna's service:** It is terrible time to pass like this because earlier he was very happy with his wife Ganges. He had to pass 16 years all alone. **And lone time if it is not utilized in understanding Krishna, then we become mad, mental.** And that is why we find more mad people in these countries. In our country, even now, whatever be the condition, we do arrange for the children to get married so that they are not alone. Either they have parents or they have their own wife or husband, they have their own family, so that loneliness is not there. In these countries, parents don't take care. So children are left on their own and when they are left on their own, they don't know really. Somebody is in mode of goodness. Some in mode of passion or ignorance. And the children cannot manage to get married themselves. If they get married, the wife may not be up to the standard and again there is a difficulty regarding divorce and everything. This case was completely absent, even recent times. And even now the parents are very careful to get their children married. So this is how the loneliness could be avoided in our country. **But if you are alone, and if you don't have any other useful engagement, then you are completely lost.**

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more about Bhishmadev from Maharaj in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

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

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 3

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offering we heard from Maharaj about the birth of Bhishmadev and how by influence of fate his father King Santanu had to be separated from his wife Ganga and how fate cannot be changed. We also saw how lone time needs to be utilised. Now we shall hear further from Maharaj on this topic.

2. **Use Lone time in Krishna's service:** In your country, there are big inventors born. You know the railway man John Stephenson, he was lonely man. And what to do in loneliness? It was cold and he was experimenting. He was making tea and the tea leaves were jumping and he got the idea from that and he invented the train and engine. This is a product of loneliness. Because he was alone, he had to make the tea. It should have been very cold at that time. So he wanted to have the tea and as soon as he made the tea, his mind was attracted to the leaf jumping due to the steam. And on that principle he constructed a nice engine and at that time, some small line was constructed from York or somewhere to London. And this is how steam trains started and all these inventions are products of loneliness.

In lone moments, you can do some creative things and the best creative thing, is to know the Absolute Truth. That is the best creative thing and we will not feel lonely. You just try. Those who are married, those who are with children, I guarantee you that you cannot stay alone for even one week. You will be completely mad, unless we are attracted to these things. So what to speak of 16 years! For 16 years Santanu had to be alone and could not do anything really. But he saw that his public, his population should not suffer, his kingdom was very nice. After 16 years again he went for hunting on the bank of Ganges. He saw a nice young boy. And in his heart he thought, "Oh if my son had been with me now, I would have been very happy." And eventually Ganga came and told him that, "This is your son and he is ready now. And he should stay with you and you see that he becomes the king." And telling this she again vanished. This is how Devavrat then started living with Santanu. And not only that he was declared as the apparent-heir of the kingdom.

And after that again the fate came. Fate started playing around. In our life so many times, things are going on well and suddenly something happens, something goes wrong and that is how fate plays. And as I told you, **fate will not give you anything and everything. From every point of view, you will not be joyful at all in this life and that is material life.** In same way fate was playing very cruel way in the life of Bhishma and Santanu also.

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more about Bhishmadev from Maharaj in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sudarshana devi dasi.

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 4

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offering we heard from Maharaj

1. Fate cannot be changed.
2. Use lone time in Krishna's service.

Maharaj said how fate continued to play in the life of Bhishmadev and Santanu. Now let us hear further.

3. **Fate is inevitable:** It is very difficult to control the fate. ***Fate is the force which cannot be controlled, which is already there and we have to suffer. That is all. Nothing else. Nothing else. Only thing we can do is to purify our activities and purify our existence.*** If you want to have good fate or if you want to be free from miserable conditions, then only good activities, very straight-forward activities will help us. Till we are alive, it will help us to have a healthy life and after death, definitely, we will not come back. That is the main thing. But somehow or other till then we have to suffer, because so much fate is waiting for us. So much bhāgya is waiting for us and because it is there, even now, if you have come to Krishna, those things could not be checked. They will come. But it is like that magicians in India who play with the snakes because the poison teeth is removed. Ours is also the same case. ***So we are chanting Krishna's names and because we are somehow or the other attracted to Srila Prabhupada's books and to the Lord, and that is why the poison teeth from our miseries is taken out. Otherwise it is horrible, it is horrible misery.***

(Referring to one of the devotee in the class Maharaj says) Take his example. His mother is not there. It is a miserable condition. Everything has to be managed. Without Lord's association, these children would have been completely mad because they don't know what is happening. Mother is not there to take care. The food is not there in the house. The house is not clean. The clothes are not washed, the pots are not washed. House is not swept. All these things look very small. But when the lady is in the house, she keeps the house very nice. Till the time we don't know that it is going on very nicely. But as soon as she is absent, then we see what she was doing. This is how fate plays very cruelly. And Krishna, with one stone He kills ten birds. By acting in one way, He punishes so many living entities. And we cannot blame Him. He is the cause, but we cannot blame Him. In the same way, this Devavrat was very happy. He was nice young man, very able man to be a king. But eventually the fate played with him and Santanu also.

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more about Bhishmadev from Maharaj in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

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

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 5

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offering we heard from Maharaj

1. Fate cannot be changed.
2. Use lone time in Krishna's service.
3. Fate is inevitable.

Maharaj said how fate continued to play in the life of Bhishmadev and Santanu. Now let us hear further.

4. **Sacrifice of Bhishmadev**: Santanu again went back to the bank of Ganges. He was going there to hunt and then he came across Satyavati, fisherman's daughter. She was raised by fisher-man. He smelled a nice fragrance. She was born out of a fish and she was smelling very bad. But then by the benediction given by Parasara Muni, she smelled very nicely. So when he smelled and he saw her climbing the boat on the bank of the river, he fell in love with her. Then she told that he has to go to her father to ask for her hand. So Santanu was blind with love. He went and approached the fisher-man and fisher-man said that, "It is alright that you are king and I am very fortunate that my daughter is getting such a nice husband." But again he had one condition that her children should become the king. And now Santanu had already declared Bhishma to be the heir-apparent. So again Santanu was in trouble. And this is sense-gratification again. Santanu should not have been attracted because he had a nice son like Devavrat. Very nice son, so there was no need for anyone else, because father and son were very nice friends. Son was 16 years old and father-son relationship was going very nicely. But somehow or the other, in order to cover up his own sense-gratification, he found other ways to express this to Devavrat.

He went back to the palace and wouldn't talk to Devavrat. Devavrat saw that his father was completely changed and wondered what was the trouble with him. He asked his father, "What is the trouble with you? You are not eating properly. You are not staying alright." He wouldn't tell anything and then from the charioteer Devavrat knew that father is in love with that girl. He asked his father again and father then opened his mouth. In material world it is always the case that if somebody is suffering from head-ache, he will say that he is suffering from stomach-ache. He will never tell you the correct thing.(laughter) This is nature of the material existence. **Every step we want to tell lies, without any reason.**(laughter) This was the king's position also. So instead of telling him that he has fallen in love with Satyavati, he said, "You are the only son for me and a great archer. So sometime, if you die, then what will happen to our dynasty?" Devavrat was very clever to read inbetween the lines. He saw that this is not the case, but the father wants to get married. But then Devavrat was very generous. He sacrificed his own marriage for the sake of his father. Who will do it? Except Vedic culture, where can we find this behaviour?

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more about Bhishmadev from Maharaj in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

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

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 6

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offering we heard from Maharaj

1. Fate cannot be changed.
2. Use lone time in Krishna's service.
3. Fate is inevitable.
4. Sacrifice of Bhishmadev

Maharaj explained how Devavrat sacrificed his marriage for the sake of his father. Now let us hear further.

5. **Sense-gratification drags us down:** If there had been a father like Shantanu here, then the son would have said, "*Mind your business. You go to hell. I will marry.*" (laughter) If father tells the son, "*Please don't marry. You sacrifice your marriage for my marriage*", the son will kill the father. This is the truth. But these Vedic values in our life (son sacrificing for the sake of father), they do carry weight. They do carry weight. Because these are not very normal things. Normal thing is that son will be married and become king and father will remain without marriage. This was normal thing. But sense gratification is very powerful that we are not ashamed to tell our son also or to neglect our son's life also. We are carried away by the sense-gratification. Senses are so very powerful. In Bhagavad Gita Lord Krishna says nicely in verse 2.67:

*indriyāṅām hi caratām yan mano 'nuvidhīyate
tad asya harati prajñām vāyur nāvam ivāmbhasi*

As a strong wind sweeps away a boat on the water, even one of the roaming senses on which the mind focuses can carry away a man's intelligence.

'*indriyāṅām*' - out of all the senses, '*yan*' means 'only one', and '*caratām*' - as soon as you ponder over that sense, then that sense alone carries you away as the wind carries away the boat. This is how unknowingly we are carried away like the boat. And this was the case of Shantanu. Just he wanted to marry and his whole mind was engrossed with marriage. There was no room for Krishna. The sense-gratificatory activities take a grip on our mind and once they take a grip, then what happens is mentioned in third chapter of Bhagavad Gita, verse 3.40. '*indriyāṅi mano buddhir asyādhiṣṭhānam ucyate*'. '*indriyāṅi*' - 'all our senses'. '*adhiṣṭhānam*' - 'the foundation'. Foundation is *mana* and *buddhi*, mind and intelligence. **When these indriyās are powerful, they take a grip on your intelligence and mind and as soon as your intelligence and mind are captured by the senses, you will be driven unknowingly to that direction and you will not even know that you are being driven away.** It is so very horrible thing and then we don't see with whom we are marrying, why we are marrying and what will be the consequences. We will be completely blind to that. '*Etair vimohayaty eṣa jñānam āvṛtya dehinam*'. '*vimohayaty*' - 'it will delude you'. '*jñānam āvṛtya*' - 'it will cover your knowledge.' Then you lose everything. You lose your common sense. You lose your life, you lose everything.

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more about Bhishmadev from Maharaj in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sudarshana devi dasi.

Nectar of Instructions from Navayogendras - 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, "Nectar of Instructions from Nava Yogendras". In the previous offering we heard from Sri Kavi, one of the Nava Yogendras, that devotional service to Supreme Lord gives fearlessness. Today, we will see further Nectar from Sri Kavi in Srimad Bhagavatam 11.2.41.

2. Seeing Krishna Everywhere and in Everything:

*khaṁ vāyum agniṁ salilam mahīm ca
jyotīṁṣi sattvāni diśo drumādīn
sarit-samudrāmś ca hareḥ śarīram
yat kiṁ ca bhūtaṁ praṇamed ananyaḥ*

A devotee should not see anything as being separate from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna. Ether, fire, air, water, earth, the sun and other luminaries, all living beings, the directions, trees and other plants, the rivers and oceans — whatever a devotee experiences he should consider to be an expansion of Krishna. Thus seeing everything that exists within creation as the body of the Supreme Lord, Hari, the devotee should offer his sincere respects to the entire expansion of the Lord's body.

In the purport to above verse it is mentioned that 'Srila Jiva Goswami says, "Because of a greedy person's obsession with money, wherever he goes he sees an opportunity for acquiring wealth. Similarly a very lusty man notices women everywhere." In the same way, a pure devotee should see the transcendental form of the Lord within everything, since everything is an expansion of the Lord. Krishna is supremely sacred, being the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and since everything that exists expands directly or indirectly from the body of the Lord, everything is sacred when seen through the eyes of a self-realized person.'

Wonderful lesson for all of us from the above verse is that we should have clear understanding that everything that exists is from Krishna and is under His direct control. Whole universe is His body and as such, we should not disrespect anything in this material world. How gloomy and depressed we feel if one day sun does not rise. If there is no rain, then there will be panic all over as water is very much essential for crops. Further, we need plants and rivers to sustain our physical body. Thus, in totality, our life in this planet is made possible and made tolerable due to presence of several matters produced from Krishna's energy. But many a times we fail to realize that Lord Krishna is the force behind all these natural resources. By being in constant association with guru, sadhu and shastras and following their instructions, by their mercy, we gradually get the vision to see Lord in everyone and in everything and then offer sincere respects to all these energies of Lord Sri Krishna. Arjuna wonderfully glorifies Lord for all His energies in Srimad Bhagavad Gita 11.39,

*vāyur yamo 'gnir varuṇaḥ śaśāṅkaḥ
prajāpatis tvam prapitāmahaś ca
namo namas te 'stu sahasra-kṛtvah
punaś ca bhūyo 'pi namo namas te*

You are air, and You are the supreme controller! You are fire, You are water, and You are the moon! You are Brahma, the first living creature, and You are the great-grandfather. I therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto You a thousand times, and again and yet again!

Krishna willing, we will ponder over other instruction from Nava Yogendras in the next offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Manohar Suvarna

Abu Dhabi.

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 7

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offering we heard from Maharaj

1. Fate cannot be changed.
2. Use lone time in Krishna's service.
3. Fate is inevitable.
4. Sacrifice of Bhishmadev.
5. Sense-gratification drags us down.

Now let us hear further.

6: Way to Overcome Sense-gratification: *The only way you can save yourself from falling prey to sense-gratification is by coming to the Lord.* But at that time Santanu did not have time to think about the Lord. Such a great person, king of the whole planet and he was just carried away by one idea - "Satyavati". Such a horrible thing. It is very difficult. It is very nicely said that,

*viśvāmitra pārāśayo prabhṛtayo vātāmbu parṇāśanaḥ
te'pi strī mukha pañkaja sulalita māyā moham gataḥ
śālyānam sahitaṁ payodadhighṛtam ye bhujate mānavāḥ
teṣāṁ indriya nigrāho yadi bhavet vindhyā calet sāgare*

The great sages starting from Vishwamitra to Parashara were subsisting only by eating air, water and leaves. Even they become bewildered just by seeing the gentle and beautiful lotus like face of women. Then what to speak to human beings who consume well cooked rice with rich milk, thick yogurt and pure ghee? If these human beings can control their senses, then the Vindhya mountains will float on the ocean.

Vishwamitra, Parashraya are such highly elevated persons that they were not eating food. *Vātāmbu parṇāśanaḥ* - They were just eating only air and water. *vaata* means air. Such elevated living entities - *strimukha pankaja* - just seeing the face of the *stri*, woman, *māyā moham gataḥ* - fell down. But you people are nicely eating rice cooked with milk, yogurt and ghee and then say *indriya nigrāho yadi bhavet* - "I have have succeeded in controlling the senses". This is like *vindhyaa calet saagare* - In the ocean if you throw Vindyacal mountain, will it float? It cannot float. Such a difficult thing. So if somebody says that *indriya nigrāho yadi bhavet*, it is completely false. It is such a difficult thing to do it, to control the senses. Only Haridas Thakur could do it, because he was fully engrossed in chanting, fully engrossed in chanting. ***If you take the help of sincerely chanting the Mahamantra, then you will be able to control.*** And the culture behind you, that is very important. The whole culture, Vedic culture, if you can cultivate - that is what Srila Prabhupada wanted us to do. He had started the ball rolling. And now if we are stopping the ball, we will glide down. If we continue to roll it in his way, then we are safe. This is how even the great king like Santanu could not control.

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more about Bhishmadev from Maharaj in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

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

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 8

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offerings we have heard 6 points. Now we shall hear further.

7. **Bhishmadev's vows:** Since Shantanu could not control his senses, the whole current of history was completely diverted. Otherwise it would have been very nice. This Devavrat would have been married and he would have had nice children and the same dynasty would have continued. And because of this Santanu's folly, the whole thing was completely disturbed. ***The whole Mahabharat stands on this folly. You do one thing wrong and you are creating Mahabharat. That we don't know and we do wrong just like that, like play thing. And as soon as you do something wrong, then Mahabharat has to follow.***

And this is the thing to be learnt from Bhishmadev's story. Somehow the other he was highly elevated person. But highly elevated persons can sacrifice and he did it for the sake of his father. And this was again a noble quality. Otherwise other sons might have told, "*Let it be. You need not get married now*". This is how our culture stands on these values and these are the values which we should take from Mahabharat, Bhagavad Gita and Srimad Bhagavatam. Otherwise if you don't touch these values, just like animals we have come and like animals we go. There is no difference then. Even dog is better. Because dog at least stays and passes his life according to the dictates of the Lord. He doesn't visit pubs. He doesn't like. If you offer him a glass of beer, he just goes away. He won't touch it. But we degrade ourselves more than that. These are the few lessons which we should learn and discern from Mahabharat and Bhishmadev.

And then the whole thing followed. Bhisma had to take the vow. When he went to the fisherman, the fisherman said, "My daughter's sons only should be come the king." So Bhishmadev agreed. "Alright, I will not claim the throne. Your grand-children will have the throne." And again the fisherman did not leave. The fisherman was a real solicitor.(laughter) Solicitors are all fallen from the sky. They have lot of brains.(laughter) So the fisherman said, "If you marry and if you have children, then what guarantee that the children will not claim the throne?" So again Bhisma had to think. "Now what is to be done?" The fisherman continued, "Merely disowning the throne, is not useful. You have disowned. But what is the guarantee that children will disown, will not claim it?" So then there was no other go and then Devavrat had to say that he will remain brahmacari for the whole of his lifetime. And then the fisherman was very satisfied. After he ate away the whole life of Bhishmadev, the fisherman was satisfied. This is how Bhishmadev had to take the vows as otherwise his father was morose.

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more about Bhishmadev from Maharaj in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sudarshana devi dasi.

Sweet as Sugar Candy

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

One of the senior devotees recently was sharing a very powerful incident when Srila Prabhupada was in London in the 1970's.

Srila Prabhupada stayed for some time in Bhaktivedanta Manor and translated Sri Caitanya Caritamrita. Most days he would be awake all night and dictate in the dictaphone. Devotees were eager to see how much Prabhupada has translated every day. So one of the days Prabhupada's light was on all night, so devotees were thinking he would have translated a lot of texts. But in the morning the personal servant of Prabhupada was amazed to find that he had translated only one word. He went to Prabhupada and asked him, why did he not translate more than one word. For that, Srila Prabhupada responded, "I was thinking hard all night, how to translate this one word in simple way for practical implementation of all the future generation!"

That is how complex that service Srila Prabhupada had taken upon himself - to convert the powerful and concentrated instructions of the previous acharyas into the world of current day population which is short-lived, lazy, misguided, unintelligent and always disturbed. As days go by, the amount of usage of electrical and electronic equipments are growing so much that nobody is interested in the invaluable message of the vedic scriptures. And Srila Prabhupada made the impossible to possible!

The senior devotee who was sharing this incident told us how easy it is for us to engage in all other forms of physical services, but sitting and reading Srila Prabhupada's books is so hard and tough. But that is the most important of services Srila Prabhupada insisted for each one of his followers to take up. He was instructing us to carefully read his books minimum 1-2 hours a day depending on the time we have. Srila Rupa Goswami says in Nectar of Instruction verse 7,

*syāt kṛṣṇa-nāma-caritādi-sitāpy avidyā-
pittopatapta-rasanasya na rocikā nu
kintv ādarād anudinaṁ khalu saiva juṣṭā
svādvī kramād bhavati tad-gada-mūla-hantrī*

The holy name, character, pastimes and activities of Krsna are all transcendently sweet like sugar candy. Although the tongue of one afflicted by the jaundice of avidya [ignorance] cannot taste anything sweet, it is wonderful that simply by carefully chanting these sweet names every day, a natural relish awakens within his tongue, and his disease is gradually destroyed at the root.

It is only because of the disease called ignorance that we are not able taste the nectarian pastimes of Lord Krishna narrated beautifully by Srila Prabhupada in his books. But that is the only medicine which will rid us of our material disease. It will not only uproot of the disease from its root but also establish our original taste to hear the Lord's glories and pastimes. As we keep reading Srila Prabhupada's books, we will get more and more addicted to its taste that nothing else will taste any better.

Let us all pray to Srila Prabhupada that we get the taste to read his books and relish it with everyone else who we meet.

Thank you very much.

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

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 9

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offerings we have heard 7 points.

8. **Commitment of Bhishmadev:** In order to please his father, Bhishmadev sacrificed his life. And this sacrifice is very difficult. Very difficult. And you do anything for others, you have to sacrifice, you have to sacrifice, yajna. **Yajna that are just directed to the good of all people, then you are satisfied. Otherwise yajnas can be done for otherwise also. But they are not recommended in shastras. For good we can do, for bad things we should shun.** And then only our life may become pure during this lifetime. If not next, next or next life. Atleast we are on the path, so at least we should try.

So after this sacrifice, the fisherman's daughter, Satyavati accompanied Bhishmadev. She was brought to the palace by Bhishmadev. And then she was offered to Santanu and he was very pleased. And then when he knew about Bhishmadev's sacrifice, he was feeling the pain. But it was too late. Everything was completely over. And Santanu was satisfied anyway. And then, again the fate started. All the while fate is playing. **Fate never stops.** Then Santanu had two sons. Vicitravirya and Citrangad. Citrangad was very good fighter. So he was invited for fight by the demigods and he was killed eventually.

So only Vicitravirya was left, he was to be married, when he was of the age. But he was not very clever, not very strong. So Bhishmadev had to arrange his marriage. The king of Kashi, had the practice for generations giving the daughter to Kuru dynasty. But at that time, he was going against it. So Bhishma was upset. So he thought that how can Kashi raja's daughters go to somebody else. Kashiraja had arranged for the marriage competition, Svayamvara. And when Bhishmadev went there, he brought all the three daughters, Amba, Ambika, Ambalika. So in this also Bhishma committed a mistake. And see how these mistakes were committed and all the horrible results were awaiting. This is the intricacy in Bhishmadev's life. As soon as we hear the name of Bhishma, all these things we have to remember, so that we know what character we are reading about. These are the different things which has moulded his life to this end.

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more about Bhishmadev from Maharaj in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sudarshana devi dasi.

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 10

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offerings we have heard 8 points. Now let us continue to hear further.

8. **Commitment of Bhishmadev:** When Bhishmadev got all the three daughters of Kashiraja after fighting with the other kings, he brought them home and offered them to Vicitravirya. And then Amba, the first daughter said, "Before you took us, I had already decided to marry king of Salva." Bhishma had fought violently with all the kings. Everyone was killed, but Salva was left alive. So she says that, "Now you do whatever you like." Bhishma said, "Why did you not tell me before? I would have left you go." And then Bhishma said, "Now I am allowing you to go." When she went to the king, the king said, "I won't accept you, because you are won by Bhishmadev. So it was the rule of kshatriyas, that whoever wins the fight, she has to marry him. Again there was trouble for Bhishma. She came back to Bhishma. She said, "You are ruining my life. You have to marry me." But Bhishma could not do that because his oath was like that. So he said, "I can't marry." She waited and waited for 6 to 7 years and eventually Bhishma told her that he cannot marry her and that she has to manage her own life. She couldn't do that.

She was upset and when she was upset, she started tapasya. **There was no psychiatrist at that time. (laughter) Otherwise in our times, we go to psychiatrist. But in those days, there were no psychiatrists. The whole population was very nicely directed to do tapa, austerities.** And she performed great austerities in the forest and she could not understand why Bhishma should deny her. When it was clear that Bhishma was not going to marry her, she wanted to take revenge. With that revengeful idea, she started doing different penances. She tried to please the son of Lord Shiva, then Shiva Himself and she got the benediction. Lord Shiva was able to give her a nice benediction, "You will be able to kill Bhishmadev yourself in the next birth. That time first you will be born as a daughter and later you will become a man and you will be named as Shikhandi. Then you will be able to kill Bhishma." So his death was created by his own activities and this we don't know. **In the material world while performing the activities, we don't have the dream that we are inviting our own death, by the activities which are against the instruction of Lord.** We should be very clear from BG 16.23,

*yaḥ śāstra-vidhim utsṛjya vartate kāma-kārataḥ
na sa siddhim avāpnoti na sukhaṁ na parāṁ gatim*

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

As soon as you go against the shastra vidhi, instructions of shastras, you are inviting your own end. This we don't know. And eventually Bhishma had to die at the hands of Shikhandi and this was all because there was a slight mistake of bringing Amba who had already decided to marry King Salva.

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more about Bhishmadev from Maharaj in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sudarshana devi dasi.

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 11

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offerings we have heard 8 points. Now we shall hear further.

Then next two daughters were again married to Vicitravirya. Ambika and Ambalika were married to Vicitravirya. In the end Vicitravirya suffered from serious disease like cancer and because of that he died young. So again fate was playing a cruel game. He died without any children. Now how to continue the Kuru dynasty? It has come to a halt again. So again Satyawati requested Bhishmadev that he should help in this condition. Bhishmadev did not agree. Somehow or the other Vyasadev was invited. He was the son of Parasara through Satyawati, (before she was married to Maharaj Santanu) came to her help. This is how Kuru dynasty continued. And then Bhishmadev looked after and in the end there was Kurukshetra war and when he was in the death-bed, that time we have this chapter wherein we have his instructions and last wishes. In Srimad Bhagavatam verse 1.9.24, he very nicely describes the appearance of Krishna in front of Him and he begs Him that I should remember you always till I die. This is perfection. Bhagavad Gita also says,

*yaṁ yaṁ vāpi smaran bhāvaṁ tyajaty ante kalevaram
taṁ tam evaiti kaunteya sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ*

Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, O son of Kunti, that state he will attain without fail.

That verse is connected to the whole chapter and I request you to study this whole chapter. These are few things we should remember and **try to purify the life always. Ignore all other dirty things and become pure like gold.** 24 carat gold, nothing can touch. Nothing can touch. We should not be contaminated in any way. Try to elevate yourself and please start as soon as possible. Other activities will go on. All activities will go on. Nothing will stop. **Somehow or the other we will get some prasadam to eat, clothing to put. But the spiritual things you will not get unless you cultivate it. Endeavors in material things could be attained by the mercy of the Lord and this is true for spiritual things also.**

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more about Bhishmadev from Maharaj in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sudarshana devi dasi.

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 12

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offerings we had heard about how fate played in the life of Bhishmadev and some of the lessons we need to learn from the same. Now we shall continue to hear the conversation between Maharaj and the devotees on this topic.

Devotee 1: Maharaj, you said that we cannot change our fate even after coming to Krishna consciousness. So first question is we have heard that when we come to devotional service, Krishna takes away our sins. So what does it mean? And secondly even if we are chanting Hare Krishna, aren't we not eradicating our sins? We might have done some crimes in our pasts like go-hatya etc. But now we have taken to chanting and devotional service. So do we still need to go to patala-loka for the sins committed in the past? Essence of question is do we still need to suffer, even though we have taken to the path of Krishna consciousness? Can't we change the fate?

Maharaj: You know for Pandavas, Lord was with them. Even then they had to suffer. It is not the question of remembering. Lord was right in front of them. They were always seeing Him day and night. But even then, their fate was not changed. Do you follow this point? So they did not worry about the difficulties. They knew that Lord was with them. So they were somehow or the other saved in the laksha-graha, house of lac. Their house was burnt. How can they be saved? Somehow or the other, they were saved. This is how **difficulties are bound to come. The fate is going to work. That flow cannot be changed. It will come. But if you are with Krishna, then that sting will go away. The sting of miseries will go away.**

Devotee: Why does not Krishna take away the whole misery instead of only the sting?

Maharaj: He doesn't do it. Take Dasarath for example. **Lord could have increased the lease of life for His father. He did not do even for His father. Then who are we? So fate is going to come.** Fate or bhagya is our creation. We have created the fate. In English it is very nicely said, 'Man is the architect of his own future.' So we are the architect of our own future. **We have committed some sins and they are bound to take a toll of our life. That is bound to come. But only thing is if you are protected by the Lord, you will not feel it.** If you are travelling with your parents in a car, and something goes wrong with the car, then parents worry about the car. And you play on the road. Your car is also broken and you are also not going ahead. But you don't worry there. Parents are there to worry. If you are not protected by the parents and if something goes wrong on the way in the car, then you have to find out the solution. You have to spend money. But because you are protected by the parents, they are doing everything and you are playing. They are suffering and you are playing. **This is how Krishna is our protector and if you take help of the protector, then you will be free in the miseries also.** Your fate cannot be changed. Car broken is car broken. That's all. You cannot tell that, "I am protected by my parents and so I can travel." No. You cannot go. You are also in the broken car. **But even while not going ahead, you are quite protected there. This is how we are protected by the Lord and if we are protected by the Lord, we don't feel it. No doubt, fate is working on us. But we don't feel it.**

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more nectar on fate in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sudarshana devi dasi.

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 13

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offerings we had heard about how fate played in the life of Bhishmadev and some of the lessons we need to learn from the same. Now we shall continue to hear the conversation between Maharaj and the devotees on this topic.

Devotee 1: Maharaj, does it mean that if we have done some wrong thing in the past life or previous years, take go-hatya for example, even though now we are Vaishnavas and have taken to Krishna consciousness, does the cow-slaughter done in the past still have a effect on us?

Maharaj: It does. It does have an effect.

Devotee 2: Then why we say in tulsi pooja - '*yāni kāni ca pa pāni*' - if you do puja to tulsi and circumambulate her, then all the sins that we have committed are washed away, even the sin of killing a brahmana. It is also said that even if we observe ekadasi fast, the sins are washed away.

Maharaj: **The sins are washed away. But the difficulties will not go away.** There is a difference between the two. It will come. It will come. You have to understand this. The difficulties are bound to come. **Whatever we have sown, it is going to grow. Nobody can stop it. Only thing is that the misery will be less.** That is the point to be understood. We have to suffer. If we do anything wrong, we have to suffer. If anyone is leading a sinful life and as a result is suffering from disease or some problem in their life, after taking to Krishna consciousness, they might have improved their health or they might have improved in their life, but death is there. The effect of previous karmas, cannot be paired. **Whatever activities they have done, it cannot be changed to 'not done'. But it has to be suffered.**

Devotee 1: So does it mean that it cannot be mitigated?

Maharaj: How can it be mitigated? Now take your own example. Your mother is dead. That was your bhagya. You have come to Krishna. But you cannot ask Krishna to bring her back. No. You can't do it. However hard you try, she will not be replaced. Why? It is your *bhagya*. So *bhagya* is already there. But you are saved by the Lord and that is why, you don't feel it. You have accepted it. That is the way. It can never be undone. Do you follow my point?

Devotee 1: I know that it cannot be undone. But..

Maharaj: Just like how that cannot be undone, nothing can be undone. The reactions will be there, but you will not feel the suffering. Just like how you are happy now. No doubt there is no mother and you cannot have the mother back. Difficulty is there, but you are not suffering now. Same way, **difficulties are bound to come. But it will not affect you.**

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more nectar on fate in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

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

Pleasing the Boss

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

Most of us have the experience of working under very difficult bosses as part of our prescribed duty. In some cases the bosses are atheistic, merciless, selfish, very dominating, exploiting etc and under these circumstances we tend to become intolerant, irritated and disturbed. This gets reflected in our work and sadhana and we start blaming our bosses for our poor sadhana. This results in imperfect execution of our material and spiritual duties. But what is the right attitude to be followed is very nicely exhibited by Sri Akrura in Srimad Bhagavatam.

In Srimad Bhagavatam, we find that after Krishna killed Arishtasura, the bull demon, Kamsa arranged for performing the sacrifice called dhanur yajna, as per the counsel given by Sri Narada Muni. In that festival, he arranged for a wrestling match wherein he planned to kill Krishna and Balarama. He then called for Akrura, one of the descendants in the family of Yadu, in which Krishna was born as the son of Vasudeva. Kamsa wanted Akrura to bring Krishna and Balarama from Vrindavan to Mathura. Akrura who had great devotion for Krishna in his heart, was serving under Kamsa. Just imagine the kind of boss which Akrura had! We can just try to understand the situation under which Akrura had been working. But we find that Akrura who was working under an anti-Krishna boss had so much love, devotion and eagerness to serve Krishna. When Akrura came to see Kamsa, Kamsa very politely shook hands with him and said, "*My dear Akrura, actually I have no better friend than you in the Bhoja and Yadu dynasties. You are the most munificent person, so as a friend I am begging charity from you.*" Then he proceeds to say in Srimad Bhagavatam 10.36.29,

*atas tvām āśritaḥ saumya kārya-gaurava-sāadhanam
yathendro viṣṇum āśritya svārtham adhyagamad vibhuḥ*

Gentle Akrura, you always carry out your duties soberly, and therefore I am depending on you, just as powerful Indra took shelter of Lord Vishnu to achieve his goals.

Here we see that actually Kamsa is glorifying Akrura and he spells out the reason why he especially chose Akrura for the job. He says "*kārya-gaurava-sāadhanam*" - "**you always carry out your duties soberly.**" So this is what pleases the bosses and because of this reason Akrura is glorified as a dependable employee. This is true and practical in our duties also.

Our beloved Gurudev HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj was always very very practical and realistic in all his instructions and when once he was asked by someone how to be regulated in work, Maharaj said, "Concentration in work IS Krishna. Before going to work, we should offer obeisances to the Deity, seeking permission from them to leave and at work, we must concentrate only on work and do it very immaculately and sincerely. **If your boss is pleased, then Krishna is pleased.** As soon as we return home, we should bow down before the Deity, thanking Lord for the day, quickly refresh and try to steal time to take shelter of scriptures."

Then we see that Kamsa proceeds to say "*Please go to Nanda's village, where the two sons of Anakadundubhi are living, and without delay bring Them here on this chariot.*". Srila Vishvanatha Cakravarti gives the following interesting note: "*When King Kamsa said 'with this chariot,' he pointed with his index finger to a brand-new, attractive chariot.*" Thus Akrura was yearning to have darshan of the Lord. Though he was working under an anti-Krishna boss, Krishna as the Super-soul understanding the eagerness of Akrura arranged in such a way that Kamsa, the boss granted official leave and also a brand new vehicle for Akrura to go and have darshan of his most beloved Master Sri Krishna.

Thus sincere and sober performance of our duties is appreciated by our boss here and also by our Supreme boss Lord

Sri Krishna.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Mumbai.

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 14

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offerings we had heard about how fate played in the life of Bhishmadev and some of the lessons we need to learn from the same. Now we shall continue to hear the conversation between Maharaj and the devotees on this topic.

Devotee: Maharaj, I know that difficulties would come in life. But I am talking about topics in Bhagavatam which says that there will be specific reactions for specific sins. Say if in the past life, I had killed some person, will that person kill me now, even if I give my life in Krishna's service now?

Maharaj: That is very correct. Our life may be given to Krishna now, so that in future, you may not have such difficulties. But ***the arrows that we have already shot, they have gone through our hands. We cannot control it now. You could have thought before the arrow is shot. Now once the arrow is shot, you should wait for the consequences.***

Devotee: That means devotees who have given their whole life to Krishna, ever since their childhood, still will suffer for the past sinful life?

Maharaj: They must. You don't understand the point. You should understand. I gave you the example of Pandavas. Their destiny was to suffer and I gave you the example of laksha graha - They were not burnt alive, but they were saved. But Krishna did not stop the fire or the burning of the house. He did not do it. Krishna Himself was there. It was not His name or devotion. He Himself was there. Within a second, He could have just stopped the laksha-graha. He could have drank the whole fire. But He didn't do it. Why? It was their fate. So that fate has to come. The only thing He did was that they should not suffer. This is the meaning of that. ***You may go around Tulsi, you may come to the temple and chant. Then you are completely safe. You are misery-proof. But then miseries are bound to come.***

Devotee: Does this mean that in this life-span, if I do anything bad, am I creating the destiny for my next left time? I have already kept it ready?

Maharaj: That is correct. If you have robbed the bank in the past, and now you get arrested, you will be put in the jail. Now that you have taken up devotional service, then even in the jail, you will sit and study Bhagavad Gita and that will make you misery-proof. That misery will not affect you.

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more nectar on fate in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

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

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 15

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offerings we had heard about how fate played in the life of Bhishmadev and some of the lessons we need to learn from the same. Now we shall continue to hear the conversation between Maharaj and the devotees on this topic.

Devotee 1: How does Lord define death? Why do some people die early and some die late? How is it controlled? How does He decide who dies first?

Maharaj: It is a very fine system. More fine than your computer system. You might store so much data in your computers and link them. If you code the data retrieval in a particular format from one computer to another, then when you hit the keys, relevant data comes out. That way it is very fine tuned. Do you understand? And Krishna's transcendental computer is far far more fine than the computers in the material world. It does not even require any keys or buttons. His computers work without anything. We don't have any buttons in our head, even then we can speak Gujarati, English etc. We have got everything in our head, but we forget Krishna. All this is material. If our brain which is like a computer in the material world is so fine, then imagine how fine Krishna's transcendental computer is. It is mentioned in Svetasvatara Upanishad 6.8,

parāsyā śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate svābhāvīkī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca

The Supreme Lord has multi-potencies, which act so perfectly that all consciousness, strength and activity are being directed solely by His will.

para means Krishna and *śakti* means energies. *vividhaiva* means 'so many' or 'multifarious'. He has multifarious energies. *svābhāvīkī* - They work in a sequence. *jñāna, bala kriyā ca* - They supply all the information to the Lord. For example, night can send information. So night is His energy. If night sees this group has got together to remember the Lord then it will send that information to the Lord. This means that night also is His energy. The moon is also his energy, it would also send information to the Lord that this group is chanting His names, or this person is drinking or going to cinema. We think that no one is watching. This is *svābhāvīkī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca*. For that reason God fearing persons wouldn't do anything wrong, as they know if they do anything wrong they could be caught. If one is not God fearing, they will keep on doing wrong. This is how *bhagya* is getting written.

Devotee 2: Is it like the example of two birds living in a tree, one bird is trying to enjoy and other bird is watching over it. The bird trying to enjoy is the soul, living entity and the other one who is witnessing it is the Super-soul.

Maharaj: Yes, you are right.

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more nectar on fate in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

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

Moderator's Note: We would like to thank our God-sister HG Apurvashakti Mataji for translating portions of the above conversation which are in Gujarati. HG Apurvashakti Mataji is wife of HG Amoghalila Prabhuji and they live with their children Krishna (12 yrs) and Tulsi (8 yrs) in London. Both Mataji and Prabhu have very nice service attitude and they

do different kinds of services in the temples. They are bringing up their kids very nicely in a Krishna conscious environment.

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 16

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offerings we had heard about how fate played in the life of Bhishmadev and some of the lessons we need to learn from the same. Now we shall continue to hear the translations of the Gujarati conversation between Maharaj and the devotees.

Devotee: In the Garuda-puran they say a lot about the soul after death. Is it true?

Maharaj: What is said there?

Devotee: After death the soul goes to a different loka, afterwards it goes to Pitru Loka, then their body become as small as a thumb and if the relatives cry for that soul then that soul really suffers. The soul is made drink something extremely hot and really suffers. There is a lot that has been explained in the Garuda purana.

Maharaj: There is lot of information in the Garuda purana. However I can tell you ***that there is only one Srimad Bhagavatam and in that it clearly states if we take Krishna's names then there is no suffering for that soul. In a family, if there is only one person, who is a devotee then he can liberate the entire family lineage.*** So these information mentioned in Garuda Purana are meant for people who are gross materialists. Whoever has a birth in India, they are devoted from the beginning. Over there men and women are very pure. You were telling me other day about how in your childhood, even if your dad gets angry, your mom would still ask him about having prasadam, even if he would go away. That is Vedic culture. But in places where there is no touch of Vedic culture, he would be told to mind his business and go to restaurant. That's the difference. Even if only one person in the family remains silent during quarrels, then it has Godly effect. That is why our Vedic culture is praise worthy.

Devotee: You said if any one person in the family, be it male or female is a devotee, then they can liberate the whole family?

Maharaj: Yes. It is enough, enough.

Devotee: So that one person could be a boy or a girl? For example as a daughter, if I become a devotee and perform sincere devotional service, then I can help in my dad's liberation?

Maharaj: What can I say? A single sincere devotee can liberate up to 21 generations backward and forward.

Devotee: Should the devotee be a boy or girl?

Maharaj: In the spiritual concepts we are all souls. There is nothing like boy or girl. This is just the body.

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 Gurudeva,
Sudarshana devi dasi.

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 17

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offerings we had heard about how fate played in the life of Bhishmadev and some of the lessons we need to learn from the same. Now we shall continue to hear the translations of the Gujarati conversation between Maharaj and the devotees

Maharaj: So if one becomes a devotee then, he becomes liberated and liberates 21 generations more. And if the next generation also takes to devotional service, then he/she liberates 21 more generations. It does not stop with that. So like this the chain goes on. It is Lord's inconceivable mercy. Just imagine how much is His causeless mercy?

Devotee 1: So if one becomes devotee he becomes liberated. What does that mean. Does it mean he goes to Goloka Vrindavan ?

Maharaj: Yes. Vrindavan.

Devotee 1: So Maharaj, I'll tell my brother to become a devotee and I'll carry on with my sins.

Maharaj: Yes you can do that. (laughter) But you will have to suffer for it. Because you are deliberately doing wrong. You are a crook. (loud laughter)

Devotee 1: Please forgive me Maharaj.

Devotee 2: Maharaj, when you say that even if there is one pure devotee, then all 21 generation gets liberated, what kind of liberation is that? Is it going back to Krishna? How can the whole generation go back to Krishna?

Maharaj: Because you are going back to Krishna. It is like how when you are going on some diplomatic field somewhere, then you get the ticket, your wife gets the ticket. Children get the ticket. They don't work. You only work. But because they are related to you, they are given the passage. They don't have to do anything. They don't have to pass the examination or interview. You have passed the examination. You have passed the interview. You have taken the job. Wife has done nothing. But because she is your wife, she gets the ticket.

Devotee 2: So if an individual goes to Goloka Vrindavan, then does his family also get the same liberation?

Maharaj: Same liberation. You go to another country to work in an Embassy somewhere, your wife also goes there. If you go to South Africa, your wife also goes to South Africa. It is not that your wife goes to America and you go to South Africa.

Devotee 2: Does this apply for liberation also Maharaj?

Maharaj: It is. It is. If in this lifetime, you do sincere devotional service and go to Goloka Vrindavan, then all seven generations will go to Goloka Vrindava. If you go to hell, then all seven generations, will go to hell. This is how wherever you go, without performing anything, the rest of generation can go. Do you understand? If you are selected as an ambassador of South Africa, then whole family gets the passage. They are not ambassadors. But they travel with you.

Devotee 2:

But this is material example. How to relate this to spiritual world?

Maharaj: This material example is at gross level. Spiritual things are much more finer than this. This material example is just to give you an idea that your wife goes not as an ambassador, but as your wife. She travels in the same plane with you as she is related to you. ***Similarly, those who are related to you, because of your devotional service, they also accompany you in the service of Krishna and they will be trained accordingly without any hesitation, because they are related to you. And it is not just your seven generations, previous species 7 generations and previous to previous species seven generations all are liberated. And again those who are liberated, again their chain of liberation will go on. It is unlimited. And that is why to become a devotee is really a very great thing. Just imagine how much dayālu Krishna is! He is very very merciful.***

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 Gurudeva,
Sudarshana devi dasi.

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 18

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offerings we had heard about how fate played in the life of Bhishmadev and some of the lessons we need to learn from the same. Now we shall continue to hear the conversation between Maharaj and the devotees.

Devotee 1: Maharaj, Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita that those who worship the forefathers, they go to the planet of the forefathers. So when you say that previous generation is liberated, what will happen to those who are in the planet of forefathers.

Maharaj: Wherever they are, Krishna knows. Do you follow me? ***You don't know. I don't know. But Krishna knows where your forefathers are there. So when you do sincere devotional service, then He will pick them up from wherever they are and send them to Goloka Vrindavan. He will do it. Be sure about it. And this cannot be proved. This cannot be mentally adjusted.*** Because our mind is material. And so these things cannot be mentally adjusted. These things we have to just agree.

Devotee 1: Maharaj, relating to the same example wherein you said, when I go, my wife and everyone else can go. But say for example if my wife or son has done some crime and say if they are in prison, then as per what we discussed earlier, their fate cannot be changed. They have to suffer for their sins. How can they come to Vrindavan with me, without suffering for their punishment.

Maharaj: (speaking in a grave and firm voice) That you don't have to worry. ***If Krishna says, we have to agree. It is up to Krishna. It is up to Krishna as to how to nullify their sins and take them to Goloka Vrindavana.*** The rule is that we have to suffer for the sins we commit. But Krishna is the Supreme Father. He has no rules and He is completely independent.

Devotee 1: So Maharaj you mean to say that He can change the rules?

Maharaj: ***Krishna can do anything.*** Just like how in a prison, prison-officer can do anything, prisoner cannot do anything. That is the difference between prisoner and prison officer. Prison officer is authority to make changes here and there. But prisoner cannot demand the changes. This is the thing to be understood. ***These doubts are there, because we are doubting the capacity of the Lord. The root cause of misunderstandings and all these questions, lies in the faithlessness of the Lord.***

Devotee 2: Maharaj can I share one more example related to what you said? In prison-house sometimes king passes by and if the king decides, he can release any prisoner.

Maharaj: Yes.

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 Gurudeva,
Sudarshana devi dasi.

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 19

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offerings we had heard about how fate played in the life of Bhishmadev and some of the lessons we need to learn from the same. Now we shall continue to hear the conversation between Maharaj and the devotees.

Devotee 1: Lord is so merciful that irrespective of how sinful one is, whether he is meat eater or not, Lord is giving every one same amount of air, water. So like that if we do pure devotional service, work hard like Srila Prabhupada, then to please His devotee, Lord liberates the whole generation.

Devotee 2: Please forgive me if I am wrong. In the Nectar of Devotion Srila Prabhupada says that there are three kinds of sins.

Maharaj: Yes. The sins are in seed form. Some are mature enough to yield us the reaction. Some of them are lying dormant. **But you should understand that these sinful activities or sins has nothing to do with our devotional service. Devotional service, is completely purifying agent. Just once you chant Krishna's names and you clear all sins completely.** So what to speak of people like us who are daily chanting His names? Our life is completely purified. Purification doesn't stop, or it is not limited to our own life. It is unlimited to our whole generations. Krishna beautifully says in Bhagavad Gita 9.22,

*ananyās cintayanto mām ye janāḥ paryupāsate
teṣāṁ nityābhiyuktānām yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham*

But those who always worship Me with exclusive devotion, meditating on My transcendental form—to them I carry what they lack, and I preserve what they have.

He says, those who come to Me, I give them the yoga that whatever they lack I give them and whatever they have I preserve them. **That is His nature. We cannot ask Him, how He does it? He does it. How He does it, I even don't know. But He does it. And that's it.**

Devotee: Maharaj, I am not questioning how the Lord does it. But just wanted to know that on one hand in Gita He says that He will protect those who do devotional service and on the other hand, the whole thing is turned topsy turvy (when we heard that we have to suffer for the sins and that our fate cannot be changed.)

Maharaj: **The difference is that those living entities who are not connected to devotee, they will have to suffer. But those who are connected to devotees, their position is completely changed. It is not a paradox and there is no contradiction here as you believe. There is no contradiction in spiritual world. Both of them are accommodated.** Krishna came to this world and He helped His devotees and killed the demons. But at the same time, the demons were also liberated. Putana was given the post of mother in the spiritual world. Her intention was completely sinful. But even then she was given and not only that, regarding Putana, you should remember that in previous life she was Bali Maharaj's daughter, Ratnamala. She was in the *yajñśālā* where Vamana dev came and she liked the dwarf incarnation child. She thought, "Oh, if I can have a son like this and could feed him?" And Lord knew her wish and she granted her wish. Then she was born as Putana demon and was given a chance to feed Krishna **and by the touch of Krishna, she was immediately purified. These things are very intricacies and we even don't know many times. But some how or the other Lord does it.** Otherwise who will give the motherly status to

the woman who is ready to kill the child? In the material world, we will kill her. But in spiritual world, Lord does not kill her. He sees that, "Oh she has fed me, let her come to Goloka."

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 Gurudeva,

Sudarshana devi dasi.

Lessons from Bhishmadev - Part 20

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the transcription of the nectarean and inspiring class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj in London on Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1, Chapter 9. In previous offerings we had heard about how fate played in the life of Bhishmadev and some of the lessons we need to learn from the same. Now we shall continue to hear the conversation between Maharaj and the devotees.

Devotee: Maharaj, from Putana's story should we understand that those people who are connected with me, even though if they have not performed any great devotional activities, they getting liberation is because they must have done something in the past life, to be related to me in the first place. Like Putana, she has done lot of pious activity in the past life, to be able to offer that service to Krishna in this birth. What I mean is that there is a cause for being liberated. It is not happening suddenly just like that.

Maharaj: First we have to understand that we are not talking about liberation. There is a difference between liberation and devotion. Liberation is a passive state. Liberation means you are just stopping the material attractions. And as soon as you are stopping the attractions, it is known as liberation or moksha. **But we are not interested in moksha. We are interested in devotional service - bhakti and the concomitant results of bhakti will be liberation etc.** We are not worried about those.

*hari na jan to mukti na mānge
mānge janamo janam avatār re
nitsevā, nitkirtan ochchhav
nirakhava nandkumar re*

Narsi Mehta is singing this. He says that Vaishnavas don't ask for mukti. **They only pray for always doing seva, kirtan and glorifying Krishna in every birth. This is our purpose. This is our purpose.** We don't want liberation. No. And we don't want our relatives also to be liberated. They should become devotees. And devotion is so very powerful. Srila Prabhupada was only one devotee and now there are three million devotees all over the planet. One devotee could show this. He was only one devotee. And one devotee, how could he purify the whole three million people. It is unlimited purification and this shows that if three million are purified in this planet, then how many more should have been purified unknowingly? Each one's generations and his generations and his generations...it is a very big purifying agent. You look at the sun. The sun rises and does it has a limit to one or two miles? The whole planet is engulfed. And sun is nothing when compared to Krishna.

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 Gurudeva,
Sudarshana devi dasi.