

Power of Association - Part 11

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In our last offering on the story of Mrgari, we saw the importance of surrendering to a spiritual master. Let us continue to meditate further on the lessons from the story.

11. **Full Surrender Attracts the Mercy of Spiritual Master**: We saw how upon the assurance given by Narada muni, the hunter broke his bow and immediately surrendered to Narada muni.

Being thus assured by the great sage Nārada Muni, the hunter broke his bow, immediately fell down at the saint's lotus feet and fully surrendered. After this, Nārada Muni raised him with his hand and gave him instructions for spiritual advancement.

In the above statement, it is mentioned that the hunter fully surrendered to Narada muni. What does full surrender mean? It means offering our body, mind, life, wealth, intelligence, desires and everything at the spiritual master's disposal. It means we have full confidence that the spiritual master will handle these far better than us and therefore let us follow their guidance and instructions in every step of our life. An occupation which the hunter was doing for life time with his most dear weapons the bow and arrow, he was ready to give it up in a moment's conviction and assurance given by Narada muni.

There is an interesting point to note here. It is vedic etiquette that whenever we fall at someone's (especially elder's) feet, we don't do it just for formality, get up immediately to do something else. We fall at their feet in a mood of respect and surrender, which implies that "*Now I am yours. You can do whatever you want with me.*" Unfortunately we don't follow this mood these days. We fall at the feet, immediately get up and move on. But we can see the humble etiquette followed by even the uncivilized hunter here. He fell at the feet of Narada muni in full surrender, and did not get up until Narada muni raised him with his hands. In other words, if Narada muni had taken his time to raise him up (or did not lift him up at all), he would have continued to lie down at his feet. That is the real mood of full surrender. "*Waiting eagerly & patiently to receive the order*" from the spiritual master is a beautiful quality and it pleases the guru greatly. Being pleased with this sincere attitude of the disciple, the spiritual master will bestow the transcendental knowledge upon him - *upadekṣyanti te jñānam jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ*.

After this, Narada muni went on to give specific instructions for him to advance in spiritual life. Narada muni told the hunter,

1. Go home and distribute all the wealth you have accumulated, to pure brahmanas.
2. Then leave home along with your wife, each of you taking with you only one cloth to wear.
3. Go to a river and construct a small cottage to live.
4. Grow a Tulasi plant, daily worship her by circumambulating and offering various things.
5. Continuously Chant the Hare Krishna Mahamantra.

Krishna willing, we shall look at these points briefly in our next offering.

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

Welcome to Granthraj 2.0

Dear Devotees,

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

Wish you a very Happy Krishna conscious New Year 2020!!

With the dawn of the new year and new decade we are officially commencing Granthraj in our new system.

By Krishna's mercy and with the immense dedication of Srividya Mataji & Sharma Prabhuji, we have migrated our email server overcoming several technical challenges. Our heartfelt gratitude to their undaunting support.

Few Important Updates:

1. As mentioned earlier, all the old articles are archived and migrated to Maharaj's official website under the location - <http://www.mahavishnugoswami.com/#granthraj>. While the email system was stopped for a couple of weeks, the articles were regularly updated in the website in the above location. You can visit and read them at your convenience.
2. Now devotees can submit their articles to **granthraj@mahavishnugoswami.com**. The articles will get published in the website and also sent to all the subscribers through email system.
3. We have ported all the current subscribers to the new system. If you are getting this email, it means that you are already subscribed to the newsletter. If you don't see it in the inbox, please check in spam and add the above email id to your contact list/safe sender's list.
4. If anyone wants to subscribe, you can use the '**Subscribe to Granthraj**' option in the home page of the website <http://www.mahavishnugoswami.com> or write to granthraj@mahavishnugoswami.com.
5. For any queries/concerns or you want to unsubscribe, please write to admin at granthraj@mahavishnugoswami.com.

Thank you very much for your patronage to our service all these years and we look forward to providing you an uninterrupted service of deep-diving into the nectarean ocean of Srila Prabhupada's vani.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Kalacakra Krsna das

Granthraj Moderator

Power of Association - Part 12

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In our last offering on the story of Mrgari, we saw the meaning of full surrender to a spiritual master. Let us continue to meditate on the various instructions given by Srila Narada muni to his disciple Mrgari.

12. **Transcendental Instructions of Narada muni to Mrgari:** We saw the 5 instructions given by Narada muni to Mrgari. Let us see them.

a) *Distribute the wealth you accumulated to pure brahmanas:* The wealth that we accumulate carries the reactions of the sins we do to collect it. So Narada muni advised Mrgari to distribute them all to saintly people who has the power to nullify the sinful reactions. As a bona fide spiritual master, he destroyed the past sins of his disciple and at the same time inculcating the habit of charity in him. However we cannot take it as a general template to commit whatever sins we want, hoard wealth through illegal means and then donate some to the temples (tantamount to bribing God) thinking it will absolve us of the sins. It is said in SB 10.84.37:

*ayaṁ svasty-ayanaḥ panthā dvi-jāter gr̥ha-medhinaḥ
yac chraddhayāpta-vittena śuklenejyeta pūruṣaḥ*

This is the most auspicious path for a religious householder of the twice-born orders — to selflessly worship the Personality of Godhead with wealth honestly obtained.

The special qualification of the hunter is that he was genuinely repentant of his past sins and in an effort to absolve himself of those sins, he took complete shelter of a pure devotee such as Narada muni. Most importantly, he did not have any expectation upon Narada muni that he should do this favor to him. In such genuine cases, the spiritual master can submit an exception to Krishna on our behalf.

b) *Leave home along with your wife taking only one cloth to wear:* Mrgari was not living a grhastha life, he was lower than a grhamedhi, but by the causeless mercy of Narada muni, he directly took to the Vanaprastha order. Since the atmosphere of his house was filled with so many sins, Narada muni wanted him to give it up and start a new life of devotional service along with his wife. By keeping the food, clothing and shelter requirements to a minimum and leading a simple life, one's tendency to commit sins will be greatly reduced and dependency on Krishna's shelter will increase. This is the purpose of the 2nd instruction.

c) *Go to a river and construct a small cottage to live:* Living near a river is favorable in various ways. It provides a sattvic atmosphere. Most of the local villagers visit there to fetch water from the river and animals also go there only to quench their thirst. The river, being highly sattvic in nature, will inculcate the same mood in the hunter and eradicate sinful propensities from his mind. Also he can get water, fruits, vegetables and various other sattvic food by being near the river. Wood will be available easily to build a simple cottage. So the food and shelter problem will be solved in this way.

d) *Grow a Tulasi plant and worship her everyday:* It is interesting to note that Narada muni gave the same instruction to Dhruva Maharaj too even though he was a small boy and was going inside a dangerous forest to meditate on the Lord. It shows the importance of Tulasi worship in our devotional life because she is *krishna-bhakti-pradaayini*, bestower of Krishna bhakti. By circumambulating the Tulasi plant, even the gravest sin of killing a brahmana can be destroyed. Haridas Thakur also advised the prostitute who came to attract him, to worship Tulasi devi and she became a great devotee. Srila Prabhupada writes in his purport to SB 4.8.55, "*Tulasī leaves are very dear to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and devotees should take particular care to have tulasī leaves in every temple and center of worship.*"

" Hence Narada muni's instruction of worshiping Tulsi devi is very conducive to bhakti.

e) *Continuously chant the Hare Krishna Mahamantra*: This is the final and topmost instruction. He advised Mrgari to continuously chant the holy names, especially the Hare Krishna Mahamantra. Srila Sukadeva Goswami speaks this beautiful verse to Parikshit Maharaj in SB 6.3.31:

*tasmāt saṅkīrtanaṁ viṣṇor jagan-maṅgalam aṁhasām
mahatām api kauravya vidhy aikāntika-niṣkṛtam*

My dear King, the chanting of the holy name of the Lord is able to uproot even the reactions of the greatest sins. Therefore the chanting of the saṅkīrtana movement is the most auspicious activity in the entire universe. Please try to understand this so that others will take it seriously.

The chanting of Hare Krishna Mahamantra is the only way to destroy even the greatest of sins and bring auspiciousness to the entire universe. Hence Srila Prabhupada has given us the topmost instruction to advance in our bhakti - i.e., to always chant the holy name irrespective of time, place and circumstances - *hari sarvatra sarvada*.

So with the 1st instruction Narada muni destroyed all the accumulated sinful reactions of the hunter, in the next 2 instructions he made arrangement to lead a simple life with minimum endeavor for food, cloth and shelter and in the last 2 instructions he gave him the supreme method of performing sadhana to advance in his devotional service. With just 5 simple instructions he changed the entire life of the hunter upside down. This is the greatness of an exalted acarya like Narada muni.

Krishna willing we will meditate on further lessons from the story of Mrgari in subsequent offerings.

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

Power of Association - Part 13

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In our last offering on the story of Mrgari, we meditated on the instructions given by Narada muni to the hunter. Let us continue to meditate further on this topic today.

13. Follow Instructions of Guru Strictly & Make Vigorous Advancement in Bhakti: One may argue that it was possible for the hunter could go to a river side and build his own cottage in those days, but now finding a river is almost difficult and even if we find one, getting a space to build a house is even more difficult. How can one live a sattvic life, let alone practice devotion? Srila Prabhupada gives answer to such questions in his beautiful purport to verse 261,

*"In any condition, any man can live in a small cottage, plant a tulasī tree, water it in the morning, offer it prayers, and continuously chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra. Thus one can make **vigorous spiritual advancement**. This is not at all difficult. One simply has to follow the instructions of the spiritual master strictly. Then everything will be successful in due course of time."*

Srila Prabhupada interestingly uses the word, '*vigorous spiritual advancement*'. 'Vigour' is a french word that means, full of liveliness, activity, energy and enthusiasm. All these characteristics are monopoly of devotional service only. Bhakti is full of life (*sanjivayati*), enthusiasm (*utsaha*) and energy (*shakti*). We can see how devotees are active throughout the year with various festivals, services and our temples and centers are full of life. We don't see this in any other movement, because pure bhakti is missing there. This is our Srila Prabhupada's monopoly. Being blessed by the greatest saint Narada muni, we can see how the hunter made advancement in leaps and bounds in his devotional service in double quick time and similarly being blessed by the transcendental instructions of Srila Prabhupada, we can also make rapid advancement in our bhakti.

Srila Prabhupada then goes on to clarify further, "*One may live in a cave, in a cottage beside a river, in a palace or in a big city like New York or London. In any case, a devotee can follow the instructions of his spiritual master and engage in devotional service by watering the tulasī plant and chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra."* This is how Srila Prabhupada has made devotional service extremely practical for us. If we take to the instruction of Narada muni literally, we would be running around to find a river (let alone it has water) and struggle our whole life to find some space nearby. But Prabhupada has simplified it so nicely for us in this kali yuga saying that be situated wherever you are - *sthāne sthitāḥ śruti-gatāḥ tanu-vān-manobhir*, simply follow the instructions of the spiritual master, doesn't matter you are in a mansion or in a hut in New York or London, you will achieve perfection.

In fact, it is very interesting to note that around the world, others have to struggle so hard throughout their life to secure a piece of land in a serene place, but devotees get palatial mansions or big piece of land in posh areas without much endeavor. This is the blessings of Krishna for our bhakti and it is confirmed in SB 8.5.47:

*kleśa-bhūry-alpa-sārāṇi karmāṇi viphalāni vā
dehinām viṣayārtānām na tathaivārpitaḥ tvayi*

Karmīs are always anxious to accumulate wealth for their sense gratification, but for that purpose they must work very hard. Yet even though they work hard, the results are not satisfying. Indeed, sometimes their work results only in frustration. But devotees who have dedicated their lives to the service of the Lord can achieve substantial results without working very hard. These results exceed the devotee's expectations.

Krishna willing, we will see further lessons from the story of Mrgari in the subsequent offering.

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

Power of Association - Part 14

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In our last offering on the story of Mrgari, we meditated on the practical application of the instructions in this day and age as given by Narada muni to the hunter. Let us continue to meditate further on this topic today.

14. Simple Living - The Hallmark of Pure Devotional Service: After giving the instructions to the hunter Narada muni said, "**Every day I shall send sufficient food to you both. You can take as much food as you want.**"

When Narada muni instructed the hunter to break his bow, his source of income finished but also his present and future sins. When he asked the hunter to distribute all his wealth, all his savings were gone along with his past sins. And when he asked him to leave home with only one piece of cloth, he was deprived of his shelter and also the sinful environment. While doing devotional service if we are losing something material, then it means we gain something valuable spiritually. The hunter followed all the instructions of Narada muni with full faith and advanced in his devotion rapidly. As a bona fide spiritual master, Narada muni never forgot his initial promise to the hunter and therefore confirmed him again that he will arrange for sufficient food for both the hunter and his wife.

A bona fide spiritual master will never betray our faith in him. In fact, he will give more than what we deserve. Earlier, the hunter had to work so hard just to supply food for his family, but by Narada muni's blessings now without harming other living entities he would be supplied so much food that he would be in anxiety how to distribute the excess food. This is made possible because the hunter simply followed the instructions of his spiritual master and practiced unflinching devotional service.

Srila Prabhupada writes a very thought-provoking purport to this verse, "*When a person takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there is no need to care for material necessities. Kṛṣṇa says, yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham: "I personally carry all necessities to My devotees." Why should one be anxious about the necessities of life? The principle should be that one should not want more than what is absolutely necessary. Nārada Muni advises the hunter to accept only what is absolutely necessary for him and his wife. The devotee should always be alert to consume only those things that he absolutely requires and not create unnecessary needs.*"

The only absolute necessity for us in this life is Krishna bhakti, intense devotional service. This is the only necessity without which we cannot live this life, rest everything becomes optional provided our bhakti is intense and focused. Dhruva Maharaj showed us in practice. He kept reducing his material needs every month as the intensity of his devotion increased. He reduced it to such an extent that at one point he inhaled air only once in a few days and eventually he even stopped breathing that the three worlds became suffocated.

With the advancing age, our body naturally loses its digesting capacity and accepts lesser and lesser food, then slowly we lose taste and towards the end can only take some liquids (if we are lucky). This is true even from a mundane point of view and it is a great suffering. But when we reduce our needs voluntarily on the basis of sincere devotional service then the same suffering gets converted into a cheerful austerity performed for the pleasure of Krishna. Hence Prabhupada insists on this point - *yaavad arthah*, accept that which is absolutely necessary, then we can lead a peaceful life. It is rightly confirmed in SB 1.2.10:

*kāmasya nendriya-prītir lābho jīveta yāvatā
jīvasya tattva-jijñāsā nārtho yaś ceha karmabhiḥ*

Life's desires should never be directed toward sense gratification. One should desire only a healthy life, or self-preservation, since a human being is meant for inquiry about the Absolute Truth. Nothing else should be the goal of one's works.

For basic necessities and self-preservation, one need not struggle too much. It is only for living a luxurious life-style that will make the "neighbors envious and owners proud" we have to toil hard. Since Narada muni has given the perfect process of Krishna consciousness to the hunter, he knew well that the hunter is safe both from devotion point of view as well as maintenance point of view. By leading a simple life, he would spend more time performing devotional service and less time worrying about his maintenance, because he has been convinced by Narada muni that the Supreme Lord maintains everybody - *yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham*.

Let us strive to practice a simple life, accept that which is absolutely necessary as advised by Narada muni and Srila Prabhupada to intensify our Krishna conscious life.

Krishna willing, let us try to meditate on further instructions from the story of Mrgari.

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

Power of Association - Part 15

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In our last offering on the story of Mrgari, we meditated on the importance of simple living, i.e., living with only things that is absolutely needed. Let us continue to meditate on further lessons from the story today.

15. Narada muni - The Most Genuine Acarya: Narada muni after assuring the hunter that he will send sufficient food everyday to maintain himself and his wife, by his transcendental power, brought back to life the three animals that were half-killed by the hunter. The animals quickly got up and fled as if nothing has happened to them. Upon seeing this mystic power of his spiritual master, the hunter was struck with wonder. He was convinced beyond doubt about his spiritual master's transcendental power and with full satisfaction and joy paid his obeisances to Narada muni and returned home.

This is a very significant point to meditate upon. Narada muni could have displayed his spiritual mystic potency even before making the hunter realize his sins and go through a change of heart. But he did not do that. Because, if the hunter had surrendered upon witnessing Narada muni's mystic powers, it would have been an incomplete and immature surrender. The cleansing of the hunter's heart would not have been complete because he would have been more attracted to Narada muni's miracles than realizing and repenting his own sinful actions. Narada muni's aim was not to give motivated devotional service to the hunter. He wanted to instill pure devotional service in the heart of the hunter once and for all because when we become pure devotees, even the Supreme Lord Yogeshwara, the master of mystics becomes our servant, then what to speak of some cheap magic tricks? Secondly, he wanted to relieve the animals of the intense pain caused by the hunter to release both the animals and the hunter from the bondage of karma-revenge cycle in their future lives. Thus Narada muni took full control and responsibility of the hunter's future.

Narada muni's genuineness is fully revealed here. Even though he had the mystic power to save the animals, he knew that the mystic power is insignificant when compared to the pure unflinching bhakti he possessed. So his aim is only to distribute the seed of bhakti in everyone's hearts and attract them towards Krishna, not show some cheap magic to attract them towards himself and gather a fan-following. He had absolutely no desire for name, fame, wealth or followers. The hunter also could appreciate this genuineness in Narada muni and hence his respect and adoration for his spiritual master grew leaps and bounds. When we see someone possess special powers and does not boast of it or misuse it to make a business out of it, we get convinced about that person's genuinity and our reverence for them naturally grows. This is natural human tendency of people with common sense. Thus the hunter also developed great adoration for his spiritual master Narada muni. The hunter then returned home and exactly followed the instructions of his spiritual master Narada muni. Narada muni also left for his next destination, *completely detached and fixed in his service to Krishna*.

Narada muni teaches us a very important lesson as a spiritual master. Being a dear servant of Krishna, even though he had all the power at his disposal, his aim is to bring the living entities closer to Krishna simply by inspiring them with pure bhakti and not by mundane attraction to magical powers, name & fame etc. So we as disciples, when we are in search of a bona fide spiritual master, should look for one who has these genuine qualifications as a pure devotee of Krishna that Narada muni revealed in this pastime.

Srila Prabhupada too, the most recent bona fide acarya in the Vaishnava sampradaya, performed so many miracles during his presence in this world, but he did not want that to be the primary attraction for the living entities. He wanted Krishna bhakti to be the main source of attraction and worked hard for it all through his life. As a result, his miracles such as 'converting hippies into happies', 'building a house in which the whole world can live', 'creating a world wide movement in a very short time', 'writing the most no. of books in a short time' etc., are seen as a by-

product of his pure bhakti unto Lord Krishna and not as stand-alone mystic potencies. That is the reason, his movement is still creating pure Krishna devotees and not mundane magicians.

Krishna willing, let us meditate on further lessons from this story in the next offering.

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

Power of Association - Part 16

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In our last offering on the story of Mrgari, we meditated on the unique quality of Narada muni's pure devotional service and how he saved the half-killed animals by his transcendental power. Amazed at Narada muni's mystic power the hunter went home to practice the instructions given to him. Narada muni also left for his next destination. Let us continue to meditate on further lessons from the story today.

16. **Every Saint has a Past and Every Sinner has a Future:** The hunter constructed a humble cottage by the side of the river as ordered by Narada muni.

"The news that the hunter had become a Vaiṣṇava spread all over the village. Indeed, all the villagers brought alms and presented them to the Vaiṣṇava who had formerly been a hunter."

The transcendental touch of Narada muni has started working in the hunter's life immediately. There is this famous saying, "*Every saint has a past and every sinner has a future.*" The beauty of devotional service is that even if we were the worst of sinner in the past, as soon as we become saintly, the past is forgotten and we are welcomed and honored by the same people who were cursing us once for our frightful actions. No other process can convert an outright sinner into a saint in such a quick time. And all this change was brought about by the pure devotee Srila Narada muni. He had so much faith in Krishna and so much compassion for the living entities that he forced Krishna to display this miracle of turning the sinner into a saint. Credit has to be given to the hunter as well for following the instructions of his spiritual master strictly. Whatever he said, the hunter had full faith in it and simply followed them. Never once did he doubt the potency of Narada muni's words. That is the reason he did not go and beg to anyone for food. He simply stayed at his home, chanted Hare Krishna and worshiped the Tulasi plant. It was such a big surprise for the villagers that how can a hunter who had no credit of piety in him, suddenly become a devotee. And without brooding over his past, they sent abundance of food for him.

This is a great encouragement for us all aspiring devotees. We do not have to worry about our sinful past life. Krishna Himself says in the Gita 9.30:

*api cet su-durācāro bhajate mām ananya-bhāk
sādhur eva sa mantavyaḥ samyag vyavasito hi saḥ*

Even if one commits the most abominable action, if he is engaged in devotional service he is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated in his determination.

Krishna Himself says that even if a person is the most abominable sinner, I consider him a saintly devotee if he performs devotional service with full focus and determination. So what will normal people do? As Krishna Himself says in the Gita 3.21:

*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas tat tad evetaro janaḥ
sa yat pramāṇam kurute lokas tad anuvartate*

Whatever action a great man performs, common men follow. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.

Krishna is the greatest of all. When He accepts a person as saintly ignoring all their past, then everyone else naturally

follows Krishna and worship such a devotee.

Hence it is important for us to understand from this pastime that Krishna takes into consideration only our sincerity and determination in executing devotional service, not the account of our past sins or imperfections.

Krishna willing, let us meditate further on the lessons from Mrgari story in the next offering.

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

Power of Association - Part 17

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In our last offering on the story of Mrgari, we saw how the hunter started receiving more than enough food from all the villagers simply by following the instructions of Narada muni. Let us continue to meditate on further lessons from the story today.

"The news that the hunter had become a Vaiṣṇava spread all over the village. Indeed, all the villagers brought alms and presented them to the Vaiṣṇava who had formerly been a hunter."

17. **Vaishnava's Contribution to the Society:** While the hunter's obedience to his spiritual master Narada muni's instruction is very much appreciated, in his purport to the verse 266, Srila Prabhupada brings an interesting perspective. He says, *"Every Vaiṣṇava is dependent on Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa is ready to supply all of life's necessities, provided a Vaiṣṇava follows the principles set forth by the spiritual master. There are certainly many householders in our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. They join the movement and live in the society's centers, but if they take advantage of this opportunity and do not work but live at the expense of the movement, eating prasādam and simply sleeping, they place themselves in a very dangerous position."*

Vaishnava never means living at the cost of others and be a parasite to the society. Vaishnava means we have offered ourselves to the society and every act we do is for the ultimate benefit of the society and in order to accomplish that, a vaishnava will be ready to sacrifice even his own life.

Srila Prabhupada writes beautifully in his another purport to SB 2.2.5, *"The renounced order of life is never meant for begging or living at the cost of others as a parasite... The renounced order is meant for contributing something substantial to society and not depending on the earnings of the householders. On the contrary, acceptance of alms from the householders by the bona fide mendicant is an opportunity afforded by the saint for the tangible benefit of the donor. In the sanātana-dharma institution, alms-giving to the mendicant is part of a householder's duty, and it is advised in the scriptures that the householders should treat the mendicants as their family children and should provide them with food, clothing, etc., without being asked. Pseudomendicants, therefore, should not take advantage of the charitable disposition of the faithful householders."*

The hunter never thought (or expected) that the villagers would come and offer him alms and honor him. He thought, "My spiritual master said he will organize my food, so nothing to worry." Here the words '*brought alms and presented*' is very important to note. The villagers were not giving him food because they felt pity on him. They offered him alms because *they started 'respecting' him*. And he gained this respect only because he turned saintly by obediently following his spiritual master's order with full faith. This is how, those who are cent-percent obedient to their spiritual masters will be glorified in all the three worlds.

Now, what was his contribution to the society?

1. He offered the greatest charity as explained in Srimad Bhagavatam 3.21.31:

*kṛtvā dayāṁ ca jīveṣu dattvā cābhayaṁ ātmavān
mayy ātmānaṁ saha jagad drakṣyasi ātmani cāpi mām*

Showing compassion to all living entities, you will attain self-realization. Giving assurance of safety to all , you will perceive your own self as well as all the universes in Me, and Myself in you.

Srila Prabhupada says in his purport, "*To award fearlessness to the common man is the greatest act of charity." When Mrgari turned from a hunter to a devotee, not only the human beings but also all the animals became fearless of him. This is a great lesson we can learn from the hunter. Like the hunter we also instill fear in others because of our envy and violence. As long as we are envious, some living entity or the other in this world will always be either afraid of us or try to harm us. So it is very important for us to become *non-envious and non-violent* towards others both physically and mentally to make them free of fear, and more importantly replace that envy with love.*

2. Another important service the hunter did was to be a great inspiration for the potency of devotional service and pure devotees for generations to come. That is the reason, even after many thousands of years we are meditating on his story and derive great inspiration in pursuing our own devotional service too.

Krishna willing, we will continue to meditate on further lessons from this story in the subsequent offerings.

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

Power of Association - Part 18

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In our last offering on the story of Mrgari, we saw how the hunter's devotion and compassion changed the perspective of the villagers and other living entities towards him. Let us continue to meditate on further lessons from the story today.

18. **Being Simple and Satisfied with Minimum Needs:** Before leaving, Narada muni told the hunter that "I will send sufficient food for you both. Take as much as you want." Neither did Narada muni ask him how much food they will take normally, nor did the hunter tell him that information because the source is Krishna and He knows how much to give. But to the hunter's surprise, all the villagers started giving them so much prasadam with so much love, that it was good enough for 20 people to eat.

"In one day enough food was brought for ten or twenty people, but the hunter and his wife would accept only as much as they could eat."

Srila Prabhupada often quotes his father's one most powerful realization, "*If Krishna wants to take your possession He will take it away with His twenty hands. How much can you protect with your two hands? And if Krishna wants to give you, He will give with His twenty hands, how much can you accept with your two hands?*" This is an extremely deep realization and it is perfectly proved here in this story. When Krishna saw that the hunter unflinchingly surrendered to Srila Narada muni, His dearest disciple, He bestowed a lot more than what the hunter could imagine.

Our spiritual master once said, "*Of the six opulences, the most difficult opulence to acquire is renunciation, especially renunciation for name & fame and followers. That is why, it is considered as the last and most challenging hurdle for advancing devotees.*" Very soon the news of hunter becoming a devotee has reached all around and he became quite famous. Everybody started developing good perception about him and that is why they lovingly presented alms to him everyday. But the hunter knew well that all this is happening by the divine grace of his spiritual master Srila Narada muni and hence was detached and never took credit for this drastic change of fortune.

In this world, when love is bestowed upon us from different corners, two things can happen - If we keep ourselves as the center of existence, it will only develop pride in us and we eventually fall down, whereas if we keep Guru and Krishna as the center of our life, then genuine faith, attraction and bhakti develops along with unlimited gratitude towards them for their causeless mercy. The hunter's life is a tangible proof for this fact.

Since the hunter kept Narada muni's instructions as the center of his existence and gave all the credit to him, his life became very simple and satisfying. He and his wife had no greed to gobble up all the prasadam just because palatial food stuff was offered to him. Our Guru Maharaj would often quip insisting on the concept of simplicity in eating, "*Prasadam may be free. But stomach is yours. You have to keep your stomach soft by eating light, otherwise what you would have otherwise spent for that prasadam, you have to spend for the doctor fees.*"

We could see how much satisfied the hunter was, with even his basic needs. He just took what is needed to keep his body and soul together. He did not keep a refrigerator to store the extra prasadam so that he can eat it the next day in case the villagers did not feed him. He had complete faith that his spiritual master and Krishna will take full care of the surrendered soul and hence he distributed all the excess food for the day to the needy people, animals and birds. This way his service of charity also continued. Observing this miraculous change in character in the hunter, the villagers also regularly offered him prasadam.

Krishna, when He sees that we are not attached to anything, then He will offer us in abundance, because He will be assured that we can handle the pressure of name & fame, success etc. that comes as a by-product of our devotion and detachment. When He sees that our devotion is weak and we will succumb to that pressure of success, He will block it from affecting our bhakti-lata, creeper of devotion. He is our kind father and whatever He offers us is more than what we deserve.

From the hunter we learn an important lesson to be simple, satisfied, sincere and surrendered to the instructions of the spiritual master, then success in devotional service is cent-percent guaranteed.

Krishna willing, let us learn more lessons from the story of Mrgari in the subsequent offering.

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

Power of Association - Part 19

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In our last offering on the story of Mrgari, we saw how the hunter was satisfied with bare minimum needs even though all the villagers offered him alms in plenty. Let us continue to meditate on further lessons from the story today.

19. The Devotee Hunter Receives his Spiritual Master: One day Narada muni requested his friend Parvata muni to accompany him to go and meet the hunter and see how he is faring in his devotional service. As the sages approached the hunter's cottage, he could see them from a distance.

"With great alacrity the hunter began to run toward his spiritual master, but he could not fall down and offer obeisances because ants were running hither and thither around his feet."

Srila Prabhupada's usage of words are nothing short of magical. He uses the word 'alacrity' to represent the mood of the hunter upon seeing his beloved spiritual master. 'Alacrity' is derived from the latin word, 'alacer' which means 'lively' & '*physical quickness coupled with eagerness or enthusiasm.*' The word also means, '*brisk and cheerful readiness*'. This is the mood of a person who is eagerly waiting to serve someone he adores and suddenly he got the opportunity to do that. After their first meeting, once Narada muni left and the hunter started following his instructions, he was experiencing great miracles in his life due to the potency of devotional service and his spiritual master's causeless mercy. Hence with each passing day, the hunter's gratitude towards his spiritual master Narada muni was growing in leaps and bounds and he was eagerly waiting to offer his humble obeisances and serve him when he gets a chance to meet him again. Narada muni too did not give any fixed appointment date for meeting him in the future, so the hunter was eagerly waiting everyday hoping, "Today my spiritual master will come", just like how Mother Sabari was waiting for Lord Rama's visit to her humble abode.

In this day and age it is hard to understand that we cannot meet our spiritual master whenever we feel like. One of the senior devotees in the movement shared a beautiful realization with me many years ago. This Prabhuji lived in Minneapolis and joined the movement in 70's when Srila Prabhupada was present but had not seen him yet. He called the local authority to check when will Prabhupada come to Chicago so that he can book a ticket to fly to Chicago and take darshan of Prabhupada. The local authority shot back, "*You can't buy a ticket to see your spiritual master!*". He then shared his beautiful realization with me, "*That statement made me understand that our spiritual master is not an ordinary man that I can just book a ticket and go see him whenever I want. It is only by his grace, when he decides to give us his darshan, can we see him.*"

So the hunter had so many things in his mind to express to his spiritual master - his gratitude, his surrender, his love, his service and many more. Upon suddenly seeing his beloved master, he felt like his life came back, became cheerful and greatly enthusiastic. Since his spiritual master has come all the way, along with another saintly devotee, he rushed to meet them to receive them with great respect and honor. Narada muni was aware of all the changes in the hunter because as a doctor he exactly knew how the medicine (the Hare Krsna Mahamantra) will work on the patient. Hence he planned his visit to the hunter's place along with Parvata muni.

We have heard about similar receptions by his disciples whenever Srila Prabhupada used to travel to different parts of the world. The receptions he would get in the airport, in the temples, ratha yatras, festivals etc. were simply out of the world and the respect the disciples/followers exhibited for Srila Prabhupada showed how exalted an acarya he is. The onlookers, media reporters, govt authorities, airport securities etc. were simply bamboozled at how crazy the disciples went when they saw Srila Prabhupada majestically walking out of the airport security gate. The devotees would cross all rules and etiquettes, sing loud kirtans inside the airport, throw flowers all over, jump up & down to dance cheerfully

for the pleasure of Srila Prabhupada, while Prabhupada would cast a beaming smile at them all filled with love.

How did this transcendental connect happen between the Guru and the disciple? Srila Prabhupada would have hardly spent a few moments with his disciples. Srila Prabhupada himself met his guru Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur only a few times. Narada muni hardly spent a few moments with Mrgari. But how is it that the disciples decided to dedicate their entire life to their spiritual master? It is because of the purity of the relationship. The spiritual masters do not want anything from their disciples. They simply wish well-being of their followers and that they become good sincere devotees of Krishna. And for this to happen, the spiritual masters are willing to risk their own life. This is the secret of such a lovely, eternal relationship as we sing glorifying our spiritual master in the guru puja,

*caṅṣu-dān dilo jei, janme janme prabhu sei, divya jñān hṛde prokāśito
prema-bhakti jāhā hoite, avidyā vināśa jāte, vede gāy jāhāra carito*

He opens my darkened eyes and fills my heart with transcendental knowledge. He is my Lord birth after birth. From him ecstatic prema emanates; by him ignorance is destroyed. The Vedic scriptures sing of his character.

Krishna willing, we will meditate on further lessons from the story of Mrgari in the subsequent offering.

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

Power of Association - Part 20

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In our last offering on the story of Mrgari, we saw how the hunter was ecstatically receiving Narada muni and Parvatai muni. Let us continue to meditate on further lessons from the story today.

20. **Offering Obeisances Takes us Back to Godhead:** The hunter ran towards his spiritual master Narada muni and wanted to offer him his dandavats but upon seeing some ants running around here and there on the ground he hesitated. He then gently whisked them away with a piece of cloth and then fell down flat to offer his obeisances.

This is the significant transformation that was brought by Narada muni in the life of the hunter devotee. Turning the clock backwards if we can recall how the hunter treated even big animals so cruelly, it is the same hunter now who does not even want to harm the tiny ants. No one cares much for the ants. They are present everywhere. Even inadvertently we step on them and they die. But the hunter who was so violent in his past has become so compassionate towards even those tiny ants. This is the result of his unflinching devotional service.

The hunter then paid his dandavat by falling flat on the ground. Srila Prabhupada, in his purport explains the meaning of dandavat, "*The word daṇḍa means "rod," and vat means "like." To offer obeisances to the spiritual master, one must fall flat exactly as a rod falls on the ground.*"

It is normal tendency that we look at the place where we offer obeisance as whether it is clean and we will be doubly careful if our dress is fresh or new. There is a nice saying in Hindi which our Guru Maharaj used to say and it is a nice play of word just by shifting one letter.

nar kapadan ko darat hai narak padan ko nahi
nar kapadan ko darat hai narak padan ko nahi

nar kapadan ko darat hai narak padan ko nahi

Men are worried about their dress (getting dirt) when they offer dandavat, but they don't worry about falling down to hell.

This is normally our level of consciousness. We worry more about the externals like our clothes, body etc. getting dirty than thinking about the benefits of paying dandavat pranam to exalted vaishnavas and the Supreme Lord. Even while praying or offering obeisances inside the temple we meditate on the slippers that we left outside. We can change the cloth easily even if it gets dirty but we cannot change the body easily once we get it. Offering obeisances is one of the important limbs of devotional service. It stops the changing of bodies once and for all what to speak of change of clothes? Srimad Bhagavatam concludes with the last verse 12.13.23 proving the importance of offering obeisances:

*nāma-saṅkīrtanaṁ yasya sarva-pāpa praṇāśanam
praṇāmo duḥkha-śāmanasaṁ namāmi hariṁ param*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Lord, Hari, the congregational chanting of whose holy names destroys all sinful reactions, and the offering of obeisances unto whom relieves all material suffering.

Offering obeisances to exalted vaishnava devotees is as good as offering obeisances to the Supreme Lord because He Himself says they are non-different from Him. It is an expression of humility and gratitude for the greatest gift of

Krishna consciousness that they have given us. Hence Mrgari who had by then transformed into mrdhu-hriday (soft-hearted) had no hesitation in falling down to offer his dandavat pranam to his spiritual master & life savior Narada muni and the saintly devotee Parvata muni. We have to learn this important lesson of offering obeisances from the hunter transformed into a devotee.

Krishna willing, we will meditate on further lessons from the story of Mrgari in the subsequent offering.

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

Power of Association - Part 21

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In our last offering on the story of Mrgari, we saw the importance of offering obeisances in devotional service and how the hunter paid his sashtanga dandavat to his spiritual master. Let us continue to meditate on further lessons from the story today.

21. **Devotion without Disturbance:** One of the important lessons we should also learn from the hunter in the way he paid his obeisances after whisking away the ants on the ground. He did not want his act of devotional service to be a disturbance to other living entities even if it is an ant. Many times we do knowingly or unknowingly inconvenience other living entities in the process of doing our services or even sadhana. We cannot take a high moral ground saying, "I am serving Krishna and others are supposed to glorify me instead of getting annoyed at my service." Even if our chanting is a disturbance to others who may or may not know the value of Krishna consciousness, we need to leave them at peace and move away to a different place instead of confronting them. This way, the living entity may not be inspired to take up Krishna consciousness at that point, but they will at least leave with a positive impression about Krishna consciousness.

Krishna says in the Gita, 12.15:

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

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

The first condition Krishna says is that '*we should not put anyone into difficulty*'. He does not qualify it with words like 'knowingly' or 'inadvertently' etc. The person who is inconvenienced by us will not care whether we did it knowingly or unknowingly. So what is the best way out? We simply ask for genuine forgiveness from them and ensure we either move away from them or do not repeat the same mistake.

The next condition Krishna says is that '*we should not be disturbed by others*'. We predominantly get disturbed by others in two ways.

1. First is, when others are disturbed by our Krishna conscious activities, ignore or neglect us, we get disturbed at the fact that they are not appreciating or respecting the value of our devotion. This is a sign of our immaturity. If others are not appreciating our devotional service, it simply means we have to improve the quality of our devotion. Also we have to keep in mind that we are not doing our devotional service for someone to glorify us. *na dhanam na janam na sundarim kavitam va jagad-isa kamaye*. We are doing our service for Krishna's pleasure and not for our own pleasure.

2. Second is, without any reason or without any instigation, someone may come and disturb us physically or mentally. This is adhibhautika misery and it is unavoidable. When we are 'disturbed' by these adhibhautika miseries, it indirectly means that we are *expecting* the process of devotional service to mitigate our miseries. While devotional service will naturally mitigate it anyway, but it is the 'expectation' of results and our impatience that will kill our bliss in devotional service. Krishna says we should avoid being disturbed by others as well. Only when we follow these two conditions along with being equipoised in all circumstances, Krishna says we will be dear to Him.

The hunter, before getting Narada muni's association, was enjoying putting others into difficulty, such an anti-

bhagavad gita life he led. But after getting the pure association of the great saint, he turned into saintly devotee who would not like even an ant to be disturbed by his devotional service. This is the great miracle that Narada muni performed on the hunter by giving his association and causeless mercy.

Krishna willing, let us meditate on further lessons from the story of Mrgari in the subsequent offering.

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

Power of Association - Part 22

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In our last offering on the story of Mrgari, we learnt from the hunter devotee, the importance of doing our devotional service without disturbing others. Let us continue to meditate on further lessons from the story today.

22. **Only Bhakti can Destroy Envy**: Upon seeing the behavior of hunter in protecting the ants from being killed, Narada muni expressed his satisfaction, "**My dear hunter, such behavior is not at all astonishing. A man in devotional service is automatically nonviolent. He is the best of gentlemen.**"

So Narada muni who knows the potency of devotional service, is not astonished at the transformation of the hunter, because for him it is a surprise only if it did not work. A magician is never astonished at his magical feats, it is the onlookers who do not know the science behind those magic tricks will be amazed to see them. Narada muni was quite sure that the process will work on the hunter if he followed his instructions sincerely. And observing the hunter's behavior before he left him, Narada muni understood his sincerity and hence he was confident of the hunter's transformation into a devotee. A devotee is naturally non-violent, *himsā-sūnya*, because he sees Krishna present in every living entity, rather everything that is manifest. By Narada muni's causeless mercy, the hunter not only became non-violent, he also became a *sadhu-varya*, the best of honest gentlemen.

Then Narada muni further tells Mrgari, "**O hunter, good qualities like nonviolence, which you have developed, are not very astonishing, for those engaged in the Lord's devotional service are never inclined to give pain to others because of envy.**"

The inclination to give pain to others (especially unprovoked), has its roots in our envious nature. Srila Prabhupada writes beautifully in his purport to BG 12.15, "*Generally a materialistic person becomes very happy when there is something for his sense gratification and his body, but when he sees that others have something for their sense gratification and he hasn't, he is sorry and envious.*"

The basic tendency in us is that, "No one should be happier than me or enjoy more than me in this world. When they do not have what I own, when they hanker for I have, or feel disappointed for not owning it, that gives me great happiness and a sense of accomplishment." In every step of our life, we strive only for this goal in a subtle way. But the reality is topsy-turvy. It is we who are helplessly looking at everyone and hankering to possess what they own. Unfortunately, Krishna has cleverly designed this world in such a way that everyone will have at least something of what others don't have and will not have something that other's have. And our desire is to have everything that everyone else has (and a little more). When this impractical expectation is not fulfilled, the natural outcome is that we become envious of others. If those people are within our power of influence, we hurt them with our words, actions and thoughts and enjoy their suffering. But if they are beyond our capacity to hurt, then we hurt ourselves by becoming dejected, depressed, discouraged and disappointed. This is how envy works in this material world.

However, the hunter fortunately escaped this whirlpool of envy and violence by performing sincere devotional service under the guidance of transcendental acarya like Narada muni who is above and beyond all such anarthas.

Narada muni being a pure devotee, not only was non-envious himself, but he also strived hard to make others non-violent and non-envious. As Srila Prabhupada says in one of his purport, the aim of vaishnava acaryas is to create a non-envious, competitionless society for the welfare of all. In this context, we would like to meditate on this beautiful prayer by one of the glorious disciples of Srila Narada muni, Sri Prahlad Maharaj in SB 5.18.9:

*svasty astu viśvasya khalāḥ prasīdatām
dhyāyantu bhūtāni śivam mitho dhiyā
manaś ca bhadrām 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and always remain absorbed in thought of Him.

Bhakti yoga is the only process that can destroy envy from its roots. The hunter practiced bhakti yoga following the instruction of Srila Narada muni and began thinking of the welfare of even the tiny ants. Let us take inspiration from this prayer and the life of Mrgari to shed all traces of envy from our hearts by practicing sincere devotional service.

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

Power of Association - Part 23

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In our last offering on the story of Mrgari, we learnt the potency of devotional service and it is the only process that can uproot the negative qualities such as envy and violence. Let us continue to meditate on further lessons from the story today.

23. **Devotion Matters, not the Paraphernalias:** As Narada muni acknowledged that the hunter has developed good qualities like non-violence and non-jealousness, the hunter received the two saints with great respect.

"The hunter then received the two great sages in the courtyard of his house. He spread out a straw mat for them to sit upon, and with great devotion he begged them to sit down. He then fetched water and washed the sages' feet with great devotion. Then both husband and wife drank that water and sprinkled it on their heads."

Srila Prabhupada emphasizes in his purport, "*When the spiritual master comes to the residence of his disciples, the disciples should follow in the footsteps of the former hunter. It doesn't matter what one was before initiation. After initiation, one must learn the etiquette mentioned herein.*"

1. The first point we understand is that when Narada muni initiated the hunter, he only gave him basic instructions to worship Tulasi plant and chant Hare Krishna mahamantra and left the place. How did the hunter learn all these detailed etiquette's of receiving guests? One possibility is that due to his sincerity and eagerness, Krishna and his spiritual master would have arranged for other devotees & saints in the local villages to instruct him in basic etiquettes. The foundation was of course laid by Narada muni. Second and most importantly, due to his sincere desire for service, his spiritual master Narada muni as the chaitya guru, revealed all the knowledge from within his heart.

This happens to many of us in our spiritual life too. The seed of bhakti is sown by the spiritual master in our hearts at the time of initiation. Initially we may not know how to recite the shlokas, we may not know how to study Prabhupada's books, we may not be aware of the rules and regulations to perform arati, dress the deities, cook bhoga so on and so forth. But after a few years of associating with devotees in Krishna consciousness, studying Srila Prabhupada's books and learning from spiritual masters, we naturally get trained in the various aspects of bhakti, develop a taste to follow them and even become experts. We may not even know ABCD of Bhagavad-gita initially, but within few years after initiation, by the mercy of Guru, we see devotees becoming expert speakers of Bhagavad-gita, Bhagavatam etc. Srila Prabhupada quotes the beautiful sloka from the Svetasvatara Upanishad 6.23 in this regard:

*yasya deve parā bhaktir / yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ / prakāśante mahātmanaḥ*

Unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master, all the imports of Vedic knowledge are automatically revealed.

As disciples we just need to have *implicit faith* in the spiritual master and strictly follow his instructions. Everything else will be automatically revealed in due course of time as Krishna Himself says - *dadami buddhi yogam tam*. This is the most important lesson we learn from the hunter devotee.

2. The hunter and his wife received the two saintly devotees and also washed their feet *with great devotion*. Devotion is the key point here. He had a humble cottage and had not prepared any paraphernalias to receive them as the two

saints came unexpected, but by their great love, respect and devotion the hunter and his wife extremely pleased Narada muni and Parvata muni.

This reminds us of the story of two hosts who invited Krishna. When Krishna was visiting Mithila, both the opulent king Bahulashva and the poor Brahmana Srutadeva invited Krishna simultaneously with great love and eagerness. Krishna accepted both their invitations and went along with a few sages simultaneously to both their homes. At the king's residence, Krishna was received with extreme opulence, whereas the poor brahmana had nothing to receive them in his humble hut. Still he enthusiastically received Krishna and the sages, bowed down to them and danced with great joy waving his shawl. He offered them grass mat on the floor to be seated and then washed their feet with great pleasure. He then sprinkled the water upon himself, his house and family with great joy. He then offered beautiful prayers glorifying the Lord and the sages. Krishna in turn being pleased with him, gave very deep instructions in devotional service.

The essence in both these examples is the Lord and His pure devotees, do not care for opulent paraphernalias to welcome them. They simply go only to those places where they are welcomed with heart-felt devotion and accept the love and joy with which we receive them. It is not very difficult for them to identify it, since they are seated in our hearts as chaitya guru and Paramatma.

Krishna willing, we shall look at further lessons from the story of Mrgari in the next offering.

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

Power of Association - Part 24

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In our last offering on the story of Mrgari, we learnt how the hunter devotee enthusiastically served the two saints with very minimum paraphernalias but both Narada muni and Parvata muni were extremely pleased with his great devotion. Let us continue to meditate on further lessons from the story today.

24. **The Power of Holy Name:** The hunter washed the feet of the two saints with water and blissfully sprinkled it on his and his wife's head. Then he began to chant the holy names of the Lord as taught by Narada muni in the previous meeting.

"When the hunter chanted the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra before his spiritual master, his body trembled and tears welled up in his eyes. Filled with ecstatic love, he raised his hands and began to dance, waving his garments up and down."

This is the real success of spiritual life - to relish chanting the holy names of the Lord. If only we can relish this one service, then we will get taste for all other services. Another beautiful episode in relation to this point is in CC where Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu explains how his spiritual master Sri Ishwara Puri initiated him with the holy names. Ishwara puri described the potency of the holy names to Mahaprabhu and instructed him to always keep this verse in his throat while chanting the holy names:

*harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā*

We have heard this verse so many times but its importance is taught to us by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's spiritual master. When we realize that chanting the holy names is the only way to obtain Krishna prema and there is no other way than this, then there is hope for us to get the taste for holy names.

Then Ishwara Puri advised Caitanya Mahaprabhu, **"Simply by chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa one can obtain freedom from material existence. Indeed, simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra one will be able to see the lotus feet of the Lord."**

Srila Prabhupada writes beautifully in his purport, "When one realizes that the holy name of the Lord is identical with the Supreme Person, he becomes completely eligible to chant the holy name of the Lord. Such an ecstatic chanter and dancer must be considered to have a direct relationship with the Lord."

He further emphasizes, "The holy name and the Lord are identical. One who is completely free from the clutches of māyā can understand this fact. This knowledge, which is achieved by the mercy of the spiritual master, places one on the supreme transcendental platform."

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu then started chanting the holy names as instructed by his spiritual master and he began to experience great ecstasy. He lost himself, laughed, cried, danced and sang like a mad man. Thinking that something must be wrong with him, he went back to his spiritual master and described his experience. Ishwara Puri laughed upon hearing these symptoms and said, **"It is the nature of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra that anyone who chants it immediately develops his loving ecstasy for Kṛṣṇa. It is a characteristic of love of Godhead that by nature it induces transcendental symptoms in one's body and makes one more and more greedy to achieve the shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord. When one actually develops love of Godhead, he naturally sometimes cries, sometimes laughs, sometimes chants and sometimes runs here and there just like a madman."**

"

As a shastric evidence Sri Ishwara Puri then reveals the Srimad Bhagavatam verse 11.2.40 to Caitanya Mahaprabhu:

*evam-vrataḥ sva-priya-nāma-kīrtiyā
jātānurāgo druta-citta ucchaiḥ
hasaty atho roditi rauti gāyaty
unmāda-van nṛtyati loka-bāhyaḥ*

When a person is actually advanced and takes pleasure in chanting the holy name of the Lord, who is very dear to him, he is agitated and loudly chants the holy name. He also laughs, cries, becomes agitated and chants just like a madman, not caring for outsiders.

It is important for us to understand that there is no short-cut to attain these symptoms artificially. Srila Prabhupada sounds a warning to such mundane imitators in his purport, "*Lord Caitanya never tried to be the master of the holy name; rather He taught us how to be servants of the holy name. If one chants the holy name of the Lord just to make a show, not knowing the secret of success, he may increase his bile secretion, but he will never attain perfection in chanting the holy name.*"

Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu taught us the most vital lesson to us by his personal example when he presented himself as a great fool in front of his spiritual master, even though he was a renowned scholar by then. He simply followed the orders of his spiritual master with unflinching faith. Similarly we see that the hunter also presented himself as a complete ignorant in front of Narada muni, followed his instructions cent-percent and thus achieved success in relishing the holy names of the Lord in such a short time.

Let us fervently pray at the lotus feet of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to bestow upon us the taste for chanting the holy names sincerely.

Krishna willing, we shall meditate on further lessons from the story of Mrgari in the next offering.

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

Power of Association - Part 25

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In our last offering on the story of Mrgari, we saw how the hunter became attached to chanting the holy names and also the potency of pure chanting. Let us continue to meditate on further lessons from the story today.

25. **A Pure Devotee is a Sparsha-Mani**: The hunter devotee exhibited all the ecstatic symptoms while chanting the holy names to his spiritual master.

"When Parvata Muni saw the ecstatic loving symptoms of the hunter, he told Nārada, 'Certainly you are a touchstone.' "

Parvata Muni addresses his friend Narada muni as a touchstone. A touchstone's purity is determined by its power to turn even an iron into gold - *phalena pariciyate*. The hunter was like the rusted iron and just by the touch of Srila Narada muni he got transformed into pure gold standard Vaishnava. We do not judge the result in terms of the numbers but in the quality of the numbers. The no. of people we bring into Krishna consciousness is not as important as how sincere and advanced they turn into in their spiritual life. Every single personality that we see in the scriptures who were touched by Narada muni were transformed into a pure devotee. This is his glory.

Nārada Muni asked the hunter, 'My dear Vaiṣṇava, do you have some income for your maintenance?'

The hunter replied, 'My dear spiritual master, whoever you send gives me something when he comes to see me. Please do not send so much grain. Only send what is sufficient for two people, no more.'

Nārada Muni approved his not wanting more than a daily supply of food, and he blessed him, saying, 'You are fortunate.' Nārada Muni and Parvata Muni then disappeared from that place.

There are some significant lessons we can learn here.

a) Narada muni remembered the hunter's original concern in their first meeting when he asked him to break his bow and arrow. The hunter was worried about his income for his maintenance. But Narada muni assured him at that time that it will be taken care as long as he follows his instruction to do sincere devotional service. Miraculously, (as the hunter devotee confirms) he was not only getting sufficient food for him and his wife, but he was getting so much more that he was worried not to waste the extra prasadam. By Narada muni's mercy, not only that the hunter got his maintenance taken care of but in the process of doing bhakti, he acquired the transcendental quality of being 'self-content' (being satisfied with minimum needs and whatever comes of its own accord) which is one of the most important outcome of bhakti.

b) In the first meeting, we do not see that Narada muni went to each house in the village to canvas for the hunter and request them to assist in his maintenance. He simply assured the hunter that his maintenance will be taken care of and left for his next destination because he was cent-percent sure of Krishna's reciprocation upon His devotees. And as Krishna says in the Gita, "*kaunteya pratijānīhi na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati - Declare to the world that My devotees are never lost*", Krishna had to make sure Narada muni's promise to the hunter should not go wrong, because Narada muni is a pure devotee spiritual master and the hunter obeyed the orders of his Guru cent-percent. Hence Krishna was obliged to shower His causeless mercy upon the hunter.

c) Narada muni was glorified by his friend Parvata muni as 'touchstone'. And the hunter was also profusely thanking

him for sending the required needs for his maintenance. But most importantly, Narada muni did not take any credit at all even though he was the sutra-dhari for the entire sequence of miraculous events. He simply blessed the hunter, "*You are fortunate*", indicating that even though he was a low-born cruel hunter not too long ago but was able to extract the causeless mercy of the Lord by his obedient devotional service and reached the highest position of pure devotion. As spiritual master, Narada muni played the the most important role of a sparsha-mani, but he simply gave credit only to the hunter's sincerity, extra-ordinary potency of bhakti and the Supreme Lord's unlimited compassion. This is the ultimate greatness of a saintly acarya like Srila Narada muni that we have to imbibe.

We had a similar experience when we started the Granthraj forum. In the beginning we were pretty raw, sporadic and unorganized in our postings. Our Guru Maharaj, H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj, instructed this low-born and uncivilized living entity to keep posting one offering every day. He insisted, "*Kalacakra, this is my order to you son. Ensure that one offering is published every day without fail. And they should be original realizations out of your serious study of Prabhupada's books.*" And then sometimes later when he saw other devotees were not writing their offerings, he encouraged, "*You don't worry about the lack of offerings coming in. You keep writing and I will do the canvassing wherever I go and request devotees to write.*" Then as days went by, he found that many devotees were not reading the offerings even. Then wherever he went, he would request devotees, "*Please, please, please, I request you to at least read the Granthraj offerings, if you don't have time to write.*" Being at such an exalted position of a spiritual master and with so many important commitments, he need not have extended himself to such an extent. But he did so out of love towards us and his determination to spread the glories of Srila Prabhupada & Srimad Bhagavatam all over the world. He is the source of inspiration for this forum and without his mercy we cannot write even a single word. But after doing all the hard work, just like Narada muni *he did not take any credit whatsoever* and gave all credits to the authors. We are eternally thankful to our glorious spiritual master for turning this raw & crude Granthraj forum into a respectable group where devotees offer everyday their deep realizations from their serious study of Srila Prabhupada's books.

We conclude the series "Power of Association" on the story of Mrgari. By the causeless mercy of Their Lordships Sri Sri Radha Neelmadhav, Guru and Gauranga we were able to meditate on this story like a neophyte licking the outer part of the honey bottle. If we had made any erroneous points inadvertently, we offer our humble apologies for our incompetency.

Thank you very much.

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

Moderator's Note: We understand that since the last 3 weeks when we started Granthraj from the new mail server, the mail delivery was sporadic and devotees were not getting the mails regularly. We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience. While we are working on this problem to be resolved soon, you can read the offerings by going directly to the website - <http://www.mahavishnugoswami.com/#granthraj>.

Sweet and Sublime Relationship

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In the recent series of Granthraj offerings on the "Power of Association", in Part 11 we see a very vital point mentioned by HG Kalacakra prabhujis regarding full surrender wherein he has explained about the vedic etiquette of not getting up after falling at the lotus feet of spiritual masters and elders and getting up only after being raised by them, thus patiently waiting for their instructions and blessings. In this regard there is a very nice pastime in the life of Srila Ramanujacharya. Herein we also see the immense love shared between the spiritual master and the disciple.

Sripad Ramanujacharya was entrusted with the administration and proper functioning of Srirangam temple. He meticulously set upon the job and aimed at perfection. He could not brook any lapse in the services rendered to the Lord and did not hesitate to punish and reform those who erred. This angered some of the people involved and they hatched a plot to murder Ramanuja. As a sannyasi, Ramanujacharya had to accept alms or Bhiksha from grhasthas (householders) from a certain number of houses. One such housewife was compelled to give poisoned rice as alms. This was against her will. She placed the poisoned rice away from the rest of the alms and prostrated Ramanuja with tears in her eyes. Ramanujacharya understood something was amiss. He took the rice and threw it in the Kaveri river. Some particles which fell on the river bank was eaten by a crow which fell down dead after eating it. Ramanujacharya observed fast for several days following this incident.

The Spiritual Master of Sripad Ramanujacharya, Goshtipurna (also known as Tirukoshtiyur Nambi) heard about this from Mahapurna (also known as Periya Nambi) and immediately rushed to Srirangam. Sripad Ramanuja went to the banks of the Kaveri to receive his guru. It was mid-day and the sands were scorching. Yathiraja Ramanuja who was weak due to fasting, kept lying prostrated at his guru's feet and his guru did not stop him. According to vedic etiquette, when one meets the spiritual master, he should fall at the spiritual master's feet and get up only when he is asked to. So Sripad Ramanuja did not get up though the sands on the banks of the Kaveri was scorching his skin. Along with Ramanujacharya were his disciples. None was willing to risk Tirukoshtiyur Nambi's anger by requesting him to allow Ramanuja to get up. But one disciple Kidambi Achan could not bear to see his spiritual master Ramanuja's skin being scorched by the sands. So he said to Ramanuja, "*Will anyone put a garland of fragrant flowers on the sand?*" Then he told Tirukoshtiyur Nambi, "*Your action (in not asking Ramanuja to get up) is worse than the poison mixed in the biksha*". With tear-filled eyes he asked, "*Is the acharya going to test his shishya till he dies?*" He hugged Ramanuja and rubbed him all over. His only concern was the welfare of his guru Sripad Ramanuja.

Goshtipurna (Tirukoshtiyur Nambi) said very gladly, "*After all, now I can cast off my physical body since I have found one who would take the greatest care of Ramanuja. This was a test to find the person most concerned about Ramanuja's well-being. Kidambi achan! Henceforth Ramanuja will not go out seeking 'bhiksha'(alms). We entrust you with serving him food personally cooked by you.*"

Saying so, he tried to lift Ramanuja up. This was what Nambi was looking for in Ramanuja's disciples. He who put Ramanuja's welfare above everything else would be the proper one to cook for Ramanuja. He would make sure that there was no danger to Ramanuja. So, Nambi decided that Kidambi Achan, a great scholar, should be Ramanuja's cook.

Herein we see the deep bond of love between the spiritual master and the disciple. How much care and concern they have for each other.

In the pastime of Lord Krishna meeting his friend Sudama, we find that Krishna was reminiscing the times they spent as students and He recollects the incident when they went to collect fuel from the forest on the order of the guru's wife. While collecting the dried wood, they entered the dense forest and by chance became lost. There was an

unexpected dust storm and they were lost in the dark jungle. After this, there was severe rainfall; the whole ground was overflowed with water, and they could not trace out the way to return to our guru's ashrama. They passed the whole night in that way, and early in the morning, when their absence became known to their gurudeva, he sent his other disciples to search them out. Not only that, the spiritual master was so much concerned about the children that he personally came with them, and when he saw Krishna and Sudama in a distressed condition, the spiritual master very compassionately speaks in Srimad Bhagavatam 10.80.40:

*aho he putrakā yūyam asmad-arthe 'ti-duḥkhitāḥ
ātmā vai prāṇinām preṣṭhas tam anādrtya mat-parāḥ*

[Sāndīpani said:] "O my children, you have suffered so much for my sake! The body is most dear to every living creature, but you are so dedicated to me that you completely disregarded your own comfort."

Then Sandipani Muni greatly appreciated them and blessed his disciples with the Vedic mantras, which reveals that the Absolute Truth will never lose their meaning for them but will remain ever fresh in their minds.

Such is the sweet and sublime relationship between the spiritual master and the disciple.

Thank you very much.

Yours in the service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Chennai

Choose Your Battles Wisely

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In Mahabharata, when Dronacharya was killed in the battle, his son Ashwattama, unleashed the Narayana astra on the Pandavas. Narayana astra is a very powerful weapon. The Pandavas were unaware of how to counteract this weapon. The weapon is so fierce that it in turn fires a powerful tirade of millions of deadly weapons simultaneously. Lord Krishna knew that the intensity of the astra rises with increase in resistance. The only counteraction for this is total submission by just bowing down. That is the only way which will cause the weapon to spare the target. So, Lord Krishna instructs the Pandavas and their warriors to just drop their weapons and lie down on the ground, so that they all surrender completely to the power of the weapon. It was also said that this weapon can be used only once in a war and if one tries to use it twice, then it would devour the user's own army. Bhima refuses to surrender thinking it an act of cowardice and Lord Krishna forced him to submit and bow down and thus he was saved.

This is a very beautiful pastime which instructs us that *retaliation is not always the way to win*. As we go through life, we realize that though there are so many battles we have to face in life, all the battles are not worth fighting or rather the best way to win is not to always fight the battle. That is why we generally hear people asking us to choose our battles wisely. Otherwise we lose all our inner peace and we waste our time and energy. Maharaj always instructed that no counteraction is the best counteraction and to just cut short the things and let go.

Herein we remember the nice advice of Brahmaji to Prthu Maharaj in Srimad Bhagavatam 4.19.34:

*maasmin mahaaraaja krthaah sma cintaam nishaamayaasmad vaca aadrtaatma yad dhyaayato daiva hatam nu kartum
mano 'tirushtam vishate tamo 'ndham*

My dear King, do not be agitated and anxious because your sacrifices have not been properly executed due to providential impediments. Kindly take my words with great respect. We should always remember that if something happens by providential arrangement, we should not be very sorry. The more we try to rectify such reversals, the more we enter into the darkest region of materialistic thought.

This was instructed to King Prthu who could not finish the 100th sacrifice thus making him understand that, just because he could not hit century, does not mean that he is lost. The Lord was very pleased when King Prthu embraced Indra and thus gave up all envy against him. By submission if we can please Krishna, then it is like winning the war though seemingly losing a battle. We see in the pastime of Lord Vamanadeva that even though externally it seemed that Bali lost everything, actually he was supremely successful as he achieved the personal protection of the Lord just by his complete surrender & submission.

Thank you very much.

Yours in the service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Chennai

The Enchanting Smile

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

One of the significant point our spiritual master H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj used to say often in regard to the prayers in Srimad Bhagavatam is that we should not stop with just reciting or studying the prayers of different devotees. We should also study the Lord's response to the devotee after the prayers are offered. For eg., In the 3rd canto, when Lord Brahma offers his prayers seeking the Lord's mercy for the service of creation, the Lord responds with some very deep and meaningful slokas. Similarly Lord Nrsimhadev also responds with very thought-provoking verses to Prahlad Maharaj's prayers. It is an interesting study exercise to meditate on these responses from the Lord. One of the foremost prayer in Srimad Bhagavatam is by Srimati Kunti Maharani. The Lord's response to this most beautiful kunti stuti is very interesting to meditate on. It is said in Srimad Bhagavatam 1.8.44, that after Kunti Maharani offered her prayers to the Lord, who was about to leave Hastinapura for Dwarka, the Lord simply smiled in response.

sūta uvāca
pr̥thayettham̐ kala-padaiḥ pariṇūtākḥilodayaḥ
mandam̐ jahāsa vaikuṅṭho mohayann iva māyayā

Sūta Goswami said: "The Lord, thus hearing the prayers of Kuntidevī, composed in choice words for His glorification, mildly smiled. That smile was as enchanting as His mystic power."

Srila Prabhupada writes in his beautiful purport, "*Śrīmatī Kuntidevī has prayed to the Lord just to enunciate a fragment of His glories. All His devotees worship Him in that way, by chosen words, and therefore the Lord is known as Uttamaśloka. No amount of chosen words is sufficient to enumerate the Lord's glory, and yet He is satisfied by such prayers as the father is satisfied even by the broken linguistic attempts of the growing child.*"

Kunti Maharani's prayers are full with deep philosophy, pure loving bhakti and full of detachment. She is one of the most resilient and powerful character in the entire Mahabharata. She speaks very little but her actions as a loving mother, dedicated daughter-in-law of the kuru family, as a dutiful wife of king Pandu and a dear devotee & aunt of Lord Krishna is worthy of worship. She endured all kinds of difficulties, disrespect, disappointments, neglect, betrayals and nothing else. But we never see her complain to Krishna even once for her unending miseries. On the contrary she prays that she wants Krishna to bring all the miseries back in her life once again so that she can see Him again and again. As far as she is concerned, all the pains and sufferings they faced throughout their life put together is nothing compared to the pain of separation from the Lord.

As a pure devotee of the Lord, she does not want anything in return from the Lord for her prayers. Rather she wants the Lord Himself to stay back and not leave them. Interestingly, the Lord did not say a single word in return for her prayers. He simply smiled. And that transcendental smile was as enchanting as His mystic power. It cast a spell on the devotee and relieves them of all their miseries, most importantly the pain of separation from Him. Srila Prabhupada writes beautifully that the Lord's smile indicated at least 2 things:

1. The Lord's glories are unlimited and it is not humanly possible to glorify all of them. But when we do it in our puny capacity, He is satisfied just like the father getting satisfied by the broken words spoken by the child. Thus the Lord smiled as an acknowledgement indicating His satisfaction of Kunti Maharani's devotion.
2. Secondly the Lord's smile also indicates His mercy being bestowed upon the devotees. The devotees do not want wealth, name and fame, followers, power etc from the Lord. These are all utterly insignificant when compared to the

transcendental glance and smile that He casts upon His devotees. Even the entirety of the three worlds is not equal to that enchanting smile of the Lord. The Lord exactly knows what will satisfy the devotees and He exactly gives it to them. In the case of Kunti Maharani, the eternal pure devotee of the Lord, the transcendental smile of the Lord is enough to satisfy her.

It is a very important lesson for us to meditate on. Many times we offer our prayers to the Lord. When we get some material benefits, we think that the Lord has answered our prayers. When we don't get any material benefits, we either get frustrated or get upset with the Lord. We can get the best reciprocation from the Lord when we do not ask for anything material from Him, or rather anything from Him. All we should want is for Him to simply cast His transcendental enchanting smile upon us always! No other benediction is of any value to us.

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

Moderator's Note: We were facing technical issues with the Google Group mail server last 2 weeks and hence the messages were not delivered to the members. The technical support team informed that the issue must be resolved now. Our sincere apologies for the inconvenience and we hope that this issue will not recur.

Nectar from Maharaj's Diary - Part 1

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

Today we would like to share a few nectarean points we collected from our spiritual master H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj's diary.

1. Srila Bhaktivinod Thakur states that a Vaishnava exists eternally packed up with the Lord in transcendental sound vibration.

*He reasons ill who tells that Vaishnava die
When thou art living still in sound!
The Vaishnava die to live, and living try
To spread the Holy name around!*

2. A beautiful verse from the shastras:

ताार्केशु कर्कशा धियो वयामेया यावत्
साहित्ये कमला धियो वयामेवा यावत्
तन्त्रे निरन्तरा धियो वयामेवा यावत्
कृष्णे निवेशिता धियो वयामेवा तावत्

*taarkeshu karkasha dhiyo vayameya yaavat
sahitye komala dhiyo vayameva yaavat
tantre nirantara dhiyo vayameva yaavat
krishne niveshita dhiyo vayameva taavat*

Only when our minds are absorbed in Krishna, do we have unsparing thoughts in arguments, sensitive thoughts in literature and incessant thoughts on our duties.

3. Maharaj has written the verse Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.32, word-word meaning and translation in his diary and then he has written a few important lines from the purport with the remark "important to refer": *It does not matter what one is...If one is administrator, statesman, warrior, politician etc..then one should try to establish the Lord's supremacy in statesmanship...if one is a businessman, an industrialist, an agriculturalist etc. then one should spend his money for the cause of the Lord.*

Then Maharaj has written the following words as his comments:

Comments: *We, in Krishna consciousness, have to show how to solve problems by actually solving them in ISKCON and by sharing our solutions with the world. We have to show, "Why things fail without Krishna" by ourselves not failing and by ourselves never being without Krishna. And this work is to be carried out by every Krishna conscious devotee, not only by a few leaders or few writers.*

4. "Any living entity who lives only to satisfy the Lord is a demigod." - Krishna Book, 1st Chapter, "Advent of Lord Krishna".

5. Goethe: "*Whatever you can do or dream you can do, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it....begin it now.*" [We have practically seen how Maharaj was so bold in everything he did and he has practically lived this statement].

Thank you very much.

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

Nectar from Maharaj's Diary - Part 2

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

Our spiritual master has written very beautiful realizations in Hindi in his diaries and as I was relishing them, I thought of translating them into English for everyone's benefit. My knowledge of Hindi and ability to translate is very average, so please bear with my incapability.

1. Maharaj has written the below statements with a note - *duhkha aur upaay* (Misery and its solution)

इदम मे स्यात् इदम मे स्यात् इति इच्छा कामा शब्धिता ।

idam me syat idam me syat iti iccha kaama shabdhitā

'I want to attain this', 'I want to attain this' - this kind of desire is called as lust.

When we do not have 'what we desire' and when we have 'what we do not desire', this is called as misery. If we simply leave 'I want' and 'I don't want', then where is the question of misery?

2. *Desire is the root cause of all sins and miseries.* Story: There was a man and his name was *badmaash* (scoundrel). His wife went missing one day and he was searching everywhere. When he inquired some people they asked for her name. He said that her name is *fajiti* (humiliation). Then they replied, "Don't worry. She will come on her own.", meaning a scoundrel will automatically be humiliated. Similarly, for those people who desire to possess temporary and perishable objects in this world, misery will come automatically.

3. It is said in Mahabharat,

कांक्षया बन्धनमस्ति इति ब्रह्मसंहिता ।
कांक्षया बन्धनमस्ति इति ब्रह्मसंहिता ॥

*kaama bandhanam eva ekam na anyad asti iti bandhanam
kaama bandhanam mukto hi brahma bhuyaaya kalpate*

Desire for sense enjoyment is the only bondage in this world. There is no other bondage. One who is liberated from this bondage of desire, becomes qualified to attain brahma-bhaava.

Krishna willing, we will relish some more nectar from Maharaj's diary in the next offering.

Thank you very much

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva

Kalacakra Krsna das

Nectar from Maharaj's Diary - Part 3

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

We will continue to relish some more nectar from Maharaj's diary regarding Karma.

These are some of the notes written by Maharaj for 4th Chapter of Bhagavad Gita.

Verse 4.1:

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śrī-bhagavān uvāca
imaṁ vivasvate yogaṁ proktavān aham avyayam
vivasvān manave prāha manur ikṣvākave 'bravīt

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In the scriptures, Sun is called "Savita" (the creator). Grhastha ashram is the main one among the four ashrams. Quoting the names of the kings like Surya, Manu, Ikshvaku, etc., the Lord says as to how in the ancient age, the householders learnt the karma yoga, and by living in their respective ashramas attained self realization by destroying their desires. Lord Krishna and Arjuna were also householders themselves.

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Perfection of 'yoga' is attained by following one's prescribed duty (svadharma) for the benefit of others. So doing our duties immaculately is to attain inaction or to get rid of the duty. One should do the prescribed duties with service attitude.

Verse 4.5:

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śrī-bhagavān uvāca
bahūni me vyatītāni janmāni tava cārjuna
tāny ahaṁ veda sarvāṇi na tvam vettha paran-tapa

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The basic reason for not caring to know about the appearance of Lord is that our minds are attracted to and absorbed in harmful and perishable things which will plunge us in darkness of ignorance. This is the reason why our knowledge is not developing.

Verse 4.9:

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

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Prescribed duties also becomes transcendental, when one does his prescribed duties but still realizes that he is not related to them (he is not the doer). This is the essence of action. This is karma yoga.

(Refer Srimad Bhagavatam 7.1.28-29 important.)

Krishna willing, we will relish some more nectar from Maharaj's diary in the next offering.

Thank you very much

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva

Kalacakra Krsna das

Nectar from Maharaj's Diary - Part 4

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

We will continue to relish some more nectar from Maharaj's diary. These are some of the notes written by Maharaj for 4th Chapter and 5th chapter of Bhagavad Gita.

Verse 4.17:

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यमं बोद्धव्यमं च विकर्मणाह
अकर्मणासं च बोद्धव्यमं गहानां कर्मणो गतिह

*karmaṇo hy api boddhavyam̐ boddhavyam̐ ca vikarmaṇaḥ
akarmaṇaś ca boddhavyam̐ gahanā karmaṇo gatiḥ*

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यमं बोद्धव्यमं च विकर्मणाह अकर्मणासं च बोद्धव्यमं गहानां कर्मणो गतिह

In the sixteenth chapter of the Gita, verses 8 to 13, the word 'kaama' has been mentioned about nine times. This proves that 'kaama' - the desire is the cause of all demoniac propensity (sins).

[The 16th chapter of Gita is titled 'The Divine and Demoniac Natures - Daivaasura Sampad Vibhaga Yoga. In these verses 8-13 Krishna talks about the nature of demoniac personalities.]

Verse 4.37:

यथाह्दहंसी समिद्धो ग्निर् भस्मा-सत् कुरुते र्जुना
ज्ज्ञानाग्निह सर्वा-कर्मानी भस्मा-सत् कुरुते तथह

*yathaidhāṁsi samiddho 'gnir bhasma-sāt kurute 'rjuna
jñānāgniḥ sarva-karmāṇi bhasma-sāt kurute tathā*

यथाह्दहंसी समिद्धो ग्निर् भस्मा-सत् कुरुते र्जुना ज्ज्ञानाग्निह सर्वा-कर्मानी भस्मा-सत् कुरुते तथह

When one attains self-realization, then there is not even a drop of impact due to the *sanchit, praarabdha and kriyamaana karma* - (sins which are accumulated, sins which are already fructified, sins which are being created in the present). Only the ashes remain. That means the karma (action) becomes akarma (inaction)

यथाह्दहंसी समिद्धो ग्निर् भस्मा-सत् कुरुते र्जुना ज्ज्ञानाग्निह सर्वा-कर्मानी भस्मा-सत् कुरुते तथह

When one attains knowledge of the self, the *sanchit karma* which takes shelter of ignorance is destroyed. A body made of destiny (*praarabdha karma*) is seen. But due to lack of capability, new *karmas* are not created from it. By the influence of destiny, one may attain favorable or unfavorable situations - but since the enjoying propensity is absent, one does not become happy or sad.

Verse 5.5:

संख्ययोगः प्रकृत्या संख्ययोगो योगो न
संख्ययोगो न योगो न : संख्ययोगो न योगो न

*yat sāṅkhyaiḥ prāpyate sthānaṁ tad yogair api gamyate
ekaṁ sāṅkhyam ca yogam ca yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati*

संख्ययोगो न योगो न संख्ययोगो न योगो न , योगो न योगो न , योगो न योगो न योगो न योगो न

The desire to live, fear of death, greed to get and passion to do - all gets vanquished when the means is fulfilled.

Krishna willing, we will relish some more nectar from Maharaj's diary in the next offering.

Thank you very much

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva

Kalacakra Krsna das & Sudarshana devi dasi

Nectar from Maharaj's Diary - Part 5

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

We will continue to relish some more nectar from Maharaj's diary. These are some of the notes written by Maharaj for the verses in 5th chapter of Bhagavad Gita.

Verse 5.15:

āhāra-nidrā-bhaya-maithunam ca sāmānyam etat paśubhir narāṇām
dharmo hi teṣām adhiko viśeṣo dharmeṇa hīnāḥ paśubhiḥ samānāḥ

*āhāra-nidrā-bhaya-maithunam ca sāmānyam etat paśubhir narāṇām
dharmo hi teṣām adhiko viśeṣo dharmeṇa hīnāḥ paśubhiḥ samānāḥ*

Eating, sleeping, sex, and defence—these four principles are common to both human beings and animals. The distinction between human life and animal life is that a man can search after God but an animal cannot. That is the difference. Therefore a man without that urge for searching after God is no better than an animal.

Verse 5.19:

sarve bhavantu sukhinah sarve santu niraamayaah
sarve bhadraanni pashyantu maa kashcid-duhkha-bhaag-bhavet

*sarve bhavantu sukhinah sarve santu niraamayaah
sarve bhadraanni pashyantu maa kashcid-duhkha-bhaag-bhavet*

May All be Happy, May All be Free from Illness. May All See what is Auspicious, May no one Suffer.

kapa vātadi doshena mad-bhakto na ca mām smaret
tasya smarāmyaham no-cet krtagno nāsti mat-parah

*kapa vātadi doshena mad-bhakto na ca mām smaret
tasya smarāmyaham no-cet krtagno nāsti mat-parah*

At the time of death, due to phlegm and wind and so on, if the devotee is unable to think of Me, I myself think of him. If I don't do so, then no one else can be considered to be more ungrateful (than I am).

At the time of death, due to phlegm and wind and so on, if the devotee is unable to think of Me, I myself think of him. If I don't do so, then no one else can be considered to be more ungrateful (than I am).

Krishna willing, we will relish some more nectar from Maharaj's diary in the next offering.

Thank you very much

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva

Kalacakra Krsna das

Dhṛta'raṣṭra' and Dhṛta'Hari' - Part 1

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In Bhagavad Gita verse 1.1 Dhṛtarāṣṭra inquires Sanjaya,

*dhṛtarāṣṭra uvāca
dharma-kṣetre kuru-kṣetre samavetā yuyutsavaḥ
māmakāḥ pāṇḍavāś caiva kim akurvata sañjaya*

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said: O Sanjaya, after my sons and the sons of Pandu assembled in the place of pilgrimage at Kurukshetra, desiring to fight, what did they do?

The above inquiry of Dhṛtarāṣṭra shows that he was stuck with fear, anxiety and doubts when the armies were all assembled in Kurukshetra.

1) Dhṛtarāṣṭra feared that the Kauravas might lose their kingdom. Our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj says that, "**Dhṛta-raṣṭra means one who was eager to grab the nation - Like him we are also "dhṛta-money", "dhṛta-house", "dhṛta-spouse" etc. Instead of being "Dhṛta" for these things we should behave like Lord Brahma and be "Dhṛta Hari"**". In Srimad Bhagavatam verse 2.6.34 Lord Brahma says to Narada Muni,

*na bhāratī me 'ṅga mṛṣopalakṣyate
na vai kvacin me manaso mṛṣā gatiḥ
na me hṛṣīkāṇi patanty asat-pathe
yan me hṛdautkaṅṭhyavatā dhṛto hariḥ*

O Nārada, because I have caught hold of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, with great zeal, whatever I say has never proved to have been false. Nor is the progress of my mind ever deterred. Nor are my senses ever degraded by temporary attachment to matter.

2) He was doubtful that Duryodhana might change his mind (due to the influence of the *dharma-kshetra, Kuru-kshetra*) and donate all the land to the Pandavas. As Srila Prabhupada explains in the purport to above verse Kurukshetra is a dharma kshetra - sacred place of pilgrimage, place of worship even for denizens of heaven. It is a place where a lot of dharma, yajna etc. have been performed over many years. The purity of the holy place is that it has the potency to change even a man with bad qualities. Also Krishna and His pure devotees who follow dharma were present in Kurukshetra.

Any place which is sanctified by Lord and His pure devotees becomes a dham. Wherever dharma is followed that place becomes dharmakshetra. Real dharma is to love and serve Krishna, do things which are pleasing to Krishna. By mercy of Srila Prabhupada now we have such dhams all over the world. Maharaj says that our home also can become Vaikuntha if we do regular chanting of Lord's Names and study of scriptures like Bhagavad Gita and Bhagavatam. And that will give peace of mind not only to the residents, but also to anyone who is visiting our homes. In his book "On the way to Krishna", Srila Prabhupada gives nice example of impact of pilgrim place and association of sadhus on a thief. "*In this regard there is the story of a thief who went on a pilgrimage to a holy town, and en route he and the other pilgrims stopped to rest overnight at an inn. Being addicted to stealing, the thief began making plans to steal the other pilgrims' baggage, but he thought, "I'm going on a pilgrimage, so it doesn't seem appropriate that I should steal this baggage. No, I shall not do it." Nonetheless, due to his habit, he could not keep his hands off the baggage. So he picked up one person's bag and placed it in another place, and then another person's bag and placed it elsewhere. He spent all night placing different bags in different places, but his conscience bothered him so that he could not take*

anything from them. In the morning, when the other pilgrims awoke, they looked around for their bags and couldn't find them. There was a great row, and eventually, one by one, they began to find the bags in various places. After they were all found, the thief explained: "Gentlemen, I am a thief by occupation. Being that I am habituated to stealing at night, I wanted to steal something from your bags, but I thought that since I am going to this holy place, it is not possible to steal. So I may have rearranged the baggage, but please excuse me." This is the characteristic of a bad habit. He does not want to commit theft anymore, but because he is habituated, sometimes he does."

Thus the holy dhams have the transcendental quality of purifying anyone with bad habits and transform them into saintly personalities.

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

Hare Krishna

Thank you very much

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva

Kalacakra Krsna das

Dhrta'rastra' and Dhrta'Hari' - Part 2

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled "Dhrtarashtra and DhrtaHari" wherein we were meditating on verse 1.1. of Bhagavad Gita. We were seeing the reasons as to why Dhrtarashtra was having fear and doubts. Now we shall see further.

3) Dhrtarashtra was anxious that his sons might loose the war and even die. He knew that his sons were at fault for all the mishaps and were on the *adharm*a side. Fighting the battle in the holy place will not be favorable for them and they are bound to be defeated.

So if we are not "Dhrta-Hari" then we are bound to be haunted by fear, doubt and anxiety always.

4) Dhrtarastra uses the word *maamaka* which means my party (sons). This shows that he did not treat the Kauravas and Pandavas equally and discriminated the Pandavas. This showed his attachment towards his own sons and it is the root cause of the fratricidal war. Maharaj says that, "when dual mind is there, destruction is bound to happen." In Srimad Bhagavatam verse 3.29.26 Lord says,

*ātmanaś ca parasyāpi yaḥ karoty antarodaram
tasya bhinna-dṛśo mṛtyur vidadhe bhayam ulbaṇam*

As the blazing fire of death, I cause great fear to whoever makes the least discrimination between himself and other living entities because of a differential outlook.

In whole of Gita we find that apart from Krishna, Arjuna and Sanjaya also spoke few verses. But as soon as Dhrtarashtra said, "*maamaka*", he didn't get any more chance to speak.

If we keep discriminating Krishna says He will appear as blazing fire of death. So for our own well being - it is good to surrender unto the Lord and treat everyone equally. The quality of equivision or *samadrshi* is very dear to the Lord and He mentions in many verses in Gita that He is very pleased with those who have equal vision. If we do not follow religious principles, then we will also be wiped out by Krishna, like how he wiped out the Kauravas in the battlefield of Kurukshetra.

Hare Krishna

Thank you very much

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva

Kalacakra Krsna das

Devotional Service is whose Business? - Part 1

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In Srimad Bhagavatam first canto we see that Maharaja Parikshit while engaged in hunting in the forest, was feeling very hungry and while searching for a reservoir of water, he entered the hermitage of the well-known Samika rishi and saw the sage sitting silently with closed eyes. The King, not received by any formal welcome by means of being offered a seat, place, water and sweet addresses, considered himself neglected, and so thinking he became angry. While leaving, the King, being so insulted, picked up a lifeless snake with his bow and angrily placed it on the shoulder of the sage. Then he returned to his palace. Being a pure devotee of the Lord, while returning home, the King felt that the act he had committed against the faultless and powerful brahmana was heinous and uncivilized. Consequently he was distressed. In Srimad Bhagavatam 1.19.2 we see what King Parikshit thought:

*dhruvaṁ tato me kṛta-deva-helanād
duratyayaṁ vyaśanaṁ nāti-dīrghāt
tad astu kāmāṁ hy agha-niṣkṛtāya me
yathā na kuryāṁ punar evam addhā*

[King Parikshit thought:] Due to my neglecting the injunctions of the Supreme Lord I must certainly expect some difficulty to overcome me in the near future. I now desire without reservation that the calamity come now, for in this way I may be freed of the sinful action and not commit such an offense again.

Srila Prabhupada writes a very important point in the purport: *A man's personal misconduct affects all his family members. Therefore Mahārāja Parīkṣit desired the calamity to fall on him alone. By suffering personally he would be restrained from future sins, and at the same time the sin which he had committed would be counteracted so that his descendants would not suffer. That is the way a responsible devotee thinks.*

Our beloved Godbrother HG Devakinandan prabhu very beautifully explained this point in his class on 1st January 2020 in Singapore. I share herewith the transcription of a portion of the class for all our benefit.

“This is a very important point. He prays that “if anything is to happen let it happen to me. Let it not happen to my family members. Let it not happen even to my kingdom. If it must happen, let it happen to me.”. **We must understand that, as devotees, not only are we responsible for our own devotional service, we are all responsible for the devotional service of those who depend on us.** And normally those who depend on us are our family members. So it is very important that each of us take responsibility for our own devotional service because, how we behave as devotees will affect others who depend on us. Parikshit Maharaj repented and requested Krishna that his descendants should not suffer. That is why when we repent sincerely, what happens is, it genuinely brings care and compassion within us. We stop thinking of only of ourselves and we start thinking of how we are affecting others who depend on us. This is mood of a devotee and the more selfless we become, the more repentant we actually become. Those who are selfish will find it very hard to repent because they blame everyone and they think that everything revolves around them. Parikshit Maharaj felt, “Who am I? I am not Parikshit the great person. I am nobody. Samika rishi is the opposite. Samika rishi is such a great person, such a powerful brahmana and yet I did this to him. I should not have done that to him.” This is what he felt.

Krishna willing we shall meditate further on this topic in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much

Yours in the service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Chennai.

Devotional Service is whose Business? - Part 2

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled, "**Devotional Service is Whose Business**" wherein we were trying to learn the important lesson from the pastime of Parikshit Maharaj as to how to be responsible devotees. We were sharing some of the points from the class given by our Godbrother HG Devakinandana Prabhuji on verse 1.19.2 of Srimad Bhagavatam. Now we shall see further.

"In the same purport Srila Prabhupada also says: *The family members of a devotee also share the effects of a devotee's service unto the Lord. Mahārāja Prahāda saved his demon father by his personal devotional service. A devotee son in the family is the greatest boon or blessing of the Lord.*

A man's misconduct affects his family members. Then a man's devotional service can also benefit his family members. This is not just a man. It also refers to a woman. Also to a child. Prahlad Maharaj's devotional service saved generations of his family. Think about it. It's not only the mothers and fathers who must be responsible for devotional service. Even the children, young teenagers, even their devotional service can save their parents because Prahlad Maharaj was very young. His father was supposed to teach him devotional service. But in the end Prahlad Maharaj's prayers saved his father. Not only that. His prayers saved Bali Maharaj his grandson, years later when he was caught up by his pride and when Vamana deva came to check his pride. It was only because Prahlad Maharaj prayed and asked for compassion that Vamana dev relented in his heart and allowed Bali Maharaj not to be stepped into the ground.

So you see even a child can change the lives of his parents. So we are all children of our parents also. We are all sons and daughters. It becomes our responsibility whenever something is happening, that we review our spiritual life, improve our spiritual life so that our conduct will benefit all those who depend on us. As leaders and preachers our devotional service affects those who depend on us. That is why each one of us is interconnected to the other. No one really can say that how I do my devotional service is my business. No. It is everybody's business. Your devotional service is my business and my devotional service is your business. That's how we help each other to grow in devotional service."

Our heartfelt thanks to HG Devakinandan prabhu for highlighting this most valuable point making us realize our responsibility as aspiring devotees.

Thank you very much

Yours in the service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Chennai

Dhrta'rajshtra' and Dhrta'Hari' - Part 3

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

In Bhagavad Gita verse 1.2 Sanjaya says,

*sañjaya uvāca
dṛṣṭvā tu pāṇḍavānikam vyūḍham duryodhanas tadā
ācāryam upasaṅgamyā rājā vacanam abravīt*

Sanjaya said: "O King, after looking over the army gathered by the sons of Pandu, King Duryodhana went to his teacher and began to speak the following words."

1. Sanjaya who was serving as secretary of King Dhrtarashtra, was student of Vyasadev. He is known for his non-envious nature. Envy or jealousy is a very abominable quality. Whereas Krishna is very pleased with those who are "anasuya". In fact in Bhagavad Gita verse 9.1 Krishna says, "**My dear Arjuna, because you are never envious of Me, I shall impart to you this most confidential knowledge and realization, knowing which you shall be relieved of the miseries of material existence.**" Also in Srimad Bhagavatam it is mentioned in verse 1.1.2 - "*dharmah projjhita-kaitavo 'tra paramo nirmatsarāṇām satām*" - "**Completely rejecting all religious activities which are materially motivated, this Bhāgavata Purāna propounds the highest truth, which is understandable by those devotees who are fully pure in heart.**" Here nirmatsara means one who is free from all (matsara) envy. Srila Prabhupada has nicely translated it as 'one who is 100% pure in heart.' So those who are non-envious are very dear to Lord and all knowledge is revealed to them.

2. Once Krishna and Arjuna were having a private conversation and Krishna had asked the doorkeepers not to let anyone inside. Sanjaya had come there to deliver some message. When doorkeepers told him that they would not be able to let him in, he asked them to just go and inform Krishna about his arrival. As soon as Krishna heard Sanjaya's name, he let him in. Sanjaya came in, offered obeisances, delivered the message and left the place. When Arjuna was wondering why Krishna let him in, Krishna said that Sanjaya was nonenvious and that quality pleased Him. When we are envious of others, neither Lord nor the people around us would like to spend time with us. When we are non-envious we become an approachable person for all and Krishna also loves to bestow us with His darshan. By being envious we lose the association of Lord and his devotees.

3. Also by the mercy of his spiritual master Srila Vyasadev, Sanjaya who was staying with Dhrtarashtra in Hastinapur, could visualise what was happening in Kurukshetra. So the main point to understand is that if not for mercy of spiritual master, we cannot see anything materially or spiritually. *cakshur unmilitam ena* - Guru force opens our eyes which are blinded by darkness of ignorance. So we must always remember the mercy showered upon us by the spiritual master and remain grateful to him.

4. Whereas we find here that Dhrtarashtra - because of not taking shelter of elders or spiritual master - had become blind both spiritually and materially. He not only destroyed his life, but by sowing the seeds of envy in the hearts of his children, right from birth, Kauravas nurtured this envy right from childhood and that ended in the fatal Kurukshetra war. Srila Prabhupada nicely mentions in the purport - "Dhrtarashtra was blind from birth. Unfortunately, he was also bereft of spiritual vision." Material blindness will trouble us only in this birth, whereas if we are spiritually blind then we would drown in the ocean of repeated birth and death. Because of his envious nature, Lord did not want Dhrtarashtra or his sons to become the king. In his lecture on Gita verse 1.2-3, Srila Prabhupada says, "*So formerly, when there was fight between two kings, it is on the principle that who is giving good protection to the citizens, not for personal profit. Who is able to give good protection, life, security for life and property, he should become king. So these persons, this Dhrtarashtra and his sons, they were jealous. How they could give protection to the citizens? They are themselves jealous..Dhrtarashtra, he is jealous. He cannot give any good government. Krishna knew it.*"

."

King should treat all "praja" with equal vision. Praja means - "one which takes birth". Since Dhrtarashtra could not even treat his brother's children with equal vision, how could he treat all other praja - all other living beings. So to reestablish dharma Krishna wanted Yudhisir Maharaj to become the king.

5. As a devoted student, Sanjaya could understand the mood of Dhrtarashtra. Everyone knew that neither Duryodhana nor Dhrtarashtra are worthy enough to become a king. So just to please his master, Sanjaya is referring to Duryodhana as "raja".

Thank you very much

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva

Kalacakra Krsna das

Dhrta'rashtra' and Dhrta'Hari' - Part 4

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled "Dhrta-rashtra and Dhrta-Hari" wherein we were meditating on verses 1.1 and 1.2 of Bhagavad-Gita

In Bhagavad Gita verse 1.2 Sanjaya says,

*sañjaya uvāca
dṛṣṭvā tu pāṇḍavānikam vyūḍham duryodhanas tadā
ācāryam upasaṅgmya rājā vacanam abravīt*

Sanjaya said: O King, after looking over the army gathered by the sons of Pandu, King Duryodhana went to his teacher and began to speak the following words.

This verse reflects the nature of Duryodhana. Seeing the large army arranged by Pandavas, Duryodhana was amazed as to how it was possible for them to get such an army, inspite of all the tribulations they underwent. Those who are diplomatic, crooked and angry are always fearful. Out of fear of loss of prestige, power and so called positions in the society, one exhibits these qualities. Whereas simple and straight forward people are fearless. They don't have any hankering for others' property or position and with great compassion feel for the pains of others. Chanakya Pandit says in his Niti shastra

*mātravat para dhāreshu para dravyeshu lostravat
ātmavat sarva bhuteshu yah pashyati sa panditāh*

One who considers another's wife as his mother, another's possessions as a lump of dirt and treats all other living beings as he would himself, is considered to be learned.

Our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj says that, "**An attached person never smiles at anyone whereas detached person smiles freely at everyone.**"

Every child can become a great devotee of the Lord provided the parents give the impression of the same to the child from the beginning. Children learn alot by observing what the parents and elders do. Our attachment and affection to the child should not lead to degradation of their character. There is a famous proverb - "**Spare the rod and spoil the child.**" Inorder to inculcate good behaviour in the children, there need to be right mix of love and strictness. The lives of great devotees like Parikshit Maharaj, Prahlad Maharaj, Dhruva Maharaj, Srila Prabhupada are examples of how the impression they had in the beginning later helped them to take to serious devotional service.

Here unfortunately Dhrtarashtra was spiritually blind right from the beginning and the same traits were picked up by his children. Srila Prabhupada mentions in the purport to the above verse that *Duryodhana was quite fit to be a politician*. When there is a need, politicians can become friends even with their worst enemies or with people with whom they are not in good terms. Just to achieve power and position, they can do anything and everyything. *There is no neeti (morals) in rajaneeti (politics)*. As the saying goes "Empty vessels make most noise." So Duryodhana who is devoid of good qualities and real knowledge approaches Dronacarya.

Krishna willing we shall continue to meditate further on this topic in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much

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

Dhrta'rajshtra' and Dhrta'Hari' - Part 5

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled "**Dhrta-rashtra and Dhrta-Hari**" wherein we were meditating on verses 1.1 and 1.2 of Bhagavad-Gita

In Bhagavad Gita verse 1.3 Duryodhana says,

*paśyaitām pāṇḍu-putrānām ācārya mahatīm camūm
vyūḍhām drupada-putreṇa tava śiṣyeṇa dhīmatā*

O my teacher, behold the great army of the sons of Pandu, so expertly arranged by your intelligent disciple the son of Drupada.

Duryodhana wanted to trigger Dronacharya's anger and so he refers to Dhrstadyumna as Drupada's son. Drona and Drupada were friends in gurukul and at that time Drupada had told Drona that in future he could always approach him for help and that he would willingly give half of his kingdom. But years later when Drona was in trouble, not even having milk to feed his son Ashwattama, he approached his friend to get a cow. But Drupada's nature changed and he insulted Drona by saying that, "Friendship can be had only with equals" and refused to help. This enraged Drona and he left the place. Later when he became the guru of Kurus, he sent them to fight against Drupada. Duryodhana went in haste to fight against Drupada, only to get defeated. Later Arjuna went and he defeated Drupada and Drona then took away half of Drupada's empire. This incident enraged Drupada so much that he performed a sacrifice to beget a son to kill Drona and that son was Dhrstadyumna.

Interestingly Drupada sent Dhrstadyumna to Drona's gurukul to get trained in warfare. But as a liberal brahmana Drona taught all military arts to him. But being a crooked person Duryodhana is unable to appreciate Drona's act. Instead he is considering it as a defect and is telling Drona sarcastically that, "Your intelligent disciple, son of Drupada after learning all the arts is now fighting against you."

Dronacharya - being their Guru is worthy of worship. Fault finding is not a good quality and that too one should not speak with elders/guru in a sarcastic, fault finding mood. But unfortunately, blinded by false-ego, pride and envy Duryodhana ill-treated his elders.

Also from the interactions between Drona and Drupada we can learn few lessons

1. True friendship is not based on social, economical status of others.
2. Once we give a promise, we should try to keep it. If we are unable to keep it, we should genuinely humbly apologies.
3. We should not react sarcastically to people who approach us for help - "Friend in need is a friend indeed".
4. If someone speaks harshly, we should not do "tit for tat". By doing so we are provoking the other person to do more harmful acts - both for us and for himself. Our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj says - "By tolerating the sins, you are doing good to others as well as yourself."

Krishna willing we shall continue to meditate further on this topic in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much
Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva
Kalacakra Krsna das

Dhrta'rajshtra' and Dhrta'Hari' - Part 6

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled "**Dhrta-rashtra and Dhrta-Hari**" wherein we were meditating on first 3 verses in 1st chapter of Bhagavad-Gita. Now we shall see further.

In verse 1.4 through 7 of Bhagavad Gita Duryodhana begins to list the names of the prominent warriors who were present on the side of Pandavas. In verse 1.7 of Gita Duryodhana says,

*asmākaṁ tu viśiṣṭā ye tān nibodha dvijottama
nāyakā mama sainyasya saṁjñārthaṁ tān bravīmi te*

But for your information, O best of the brāhmaṇas, let me tell you about the captains who are especially qualified to lead my military force.

While referring to the men in Kauravas army he says, "*mama sainyasya*" - "my military force". The shastras repeatedly insist us to be nirmama (not mine) and nirahankara (no false-ego) consciousness. The concept of aham and mama is detrimental to devotional service. But both father and son are in "*aham*", "*mama*" and "*maamaka*" consciousness.

Those who are simple and honest in their dealings with others and surrendered to Krishna, they will be free of all fear and anxieties. They know that Krishna will take care in all situations. But when we are on the wrong path, we don't surrender to Krishna and we lose our own peace of mind and become restless and fearful. So, to get rid of that fear - we try to think of other alternate shelter. All such alternate shelters - be it family, friends etc are all temporary. As Bhagavatam verse 2.1.4 says we falsely think that those fallible soldiers in the form of friends and relatives would save us in times of danger. Srila Prabhupada says in his purport to verse 2.1.4 - "*Our friends, relatives and so-called wives and children are not only fallible, but also bewildered by the outward glamor of material existence. As such, they cannot save us. Still we think that we are safe within the orbit of family, society or country.*"

So here we find Duryodhana also is listing out all great warriors preset in his side, just to encourage himself and the army. He also wants to indirectly tell Bhisma, Drona, Krpa and Vikarna that they all should be loyal to him in the war and should not be lenient to the Pandavas.

Lesson for us:

1. Everything belongs to Krishna. We are only trustees in this world. So we can never claim anything as "mine".
2. Hidden speech is not good. Need to be simple and straight forward in our dealings with others.
3. Krishna is our safest and eternal shelter. As our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami says - "*whatever shelter we take other than Krishna is bound to crumble in due course of time.*"
4. Diplomacy will lead to destruction.

Thank you very much

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva

Kalacakra Krsna das