

Lord's Covering

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

A few days ago, on the occasion of Shiva Ratri, I was reading the qualities of Lord Shiva who is one of the twelve Mahajans, pure devotees of Supreme Lord Krishna, and came across this wonderful verse 4.3.23 in Srimad Bhagavatam.

*sattvaṁ viśuddhaṁ vasudeva-śabditaṁ
yad īyate tatra pumān apāvṛtaḥ
sattve ca tasmin bhagavān vāsudevo
hy adhokṣajo me namaśā vidhīyate*

I am always engaged in offering obeisances to Lord Vasudeva in pure Krishna Consciousness. Krishna Consciousness is always in pure consciousness in which the Supreme Personality of Godhead known as Vasudeva is revealed without any covering.

Here Lord Shiva is telling Mata Parvati how he was in trance meditating on Supreme Lord Krishna and therefore did not notice Prajapathi Daksha when he entered the sacrificial arena. Daksha not realising the transcendental position of Lord Shiva, out of envy chastises and cursed him for not paying him respects. Pure devotees are always meditating on the Lord that makes them to forget the surrounding at times. In such engagement, the Lord reveals Himself to the devotees without any covering. The word *apaavrtah* is worth meditating. Srila Prabhupada explains in his purport that "*the Lord's internal potency is described by the word apaavrtah. That means free from covering. The Lord's name, form, quality and paraphernalia etc. being transcendental is beyond the conception of material imagination. It is not possible to know for any one of them with material senses. When the senses are purified by the discharge of pure devotional service' hrshikena hrshikeshā sevānam bhaktir uccyate' pure senses can see Krishna without a covering.*"

Srila Prabhupada further explains how one may get a doubt that although the pure devotee's senses resemble same to that of a non-devotee, how is that possible for the pure devotee to visualize the uncovered form of the Lord. The answer is given by Caitanya Mahaprabhu that pure devotional service cleanses the mirror of the mind. *In a clean mirror, one can see one's face distinctly. Similarly simply by cleansing the mirror of the mind, one can have the clear conception of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It is possible as stated in BG 8.8 abhyaasa yoga yuktena--*
by executing one's prescribed duties in devotional service by hearing about God and chanting about Him if one's mind is always engaged and not allowed to go elsewhere one can realize the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The word *vishuddham* in the above verse means purity. So **purity is the force**. Our body, mind, words and deeds - everything should be pure. Elsewhere Srila Prabhupada is mentioning that success is only possible by celibacy. Celibacy is purity in thought, word and deed. Contrary to the general understanding celibacy includes control of not only sex impulse but also control of other senses. Celibacy is of two kinds- physical and mental. Physical celibacy is abstinence from sex act. Mental celibacy is the control of impure thoughts. Mental celibacy is more difficult than physical celibacy. It is the mind that does all actions. A desire arises in mind then one thinks how to fulfil it then action follows. No space is empty at any time. If one thing is removed from one place, immediately another thing comes to take its place. So it is necessary to entertain divine thoughts to replace evil thoughts.

How to maintain mental celibacy? We are reminded of our beloved spiritual master, H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj's statement - **"If you want to remain a brahmachari, you must get married to Srimad Bhagavatam. If you don't marry Srimad Bhagavatam, then the four walls will itself kill you and you will not be able to maintain celibacy**

." Hearing this statement we should not misinterpret that Srimad Bhagavatam is only for brahmacaris. In one of the lectures, our senior god-brother HG Devakinandan Prabhuji was sharing one of profound statements of Maharaj to grahasthas - "**Even though you are married, always keep the spirit of brahmacharya alive in you. So you should have some quiet moments with scriptures in your home daily and that will keep the fire of devotional service going.**" So irrespective of our ashram we need to take shelter of the scriptures and "purify" our thoughts, words and deeds and then Lord will reveal Himself to us without any covering.

As Kunti Maharani also prays in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 1.8.19

*māyā-javanikācchannam ajñādhokṣajam avyayam
na lakṣyase mūḍha-dṛśā naṭo nāṭyadharo yathā*

Being beyond the range of limited sense perception, You are the eternally irreproachable factor covered by the curtain of deluding energy. You are invisible to the foolish observer, exactly as an actor dressed as a player is not recognized.

When we are not pure in our thoughts, then Lord will cover Himself by the curtain of Maya and we will not be able to recognise Him.

I sincerely pray at the lotus feet of Guru Maharaj to give me the strength to practise purity in my thoughts, words and deeds.

Thank you very much.

Yours in the service of Srila Prabhupada and Gurudeva,
Purna Prajna das
Abu Dhabi.