

Service in Separation

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Dear Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

Though many a time we keep saying that vaani is greater than vapu, we indeed feel the separation of our beloved spiritual master H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj and always wish that he could have stayed with us for some more time. Maharaj is a true well-wisher for all of us and always used to lovingly correct us whenever we are going away from the gamut of devotional service. Now during his apparent physical absence, our mind will trick us that there is no check and balance and there is every possibility we may slip in our sadhana, dealing with living entities and so on. We tend to be lethargic as if there is nobody is there to correct our behaviour.

While I was thinking on these lines, I came across a wonderful verse (SB 3.4.21) spoken by Uddhava in the pages of Srimad Bhagavatam. Uddhava unequivocally declares that there is no separation from Lord Krishna, even though He had left for Goloka Vrindavan. Srimad Bhagavatam is the answer to all questions. Srila Prabhupada in his wonderful purport to this verse, in the mood of Uddhava, explains how we can apply this to the separation from spiritual master as well.

*so 'ham tad-darśanāhlāda- viyogārti-yutaḥ prabho
gamiṣye dayitaṁ tasya badaryāśrama-maṇḍalam*

My dear Vidura, now I am mad for want of the pleasure of seeing Him, and just to mitigate this I am now proceeding to Badarikashrama in the Himalayas for association, as I have been instructed by Him.

Srila Prabhupada's purport is very clear and precise. "***Uddhava's separation from the Lord was unbearable, and therefore he started to Badarikashrama in obedience to the Lord's order because the order of the Lord and the Lord Himself are identical. As long as one is engaged in the execution of the order of the Lord, there is no factual separation from Him.***"

Maharaj is wonderful in answering all our questions and doubts even after his disappearance and we can see that we are not separated from him. How foolish we are in not coming to Srimad Bhagavatam which is heart and soul of our Gurudev. I am ever grateful for our magnanimous Gurudev in giving us directions all the time. As long as we stay away from Srimad Bhagavatam we will continue to drown ourselves in illusion and ignorance.

We have to sincerely introspect ourselves and check if we are engaged in the execution of the order of our Gurudev. Engage does not mean simply engaged in various sevas with anxiety and agitation. If we are really engaged in the execution of the order of the Guru and Krishna, then we would be completely peaceful. Also when we are engaged in loving devotional service in the true sense then all the living entities also become happy by our behaviour. On the other hand, if we are engaged in the order of Spiritual master only in the gross level, and not in a subtle level, then we will neither be blissful nor be cheerful. This means we are still trying to satisfy our ego etc. After taking up the process of devotional service we would have left sense gratification to a certain extent, but the gratification of our mind and ego may go on subtly. It is a very fine line.

His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada shows us how he was completely engaged in the execution of the order of his spiritual master and Supreme Lord Krishna without any separation from Them. In one of the Vyasa puja lectures in London in 1973, he very nicely shows us the example of his unflinching attachment to the execution of the order of his spiritual master.

In that class Srila Prabhupada explains how this worship is not for a man, this worship is for Ved Vyasa and the guru is the representative of Ved Vyasa. "His qualification is - he is speaking the words of Ved Vyasa. He is not giving what he has. He is giving what Ved Vyasa has given. He is simply the medium in whatever worship is through the guru going to parampara, to Krishna." He quoted Caitanya Caritamrita and he said, "you will be happy to know that our Pradyumna has just helped me to complete Sri Caitanya Caritamrita. Actually Pradyumna did all the work. That's why I called him Pandit Mahashoy. Mahashoy is the name that Jiva Goswami gave to Narottamdas Thakur. It's a very very elevated name. I have given him the name Pandit Mahashoy because so much of my literatures are based on the Sanskrit language and he used to help me to edit the Sanskrit. It is because of Pradyumna's hard work that Caitanya Caritamrita is now available to all of you." He was praising his disciple. And then he started praising Pradyumna's wife Arundhati because she helped in the proofreading and other things. And then he started praising other ghashas who were doing so much service.

Srila Prabhupada further said, "Actually I am an old man. My Guru Maharaj, when I was twenty-five years old he ordered me to take the message of Lord Caitanya to the western world. He said that. I did it. When I was seventy years old, I really took up this mission. He said, I should have done it then at twenty-five but better late than never. I am seventy years old. I am very old man. How much can I do? It is because of all of you, it is because of all of my disciples who are working so hard, who are so dedicated that this movement is spreading throughout the world. You could all be gurus. Just selflessly repeat the words of the previous acaryas and you will be empowered to do great things."

Here the acarya is teaching us through his speech that how much he was engaged in execution of his Guru's orders. Therefore there was complete success of pure devotional service and no separation. On the other hand when we fail to follow the instructions of our spiritual master, then our LIFE will be filled with Lamentation, Illusion, Fear and Envy. Few months ago, HG Madan Mohan Prabhuji had written a nice offering titled, "Our Eternal Relation with Guru", wherein Prabhuji had shared with us few points that His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada had mentioned in the conclusion to Caitanya Caritamrita. We would like to recollect and remember the below golden lines from that offering.

"I think that His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura is always seeing my activities and guiding me within my heart by his words. As it is said in Srimad-Bhagavatam, "tene brahma hrdaaya aadi-kavaye". Spiritual inspiration comes from within the heart, wherein the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in His Paramatma feature, **is always sitting with all His devotees and associates.**"

Prabhuji had very nicely explained, "The fact that the spiritual master **is always watching us even though he is not physically present** is great news for every disciple. This shows that Guru is always with us. And Srila Prabhupada confirms here that Guru is sitting in our hearts together with the Supersoul. This is the great mercy of Guru and Krishna. The disciple who takes advantage of this confirmation by Srila Prabhupada will always live with his Spiritual master at every moment."

Therefore I pray to my wonderful spiritual master and Srila Prabhupada so that by their mercy, I will become sane in my behaviour and really engage in the execution of the order of my spiritual master grossly and subtly.

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