

Taking Pleasure in Others' Progress

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Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

In his purport to Srimad Bhagavatam verse 1.15.8, Srila Prabhupada refers to the pastime with Maya Danava. Prabhupada writes "The demon Maya Danava was an inhabitant of the forest Khandava, and when the Khandava forest was set on fire, he asked protection from Arjuna. Arjuna saved his life, and as a result of this the demon felt obliged. He reciprocated by building a wonderful assembly house for the Pandavas, which attracted the extraordinary attention of all state princes. When he was chased both by the fire and by the wheel of Lord Krishna, he took shelter of such a devotee as Arjuna, who saved him from the wrath of the fire of Lord Sri Krishna.

Devotees are therefore more merciful than the Lord, and in devotional service the mercy of a devotee is more valuable than the mercy of the Lord. Both the fire and the Lord ceased from chasing the demon as soon as both of them saw that the demon was given shelter by such a devotee as Arjuna. This demon, feeling obliged to Arjuna, wanted to do him some service to show his gratefulness, but Arjuna declined to accept anything from him in exchange. Lord Sri Krishna, however, being pleased with Maya for his taking shelter of a devotee, asked him to render service unto King Yudhisthira by building a wonderful assembly house. The process is that by the grace of the devotee the mercy of the Lord is obtained, and by the mercy of the Lord a chance to serve the Lord's devotee is obtained."

Here we see that Lord Krishna was very much pleased with Maya for his taking shelter of a devotee Arjuna. H G Devakinandan prabhujis was mentioning in one of the discussions, that when our beloved Gurudev was going through this purport, Maharaj was saying that, "Frankly speaking, if supposing we are with someone else and we consider ourselves to be superior and if somebody comes and pays obeisances to the other person with whom we are sitting, and does not offer us obeisances, then we will feel it. But here we see that Krishna was not upset with Maya Danava at all for his going and taking shelter of Arjuna and not Krishna Himself. In fact Krishna was so happy that Maya Danava fell at the feet of Arjuna. This is the greatness of Krishna and something we have to learn." Maharaj always said that, "If I find a disciple more exalted than me, I will be the happiest person in the world. But amongst you all, if you see someone more exalted than the other one, you just want to shoot him down. You can't take it. Why? That kind of devotional service brings agitation."

We see in Srimad Bhagavatam that Narada muni on observing the glories of his disciple Dhruva, went to the sacrificial arena of the Pracetas and glorified his disciple. In Srimad Bhagavatam 7.9.28 we see Prahlada Maharaj praying

evam janam nipatitam prabhavaahi-kupe
kaamaabhikaamam anu yah prapatan prasangaat

krtvaatmasaat surarshinaa bhagavan grhitah
so 'ham katham nu visrje tava bhrtya-sevaam

"My dear Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, because of my association with material desires, one after another, I was gradually falling into a blind well full of snakes, following the general populace. But Your servant Narada Muni kindly accepted me as his disciple and instructed me how to achieve this transcendental position. Therefore, my first duty is to serve him. How could I leave his service?"

Here one important quality of Narada muni is glorified by Prahlad Maharaj and that is referred to as krtvaatmasaat. Srila Prabhupada gives in the word to word equivalent the meaning as, "causing me to acquire spiritual qualities like himself (sage Narada)". In the material world we are always wary of others and we never want them to acquire equal qualifications like ourselves because we feel insecure at that point and we feel we will lose our importance and identity if we cause others to acquire the same qualifications like us. But Srimati Kuntidevi confirms that this quality of taking pleasure in others advancement alone can make us see the stoppage of the cycle of birth and death, when she prays in SB 1.8.36,

shrnvanti gaayanti grnanti abhikshnashah
smaranti nandanti tavehitam janaah
ta eva pashyanti acirena taavakam
bhava pravaahoparamam padaambujam

"O Krishna, those who continuously hear, chant and repeat Your transcendental activities, or take pleasure in others' doing so (nandanti), certainly see Your lotus feet, which alone can stop the repetition of birth and death."

Thank you very much
Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev
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