

Writing

Date: 2 Aug, 2003

Author: Madana Gopal das

Hare Krsna Kalacakra Prabhuji,

Please accept my humble obeisances, All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev, H.H. Maha-Visnu Gosvami Maharaj.

Please forgive me for any offenses committed knowingly or unknowingly. You are performing an important service for the devotees and disciples of our Gurudev. I feel that I should more formally introduce myself *(see below) as I have not met you but only heard of you and read of your realizations in Grantha Raj. I enjoy your contributions in Grantha Raj and feel embarrassed that I have been neglectful in sharing my realizations. Your letter on "writing" is well put and the perfect communication for a moderator of a conference on Grantha Raj Srimad Bhagavatam. This letter from you has inspired me to write more often. I have the least excuse as presently I am studying the Srimad Bhagavatam in Vrndavan at the VIHE. That does not qualify me greatly but it does mean that I should at least try to let you hear the very same thing as I am learning it and as I have realized it. *yathadhitam yathamati* SB 1.3.44. As Maitreya muni states in SB 3.6.36,

*tathaapi kirtayaamy anga / yathaa-mati yathaa-shrutam
kirtim hareh svaam sat-kartum / giram anyaabhidhaasatim*

"In spite of my inability, whatever I have been able to hear [from the spiritual master] and whatever I could assimilate I am now describing in glorification of the Lord by pure speech, for otherwise my power of speaking would remain unchaste."

Prabhupada's purport: It is also not possible to repeat all that one has heard from his spiritual master, but one can narrate as far as possible by one's honest endeavor. It does not matter whether the Lord's glories are fully explained or not. One must attempt to engage one's bodily, mental and verbal activities in the transcendental glorification of the Lord, otherwise such activities will remain unchaste and impure."

By unchaste speech we can conceive of gramya katha or speculation or any form of prajalpa. *(from above)I had the good fortune of taking 1st initiation from Maha-Visnu Maharaj in Dwaraka in April last year. It was a long wait for me as I first met Maharaj in Australia in 1998. I joined the ISKCON in 1994 and lived in the ashram as a brahmachari since then. My life before has no great significance except that I was always searching for Krsna without knowing it or where to look. I first met Maharaj in the form of his disciple who inspired me with His good qualities and who became my friend. I was always asking this devotee about his guru and when he told me I felt a strong desire to meet Guru Maharaj. I did in Brisbane in 1998 as mentioned and Maharaj left His strong impression with me. So I followed Guru Maharaj to Sydney and attended His programs there. On the way to Sydney Maharaj visited the New Govardhana farm community. The association and instruction that He gave to the devotees there touched me very deeply and revealed to me the true meaning of compassion. By guru Maharaj's unfathomable mercy I had genuine insight into the meaning of *tmad api sunicena* and felt that I could go on chanting eternally. Although there was a very urgent and serious side to the message being given by guru Maharaj [At that time the community was experiencing many problems] He managed to make light of things on a number of occasions and bring His wonderful humour to everyone. It seemed like despite all the problems that while

Maha-Visnu Maharaj was there "everything would be alright"

By Krsna's grace and Guru Maharaj's mercy I was fortunate to be formally initiated on April 23 2002, 5 years after Maharaj sowed the bhakti lata bhija in my heart.

Srila Gurudev Ki Jai!! I do read the letters from Grantha Raj sent to me. As I said I liked the letter you sent quoting Srila Prabhupada on writing and put the letter Acontents on the noticeboard at VIHE.

Hoping to remain the servant of the servant of the devotees
Madana-Gopal das

Arrows of Mercy

Date: 3 Aug, 2003

Author: Kaveri devi dasi

Dear Vaishnavas,

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

In Krishna's absence, Lord Brahma stole the cowherd friends and calves of Krishna and when he returned he saw that Krishna was still engaged as usual with His friends and the calves. Then Krishna exhibited all the calves and cowherd boys as four-armed forms of Naaraayana. Brahma could then understand Krishna's potency and he was astonished by the pastimes of Krishna, his worshipable Lord. Krishna bestowed His causeless mercy upon Brahma and released him from illusion. Thus, Brahma began to offer prayers to glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And here is one of that prayers.

*tat te anukampaam su-sameekshamaanno
bhunnjaaaana evaatma-krrtamm vipaakam
hrrd-vaag-vapurbhir vidadhan namas te
jeeveta yo mukti-pade sa daaya-bhaak*

"My dear Lord, one who earnestly waits for You to bestow Your causeless mercy upon him, all the while patiently suffering the reactions of his past misdeeds and offering You respectful obeisances with his heart, words and body, is surely eligible for liberation, for it has become his rightful claim."
(Srimad Bhagavatam 10.14.8)

In the purport it is explained that "just as a legitimate son has to simply remain alive to gain an inheritance from his father, one who simply remains alive in Krishna consciousness, following the regulative principles of bhakti-yoga, automatically becomes eligible to be promoted to the kingdom of God. Lord Krishna explains in the Bhagavad-gita that a devotee who fully surrenders unto Him is no longer liable to suffer the reactions of his previous karma. However, because in his mind a devotee may still maintain the remnants of his previous sinful mentality, the Lord removes the last vestiges of the enjoying spirit by giving His devotee punishments that may sometimes resemble sinful reactions. This unhappiness suffered by a sincere devotee is not technically a karmic reaction; it is rather the Lord's special mercy for inducing His devotee to completely let go of the material world and return home, back to Godhead."

At times, a devotee may find it difficult to embrace the sufferings. But the suffering itself can be

considered as a medium to reciprocate to the Lord. The sufferings should immediately remind us of the Lord's anxiety to see us and we should take the opportunity to also reciprocate to Him our anxiety to see Him by tolerating, His arrows of mercy, equipoised.

Your humble servant,
Kaveri devi dasi
Adelaide, Australia

Re: yatha adhitam yatha matih

Date: 8 Aug, 2003

Author: L..Harikumar

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,
Dandavats to all devotees. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

It was a nice mail from Madan-mohan prabhu and Kalacakra prabhu. I just want to add some points to their mails. The highlighted word is "yatha adhitam yatha matih", meaning as far as my realization allows. The same thing is expressed by Prahlada maharaj in his prayers to Lord Narasimha where he says,

*tasmaad aham vigata viklava ishvarasya
sarvaatmana mahi grhanaami yathaa manIsham*

"Therefore , I offer prayers to you in full surrender as far as my intelligence allows me. "

This is because no one can fully exhaust the glories of the Lord as the Lord himself says in Gita, "naasty anto vistarasya me' - "My opulence is limitless". However just because He cannot be glorified fully, we shouldn't stop glorifying the Lord. We should glorify to the best of our ability and when the Lord is pleased with the glorification, He bestows His mercy. This is what Prahlad Maharaj continues to say in the next words of the same above sloka.

*nico' jayaa guna visargam anupravishtah
puyeta yena hi pumaan anuvarnitena*

"Anyone who has been forced by ignorance to enter into the material world can be purified by glorifying the Lord and hear His glories. "

The word '*anuvarnitena*' is very significant. '*varnitah*' means describing and '*anu*' means to follow. '*anuvarnitah*' means glorifying the Lord as the previous acharyas and devotees have glorified. As Bhagavatam is replete with glorification of the Lord by His great devotees, reading and discussing Bhagavatam is the perfect '*anuvarnitah*'.

Your servant,
L.Harikumar

Staying at Home Like a Guest

Date: 9 Aug, 2003

Author: Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Dear Vaishnavas,

Hare krishna! Please accept my most humble obeisances. All Glories to Srila Prabhupad and Gurudev!

After Sri Uddhava inquires from Sri Krishna about the duties of the social and religious orders of the varnashrama society , the Lord describes them all in a very elaborate manner. The verses , especially those pertaining to the householder really strikes us very hard. In Srimad Bhagavatam 11.17.53 and 54 , the Lord speaks as follows so strongly.

*putra-daaraapta-bandhunaam / sangamah paantha sangamah
aanu-deham viyanty ete / svapno nidraanugo yathaa
ittham parimrshan mukto / grhesv athithi-vad vasan
na grhair anubadyeta / nirmamo nirahankrtah*

The association of children, wife, relatives and friends is just like the brief meeting of travelers. With each change of body one is separated from all such associates, just as one loses the objects one possesses in a dream when the dream is over. Deeply considering the actual situation, a liberated soul should live at home just like a guest, without any sense of proprietorship or false ego. In this way he will not be bound or entangled by domestic affairs.

The actual situation is that we are so much attached to the bodily concept of family and friends. We have the feeling that this is our permanent residence. On the one hand, the Lord refers to the home which is the constructed house and on the other the home refers to this material body in which the soul is engaged. We are very much strongly attached to both the homes . In the case of constructed homes , we engrave our names in stone in order to establish our proprietorship and we are so attached to the family people, whose association is paantha- sangama - momentary association that to our names we always add the family name, the husband's name or the father's name. This living at home just like a guest is beautifully illustrated in the following story.

Once Lord Indra ordered Vishwakarma, the architect of the demigods, to construct a very big and beautiful palace that should be unequalled in all the fourteen worlds. Vishwakarma accordingly started the construction , but the job was too taxing that even after a considerable number of deva years, he and his associates could not complete the construction and were totally exhausted. At that time Srila Narada muni, came there and Indra asked him as to whether Narada has seen such a palace in all the 14 worlds. Narada replied that he has not seen but may be Lomasha rishi might know better as he has a very long lifespan. At that time sage Lomasha arrived there. Since his entire body is covered with hairs, he is called Lomasha. A piece of loin cloth and a small mat on his head were his only assets. When Indra asked sage Lomasha as to why he is having the mat on his head, the sage replied, "This material body is anyway temporary. To protect something temporary from heat and rains, is this small mat not enough?"

Indra was totally astonished at this reply and asked the sage, "Are you not chiranjeevi? A person who has an extremely long lifetime? You are telling that this body is temporary!" To this the sage replied " Even though I am a chiranjeevi , anyway one day this body is going to perish. After all the hairs on my body fall, this body will perish. Don't think that it takes a very long time for the hair on my body to fall. At the end of the lifetime of each Brahma, one hair falls from my body. You must be knowing that the lifetime of Brahma is very insignificant. The lifetime of 16

Indras like you is oneday for Brahma. After 365 days like this, is one year for Brahma. 100 years like this is one Brahma's lifetime. That is all! For this insignificant lifetime, do you want me to build a house taking so much pains?"

Then Indra realised what we all would have realised by this answer as to how short and temporary is his lifetime and immediately stopped the construction of that big palace.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupad and Srila Gurudeva,
Vaijayantimala devi dasi
Abudhabi.

Appearance of Lord Balarama

Date: 11 Aug, 2003

Author: Kalacakra das

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

All glories to Sri Sri Balaramji. On His appearance day, let us remember Him by the following wonderful piece of Srila Prabhupada's narration of the chapter "The Killing of the Demon Dhenukasura" from the Krsna book.

These words are actually spoken by Lord Krsna to Lord Balarama glorifying Him as they all enter into the Talavan before confronting the ass demon Dhenukasura.

Extract from Chapter 15 - "Killing of Dhenukasura" in Krsna Book:

Krsna then spoke to His elder brother Balarama as follows: "My dear brother, You are superior to all of us, and Your lotus feet are worshiped by the demigods. Just see how these trees, full with fruits, have bent down to worship Your lotus feet. It appears that they are trying to get out of the darkness of being obliged to accept the form of trees. Actually, the trees born in the land of Vrndavana are not ordinary living entities. Having held the impersonal point of view in their past lives, they are now put into this stationary condition of life, but now they have the opportunity of seeing You in Vrndavana, and they are praying for further advancement in spiritual life through Your personal association. Generally the trees are living entities in the modes of darkness. The impersonalist philosophers are in that darkness, but they eradicate it by taking full advantage of Your presence. I think the drones that are buzzing all around You must have been Your devotees in their past lives. They cannot leave Your company because no one can be a better, more affectionate master than You. You are the supreme and original Personality of Godhead, and the drones are just trying to spread Your glories by chanting every moment. I think some of them must be great sages, devotees of Your Lordship, and they are disguising themselves in the form of drones because they are unable to give up Your company even for a moment. My dear brother, You are the supreme worshipable Godhead. Just see how the peacocks in great ecstasy are dancing before You. The deer, whose behavior is just like the gopis, are welcoming You with the same affection. And the cuckoos who are residing in this forest are receiving You with great joy because they consider that Your appearance is so auspicious in their home. Even though they are trees and animals, these residents of Vrindavana are glorifying You. They are prepared to welcome You to their best capacity, as is the practice of great souls in receiving another great soul at home. As for the land, it is so pious and fortunate that the footprints of Your

lotus feet are marking its body.

"It is quite natural for these Vrndavana inhabitants to thus receive a great personality like You. The herbs, creepers and plants are also so fortunate to touch Your lotus feet. And by Your touching the twigs with Your hands, these small plants are also made glorious. As for the hills and the rivers, they too are now glorious because You are glancing at them. Above all, the damsels of Vraja, the gopis, attracted by Your beauty, are the most glorious, because You embrace them with Your strong arms."

Sri Sri Krsna-Balaram ki jai!!!
Sri Balaramji Janmotsav ki jai!!!

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

Bhakti is the only Karma-Extinguisher

Date: 13 Aug, 2003

Author: Purnacandra das

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

It is well understood by all of us now that any bad karma that we commit will result in our suffering either in this lifetime or the next. However one must also understand that executing a good deed also results in one having to compulsorily live or take another birth to reap its benefits. Both bad and good karma will keep us in the vicious cycle of birth, death, old age and disease. That is the law of karma and we can do nothing to avoid that.

Or can we ?

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura says in this connection that "*one who has developed Krsna consciousness and who exists in love with Krsna is no longer subject to suffering and happiness under the laws of karma. Indeed, he is beyond karma*". The *Brahma-samhita* says, *karmaani nirdahati kintu ca bhakti-bhaajaam: a devotee is free from the reactions of his karma because he has taken to devotional service. This same principle is confirmed in Bhagavad-gita (14.26). sa gunan samatityaitan brahma-bhuyaya kalpate: one who is engaged in devotional service has already been freed from the reactions of his material karma, and thus he immediately becomes brahma-bhuta, or transcendental. This is also expressed in Srimad-Bhagavatam (1.2.21). ksiyante cAsya karmAni: before attaining the stage of love, one becomes free from all the results of karma.*

Srila Prabhupada explains in SB 6.17.17 that "the Lord is very kind and affectionate toward His devotees, and therefore a devotee, in any condition, is not subjected to the results of karma".

Again in the purport to SB 6.17.18 Srila Prabhupada explains ..."*To get free from the karma-cakra, the wheel of the results of one's karma, one should take to bhakti-marga--devotional service, or Krsna consciousness. That is the only remedy. sarva-dharman parityajya maam ekam saranam vraja.*"

The message is clear and Prabhupada repeats it at every opportunity. But no point in only knowing the message or speculating on it, but, as our Gurudev says "just follow the shastras and not your mind".

Thank you very much,
Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Purnacandra Das
Sydney

Praise The Deceiving Agent

Date: 14 Aug, 2003

Author: Kalacakra das

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

I was reading 4th canto 15th chapter titled, "King Prthu's Appearance and Coronation". There is a thought provoking message from the very first words that Prthu Maharaj speaks (verse 24). On the eve of Prthu Maharaj's appearance, the professional reciters sing His praises. But Prthu Maharaj shows His humility in not accepting their praises saying that it is improper for them to praise about qualities which He did not possess. In verse 24 He says,

*mahad-gunaan aatmani kartum ishah
kah staavakaih staavayate 'sato 'pi
te 'syaabhavinyann iti vipralabdho
janaavahaasam kumatir na veda*

"How could an intelligent man competent enough to possess such exalted qualities allow his followers to praise him if he did not actually have them? Praising a man by saying that if he were educated he might have become a great scholar or great personality is nothing but a process of cheating. A foolish person who agrees to accept such praise does not know that such words simply insult him."

When I meditated on these verses, they gave a deeper insight to me. Prthu Maharaj really had great qualities but He did not accept the praise of the reciters. On the other hand I thought how deeply interested I am in hearing about my praises from others. It just tastes sweeter than honey! And the important fact is that I don't actually possess those qualities. When Maharaj was here in Minneapolis few months back, he said, "We always have the grabbing mentality." At first I thought he is mentioning about the tendency to grab other's possessions. But yesterday it struck me that we also have this grabbing tendency when it comes to receiving praises and honours which we are not worthy of.

Once I have heard H H Radhanath maharaj speaking on this point in a humourous but highly introspective way thus: If someone praises us, "Oh prabhu! You are so humble", externally as a vaishnava etiquette we may say, "No , No prabhuji! I am not at all humble! I am rascal number one!". But internally we think, "Oh, prabhu it is so nice of you to think like that. Actually, you are the only person who have understood me correctly!". This is the grabbing tendency that H H Mahavishnu Maharaj spoke about. We are not

actually humble, but we want the honour of being humble. And Prthu Maharaj so punchingly says, "A foolish person who agrees to accept such praise does not know that such words simply insult him."

It also occurred to me how far am I in my thoughts from Krishna's charioteer Daruka, who while serving Krishna intensely, thought of the transcendental ecstatic symptoms that arose in him, as a great disturbance and prayed to the Lord to get rid of them so that he can serve the Lord undeviatingly. Here I am, hankering to get the praises of being a devotee, when in reality I do not possess any good quality!

Srimad Bhagavatam is the amala purana which can purify our contaminated dirty hearts and make it shine brilliantly. I hope and pray that one day I will become clean in my heart too!

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

Re: Praise - The Deceiving Agent

Date: 14 Aug, 2003

Author: Vasudevan

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,
Please accept my humble pranams. Jai Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

It is really a wonderful and worthy thing to think about what Kalacakra das prabhu has written about the praise acceptance qualities of our mind. It is very much true what he has said. It is very difficult for us to stop blowing our own trumpet subconsciously even if not consciously. If we do not react to someone who has hurt us then we may be into the right path. CHANTING HARE KRISHNA could be the only means to get grace from Lord Krishna to develop internally.

Your servant
Vasudevan

Beauty Lies in the Eyes of the Beholder

Date: 20 Aug, 2003

Author: Kalacakra das

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

Wish you all a very happy Janmashtami! May we become more and more sincere and enthusiastic in rendering service to the Lord on this most auspicious day. I was listening to a very interesting lecture of H H Mahavishnu Goswami maharaj today. I am trying to reproduce here as close as possible to his discourse.

The way we approach Krsna, He will reciprocate accordingly - *ye yata mam prapadyante taams tataiva bhajami aham*. This point is very nicely substantiated in the 10th canto of Srimad Bhagavatam, verse 10.43.17. This describes how the different people of Mathura saw Krsna when He entered the wrestling arena of Kamsa along with His brother Balarama.

*mallaanaam ashanir nrnaam nara-varah strinaam smaro murtimaan
gopaanaam sva-jano 'sataam kshiti-bhujaa shaastaa sva-pitroh shishuh
mrtyur bhoja-pater virAd avidusAm tattvam param yoginaam
vrshninaam para-devateti vidito rangam gatah saagrajah*

There are 10 situations described in this verse in which Krsna appears differently to different living entities. The way we want to see Him, He will appear before us like that.

1. *mallaanaam ashanir* - For powerful wrestlers like Chanura and Mushtika He appeared as a strong and well-built fighter
2. *nrnaam nara varah* - Surrendered men saw Him as a nice gentleman coming
3. *strinAm smaro murtimAn* - The ladies saw Him as the most attractive and beautiful personality.
4. *gopanAm svajanah* - The cowherd boys and men saw Him as their nice cowherd friend.
5. *asatAm kshiti bhujAm shAstA* - The impious kings who wanted to Lord over, saw Him as a Supreme king coming to punish them.
6. *sva pitro shishuh* - Elderly people saw Him as their own child approaching them.
7. *mrtyur bhojapater* - To Kamsa He appeared as the death-personified.
8. *viraad avidushaam* - For the speculative jnanis He appeared as the viraat-purusha.
9. *tattvam param yoginAm* - He appeared as the Supreme Absolute Truth to the yogis.
10. *vrshninaam para devateti* - The Vrsnis saw Him as their most worshippable deity.

Bhagavad Gita gives us the preliminary philosophical principle - *ye yata maam prapadyante* and Bhagavatam enhances it further thru His pastimes. Whatever He says in Gita, He proves it in Srimad Bhagavatam thru various episodes. This is how we should study Srimad Bhagavatam and Bhagavad Gita. These scriptures are very nicely arranged for our own elevation and at the same time with the spiritual upliftment of our existence, they guide us for every second of our existence. This is the best way of performing devotional service.

Let us all sing the glories of the Lord on this most auspicious day and receive His causeless mercy. My prayers and wishes to all for your spiritual well-being.

Thank you very much,
Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada
Kalacakra das

Remembering Srila Prabhupada

Date: : 22 Aug, 2003

Author: Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Dear Vaishnavas,

Hare Krishna! Please accept my most humble pranams! All Glories to Srila Prabhupada and Gurudev!

The following extract from the book "Jaya srila Prabhupada" authored by H.H. Bhakti Vikasa Swami, on Srila Prabhupada's presentation of sastra is worth meditating on the occasion of His Divine Grace's Vyaasa Pooja.

"Srila Prabhupada did not present sastra as a dry academic subject to be theorized, discussed and armchair-philosophized about. Instead of giving abstruse explanations, he spoke and lived the essence of sastra. He repeatedly emphasized the point of all sastra: " You are not this body. Surrender to Krishna."

Srila Prabhupada said that by reading his books we get in touch with the previous acharyas. Indeed, his purports to the sastra draw on the realization of the previous acharyas, whose commentaries Prabhupada consulted before composing his own. A special feature of Prabhupada's purports, however, is that he was the first to show how the Bhagavatham's principles can be practically applied in human society to effect a major change in the course of world history. Also for the first time ever, he comprehensively presented Gaudiya vaishnava philosophy, replete with all subtleties and complexities, in a non Indian language. Thus Prabhupada's explanations of vedic philosophy in simple, clear and uncomplicated English is an unprecedented achievement in literary history. English is a mleccha-bhasa (language of meat-eaters), but Srila Prabhupada purified it. Quoting Prabhupada's purports is as authorized as quoting from the original sanskrit sastras. The words of the acaryas are in one sense even more valuable than the original sastras, because without the acharyas's explanations, ordinary people would not be able to understand the meaning of sastra."

As our Guru maharaj always says, "With all due respects to Srila Vyasadeva, Prabhupada's purports are more nectarean than the verses."

Srila Prabhupada has thus left an invaluable treasure for all his children like us and it is upto us to immerse ourselves into it and really come to our senses.

Srila Prabhupada ki jai!

Srila Gurudev ki jai!

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi.

Abudhabi.

Practice Makes it Perfect

Date: 24 Aug, 2003

Author: Sudarshana devi dasi

Dear devotees,

Hare Krishna. Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupad and Srila Gurudev.

The following is an interesting note that I came across in , "Japa Reform Notebook" by HH Satsvarupa das Goswami.

"I became determined to reform to chant my japa pronouncing each word and syllable. My japa improved immediately. I then understood the chanting was most important and could not be neglected. I felt I was learning a crucial, confidential secret, although Srila Prabhupad is constantly repeating it, "Chant 16 rounds and avoid the offenses in chanting. It is a practice. It takes practice. Whatever u practice the body can learn to do. Chant, chant, chant!"

>>"It is a practice. It takes practice .Whatever u practice the body can learn to do." These lines were very thought provoking. I was watching a documentary wherein one of Prabhupad's disciple was being interviewed and he was saying how His Divine Grace had spent all his time in devotional activities and in translating the scriptures all night, had slept hardly for 3 to 4 hrs a day in the last 12 years of his life when he was preaching all over the world and here I am such a lazy soul, giving lame excuses to myself of being tired and doing nothing and not even relishing his work which he has given us.

In the successive paragraphs Satsvarupa dasa Goswami has referred to Bhagavad Gita (6.35) where Lord Sri Krsna says:

*asamshayam mahaa baaho / mano durnigraham calam
abhyaasena tu kaunteya / vairaagyena ca grhyate*

"O mighty armed son of Kunti, It is undoubtedly, very difficult to curb this restless mind, But it is possible by practice and detachment."

The word "*abhyaasa*" is worth noting. When we practice devotional service, with sincerity, without giving way to flickering mind, the Lord help us to advance in our spiritual journey.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Gurudev
Sudarshana devi dasi

The Glories of Devotional Service

Date: 26 Aug, 2003

Author: Radhika Ramakrishnan

Hare Krishna Vaishnavas,

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

In the purport to the SB 1.8.36 from, "Teachings of Queen Kunti" Srila Prabhupada says: "*Two plus two equals four is science. If I believe that two plus two equals five or three, does it become true? No. So there are laws of God and, and when there is dharmasya glaanih, deviation from these laws, we suffer. Just as we might suffer by violating the laws of the state, as soon as we violate the laws of God we are subjected to so many tribulations*". Now, how are we to get free from these tribulations? Krsna comes to free us from them by giving us bhakti-yoga. Krsna recommends, "Do this", and if we do it we shall get relief. Prahlada

Maharaja mentions that this bhakti-yoga consists of nine items:

*shravanam kirtanam vishnoh / smaranam paada sevanam
arcanam vandanam daasyam / sakhyam aatma nivedanam
iti pumsaarpita vishnau / bhaktis cen navalakshnah
kriyeta bhagavatya addhaa / tan manye 'dhitam uttamam*

Hearing and chanting about the transcendental holy name, form, qualities, paraphernalia and pastimes of Lord Visnu, remembering them, serving the lotus feet of the Lord, offering the Lord respectful worship with sixteen types of paraphernalia, offering prayers to the Lord, becoming His servant, considering the Lord one's best friend, and surrendering everything unto Him (in other words, serving Him with the body, mind and words)--these nine processes are accepted as pure devotional service. One who has dedicated his life to the service of Krsna through these nine methods should be understood to be the most learned person, for he has acquired complete knowledge. (Bhag 7.5.23-24)

Here is a story that glorifies vandanam: There was a great devotee of the Lord Panduranga, by the name Yoga Paramananda living on the banks of the Chandra Bhaga river in the pilgrimage place of Pandripur. Every morning he used to come to river banks and recite the 700 verses of the Bhagavad Gita and at the end of each verse he used to say "Om Pandurangaya namah" and prostrate on sand. He did this everyday, without fail. One day there was a heavy rain in the town. As it happened, a shawl merchant was passing by the town. As he did not want to make his precious goods wet and went house by house seeking shelter for the night. But no one was willing to give him a place to stay. Finally he knocked at the doors of Yoga Paramananda's little dwelling. Yoga Paramananda immediately let him. The hut was a sufficient cover for the rain and the entire hut was damp except a small corner where he slept. Seeing the merchant having some goods he allowed him keep it in that corner and slept on the wet floor along with the merchant, not caring for his comfort.

This is the quality of a devotee. *He cares for the well being of others but does not worry his own.* Early the next morning the merchant was about to leave the place. He was very grateful to Yoga Paramananda and wanted to show his gratitude towards him. He selected the most expensive and beautiful shawl and presented it to Yoga Paramananda. He accepted it and the next morning as he went to the river to recite the Bhagavad Gita he wore it around his waist. As he was prostrated every time, he was so conscious of the shawl and kept adjusting it so that it not get wet or soiled. Because of this he did not concentrate on the slokas and was so dejected on realizing this. He felt very guilty and wanted to punish himself for this offence. So he tied himself to a plough and began dragging it across the rice fields when a small boy stopped him and began to untie the rope that bound Yoga Paramananda to the plough. Yoga Paramananda said, 'Don't do that, boy. Nobody has done this to me. I am punishing myself for a serious offense I have committed. And he told him the whole story.

The boy then revealed himself as Lord Panduranga Himself and told a bewildered Yoga Paramananda, "I will, by no cost allow you do this. You are My devotee and so your body belongs to Me and I will not allow you to bring any harm to it. Yoga Paramananda fell and Lord's feet and begged for forgiveness."

In the Bhagavad Gita 9.32 it is stated, kaunteya pratijanihi na me bhakta pranasyati. "O, son of Kunti, declare it boldly that My devotee never perishes." This is quite evident here in this story.

Thank you very much
Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Radhika Ramakrishnan
Chennai

Origin of Fake Sannyasi Cult

Date: 28 Aug, 2003

Author: Akhilesh Kumar

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

While reading Srila Prabhupada's purports one must have come across these lines - "Today there are many false sannyasi". When did this idea of "false sannyasi" start?

It is mentioned in the Bhagavatam(Canto 4) thus: Prthu Maharaj wanted to perform 100 Asvamedha yagna (Horse sacrifice). He performed 99 yajnas without any hindrance. While He was performing the 100th sacrifice, Indra became afraid and envious of Prthu Maharaja because once He completes the sacrifice, He will become eligible to take over the post of Indra. So Indra tried to steal the Horse away from the sacrificial arena disguising himself as a false sannyasi. Everytime he was caught by Prthu Maharaj's son Vijitasva, Indra used to come in different false sannyasi dresses. This was when the fake sannyasi idea originated.

*viras casvam upadaya / pitr-yajnam athavrajat
tad avadyam hare rupam / jagrhur jnana-durbalah*

"Then the great hero, Vijitasva, the son of King Prthu, again took the horse and returned to his father's sacrificial arena. Since that time, certain men with a poor fund of knowledge have adopted the dress of a false sannyasi. It was King Indra who introduced this. " (Srimad Bhagavatam - 4.19.22)

Today as predicted there are many false sannyasi's whose only aim is to gain reputation or teach some nonsense to the public. Apart from false sannyasis there are also people who declare themselves as an incarnation of the Supreme Absolute Truth. One must never even go near such rascals who dare to call themselves an incarnation of The Supreme Lord and cheat the public.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada
Akhilesh Kumar

Moderator's Note: Akhilesh kumar, H G Prashantatma prabhu's 15 year old son. He is in 11th standard now studying in Chennai. He is chanting 16 rounds daily and he is regularly reading Srimad Bhagavatham and Bhagavad Gita. Even though he does not have any devotee association, he is just inspired by his father who is in living in Abudhabi.

The Power of 'sri-krsna-divyausadham' - Transcendental Medicine of Krsna's Names

Date: 29 Aug, 2003

Author: Viraja Krsna das

Hare Krsna Prabhus and Matajis,

Please Accept my humble Obeisances. All Glories to Srila Gurudev and Srila Prabhupada.

One of our founding congregation members His Grace, Pradeep Prabhuji had suffered a heart attack early last week - Although his condition is critical the doctors say that it is a miracle that he has survived this long and the general condition continues to get better. Prabhuji was initiated last week by the grace of His Holiness Mahavisnu Goswami - His name now is Prasanna Atma Krsna das. Against all odds, Prasanna Atma Krsna das, lying in the Intensive Care Unit, is demonstrating how strong of a medicine the holy name of the Lord is. Devotees around him are continuously chanting and through a walkman, Prabhuji is hearing the chanting of Hare Krsna Maha Mantra by Srila Prabhupada. There is a verse in Mukunda Mala Stotra which exactly states how Krsna's names act as medicine -

*vyamoha-prasamausadham muni-mano-vrtti-pravrty-ausadham
daityendrarti-karausadham tri-bhuvane sanjivanaikausadham
bhaktatyanta-hitausadham bhava-bhaya-pradhvamsanaikausadham
sreyah-prapti-karausadham piba manah sri-krsna-divyausadham*

'O mind, please drink the transcendental medicine of Sri Krsna's glories. It is the perfect medicine for curing the disease of bewilderment, for inspiring sages to engage their minds in meditation, and for tormenting the mighty Daitya demons. It alone is the medicine for restoring the three worlds to life and for bestowing unlimited blessings on the Supreme Lord's devotees. Indeed, it is the only medicine that can destroy one's fear of material existence and lead one to the attainment of the supreme good. (text32)

As the doctors, after giving up all hope, were removing the life support last friday, about 20 or so devotees lead Hare Krsna Maha Mantra Kirtan near the bedside. To the amazement of doctors and nurses, as the life support was being removed Prassana Atma Krsna Prabhuji's heart was taking over the function of pumping blood - in the verse significant words are translated as follows **sanjivana - for bringing the dead back to life ; eka - the only;ausadham - medicine.** Indeed when everything had failed it was only the Hare Krsna Maha Mantra that brought back Prabhuji to life.

What happened had left the medical team astonished - Maharaj often says 'I don't know how Krsna's names work - but it works somehow - we cannot conceive of it. It is inconceivable'. All, including the medical team were preparing for Prabhuji's 'death' - but the chanting of Hare Krsna inconceivable brought Prabhuji back to 'life'. The chief surgeon said 'please continue with your prayers - it is working. If he survives we are going to write a book on this.'

Putting things into perspective, this material body is bound to perish one day. The real benefit of chanting is that it provides love of the Lord, the by product of which is liberation from the cycle of birth, death, old age and disease. However the Chanting of Hare Krsna Maha Mantra is so potent that it even rejuvenates this temporary material body. Thus it is referred to as sri-krsna-divyausadham - transcendental medicine of Krsna's names.

Therefore Maharaj always says that if not for anything else, then just for the sake of our bodily health we should always chant Krsna's names loudly. The first verse of Ayur Vedic Sastra states -

**acyuta-nanda-govindo / nama ucharana-bhesajad
nasyanti sakala rogah / satyam satyam vadam 'ham**

'I am stating this truth again and again - mere pronunciation of the names of Acyuta, Nanda and Govind destroys all diseases.'

We request everyone to please take on this chanting of Hare Krsna Maha Mantra for everyone's benefit - including for the benefit of our own selves - and especially at this stage for the benefit of dear god-brother, Prasanna Atma Krsna das who is very critical in Westmead Hospital.

Your servant,
Viraja Krsna das
Sydney - Australia.

Kotim tyaktva harim bhajet

Date: 30 Aug, 2003

Author: Kalacakra das

Dear Devotees,
Hare Krishna. Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

I had a phone conversation with H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj and he was giving me some deep, thought-provoking instructions. I wanted to share with you all whatever I could grasp, because I am not sure if I will follow them, at least you all can get benefitted. When I was calling Maharaj, I was disturbed in my mind for some reason and the moment maharaj heard my voice, he said, "Is everything alright Kalacakra? You sound different than usual!". Of course, the spiritual master knows everything! He is directly in touch with Krishna!

He didn't ask me what was troubling me, (of course he must be knowing my problem already, due to his transcendental disposition), but gave me kind and loving advice based on shastras and personal experience. Every word he spoke was so nectarean! During the conversation, I strongly felt that, Maharaj was making me understand how low and fallen I am (of course with his love and purity), at the same time was helping me to realize that the Lord is mercifully waiting to help us always! This is a very tricky and almost an impossible task, especially in the spiritual life. It is not too difficult to advice or give instructions to others, but the special qualification of the Spiritual master is that his purity induces us to take those instructions and strive to put them into practice. Additionally, if we waver away (as it always happens) from following the instructions, with utmost patience and compassion, he grabs us and leads us again back home, back to Godhead.

Coming back to his instructions..., Maharaj started with the quote, "*kotim tyaktva harim bhajet*" - Give up millions of activities and take up devotional service to Lord Hari. He was relating this to a very interesting verse in Srimad Bhagavatam 4.22.32, "***There is no stronger obstruction to one's self-interest than thinking other subject matters to be more pleasing than one's self-realization.***" He said, "How important it must be to perform devotional service? *kotim tyaktva harim bhajet!* But our mind wanders all over, not showing any interest in Krishna consciousness!". I told, "Maharaj, it is not difficult for me to chant some

extra rounds, but my mind is not in the names! It runs all over!". Maharaj stopped briefly and continued, "The important thing is we have to engage ourselves in the service. ***Our behaviour is not improving.*** We do so many things in the name of devotional service, but as a devotee we are not improving our character. That is why if you see, 90% of the scriptures are instructions for us to improve our character and behaviour! Only 10% of the verses are descriptions of Krsna, Spiritual world etc."

Seeing that I am not getting the point, he continued, "Yesterday also we saw here, in Bhagavat gita, we read the 19 verses from 2.54 to 2.72. Out of these 19 verses, 18 verses are general instructions to improve our own behaviour. Only in the last verse, '*esha bhrahmi sthithi partha...brahma nirvanam rcchati*' - we are given a slight glimpse of Krsna's transcendence. The essence is that, ***unless we improve our behaviour, we cannot attain Krsna.***"

He went on quoting a deeply introspective verse in SB 11.2.49, "*Everything has its own dharma. We cannot separate the dharma from the entity. We cannot separate the heat and light from the fire. It is its nature. A child's nature also is to go to its mother. And for our soul also, it is natural to go to Krsna. It is its dharma. We cannot separate it. Similarly, this samsara also has its dharma, the modes of material nature. Since we are in this material world, invariably, it comes in between us and Krsna. But we should not be bewildered by this. avimuhyanah (one who is not bewildered), is a very important word. Everything in this world is decaying - time, money, health, beauty everything! Our body is decaying, the life air is harassed by hunger and thirst, the mind is always in anxiety, intelligence always hankers for that which cannot be obtained (shocati, kankshati). But an unbewildered person always knows the inevitable miseries of the material existence, remains aloof from it and engages always in remembering the Lotus feet of the Lord. If we are situated like that, then there is no Kali Yuga at all!! We will be always happy! Now..., I am not interested in Television. So this whole Television industry does not touch me at all! So many advertisements, so many different brands, competition, confusions..., nothing is affecting me. I am totally free! Just see, if by giving up this one attraction to television, we can become so relaxed, then how happy we can become by giving up all the desires!?"*

He finally ended the conversation with the most loving words, "Don't worry my son! Please keep calling me whenever you feel like. May Lord bless you!"

It is easy to write fancy words to describe the love of such pure devotees, but to actually feel them in the core of our heart requires genuine humility and surrender to such an extraordinary love. I hope by the mercy of all you wonderful devotees, I may get it some day!

Thank you very much
Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada,
Kalacakra das

The Last Mercy

Date: 31 Aug, 2003

Author: Sudarshana devi dasi

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

I came across the following nice reflection by H H Satsvarupa das Goswami in his book Japa Reform Notebook.

"I remember when Srila Prabhupada came to the humble little temple we had in Boston. We had advertised all over the town, painted and cleaned the building, and made so many different arrangements for the arrival of Krsna's pure devotee. We worked and worked and worked, and in the process, our hearts were cleansed. And when he actually came, Prabhupada was praising the glories of the holy name, how Krsna appears in the holy name in this fallen age. Krsna's pure devotee was telling us, "What if Krsna Himself were to come - and Krsna can come through that door just like we can -how would you receive Him ?" So what if you heard this ? What could you do ? You wouldn't know how to prepare. Certainly you would try to make gorgeous reception , the greatest welcome; the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself is coming . There is no limit of things you would do or the extent to which you would go to make a wonderful reception for Krsna. The point is that *Krsna does come* in the form of His holy name and because He is very kind, He doesn' even require a reception. You can just chant Hare Krsna.

Krsna wants to make it easy in this age - there are no hard and fast rules for chanting. Srutadeva was very poor, but certainly he did everything he could to receive the Lord. We are poor in heart, but because we are lazy and envious, we don't even invite the Supreme Personality of Godhead - but He comes anyway. His pure devotee carries the holy name - "Please you are suffering from material disease, and this is the best medicine." Except for he who is carrying the medicine what friend do you have in this material world ? Please take the medicine - hari nama mahamantra, and be happy. So He comes to your door. You don't even want to receive the holy name, but He induces you to accept Him. "I am so unfortunate that I have no attraction for the holy name." I am supposed to be a devotee, but when I hear that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is coming - I remain rascal number one. By my inattentiveness the reception is ruined. *Krsna is coming and you remain inattentive; therefore it is called nama-aparadha*. If you make an offense in cooking or Deity worship, what do you do ? You chant Hare Krsna. But if you make offenses to the holy name, then what do you do ? There is nothing! There is no other way, no other way, no other way! *This is the last mercy, and if you don't take this mercy then there is no other mercy*. A Vaishnava poet says that, "What is the value of my living ?" Better I were dead!"

We should learn how to make our hearts pure and avoid the offenses in chanting, so Krsna can come home. The spiritual master is representing Lord Caitanya in delivering this holy name to us and by accepting his guidance, we can chant Hare Krsna and go back to Godhead.

Thank you very much
Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sudarshana devi dasi