

Faith

Date: November 9, 2003
Dear Vaishnavas,

Author: Kalacakra das

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

I was reading the 4th chapter in Gita and the last 4 verses (4.39-42) attracted my attention. Krishna basically talks in those verses about the "doubt and faith" and explains how to drive away doubts by the sword of transcendental knowledge - *jnaana samchinna samshayam*).

"A faithful man who is absorbed in transcendental knowledge and who subdues his senses quickly attains the supreme spiritual peace. But ignorant and faithless persons who doubt the revealed scriptures do not attain God consciousness. For the doubting soul there is happiness neither in this world nor in the next. Therefore, one who has renounced the fruits of his action, whose doubts are destroyed by transcendental knowledge, and who is situated firmly in the self, is not bound by works, O conqueror of riches. Therefore the doubts which have arisen in your heart out of ignorance should be slashed by the weapon of knowledge. Armed with yoga, O Bharata, stand and fight."

Looking at the word "faith" few thoughts came to me. It is a very interesting word which is so frequently used, hence I thought, if we understand it will be very helpful. First, let us see what Prabhupada says in the purport for Bhagavad-Gita verse 2.41:- ***"Faith means unflinching trust in something sublime."***

If we ask people what they have faith on, they may say so many different things. If we ask them, "Do you have faith in God?", most of them will say "yes". But if we ask them the next question, "Do you know who is God ?", then they will go blank or say some wierd things. This is because their faith is not based on the authentic revealed scriptures. Krishna says this very clearly in Bhagavad Gita 16.23

*yah shastra vidhim utsrjya / vartate kaama kaaratah
na sa siddhim avaapnoti / na sukham na paraam gatim*

"But he who discards scriptural injunctions and acts according to his own whims, attains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the supreme destination."

Following this, in the beginning of the 17th chapter, Arjuna asks a question to Krishna as to what happens to those who do not follow the scriptures and Krishna dedicates the entire chapter to explain the three divisions of faith based on the modes of the material nature.

The shastras are the sublime source of knowledge and by keeping faith in them, we can attain unflinching devotion to Krishna. A sign of faith in something is that there is a constant increase in our interest to acquire more and more of it. To understand this, we can consider this point. Deep in everyone of our hearts, we all have strong faith in some of our own attributes, characters etc. Someone may think that he/she is very intelligent. That person will be happy to hear anything that aligns to this belief. If somebody praises, "Oh you are very intelligent?", he is very pleased to hear that. And he wants to hear more and more of such praises. Whereas if someone tells him, "You are fool number one", then he finds it hard to accept it, because it goes against his internal belief system. This happens to all of us in different ways for our different beliefs.

We don't like to hear anything bad/negative about ourselves because we don't think we are bad. To understand the relation between 'faith' and 'eagerness to hear more', Krishna revealed to me two interesting verses in the Bhagavatam just while I am writing this mail. Two verses SB 1.2.12 ("*tac chraddadhaanaa munayo...*") and 1.2.16 ("*sushrusho shraddadhaanasya...*") uses the word "*shraddhadhaana*". In the first one, Prabhupada gives the word-word equivalent "seriously inquisitive" and in the second one, he uses the word "with care and attention". We know that the word "*shraddha*" means faith. And "*shraddhadhaana*" is derived from it. Hence, unless we are faithful about something, we are not attentive to it or inquisitive to know more about it.

If we understand this point, and if we are willing to turn that same "faith" towards Krishna and His names, attributes, pastimes etc, then we should study shastras like Bhagavat-gita / Bhagavatam regularly (*nityam bhagavata sevaya*). The result of it is that loving service unto Krishna is established as an irrevocable fact (*bhaktir bhavati naishtiki*).

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

The Rope of Affectionate Tie with the Lord

Date: November 11, 2003
Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Author: Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Please accept my dandavat pranams. All Glories to Srila Prabhupada and Gurudev!

Parikshit Maharaj wishing to know the narrations concerning the Lord from Sukadeva goswami, wonderfully describes the process from the stage of material contamination to the pure state of being fixed in loving devotional service in just three verses S.B.2.8.4

*shrnvatah shraddhayaa nityam / grnatas ca sva-ceshtitam
kaalena naatidirghena / bhagavaan vishate hrdis*

"Persons who hear Srimad Bhagavatham regularly and are always taking the matter very seriously will have the Personality of Godhead Sri Krishna manifested in their hearts within a short time."

H.G. Kalacakra das prabhuji has written recently a wonderful mail on 'faith'. That is what is confirmed in this verse by the words 'shrnvatah shraddhayaa nityam'. We read all mundane newspapers daily -'nityam' and listen to all mundane news because we have 'sraddha' or 'faith' in all that is contained there. That faith which is for all 'asat 'or temporary matter has to be actually placed on' sat 'or eternal matters revealed in Srimad Bhagavatam and then our listening to Krishna katha will be with earnestness and we will take it seriously. As Prabhupad says in his purport to verse 2.8.3, "To be fully engaged in hearing the transcendental narration described in the text of Srimad Bhagavatam means to constantly associate with the Supreme Soul, Sri Krishna." Other than this constant association with Krishna what else do we want? Why we are not serious about this is clearly due to the lack of faith.

So this verse explains the endeavour on our part , that is hearing Srimad Bhagavatham regularly at the stage when we are still full of material contaminations. "Krishna is such a merciful personality that whenever there is endeavour on our part, there is excellent reciprocation from Him." That is explained in the next verse 2.8.5

*pravishtah karna-randhrena / svaanaam bhaava-
saroruham
dhunoti samalam krishnah / salilasya yatha sarat*

"The sound incarnation of Lord Krishna, The Supreme soul, [i.e. Srimad Bhagavatam], enters into the heart of a self-realized devotee, sits on the lotus flower of his loving relationship, and thus cleanses the dust of material association, such as lust, anger and hankering. Thus it acts like autumnal rains upon pools of muddy water. "

This is the reciprocation from the Lord. Srila Prabhupada in this purport so wonderfully states, 'By such actions(regular hearing and worshiping) the accumulated material lusts etc., become cleansed by the 'personal endeavour of the Lord within the heart.' For our insignificant endeavour, see the reciprocating endeavour of the Lord. Then what is the result is explained in the next verse 2.8.6

*dhautaatmaa purushah krsna / paada-mulam na
muncati
mukta-sarva-parikleshah / paanthah sva-saranam
yathaa*

"A pure devotee of the Lord whose heart has once been cleansed by the process of devotional service never relinquishes the lotus feet of Lord Krishna, for they fully

satisfy him, as a traveler is satisfied at home after a troubled journey."

Thus the pure stage of being fixed in devotional service is reached. The Lord is thus tied up with 'our' endeavour in 2.8.4 and His personal endeavour in 2.8.5 and finally as Prabhupada says in 2.8.6 purport, "A pure devotee of the Lord is exactly in a family tie with the Lord, and therefore he is undeterred in discharging his duty in a full affectionate tie with the Lord."

Thank you very much,
Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Vaijayantimala devi dasi,
Abudhabi.

Touch of the Supreme Lord

Date: November 17, 2003
Dear Devotees,

Author: Kalacakra das

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

I happened to talk to H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj today just a while back and Maharaj was showering a constant flow of transcendental nectar. In that discussion, Maharaj read out a very nice letter written to him by an enthusiastic devotee from Abu Dhabi H G Radha-madan mohan prabhuji. I myself had the fortunate association of H G Radha-madan mohan prabhuji a couple of times in the past. His seriousness in the study of scriptures and distributing the transcendental knowledge to other souls is simply awe inspiring. He is currently doing nice preaching in Abu Dhabi along with the other devotees there.

Maharaj read out his letter to me, but since I could not remember everything Maharaj read, I am quoting below the important points that I recall - Srimad Bhagavatam 8.4.6

*gajendra bhagavat sparshaad / vimukto jnana bandhanaat
praapto bhagavato rupam / pita vaashas catur-bhujah*

"Because Gajendra, King of the elephants, had be touched directly by the hands of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he was immediately freed of all material ignorance and bondage. Thus he received the salvation of saarupya-mukti, in which he achieved the same bodily features as the Lord, being dressed in yellow garments and possessing four hands."

In his transcendental purport, Srila Prabhupada makes some very powerful and thought provoking points...

"If one is favored by the Supreme Personality of Godhead by having his gross body touched by the Lord, his body turns into a spiritual body, and he can go back home, back to Godhead. Gajendra assumed a spiritual body when his body was touched by the Lord. Similarly, Dhruva Maharaja assumed his spiritual body in this way. Arcana-paddhati, daily worship of the Deity, provides an opportunity to touch the body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and thus it enables one to be fortunate enough to get a spiritual body and go back to Godhead. Not only by touching the body of the Supreme Lord, but simply by hearing about His pastimes, chanting His glories, touching His feet and offering worship "in other words, by serving the Lord somehow or other" one is purified of material contamination. This is the result of touching the Supreme Lord. "

H G Radha madan mohan prabhu went on to express his gratitude to Maharaj saying that it is only by the mercy of Maharaj that so many souls like himself had developed the taste to relish the transcendental purports of Srila Prabhupada. Maharaj was very pleased to know the advancement of one of his sincere disciples and was very merciful to share it with me. And I took it as Krsna's arrangement that Maharaj shared it with me because I too got some important lessons from this verse/purport.

In the purport Prabhupada essentially gives us the mood with which we should do any service. I have to personally admit that every day I put my Laddu Gopal to sleep, wake Him up in the morning, do arati and so on, but the consciousness that **I am touching the Lord**, has not gone into my head. It becomes so mechanical over time. It is very clearly said in this purport that, by being touched by the Lord, we attain spiritual body/spiritual consciousness, which means there is no more lamentation or illusion. How amazing it is ?! But since I am not realizing that I am touching the Lord's transcendental body, I am not able to get rid of my material miseries. Prabhupada goes on to expand on this word *sparsha* (touch) in his purport that not only deity worship, but also in every other activity of devotional service like hearing, chanting, reading scriptures and so on, we are touching the Lord. We just need to make ourself **aware** of His transcendental touch when we do these activities. Maharaj very emphatically said, ***"When we are reading Bhagavatam, we are actually touching Krishna, because these verses are non-different from Krishna."*** If we read our scriptures, chant or do any other service in that way (with the awareness that we are **touching** the Lord), then our devotional service is joyfully performed (*susukham kartum avyayam*).

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

Re: Touch of the Supreme Lord

Date: November 17, 2003
Hare Krishna Devotees,

Author: L..Harikumar

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

It was a wonderful realization by H G Radha madan mohan prabhu. Actually Maharajs' statement that, "When we're reading Bhagavatam we're actually touching Krishna", is very profound. When I used to hear this statement from devotees and Maharaj I used to think how a book can be non-different from Krishna? However, by Lord's mercy I was reading a verse from Skanda purana (Vishnu-kanda-6.4.3) which exactly re-iterated this point.

*srimad-bhaagavatasyaatha srimad- bhagavatah sadaa
svarupam ekam evaasti sac-cid-aananda lakshanam*

"Srimad Bhagavatam and the Personality of Godhead are always of the same nature - possessing of eternal existence, full knowledge and complete bliss."

And the Padma purana explains how each canto of Bhagavatam is related to the transcendental form of Krishna.

Your servant,
L.Harikumar.