

Chew, Digest and Preach - Part 1

Date: November 14, 2012

Author: Amogha-drk Krishna dasa

Dear Vaishnavas,

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

The following is my notes from His Holiness Mahavishnu Gosvami Maharaj's Srimad Bhagavatam classes 1.5.10 and 1.5.14 given in London on October 28, 2007.

na yad vacash citra-padam harer yasho
jagat-pavitram pragneeta karhicit
tad vaayasam teertham ushanti maanasaa
na yatra hamsaa niramanty ushik-kshayaah

"Those words which do not describe the glories of the Lord, who alone can sanctify the atmosphere of the whole universe, are considered by saintly persons to be like unto a place of pilgrimage for crows. Since the all-perfect persons are inhabitants of the transcendental abode, they do not derive any pleasure there."

Reading from the purport, Maharaja put special emphasis on the following section: "Such spiritually advanced men are called also manasa because they always keep up the standard of transcendental voluntary service to the Lord on the spiritual plane. This completely forbids fruitive activities for gross bodily sense satisfaction or subtle speculation of the material egoistic mind. Social literary men, scientists, mundane poets, theoretical philosophers and politicians who are completely absorbed in the material advancement of sense pleasure are all dolls of the material energy. They take pleasure in a place where rejected subject matters are thrown. According to Svami Sridhara, this is the pleasure of the prostitute-hunters."

Maharaja said, "This sentence will really help us to preach. We need to chew these purports you know, so that we can digest them nicely in order to present these principles to today's public. For preaching Srimad Bhagavatam and Bhagavad-gita, study and thinking is required. But we are so lazy. We work with our hands; for example while worshiping the Deity, our hands are engaged, but our mouth could also be engaged by chanting these verses, so why don't we do that? Such constant remembering and thinking about the words of the Bhagavatam and the Gita is needed for us to preach. Next, we read from Srimad Bhagavatam 1.5.14:

tato 'nyathaa kincana yad vivakshatah
prthag drshas tat-krtarupa-naamabhih
na karhicit kvaapi ca duhsthitaa matir

labheta vaataahata-naur ivaaspadam

"Whatever you desire to describe that is separate in vision from the Lord simply reacts, with different forms, names and results, to agitate the mind as the wind agitates a boat which has no resting place."

Maharaja said, "The anchor is the Supreme Personality of Godhead." Holding his chanting beads like an anchor, Maharaja smiled, "This is our anchor."

Reading from the purport, "The most defective part of worshiping demigods is that it creates a definite conception of pantheism, ending disastrously in many religious sects detrimental to the progress of the principles of the Bhagavatam, which alone can give the accurate direction for self-realization in eternal relation with the Personality of Godhead by devotional service in transcendental love. The example of the boat disturbed by whirling wind is suitable in this respect. The diverted mind of the pantheist can never reach the perfection of self-realization, due to the disturbed condition of the selection of object."

Maharaja then said, "Not only reading the purport, but thinking about it is required. Our thinking should be as wide as the horizon. We should be very magnanimous."

Krishna willing we will continue with more nectar from Maharaj in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Amogha-drk Krishna dasa,
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Chew, Digest and Preach - Part 2

Date: November 16, 2012

Author: Amogha-drk Krishna dasa

Dear Vaishnavas,

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

This is in conclusion of notes from the nectarean Bhagavatam class given by my beloved spiritual master His Holiness Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj on verse 1.5.10 and 1.5.14 given in London on October 28, 2007. In previous offering titled, "Chewing, Digesting and Preaching", we heard from Maharaj that

1. We need to chew the purports of Srila Prabhupada, digest them nicely in order to present these principles to today's public.

2. Constant chanting of verses and translation will help us in meditating on the verses and in preaching.
3. Our anchor is Krishna and His Holy Names and so we should lovingly chant His names on our japa beads.

Now let us continue to hear more nectar from Maharaj.

The four essential topics mentioned by Maharaja are reading, thinking, digesting and preaching. They are born one as a result of the other.

1. **Reading and thinking:** *"Please try to keep your eyes open and your hearts completely open wide, to imbibe these vibrations, which are coming from Prabhupada's books.* Please try to utilise those vibrations and try to scrutinise. As soon as scrutinisation is there, the essence will go inside. And this is attachment. This attachment must increase. Otherwise we are wasting our time."

2. **Digestion:** "The thing is we do not digest the shlokas from Bhagavatam. We just know the verses. But "know" means upto the mind. Digestion means upto the heart. The words don't sink into our heart." Maharaja explained that just as *"undigested food is the main reason for our sickness, so our ideas also, Bhagavatam ideas, if they are not digested, then that undigested knowledge is the reason of ajnaan."* And digestion includes reducing all material necessities to the minimum. "Everybody has a minimum limit. To that extent we should have things. We have limited our clothes, we have limited our behaviour, we have limited our food, limited our taking too much furniture in the room. No accumulation is there really. So whatever little accumulation is there, that also we should be ready to forego. Unless we try to do these things, our digestion of shlokas will not be there."

3. **Preaching:** We should somehow or other engage ourselves in preaching for Krishna, motivated by Prabhupada's books. As Maharaja explains about Prabhupada, who did not get much support in the beginning of his preaching, "...he didn't get fed up that, "Nobody is hearing me. Now what to do?" He wanted to find out some loop-hole here and there and fortunately he went to America. *That type of eagerness we should have to study and to preach. Preaching must be there and unless you digest, you will not be able to preach."*

So what does it mean when Maharaja states we should not just read, but think about and digest the Bhagavatam as well in order to preach? First of all, we should not be tempted to misunderstand this as being the same as an intellectual exercise in decoding the sanskrit, finding similar vedic references, or subtle speculations about symbolic meanings etc., which are all tricks of maya to fool us away, in the name of intellectual pursuit, from the real issue: reforming ourselves to become actually useful representatives of Krishna by getting rid of our unwanted, subtle and gross, personality traits.

It is clear that it doesn't make us better devotees merely learning shlokas if we don't get to understand what they mean by thinking and digesting them in the form of improving our behaviour and eagerly engaging in preaching them for the true benefit of

others. Which means we have to adjust according to time, place and person. As Mahraja says, "***Preaching means reaching***". We can only reach others after having considered how to apply Srila Prabhupada's teachings for their, and also our, specific situation.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Amogha-drk Krishna dasa,

Copenhagen, Denmark