

Expanding the Influence by Devotional service - Part 2

Date: March 25, 2014

Author: Sajjanapriya Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

We are continuing on the topic, "Expanding the Influence by devotional service" and perfection of this exceptional quality was in Prahlad Maharaj as confirmed in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 3.14.48

*sa vai mahaa-bhaagavato mahaatmaa
mahaanubhaavo mahataam mahishthah
pravrdha-bhaktyaa hy anubhaavitaashaye
niveshya vaikuntham imam vihaasyati*

"That topmost devotee of the Lord will have expanded intelligence and expanded influence and will be the greatest of the great souls. Due to matured devotional service, he will certainly be situated in transcendental ecstasy and will enter the spiritual sky after quitting this material world."

We were meditating on the transcendental quality of Prahlad Maharaj which enabled him to expand his influence on his demoniac colleagues in devotional service. This expanded influence quality manifested in him because of his expanded intelligence and matured devotional service even at the very young age 5 years.

1. Expanded intelligence - mahaatma

2. Maturity in Devotional service - pravrdha bhaktya

1. **Expanded intelligence - mahaatma**: Let us meditate on the symptoms of devotee with expanded intelligence.

a. **Abhayam** – He is completely fearless. Prahlad Maharaj was one man opposition to his father Hiranyakashipu. Everyone was afraid of Hiranyakashipu, except Prahlad Maharaj. Srimad Bhagavatam tells us that by just lifting Hiranyakashipu's eyebrows so many wives of demigods had miscarriages. But Prahlad Maharaj had unflinching faith in the Lord as given by his spiritual master Narada muni. He was *magna cittah* and completely absorbed in Krishna consciousness and he is the perfect example of a perfect Mahabhagavata who was 24 hours Krishna conscious. Prahlad Maharaj was not at all worried about his body and was ready to give up at any time and therefore was fearless and no material things could destroy him as seen from the verse 7.5.41 of Srimad Bhagavatam.

*pare brahman?y anirdeshye / bhagavaty akhilaatmani
yuktaatmany aphalaa aasann/ apunyasyeva sat-kriyaah*

"Even though a person who has no assets in pious activities performs some good deed, it will have no result. Thus the weapons of the demons had no tangible effects upon Prahlada Maharaj because he was a devotee undisturbed by material conditions and fully engaged in meditating upon and serving the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is unchangeable, who cannot be realized by the material senses, and who is the soul of the entire universe."

We are completely disturbed even for a small disturbance to our material comfort zone. Our sadhana goes out of gear. We become fearful and immediately out of fear we react and do counteraction, whereas Prahlad Maharaj was not disturbed by any material condition. Abhayam is the first quality required to expand our intelligence. Our intelligence is within 4 billion miles of this material world or it is sometimes within the radius of our city and country whereas Prahlad Maharaja's intelligence was expanded all over the cosmic creations and the spiritual world too.

We will continue on the other symptoms of expanded intelligence in the ensuing offering, Krishna willing.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sajjanapriya Krishna das,
Abu Dhabi

Expanding the Influence by Devotional Service - Part 3

Date: March 26, 2014

Author: Sajjanapriya Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

We are continuing on the topic, "Expanding the influence by devotional service" based on the verse 3.14.48 in Srimad Bhagavatam. We were meditating on the transcendental quality of Prahlad Maharaj which enabled him to expand his influence on his demoniac colleagues in devotional service. This expanded influence quality manifested in him because of his expanded intelligence and matured devotional service even at the very young age 5 years. In the previous offering we saw the first symptom of expanded intelligence which is abhayam. Now let us continue to meditate on few more symptoms.

2. **Depend only on Krishna**: The second symptom of this expanded intelligence is that we should never go to anybody else other than Krishna. Even if we have desires, we should go to Krishna. It is better to go to the Supreme Father rather than uncles. It is better to be under the shelter of Guru rather than taking shelter of anybody else. This is chastity. Prahlad Maharaj was harassed unlimitedly by his father and if we were in that position we would have fallen. But Prahlad Maharaj was completely chaste towards the Lord and his spiritual master Narada Muni.

3. **Don't judge parents**: The third symptom of expanded intelligence is that we should not think our father and mother are in maya. Prahlad Maharaj was so much compassionate towards his father that he prayed for his father's deliverance and in fact whenever the punishment was executed, he would fall at the feet of his father and allow the servant of Hiranyakashipu to execute the punishment. Hiranyakashipu was completely demoniac and against the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Even then Prahlad Maharaj never hated his father but only condemned his way of materialistic life and requested him to take shelter of the Lord. But we just begin to take the process of devotional service and then the immediate mentality is that, "I have become a devotee and my parents are in maya." Without the piety of our father and mother we can never think of entering into the realm of Krishna consciousness and that we conveniently forget. HG Brahmananda prabhujī, disciple of Srila Prabhupada was directed by Prabhupada to first fall at the feet of his mother before taking initiation. That was the mood of Prabhupada. Our beloved spiritual master H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj also always insisted that, "*Whether your parents take up to devotional service or not, it does not matter. But you should always respect them and serve them nicely.*" Infact Maharaj with great humility used to say, "*Even I am not your first well-wisher. Your parents are your first well-wishers. So always take their blessings.*"

Even after taking sannyas, when Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mother told Him not to leave Puri, for her sake He never left Puri. Caitanya Mahaprabhu is none other than Krishna and has shown personally how important it is to respect, obey and serve our parents. Parents if they become old and sick physically, then they would require support from their children and if they don't get it, definitely Krishna would not be pleased by that. Pundarika is perfect example wherein he made the Lord and His consort to wait in order to finish his services to his parents. Pundarika was eternalized in the scriptures for his services to his father and mother and Krishna as Lord Vittal was so pleased.

Krishna willing we will meditate more on some more symptoms of expanded intelligence in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sajjanapriya Krishna das,
Abudhabi.

Expanding the Influence by Devotional Service - Part 4

Date: March 27, 2014

Author: Sajjanapriya Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

We are continuing on the topic, "Expanding the influence by devotional service" based on the verse 3.14.48 in Srimad Bhagavatam. We were meditating on the transcendental quality of Prahlaad Maharaj which enabled him to expand his influence on his demoniac colleagues in devotional service. This expanded influence quality manifested in him because of his

1. Expanded intelligence
2. Matured devotional service.

In the previous offerings we saw few of the symptoms of expanded intelligence like abhayam or fearlessness. We also saw how such devotees depend only on Krishna and always respect and serve their parents irrespective of whether the parents take to devotional service or not. Now let us continue to meditate on few more symptoms.

d. Considering Guru as non-different from Krishna: Prahlaad Maharaj wonderfully while praying to Lord Narasimhadev in the famous verse 7.9.28 of Srimad Bhagavatam explicitly conveys his heart to the Lord so wonderfully that how he cannot leave the service of his

spiritual master.

*evam janam nipatitam prabhavaahi kupe
kaamaabhikaamam anu yah prapatan prasangaat
krtvaatmasaat surarshinaa bhagavan ghrithah
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?"

Srila Prabhupada's transcendental purport to the above verse is worth meditating and contemplating. *"As will be seen in later verses, even though Prahlada Maharaja was directly offered all the benedictions he might have desired, he refused to accept such offerings from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. On the contrary, he asked the Lord to engage him in the service of His servant Narada Muni. This is the symptom of a pure devotee. **One should serve the spiritual master first. It is not that one should bypass the spiritual master and desire to serve the Supreme Lord. This is not the principle for a Vaishnava..Therefore Prahlada Maharaja proposed that he engage in the service of Narada Muni. He never proposed that he engage directly in the service of the Lord. This is the right conclusion. Therefore he said, 'so 'ham katham nu visrje tava bhrtya-sevaam' - "How can I give up the service of my spiritual master, who has favored me in such a way that I am now able to see You face to face?" Prahlada Maharaja prayed to the Lord that he might continue to engage in the service of his spiritual master, Narada Muni."***

e. **Never get misguided under any circumstances:** Prahlad Maharaj's teachers were teaching purusharthas and glorification of his own father instead of the Lord. He did not follow. He humbly remembered Narayana and was never misguided. He was determined to the instructions of his spiritual master even though he was not personally present. In order to avoid the misguidance we have to take the resolution in our heart that we will never leave Srila Prabhupada's books at any time. Our beloved spiritual master H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj use to say that what we cannot get from Srila Prabhupada, we cannot get it from anywhere. No other person in the history of Vedic literature has written the word to word meaning, purports translations. 100 lives is not enough to read and understand Srila Prabhupada's books. Where is the time for other books? It is important to relish the nectar ourselves and also distribute the same to others. By ignoring Prabhupada's books we are committing suicide. He is lovingly take us to Krishna. How much he would have thought about in writing the word *mahaatama* as '**expanded intelligence.**' We have to just appreciate his writings and we will be purified and what to talk of implementing his purports in our life. Nothing like that.

Krishna willing we will continue on the next wonderful quality of how to execute mature devotional service and their symptoms in the ensuing offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sajjanapriya Krishna das
Abudhabi

Expanding the Influence by Devotional service - Part 5

Date: March 28, 2014

Author: Sajjanapriya Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

We are continuing on the topic, "Expanding the influence by devotional service" based on the verse 3.14.48 in Srimad Bhagavatam. We were meditating on the transcendental quality of Prahlad Maharaj which enabled him to expand his influence on his demoniac colleagues in devotional service. This expanded influence quality manifested in him because of his

1. Expanded intelligence and

2. Matured devotional service.

In the previous offerings we saw few of the symptoms of expanded intelligence and now in this offering we will see the symptoms of matured devotional service (*pravrrdha bhaktyaa*)

2. **Matured Devotional service - *pravrrdha bhaktyaa***: Our beloved spiritual master H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj says that "***Maturity is a gift. It cannot be cultivated. Gift can be there if you behave good. If cent-percent Krishna consciousness is there, then He will give the gift of maturity.***" How to get this gift of maturity from spiritual master and Krishna is as follows.

a. **To remember our constitutional position**: Prahlad Maharaj always felt insignificant and while praying to the Lord he nicely describes his position very clearly. This is maturity. In his first prayer to Lord Narasimhadeva Prahlad Maharaj says in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 7.9.8

shri prahraada uvaaca

*brahmaadayah sura-ganaa munayo 'tha siddhaah
sattvaikataana gatayo vacasaam pravaahaih*

*naaraadhritum puru gunair adhunaapi pipruh
ki toshtum arhati sa me harir ugra-jaateh*

Prahlada Maharaja prayed: **"How is it possible for me, who have been born in a family of asuras, to offer suitable prayers to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead? Even until now, all the demigods, headed by Lord Brahma, and all the saintly persons, could not satisfy the Lord by streams of excellent words, although such persons are very qualified, being in the mode of goodness. Then what is to be said of me? I am not at all qualified."**

Prahlad Maharaj says the word *ugra jaateh* – '*Born in asuric family and I am not at all qualified.*' This was his mood of devotion. The demon Hiranyakashipu has started the assault on all the demigods and when they took shelter of the Lord out of fear and the Lord told them to wait (*kaalam taavat pratikshata*). But in case of Prahlad Maharaj Lord Narasimhadev just appeared immediately for the sake of him and the Lord was waiting in all the pillars to appear for the sake of Prahlad Maharaj. But still Prahlad Maharaj was not proud. In a humble mood he says that he is not at all qualified.

Following the footsteps of that great devotee, we should also remember that whatever we are able to do in our life is because of the mercy of Guru and Krishna. Maharaj says that we say that we are in Krishna conscious but actually we are in illusion and are always in collaboration with matter. We are collaborating with idlis, sambars, puri and shrikund puri etc. Therefore spiritual existence becomes invisible just like how the soul is invisible in us. Maharaj says that we have to understand our constitutional position that we are servant of Krishna. By remaining sober and remembering that we are just servants of Krishna, the ineberties vanish instantly.

We will continue with other symptoms of maturity in devotional service in the ensuing offering Krishna willing.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sajjanapriya Krishna das
Abudhabi

Expanding the Influence by Devotional Service - Part 6

Date: April 10, 2014

Author: Sajjanapriya Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

We are continuing on the topic, "Expanding the influence by devotional service" based on the verse 3.14.48 in Srimad Bhagavatam. We were meditating on the transcendental quality of Prahlad Maharaj which enabled him to expand his influence amidst his demoniac colleagues in devotional service. This expanded influence quality manifested in him because of his

1. Expanded intelligence and

2. Matured devotional service.

In the previous offerings we saw few of the symptoms of expanded intelligence and we began to see the first symptom of matured devotional service (pravrrdha bhaktyaa) which is to remember our constitutional position. Now we will continue to see the other symptoms of matured devotional service.

b. **The Six Vows:** The second symptom of matured devotional service is that we take the six vows which our beloved spiritual master H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj gave us through this wonderful verse from the shastras.

*naanyam vadaami na shrnomi na cintayaami
naanyam smaraami na bhajaami na caashrayaami
krishna tvadiya caranaambhuja antarena
srisri nivasa purushotamma dehi daasyam.*

Prahlad Maharaj was the personification of this verse and he simply obeyed this verse in his life. Maharaj says that we should take one verse and apply in our lives, we will become free of all material inebrieties.

1. *naanyam vadaami* - **I will not speak of anything other than Krishna's topics**. Our tendency is to speak everything else other than Krishna once the Krishna katha is over. This needs to be overcome. Maharaj said that we linger on that place and that leads to useless talks resulting in agitation. We have to resolve ourselves on this and it requires lot of sincere introspection and contemplation on our part.

2. *na shrnomi* - **I will not hear of any topics other than Krishna's**. Our tendency is to hear the defamity of others but when it is against us then we are unable to tolerate and we counteract and behave badly. This is really true for me. We should cut short the material topics immediately and that can be obviated by our own resolute determination.

3. *na cintayaami* - **I will not meditate on any subject other than Krishna's.** Our meditation is most of the times on others' faults or on our bank accounts and properties. Mind is like a prostitute which hankers for everything other than Krishna. We should take some verse and meditate on the words, translation and purports and preaching is essential for developing meditation on Krishna's subject.

4. *naanyam smaraami* - **I will not think of anybody except Krishna.** Since our bodily conception is very high we always remember all the activities of our body and its relationship and no time for remembering the Lord. Prahlad Maharaj remembered the Lord so well that even the material elements like fire could not harm him as he became transcendental.

5. *na bhajaami* - **I will not worship anyone but Krishna.** Whenever we are encountered with some problems and Krishna does not resolve we may worship other gods for material solution or go for jyothish and others for our future. This is due to our faith being very weak and this can be corrected by studying the scriptures.

6. *na ca aashrayaami* - **I will not take shelter of anyone but Krishna.** Because of our material conceptions and perceptions, our tendency is that we take shelter of fallible living entities. We forget that in crisis situations, it is human nature that each one tries to save one's own self and would not have the interest or willingness to help others. Also even if they want to help us, they are also limited and not all powerful and so sometimes can't help us or give us shelter. But Krishna and Guru are only infallible. So we should always take firm shelter of them only.

When we take these six vows seriously and try to follow it as much as we can, then we will definitely get lasting peace and bliss in this life itself. It is the lack of hearing, speaking and meditating of the transcendental topics of Krishna, that is making us weak spiritually and go mental. We spend lot of time to talk about our own katha but not a few minutes in a day to talk about Krishna-katha. This is the defect we have to work on and take this verse as our life saving verse. I am completely rebellious to this matured devotional service and I am praying hard to Maharaj to whack my mind and intelligence to accept these things as life saving medicine for this bhava roga (disease of the material world).

Krishna willing we will continue with the other symptoms of maturity in devotional service in the ensuing mail.

Thank you very much
Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sajjanapriya Krishna das
Abudhabi

Expanding the Influence by Devotional Service - Part 7

Date: April 22, 2014

Author: Sajjanapriya Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

We are continuing on the topic, "Expanding the influence by devotional service" based on the verse 3.14.48 in Srimad Bhagavatam. We were meditating on the transcendental quality of Prahlad Maharaj which enabled him to expand his influence amongst his demoniac colleagues in devotional service. This expanded influence quality manifested in him because of his expanded intelligence and matured devotional service. In the previous offerings we saw few of the symptoms of expanded intelligence and we began to see the first two symptoms of matured devotional service (*pravrrdha bhaktyaa*).

- a. To remember our constitutional position.
- b. Six vows to remember Krishna..

Now we will continue to see the other symptoms of matured devotional service.

c. **Firm faith in the Lord and spiritual master:** Prahlad Maharaj heard about the devotional service when he was in the womb and with his pristine innocence he accepted with firm faith and therefore was never was deterred in his faith in his spiritual master and the Supreme Lord. Hiranyakashipu was wonder struck that in spite of all ways of annihilating his son, he could not do so and asked his son wherefrom he is deriving such power. Prahlad Maharaj says that his strength is coming Vaikuntah (*balame vaikuntah*). He had the unassailable faith, unflinching faith in the Lord that the Lord is present everywhere. So when Hiranykashipu challenged Prahlad Maharaj whether the Lord is in the pillar, Prahlad Maharaj had unflinching faith that the Lord is there in the pillar and in fact the Lord was omnipresent in all the pillars of the palace of Hiranyakashipu that any pillar was stuck by the demon, He is ready to come out just to keep the words of His devotee as confirmed by Srimad Bhagavatam 7.8.17

*satyam vidhaatum nija bhrtya bhaashitam
vyaaptim ca bhuteshv akhileshu caatmanah
adrshyataatyadbhuta rupam udvahan
stambhe sabhaayaam na mrgam na maanusham*

"To prove that the statement of His servant Prahlada Maharaja was substantial — in other words, to prove that the Supreme Lord is present everywhere, even within the pillar of an assembly hall — the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, exhibited a wonderful form never before seen. The form was neither that of a man nor that of a lion. Thus the Lord appeared in His wonderful form in the assembly hall."

Presently our faith is very weak and anything unfavourable happens in our life (spiritual or material) the first thing we do is, we lose the faith in chanting and devotional service and we try all other remedies to remove the unfavourable situations. But Srila Prabhupada gives the formula to remove the unfavourable situations in his unparalleled purport to Srimad Bhagavatam verse 4.29.32 . He is giving us the clue to increase our faith in devotional service. *"One should simply try to develop his Krishna consciousness and not waste his time trying to improve his material condition. Actually the material condition cannot be improved. The process of improvement means accepting another miserable condition. However, if we endeavor to improve our Krishna consciousness, the distresses of material life will disappear without extraneous endeavor."*

This statement works like magic and it is upto us to have faith in Srila Prabhupada. Srila Prabhupada's words are also satyam param and that faith can be obtained by our sincere prayers to the Lord and Srila Prabhupada. Prabhupad has mentioned that all we need to do is just try to endeavour to improve and not even actually improve. How much Srila Prabhupada would have meditated to write this statement ! I am still struggling to accept the words of Srila Prabhupada as satyam param and praying to all the Vaishnavas to pray for me so that I not only propogate this statement but also try to accept this simple statement in my life and Krishna willing this will be a turning point in spiritual life.

Krishna willing we will continue the other symptoms of matured devotional service in the ensuing mail.

Srila Prabhupada ki Jai ! Srila Gurudev ki Jai !

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sajjanapriya Krishna das
Chennai.

Expanding the Influence by Devotional Service - Part 8

Date: May 14, 2014

Author: Sajjanapriya Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the previous topic, "Expanding the Influence by Devotional Service", based on verse 3.14.48 in Srimad Bhagavatam wherein Kashyapa Muni describes to Diti about the transcendental nature of Prahlad Maharaj. Due to this potency Prahlad Maharaj was able to expand his influence amongst his demoniac colleagues in devotional service. This expanded influence quality manifested in him because of his expanded intelligence and matured devotional service. In the previous offerings we saw few of the symptoms of expanded intelligence and we began to see the first three symptoms of matured devotional service (*pravrrdha bhaktyaa*) which are listed below.

a. To remember our constitutional position.

b. Six vows to remember Krishna.

c. Firm faith.

Now we will continue to see the other symptoms of matured devotional service.

d. **Completely Dependent on the Lord**: The main reason for appearance of Lord Narasimhadeva is for Prahlad Maharaj who was completely dependent on the Lord in all circumstances and thereby he was always fearless. Actually Prahlad Maharaj was one man opposition in the whole kingdom of his father, Hiranyakashipu. His father tortured him to death but because of his dependence on the Lord he was completely protected by the Lord. Hiranyakashipu after hearing from Prahlad Maharaj about devotional service to Lord Vishnu, became furious and decided to kill his own son. But then all the efforts were futile. Srimad Bhagavatam verse 7.5.41 shows us how much the Lord was protecting his dear devotee Prahlad.

*pare brahmany anirdeshye / bhagavaty akhilaatmani
yuktaamany aphalaa aasann / apunyasyeva sat kriyaah*

"Even though a person who has no assets in pious activities performs some good deed, it will have no result. Thus the weapons of the demons had no tangible effects upon Prahlad Maharaja because he was a devotee undisturbed by material conditions and fully engaged in meditating upon and serving the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is unchangeable, who cannot be realized by the material senses, and who is the soul of the entire universe."

Prahlad Maharaj's complete absorption in remembering the Supreme Lord and therefore the material weapons has no tangible effects on him. In the same way if we try to absorb ourselves in devotional service, the threefold miseries would not have any effect. Because of our absorption is in material nature we are unable to tide over the material miseries and we get affected all the time. Our beloved spiritual master H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj, while on the stage of winding up his pastimes exhibited such transcendence by his complete absorption in devotional service. In spite of his ripe age (91 years old), Maharaj used to have his bath on his own and apply tilak, though his physical condition was completely difficult. He used to wash his own clothes instead of depending on his disciples and exhibited the transcendence over material nature.

His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada continued to dictate Srimad Bhagavatam purports with full clarity and absorption even during his final days. The doctors were wondering how His Divine Grace is tolerating the bodily pains. They said that anyone else in his condition, should have been in coma or should have been screaming loudly. But nothing could affect the divine consciousness of Srila Prabhupada who continued serving his spiritual master, Bhagavatam and Krishna, till his last moment.

Therefore let me pray to Srila Gurudev, Srila Prabhupada and Prahlad Maharaj to bestow their mercy upon us so that we remember and accept the truth that we are completely helpless and always take shelter of Supreme Lord without any reservations.

Lord Narasimhadev Bhagavan ki Jai ! Prahlad Maharaj ki Jai ! Srila Prabhupad ki Jai ! Srila Gurudev ki Jai. !

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sajjanapriya Krishna das,
Abu Dhabi.

Expanding the Influence by Devotional Service - Part 9

Date: May 15, 2014

Author: Sajjanapriya Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the previous topic, "Expanding the Influence by Devotional Service", based on verse 3.14.48 in Srimad Bhagavatam wherein Kashyapa Muni describes to Diti about the transcendental nature of Prahlad Maharaj. We can expand the influence when we have expanded intelligence and are mature in devotional service. In the previous offerings we saw few of the symptoms of expanded intelligence and few symptoms of matured devotional service (*pravrrdha bhaktyaa*). Now we will continue to see few more symptoms of matured devotional service.

e. **Performing Devotional service in all material conditions**: Prahlad Maharaj was completely in an atmosphere which is full of demoniac mentalities. Even his own gurus Sanda and Amarka were teaching everything other than devotional service. Even then he never deterred from his determination to continue the devotional service. He was never getting angry about the material condition. But he was simply compassionate to them and in fact he started preaching devotional service to the demoniac colleagues and they were inspired by his preaching and influenced by him. He was going through life threatening situation physically by his own father and the demons. But still he did not budget an inch from devotional service. Our conditions are not as terrible as Prahlad Maharaj. Infact we are placed by Krishna in a much more favourable situation. But still our mind does not accept devotional service. The defect in us is that we are always cautious about how others look at us and our devotional service. We are always expecting appreciation from others for whatever we do and hence always land into trouble. Actually nobody has any time to look at us as they themselves are struggling with their own lives. There is a beautiful verse spoken in Srimad Bhagavatam (4.29.32) by Narada muni which is a golden verse for us to perform devotional service in all material conditions.

*dukheshv ekatarenaapi / daiva bhutaatma-hetushu
jivasya na vyavacchedah / syaac cet tat tat pratikriyaa*

"The living entities are trying to counteract different miserable conditions pertaining to providence, other living entities or the body and mind. Still, they must remain conditioned by the laws of nature, despite all attempts to counter these laws."

This verse is more for me than for others as I have to digest these verse and assimilate in my blood. If my mind can accept this verse and convince me to do devotional service with full *utsaah* and *nishcayaat* (enthusiasm and confidence), then nothing can stop me from progressing in my own devotional service. We are not counting our blessings but always we look at the negative side of everything. Whatever position we are, it is sanctioned by Krishna and due to our own defects as a conditioned soul. Therefore how we can defy the condition and therefore it is very important to perform our devotional service without losing our enthusiasm and confidence. Devotional service is so pure that can dissolve all our karmic reactions and purify our existence in this material world. *karmaani nirdahati kintu ca bhakti bhaajam*. Actually the devotional service is the unalloyed activity of the soul and nothing to do with material conditions. It is very easy to write but practising is difficult. But we don't have any other options because material world means miseries only with no bliss but devotional service is the monopoly for eternal bliss. At least we can make a try because Krishna see the endeavour and not the result.

Krishna willing we shall continue to discuss more on this topic in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sajjanapriya Krishna das,
Abu Dhabi.

Expanding the Influence by Devotional Service - Part 10

Date: May 16, 2014

Author: Sajjanapriya Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the previous topic, "Expanding the Influence by Devotional Service", based on verse 3.14.48 in Srimad Bhagavatam wherein Kashyapa Muni describes to Diti about the transcendental nature of Prahlad Maharaj. We can expand the influence when we have expanded intelligence and are mature in devotional service. In the previous offerings we saw few of the symptoms of expanded intelligence and few symptoms of matured devotional service (*pravrrdha bhaktyaa*). Now we will continue to see further on performing devotional service in all material conditions, which is one of the symptom of mature devotional service.

e. Performing Devotional service in all material conditions: Srila Prabhupada used to tell the story that one man was sitting near the beach for a long time and someone asked him why he is sitting there. The man replied that he wants to have bath in the sea but was waiting for the waves to settle down. The waves of the sea will never stop. In the same way material nature will always have the waves and whirlpool coming in our lives and we should not wait for waves and whirlpool to stop. That will never happen and therefore better to continue with our devotional service with enthusiasm and confidence. The Supreme Lord always wants to elevate the living entities into pure devotional service. In Srimad Bhagavatam verse 3.16.6 when Jaya and Vijaya did not receive Sanat kumaras properly Lord rushes to meet them and says

*yasyaamrtaamala-yashah-shravanaavagaahah
sadyah punaati jagad aashvapacaad vikunthah
so' ham bhavadbhya upalabdha-suteertha-keertish
chindyaam sva baahum api vah pratikula-vrttim*

"Anyone in the entire world, even down to the candaala, who lives by cooking and eating the flesh of the dog, is immediately purified if he takes bath in hearing through the ear the glorification of My name, fame, etc. Now you have realized Me without doubt; therefore I will not hesitate to lop off My own arm if its conduct is found hostile to you."

This is spoken by the Supreme Lord Himself and how much of encouragement and confidence the Lord is giving in this verse. Srila Prabhupada's transcendental purport gives a double booster to this verse. *"Anyone who takes to Krishna consciousness is understood to be fully purified. He is at least engaged in the process of purification, and if he sticks to the principle of Krishna consciousness he will very soon be fully purified. The conclusion is that if one takes to Krishna consciousness with all seriousness, he is to be understood as already purified, and Krishna is ready to give him protection by all means."*

Who else in the history of Vaishnavism can make this statement except our most compassionate Vaishnava His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada? Therefore I pray to His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva to shower their causeless mercy on this most fallen soul (if I deserve) to be always encouraged and confident in performing devotional service and never try to loose the enthusiasm due to any material conditions.

Krishna willing we shall continue to discuss on other symptoms of matured devotional service in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sajjanapriya Krishna das,
Abu Dhabi.

Expanding the Influence by Devotional Service - Part 11

Date: June 1, 2014

Author: Sajjanapriya Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhuji and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation on topic, "Expanding the influence by devotional service", based on the verse 3.14.48 in Srimad Bhagavatam, wherein Kashyapa muni describes to Diti about the transcendental nature of Prahlaad Maharaj. Due to this potency of Prahlaad Maharaj, he was able to expand his influence on his demoniac colleagues in devotional service. The quality of expanded influence manifested in him because of his expanded intelligence and matured devotional service. In the previous offerings we saw few symptoms of expanded intelligence and we began to see the five symptoms of matured devotional service, *pravrddha bhaktya* . Now we will continue to see the other symptoms as follows.

f. **Cleaning the home and hearts:** Maharaj says that if we carefully look at our house 50% of the items are unwanted, but we keep it as a necessity. We keep accumulating so much waste on the pretext that it will be of use sometime later. Instead we should do regular cleaning and throw away all waste. In Prahlaad School Rhymes HG Atmaprasad Prabhuji very nicely mentions,

*If our room is clean, then our mind is clean.
If our mind is clean, we can do anything.
If our room is dirty, then so are we.
If we are dirty, we are not happy.*

In the same way we should not keep so many things in our hearts, especially the grudges against the people who seem to have hurt us. Such grudges will increase our malicious attitude towards them and we always want to take revenge against them. Instead of thinking as to how we can help others, our whole time and energy goes in meditating how to punish them. And in the process we lose the sanity and peace of mind. Srimad Bhagavatam verse 4.20.3, explains very nicely the actions of

*sudhiyah saadhavo loke / naradeva narottamaah
naabhidruhyanti bhutebhyo / yarhi naatmaa kalevaram*

"O King, one who is advanced in intelligence and eager to perform welfare activities for others is considered best amongst human beings. An advanced human being is never malicious to others. Those with advanced intelligence are always conscious that this material body is different from the soul."

Whenever someone does harm to us, we tend to blame the person. But everything is happening under the influence of modes of material nature. Srila Prabhupada in his wonderful purport to the above verse says, *"Actually the living entity, or soul, does not do anything; everything is done under the influence of the modes of material nature. When a man is diseased, the symptoms of the disease become a source of all kinds of pain. Those who are advanced in transcendental consciousness, or Krishna consciousness, are never envious, neither of the soul nor of the activities of the soul under the influence of material nature. Advanced transcendentalists are called sudhiyah. Sudhi means "intelligence," sudhi means "highly advanced," and sudhi means "devotee." One who is both devoted and highly advanced in intelligence does not take action against the soul or the body. If there is any discrepancy, he forgives. It is said that forgiveness is a quality of those who are advancing in spiritual knowledge."*

Our ultimate aim of life is to go back to Krishna and so we should not be distracted by petty quarrels that occur in this world. Holding a grudge is letting someone live rent-free in our head. We waste our time, energy and ultimately land up contaminating our minds and lives by thinking and doing bad things to others. Instead if we simply forgive and forget, our mind will be free of bad thoughts and we will have more time and energy to focus ourselves on the real aim of our lives. Since we are living in material world and are subjected to modes, our only armour of protection is shelter at the lotus feet of Guru and Krishna. When we sincerely surrender to Them, they will give us the sanity to learn the lessons of life, even under difficult situations - to tolerate, to forgive and forget. So for our own well-being we should free our heart from all grudges, simply tolerate, forgive and forget the wrong doings of others and just move on.

Therefore I pray to His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva to shower his causeless mercy on this most fallen soul, to not accumulate waste and not to keep grudges in my heart.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sajjanapriya Krishna das,
Abudhabi.

Expanding the Influence by Devotional Service - Part 12

Date: June 24, 2014

Author: Sajjanapriya Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation on the topic, "Expanding the influence by Devotional Service", based on the verse 3.14.48 in Srimad Bhagavatam wherein Kashyapa muni describes to Diti about the transcendental nature of Prahlad Maharaj. Due to this potency of Prahlad Maharaj, he was able to expand his influence on his demoniac colleagues in devotional service. In this offering we shall continue to see one more symptom of matured devotional service.

No hypocrisy: Srila Prabhupada used to give a wonderful story in this connection. Once there was a lawyer who had started his business and was very proud of his qualification and always projects as if he is the best lawyer in town. Actually he had a telephone waiting for connection to be done and he was waiting for it. One day one fellow came to his office, he immediately took the phone and said, "Dear Sir, thank you for the call from prime minister

office and I wish to submit that I am a very busy lawyer and fully booked for the year. But since it is from prime minister office, I cannot refuse your case and I would like to meet the prime minister regarding the case and I will fly to Delhi to discuss the case in detail with prime minister."

Actually he want to impress the person who had come to his office and asked him what does the person wants. The person told that he is coming from Telephone department to install the connection. The lawyer was so embarrassed at this and tried to manage the situation. His hypocrisy was exposed.

It is like the current trend in advertisement that they change the wrappers of chocolate but the content is the same. Wrappers doesn't change the content. We are wrapped in dhoti and kurtha. But if our behaviour (content) does not change, then there is no use. Purification of the 'content' requires not just understanding of the verses of Srimad Bhagavatam and reading in-between the lines, but trying to apply them in life. Our beloved spiritual master H H Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj says, "*How long are we going to show what we are not? You may show here and there, but eventually the truth is out. It is in our interest to progress very sincerely.*"

The main reason for hypocrisy is that we have fruitive mentality in our devotional service. We always do our devotional service to impress others and not to improve ourselves and that is the root cause of hypocrisy. Even in devotional service, we should not imitate other devotees and end up miserably by being hypocrite. So for our own good, we should execute sincere devotional service naturally and that will give the maturity in devotional service.

When Lord Vamana showered all His mercy on Bali Maharaj and said that He would become 24 hours guard to his palace in Sutala planet, Bali Maharaj gratefully prays to the Lord in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 8.23.2

shri balir uvaaca

*aho pranaamaaya krtah samudyamah
prapanna bhaktartha vidhau samaahitah
yal loka paalais tvad anugraho marair
alabdha purvo 'pasada 'sure 'rpitah*

Bali Maharaja said, "**What a wonderful effect there is, in even attempting to offer respectful obeisances to You! I merely endeavored to offer You obeisances, but nonetheless the attempt was as successful as those of pure devotees. The causeless mercy You have shown to me, a fallen demon, was never achieved even by the demigods or the leaders of the various planets.**"

Srila Prabhupada in his wonderful purport to the above verse says, "*Thus even though, externally, a devotee may not render full service, if he is internally sincere and serious the Lord welcomes his service nonetheless. Thus the Lord is known as bhaava-graahi janardana because He takes the essence of one's devotional mentality.*"

When our Lord is so kind and merciful that He is simply satisfied with sincere attempts, why should we unnecessarily lie or behave hypocritically? Instead let us always remain grateful to Him and be genuine in our service to Him.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Sajjanapriya Krishna das,

Abudhabi

Expanding the Influence by Devotional Service - Part 14

Date: July 27, 2014

Author: Sajjanapriya Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation on the topic, "Expanding the influence by devotional service", based on the verse 3.14.48 in Srimad Bhagavatam wherein Kasaypa muni describes to Diti about the transcendental nature of Prahlad Maharaj. Due to this potency he was able to expand his influence on his demoniac colleagues in devotional service. The expanded intelligence manifested in him because of his expanded intelligence and matured devotional service. In the previous offerings we saw few symptoms of expanded intelligence and we began to see the first five symptoms of matured devotional service. *Pravrdha bhaktya* which are listed below.

- a. To remember our constitutional position
- b. Six vows to remember Krishna.
- c. Firm faith
- d. Completely dependent on the Lord.
- e. Performing devotional service in all material conditions
- f. Cleaning the home and hearts
- g. No hypocrisy

h. Krishna is the purifying force in our lives

Now we will continue to see the other symptoms as follows

i. **Sensing Lord's Presence everywhere:** As we become matured in devotional service, our awareness of Krishna everywhere must increase. We should be very clear in our conscious that photo of Krishna and the deities are non different and above all the devotees of the Lord are also important. In the name of deity worship if we ignore the genuine requirements of the devotees then our deity worship has no value. In the name of serving our deities we tend to disrespect the feeling of the other devotees and Krishna is not at all pleased by such behaviour. When Jaya and Vijaya stopped the Sanat kumaras from entering into the Vaikunta who were very eager to render Devotional service to the Lord and have the Lord's darshan, the Lord did not interfere the cursing by the sages. In fact He was taking responsibility of these offense and was ready to lop of His own hands for the offense. This is the reason Lord Kapiladev very powerfully instructs about the recognition of Supersoul in every living entity while doing deity worship. Srimad Bhagavatam 3.29.24 verse says,

*aham uccaavacair dravyaih / kriyayotpannayaanaghe
naiva tushye 'rcito 'rcaayaam / bhuta graamaavamaaninah*

"My dear mother, even if he worships with proper rituals and paraphernalia, a person who is ignorant of My presence in all living entities never pleases Me by the worship of My Deities in the temple."

Srila Prabhupada in his purport to the above verse very clearly states what is displeasing the supreme Lord while doing deity worship. *"We may offer many valuable items to the Deity, but if we have no real sense of devotion and no real sense of the Lord's presence everywhere, then we are lacking in devotional service; in such a state of ignorance, we cannot offer anything acceptable to the Lord."*

Therefore I pray to Gurudev and Lord Krishna to shower their mercy if I deem fit, that I will be able to increase the awareness of Krishna everywhere.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sajjanapriya Krishna das

Expanding the Influence by Devotional Service - Part 15

Date: August 13, 2014

Author: Sajjanapriya Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation on the topic "Expanding the influence by devotional service" based on the verse 3.14.48 in Srimad Bhagavatam, wherein Kashyapa Muni describes to Diti about the transcendental nature of Prahlad Maharaj. Due to this potency of Prahlad Maharaj he was able to expand his influence on his demoniac colleagues in devotional service. The expanded intelligence manifested in him because of his expanded intelligence and matured devotional service. In the previous offerings we saw few symptoms of expanded intelligence and few symptoms of matured devotional service. Now we will continue to see further symptoms in matured devotional service.

j. Shouting and screaming will spoil our maturity: In adverse situations, when things are not happening in our way, we tend to shout and scream. This is not maturity. We have to understand that Krishna is under control and we cannot do anything to change the way we want. We have to accept that things which are happening in our lives is already approved and sanctioned by the Lord. It is due to anger that we shout and scream at others. Srimad Bhagavatam tells us that envy and hatred are the two causes of anger which leads to shouting and screaming. We envy somebody and therefore cannot tolerate their progress and we try to find every opportunity to put that person down. If we hate the living entities, then we simply become angry with them for whatever they do. This spoils our maturity and we glide down in devotional service. The person whom we hated or envied is completely unaware of our feelings and he will be nicely progressing in devotional service. Actually we want to control everybody according to our way and that is the reason for our shouting and screaming. Frankly speaking, I am very much prone to this short temper and I have to go a long way before I talk about maturity in devotional service. However I am making this offering so that eventually I will get purified as confirmed by the statement of Srila Prabhupada in 1.5.28, "*The flow of devotional service is so potent that any onlooker also becomes liberated from the influence of the modes of passion and ignorance.*"

We should try to be cool and calm in trying circumstances as this can only lead us to maturity. Even the Lord instructs the demigods while churning the milky ocean to keep truce with demons and instructs a wonderful verse that how to do things by peace and patience. When there is a clash between demigods and demons while churning the milk-ocean, the Lord advises the demigods in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 8.6.24 as follows.

*yuyam tad anumodadhvam / yad icchanty asuraah suraah
na samrambhena sidhyanti / sarvaarthaah saantvayaa yathaa*

"My dear demigods, with patience and peace everything can be done, but if one is agitated by anger, the goal is not achieved. Therefore, whatever the demons ask, agree to their proposal."

Maharaj always says that these two A's are dangerous - Agitation and Anger. But these two P's are good. **P**eace and **P**atience. Because of following the instructions of the Lord, the

demigods emerge victorious over the demons and gets the nectar. So when the situations are tense it is better to keep quiet, instead of justifying our position.

I pray to Srila Gurudev and Lord Krishna to shower their unlimited mercy on me if I deserve, so that I can come out of this habit of shouting and screaming.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sajjanapriya Krishna das,
Abu Dhabi.

Expanding the Influence by Devotional Service - Part 16

Date: September 21, 2014

Author: Sajjanapriya Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in conclusion on the topic "Expanding the influence by devotional service" based on the verse 3.14.48 in Srimad Bhagavatam wherein Kashyapa Muni describes to Diti about the transcendental nature of Prahlad Maharaj. Due to this potency of Prahlad Maharaj he was able to expand his influence on his demoniac colleagues in devotional service. The expanded intelligence manifested in him because of his expanded intelligence and matured devotional service. In the previous offerings we saw few symptoms of expanded intelligence and the below symptoms of matured devotional service.

- a. To remember our constitutional position
- b. Six vows to remember Krishna.
- c. Firm faith
- d. Completely dependent on the Lord.
- e. Performing devotional service in all material conditions
- f. Cleaning the home and hearts
- g. No hypocrisy
- h. Krishna is the purifying force in our lives
- i. Sensing the lord presence everywhere
- j. Shouting and screaming will spoil our maturity

Now we will continue to see the other symptoms as follows

k. **Bhagavatam or Bhagavata is the place of pilgrimage:** Srila Prabhupada has written to one devotee, "I was staying in Vrindavana already. But I left Vrindavana and I am in America now. But for me, it is Vrindavana because I am always with Bhagavad Gita,

Bhagavatam and chanting." Wherever the Bhagavatam/Bhagavata is there, then that will be the place of pilgrimage. This should be our conviction always. Darshan is not only for Deities. Srimad Bhagavatham is shastra darshan. This is non different from Deities. So simply by studying Srimad Bhagavatam, having darshan of Bhagavatas we will feel enthused, just as we feel enthused when we see the Deities in temple. This is maturity in devotional service. It is confirmed in Srimad Bhagavatam 1.13.10 wherein Yudhishtir Maharaj says to Mahatma Vidura,

*bhavad vidhaa bhaagavataas / teertha bhutaah svayam vibho
teerthi kurvanti teerthaani / svaantah sthena gadaabhrtaa*

"My lord, devotees like your good self are verily holy places personified. Because you carry the Personality of Godhead within your heart, you turn all places into places of pilgrimage."

i. Continuous Study and Sadhana: Maharaj was saying in one of his lectures We should not stop with one reading of Srimad Bhagavad gita and Srimad Bhagavatam we should do it again and again. Otherwise like Humayun - he was conquering the countries. Once he conquered one country, he stopped, thinking that he has conquered. In the mean time the country was lost. We should do *nityam bhagavata sevaya*. Regularly we must do study. Other treatments are not required. This is maturity. The material world is full of sense gratification and therefore we are swimming against it. The sadhana of our chanting and studying books is the movement of our hands and legs in water and the moment we stop swimming, we will swept away by the current. Unless our sadhana is strong it is very difficult to progress nicely in Krishna consciousness. This study will constantly hammer the nature of this temporary miserable world and make us serious and sober. Once we endeavour in our sadhana, Krishna will reciprocate nicely for our devotional service. This is confirmed in Srimad Bhagavatam 2.8.3, "Persons who hear Srimad-Bhagavatam 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."

m. Envisaging death: This is the most difficult aspect of maturity and this will definitely make our saner in our dealings. As Maharaj says everyday should be envisaged as the last day, then we will never commit blunders in our relationship. This is not easy aspect of maturity and it flows only through mercy from Guru, pure devotees and Krishna. Prabhupad was in death bed and still his Krishna consciousness was completely perfect and he was able to dictate purports to Srimad Bhagavatam and those purports are really wonderful and purifying our consciousness.

As far as I am concerned I am yet to realize these in my day to day lives and still struggling in sadhana and conviction that Srimad Bhagavatam or Bhagavata is the place of pilgrimage. I therefore pray to my dearest spiritual master and Krishna to give me the mercy to realize this in my lives and that is the only way I can try to become matured in devotional service.

Thank you very much
Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Sajjanapriya Krishna das
Abu Dhabi