

Faith

Dear Vaishnavas

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

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 - *jñāna-sañchinnā-saṁśayam*).

"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" a 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 weird things. This is because their faith is not based on the authentic revealed scriptures. Krishna says this in Bhagavad Gita 16.23 very clearly:

*yaḥ śāstra-vidhim utsrjya vartate kāma-kārataḥ
na sa siddhim avāpnoti na sukhaṁ na parāṁ gatim*

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 every one 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 chraddadhānā munayo...*") and 1.2.16 ("*śuśrūṣoḥ śraddadhānasya...*") uses the word "*śraddadhānasya*". 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 "*śraddha*" means faith. And "*śraddadhānasya*" 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 Bhagavad-gita / Bhagavatam regularly (*nityam bhāgavata-sevayā*) . The result of it is that loving service unto Krishna is established as an irrevocable fact (*bhaktir bhagavati naiṣṭhikī*).

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,
Kalacakra Krsna das.

The Rope of Affectionate Tie with the Lord

Hare Krishna Prabhuji and Matajis,
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 SB.2.8.4 of Shrimad Bhagavatam:

*śṛṅvataḥ śraddhayā nityaṁ grṇataś ca sva-ceṣṭitam
kālena nātidīrghena bhagavān viśate hṛdi*

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.

HG Kalacakra das Prabhuji has written recently a wonderful mail on 'faith'. That is what is confirmed in this verse by the words '*śṛṅvataḥ śraddhayā nityaṁ*'. We read all mundane newspapers daily -'*nityaṁ*' and listen to all mundane news because we have '*śraddha*' 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 Prabhupada 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 Bhagavatam regularly at the stage when we are still full of material contaminations. "Krishna is such a merciful personality that whenever there is an endeavour on our part, there is excellent reciprocation from Him." That is explained in the next verse SB 2.8.5 as below:

*praviṣṭaḥ karṇa-randhrena svānām bhāva-saroruham
dhunoti śamalam kṛṣṇaḥ salilasya yathā śarat*

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 worshipping) 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 Sb 2.8.6 as below:

*dhautātmā puruṣaḥ kṛṣṇa- pāda-mūlam na muñcati
mukta-sarva-parikleśaḥ pānthaḥ sva-śaraṇam yathā*

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 traveller 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 Sb

2.8.4 and His personal endeavour in Sb 2.8.5 and finally as Prabhupada says in Sb 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

Abu Dhabi.

Re: Touch of the Supreme Lord

Hare Krishna Devotees,

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

It was a wonderful realization by HG Radha Madanmohan Prabhu. Actually Maharaj's 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.

*śrīmad-bhāgavatasyātha śrīmad-bhāgavataḥ sadā
svarupam ekam evāsti sac-cid-ānanda 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
Chennai.

Touch of the Supreme Lord

Dear Devotees,

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

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 HG Radha Madanmohan Prabhujī. I myself had the fortunate association of HG Radha Madanmohan Prabhujī 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,

*gajendro bhagavat-sparśād vimukto 'jñāna-bandhanāt
prāpto bhagavato rūpaṁ pīta-vāsāś catur-bhujaḥ*

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. "**

HG Radha Madanmohan 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 and Srila Gurudev,
Kalacakra Krsna das.

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