

## Real Calamity and Real Prosperity

**Date:** 01 Feb 2019

**Author:** Kalacakra Krsna das

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

While browsing through our spiritual master's diary, I came across a very simple and profound verse written by him in one of the pages. The verse goes like this:

*vipado naiva vipadaḥ sampado naiva sampadaḥ  
vipadaḥ vismaran viṣṇoḥ sampadam nārāyana smṛtiḥ*

A rough translation is as follows:

**(What we consider as) 'calamity' is actually not a calamity and (what we consider as) 'prosperity' is actually not prosperity. Real calamity is forgetfulness of Krishna and real prosperity is remembrance of Krishna.**

Such a simple verse but carries a very deep message! All our life we keep worrying about so many situations, circumstances but in reality the situation, people or circumstances are not actually dangerous, but our state of mind if it is not remembering Krishna or being absorbed in His service, that is when it is really a disaster. Similarly we might have earned so much wealth, name and fame by our hard labor which is nice, but if such prosperity does not lead us to remember and grateful to the one (Krishna) who is its actual owner and enjoyer, then it is in reality a source of danger only.

Kunti Maharani rightly points this out in her earnest prayer to Lord Krishna in SB 1.8.25:

*vipadaḥ santu tāḥ śaśvat tatra tatra jagad-guro  
bhavato darśanam yat syād apunar bhava-darśanam*

**I wish that all those calamities would happen again and again so that we could see You again and again, for seeing You means that we will no longer see repeated births and deaths.**

It takes a paradigm shift to understand what is actual prosperity and what is actual calamity. We need to shift from a self-centric thinking to Krishna-centric thinking and it is a lot of hard work, if we try to do it on our own. But it is very simple if we simply surrender to a bona fide spiritual master, accept him as our heart and soul and serve him all our life, this paradigm shift is very easy.

Dhruva Maharaj did it simply by listening to the instructions of his spiritual master Srila Narada Muni. Initially his thinking was all about his own insult and hence he was meditating on how to avenge his step mother and brother. But by simply following the merciful instructions of his mother and his guru with great determination, he could move the 'center of service' from himself to Krishna.

Let us sincerely pray at the lotus feet of our beloved spiritual master, follow in the footsteps of these great Mahajanas and understand what is real calamity and what is real prosperity in our life.

Thank you very much.

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

## Krishna - The Most Possessive Lord - Part 1

**Date:** 02 Feb 2019

**Author:** Sharadha devi dasi

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

Possessiveness is a quality which is associated with love and attachment to a person or a materialistic thing. All of us in this world are possessive of something - it could be power, money, relationships, etc. In the shastras it is said that every quality in this materialistic world is only a perverted reflection of the spiritual world. So even in the spiritual kingdom this quality of possessiveness must be existing. The possessor of all good qualities is the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna and in this Granthraj offering with all your blessings, I am trying to attempt to relish the quality of Lord's possessiveness of His devotees.

From the sequence of the following slokas from BG 1.12 and 1.15,

*tasya sañjanayan harṣam kuru-vṛddhaḥ pitāmahaḥ  
simha-nādam vinadyoccaiḥ śaṅkham dadhmau pratāpavān  
pāñcajanyaṁ hṛṣīkeśo devadattam dhanañ-jayaḥ  
pauṇḍram dadhmau mahā-śaṅkham bhīma-karmā vṛkodaraḥ*

**Then Bhiṣhma, the great valiant grandsire of the Kuru dynasty, the grandfather of the fighters, blew his conchshell very loudly, making a sound like the roar of a lion, giving Duryodhana joy.**

**Lord Krishna blew His conchshell, called Pancajanya; Arjuna blew his, the Devadatta; and Bhima, the voracious eater and performer of herculean tasks, blew his terrific conchshell, called Paundra.**

These are the 12th to 15th sloka from the first chapter of the Bhagavad Gita. From the previous verses of Duryodhana (1.3-1.11), we understand that Dhṛstadyumna is the Commander in Chief for the Pandavas and the Great Mahajan Bhismadev is the Senapati for the Kaurava party. Duryodhana is highly political and he tries to evaluate and inform to his guru Dronacharya about the great warriors in the battlefield both from the side of Pandavas and Kauravas. Hearing all this patiently, Bhismadev the senapati of Kauravas blows the conchshell in one way to pacify Duryodhana or Bhismadeva being a pure devotee must have tried to stop Duryodhana blowing his own trumpet. After this the Kaurava army conchshells, drums were all sounded creating a tumultuous sound announcing that they are ready for the war.

Logically speaking in the Pandavas side, Dhṛstadyumna being the Senapati should have blown the conchshell as per the hierarchy but he did not blow the conch. Next in line Yudhishtira Maharaj being the eldest brother could have blown the conch in reciprocation to Bhismadev's conchshell. Even that did not happen. We can argue that Yudhishtira Maharaj always was very saintly and polite in nature and hence he did not blow the conch. How was that the most aggressive Bhima who was waiting to destroy Duryodhana also silent? Bhima also did not blow the conchshell as soon as Bhismadev blew the conch. It is so surprising that Bhima did not react immediately.

In deed it was our Bhaktavatsala, Pandavapriya, the most possessive Lord Krishna who blew the conch first from the Pandava's side. He blew the transcendental conchshell to declare saying that He was ready for the fight to protect His devotees. na me bhakta pranasyati - My devotees will never perish.

Krishna's agreed to play the role of only a chariot driver in the war and He will neither fight nor support either party. Then why did Krishna who does every role so perfectly blow the conch which is against the protocol? (Of course as Supreme Lord, He is beyond all protocols). Bhishmadev's chariot driver did not blow the conch. Then why did Krishna blow the conch?

This is because the Lord is very possessive of His devotees. The Lord will not tolerate if His pure devotees are in trouble and will do anything to protect them.

Lord Krishna tells in Srimad Bhagavatam 9.4.63,

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca  
aham bhakta-parādhīno hy asvatantra iva dvija  
sādhubhir grasta-hṛdayo bhaktair bhakta-jana-priyaḥ*

**The Supreme Personality of Godhead said to the brahmaṇa: I am completely under the control of My devotees. Indeed, I am not at all independent. Because My devotees are completely devoid of material desires, I sit only within the cores of their hearts. What to speak of My devotee, even those who are devotees of My devotee are very dear to Me.**

The *bhakta-jana-priyaḥ* in word to word meaning Srila Prabhupada translates it as - *I am dependent not only on My devotee but also on My devotee's devotee (the devotee's devotee is extremely dear to Me).*

This is one of the most soothing phrases in the entire literature of Srimad Bhagavatam - the Best discount that Lord has extended to all practicing devotees. Somehow by Gurukrpa, we are within the spiritual jurisdiction of Lord Krishna because we are in the Parampara of Srila Prabhupada and we can be rest assured that the Lord is also possessive of us if we are sincere in our spiritual endeavour.

Krishna willing, we shall continue some more nectarean qualities of the Lord's possessiveness.

Hare Krishna.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Sharadha devi dasi

Bangalore.

## Leadership and Dharma - Part 7

**Date:** 03 Feb 2019

**Author:** Amogha-drk Krsna das

Dear Devotees,

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled, "Leadership and Dharma", wherein we discussed Vedic knowledge and dharma. In today's offering, implications of not following dharma will be witnessed through the lens of Ramayana.

The word dharma has multifaceted usages, as seen in, 1) The Four Vedas, 2) Itihasa-Puranas and 3) Dharmasastras.

In our previous introduction to dharma, we focused on,

1) The philosophy of how dharma upholds and nourishes God's creation, both individually and cosmologically, and therefore oblations of sacrifice into the fire of dharma is man's duty. These are teachings of the Four Vedas, such as the Rig and Atharva-veda.

2) The teachings of the Itihasa-Puranas (viz. the Fifth Veda, the historical records) focus on practical stories on how to do things (i.e. *dharma*) according to personal duty (*sva-dharma*) and the will of the Lord (*para-dharma*), and also examples of not following dharma (i.e. *adhharma*) and the consequences thereof (i.e. *karma*).

3) The Dharmashastra's main bulk of description is of duties for proper Vedic community (*varnasrama-dharma*), and laws for punishing adharmic actions.

While each of these groups encompasses each other's usages, as well as ultimately conveying the highest dharma (*para-dharma*) as devotional service in surrender to the Lord, still the main focus differs. That's why the Itihasa-Puranas, headed by the Bhagavatam, Mahabharata and Ramayana, are hailed by sages of the Vedas such as Narada to be the chief, because they focus on the *para-dharma* of self-surrender (*Śaraṇāgati*).

The Ramayana employs a teacher's tool in showing how not to do things, in the example of Ravana's adharmic leadership. Externally speaking, Ravana was most successful:

He achieved the power of 'Indratva' (Indra's position); protected by powerful kinsmen, he enjoyed heaven with wives in a golden city (Lanka); highly intelligent and practical in the arts of kingship and Vedic knowledge; he expertly performed Vedic rituals and austerities for ten-thousand years, attracting Brahma to boon him god-like influence. His only fault was his demoniac character; his envious mimicking of God as the enjoyer of the world, made him kidnap Sita, the wife of Lord Rama. It is to be noted that a well-educated fool is far worse than an uneducated fool. While the uneducated got limited intelligence for influencing others, the educated fool's intelligence may serve to misguide society at large. Take the example of Darwin, who influenced society at large to take to the ways of monkeys, by claiming monkeys as man's progenitor through complex speculative theories. If Darwin had not been a mental speculator, but applied his intelligence in Krishna's service, he would have been the best of scientists.

Therefore we must learn to discriminate between personality and character; one may be an opulent personality, but if one's character is envious, such opulences become like jewels on the hoods of a deadly cobra (*maṇinā bhūṣitaḥ sarpaḥ*). Although looking good with jewels, the snake is a source of fear. Therefore, when Hanuman got the darshan of Ravana's splendor, sitting majestically with his mountainous body of twenty arms and ten faces on a jeweled throne, attired with luxurious apparels, jewels and garlands, attributed with all the features of a king like Indra, he exclaimed, "Alas! This king of demons possesses all wonderful symptoms of body, courage, strength, splendour and so on." Ramayana, Sundara Kanda 49.17-18,

*yadi adharmo na balavān syāt ayam rakṣaseśvaraḥ  
syāt ayam sura lokasya saśakrasya api raksitā*

**Perhaps if Ravana had not been a demon so strong in unrighteousness (adharma), he would have been a wonderful leader; a protector even of the celestials in heaven, including Indra!**

Krishna willing, we'll explore the dharmic leadership of Lord Rama in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Amogha-drk Krsna das

ISKCON Norway.

## Mutual Respect, Care And Concern - Part 1

**Date:** 04 Feb 2019

**Author:** Vaijayantimala devi dasi

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

In the very recent Granthraj offering, HG Sharada devi dasi mathaji had very beautifully mentioned how the possessive nature of the Lord is our greatest boon and she had referred to the following verse from Srimad Bhagavatam 9.4.63,

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca*  
*aham bhakta-parādhīno hy asvatantra iva dvija*  
*sādhubhir grasta-hṛdayo bhaktair bhakta-jana-priyaḥ*

**The Supreme Personality of Godhead said to the brahmana: I am completely under the control of My devotees. Indeed, I am not at all independent. Because My devotees are completely devoid of material desires, I sit only within the cores of their hearts. What to speak of My devotee, even those who are devotees of My devotee are very dear to Me.**

The *bhakta-jana-priyaḥ* in word to word meaning Srila Prabhupada translates it as - I am dependent not only on My devotee but also on My devotee's devotee (the devotee's devotee is extremely dear to Me).

Mataji had very wonderfully mentioned that this is one of the most soothing phrases in the entire literature of Srimad Bhagavatam - the Best discount that Lord has extended to all practicing devotees.

By serving the devotees of the Lord's devotees we can please Lord. So how important it is to have genuine, care and friendly relationship with all of them? It is said that familiarity breeds contempt and this is very true as we many times don't realise the value of devotee association and take them for granted, and behave in a very neglectful manner. The following pastime from the life of Srila Ramanujacharya makes us understand the value of this.

Once Srila Ramanujacharya wanted to see the holy shrine of Sri Saila. So he set off with his disciples from Sri Rangam, all chanting the holy name of Lord Hari together. At the end of the first day of the journey, they stopped for the night in the town of Dehali. On the next day they walked as far as the village of Astasahasra. Here there lived two of Ramanuja's disciples, Yajnes and Varadacharya. Intending to pass the night at the house of Yajnes, who was a wealthy merchant, Yatiraj sent two of his followers ahead to convey the news of his imminent arrival. When he learned of this from them, Yajnes was delighted and immediately began to see to all the arrangements necessary for receiving the party of pilgrims. However, so absorbed was he in all these activities that Yajnes completely neglected to see to the comfort of the two tired messengers, who were left alone without being offered so much as a glass of water. Becoming unhappy at this mistreatment, they returned to Ramanujacharya and reported to him everything that had taken place. Being most displeased to hear how his disciple had failed to show proper respect to Vaishnava guests, Yatiraj decided he would go instead to the house of Varadacharya.

Having waited expectantly for Ramanuja's arrival, Yajnes had eventually learned that the party of pilgrims had gone instead to the house of the poor Brahmin, Varadacharya. Thinking that he must have committed some grave offense and displeased his guru, he had gone there feeling depressed at heart. Gently and with affection, Yatiraj raised Yajnes to his feet and said, "Is this unhappiness due to my not coming to your house? The reason for this was the offense that you made to two exalted Vaishnavas by neglecting them. There is no higher dharma than rendering service to the Vaishnavas, and in this you have failed." Being humbled by this chastisement from his spiritual master, Yajnes replied in a voice choked with tears, "This thoughtless behavior of mine was not due to the vanity of wealth. Rather it was my exultation and eagerness to serve you that made me so neglectful." Ramanuja then consoled this repentant and

simple-hearted devotee by promising to be his guest on a later occasion.

From this pastime, we understand how the spiritual master wants us to have mutually respectful dealings with each other and concern for each other.

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

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

## Mutual Respect Care And Concern - Part 2

**Date:** 05 Feb 2019

**Author:** Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in conclusion of the previous offering titled, "**Mutual Respect Care and Concern**" wherein we were seeing how Guru and Krishna are pleased when we serve the devotees, have mutual friendly dealings with all living entities. Now we shall see further.

When a devotee is going through physical and mental difficulties, many times out of our thoughtless nature and ignorance, we fail to show our concern, but instead chastise them as being in Maya, without caring for the real difficulty they are going through. What to talk of other devotees, sometimes we completely forget that our own family members are also servants of Krishna and even if we go out and help others in the world, many times we become so very neglectful of the near and dear, on account of too much familiarity and "taking for granted" attitude.

Srila Prabhupada was so caring to his devotees. On the first Gaura Purnima festival the only existing building was not yet finished. The first night that the devotees were there Srila Prabhupada got up in the middle of the night to look in each room to see if each devotee was properly taken care of, to see if everyone had a mosquito net. He would also ensure that there was prasadam for all of them and when they were getting sick he was very concerned about their health.

In Vrindavana, during his last months on the planet, Srila Prabhupada was so sick that he couldn't even walk. When he had to go upstairs two British devotees would pick him up and would carry him in his chair. One of these devotees had a boil in his foot, and once, while he was carrying Srila Prabhupada, something hit the boil. The devotee said, "Oh!" and tried to hide it, but Srila Prabhupada understood. Srila Prabhupada could not eat for months and had lost so much weight. His body was only bones. In this state most people would think about themselves. What was a little boil for a big, strong, young devotee, in comparison with Srila Prabhupada's condition? Still, Srila Prabhupada asked, "What is your problem?" "No problem, Srila Prabhupada, no problem" said the disciple. But Srila Prabhupada insisted, "No, no, please, tell me", and then he saw the boil and told him exactly what medicine to put. He told him to take the leaf of a certain tree, put it in mustard oil, boil it, and apply this at least three times a day. The next day, when that devotee was carrying Srila Prabhupada upstairs, Srila Prabhupada asked, "How is your foot? Let me see." And for the next several days, until the boil was completely cured, Srila Prabhupada would inquire with attention and concern. The devotee felt, "Srila Prabhupada is so concerned with such an insignificant disciple like myself. I am not a big preacher or anything like that."

Our beloved Gurudev is a personification of genuine love and care for all. So from these great Vaishnavas we can learn that having mutual respect, care and concern for all living entities is important as everyone are part and parcel of Supreme Lord. That's why in Srimad Bhagavatam 1.19.16, repenting for his offending Shamika rshi Parikshit Maharaj prays,

*punaś ca bhūyād bhagavaty anante  
ratiḥ prasaṅgaś ca tad-āśrayeṣu  
mahatsu yām yām upayāmi sṛṣṭim  
maitry astu sarvatra namo dvijebhyaḥ*



**Again, offering obeisances unto all you brahmanas, I pray that if I should again take my birth in the material world I will have complete attachment to the unlimited Lord Krishna, association with His devotees and friendly relations with all living beings.**

I very humbly seek my apologies for having missed all the opportunities for expressing my love for Krishna through serving the Vaishnavas who are in difficulty and may good sense prevail upon me.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

## Let Go to Let In The Lord - Part 1

**Date:** 06 Feb 2019

**Author:** Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

On account of the bodily conception of life, it becomes very difficult to forgive those who do wrong to us in one way or the other. We see that there are so many instances of revenge taking in the pages of the scriptures, but ultimately it all proves to be a waste of time and energy, thus becoming a great impediment to our spiritual progress which is the main aim of life. The idea of taking revenge involves us in a lot of negativity and the first harm is to ourselves on account of this.

In the pages of Srimad Bhagavatam, we see that Janamejaya, the son of Parikshit, became very angry when he received news of his father's death, and he began a sacrificial performance for the purpose of destroying all the snakes. Even though Takshaka received protection from Indra, he nevertheless became attracted by the mantras and was about to fall into the fire. Seeing this, Brhaspati, the son of Angira rishi, came and advised Maharaja Janamejaya that Takshaka could not be killed because he had drunk the nectar of the demigods. Furthermore, Angira said that all living entities must enjoy the fruits of their past activities. Therefore the king should give up this sacrifice. Janamejaya was thus convinced by the words of Brhaspati and stopped his sacrifice.

In Mahabharata we see this in the relationship between Drona and Drupada which went on never ending. Again in the pages of Srimad Bhagavatam we see that Dhruva Maharaj who could see the Lord face to face in his very young age, himself was overcome by this mood of revenge, that when he came to know that a Yaksha is responsible for the death of his step brother Uttama, he started killing all the yakshas and later Svayambhuva Manu advises Dhruva in a very wonderful manner and asks Dhruva to stop being angry and turn the attention to the Supreme Lord which alone will destroy our illusory misunderstandings. Even in the very beginning when Dhruva was insulted by his step mother Suruci, his mother Suniti gives a very beautiful advice for us to always contemplate in Srimad Bhagavatam 4.8.17,

*māmaṅgalaṁ tāta pareṣu maṁsthā  
bhunkte jano yat para-duḥkhas tat*

**My dear son, don't wish for anything inauspicious for others. Anyone who inflicts pains upon others suffers himself from that pain.**

There is another beautiful story of Dadhichi muni which makes us understand the value of this statement in Srimad Bhagavatam by Suniti mata. Krishna willing, we shall see in the ensuing offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

## Let Go to Let In The Lord - Part 2

**Date:** 07 Feb 2019

**Author:** Vaijayantimala devi dasi

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled, "Let Go to Let in The Lord" on wasting our mental energy in seeking revenge. Herein we see the story of Sage Dadhici.

In Srimad Bhagavatam we are introduced to Sage Dadhici in the Sixth canto when Indra wanted to kill Vrtrasura. After Vishvarupa, the spiritual master of Indra was killed, his father, Tvashta, performed a sacrifice to kill King Indra. Unfortunately, if mantras are chanted irregularly, they yield an opposite result. This happened when Tvashta performed this yajna. While performing the sacrifice to kill Indra, Tvashta chanted a mantra to increase Indra's enemies, but because he chanted the mantra wrong, the sacrifice produced an asura named Vrtrasura, of whom Indra was the enemy. When Vrtrasura was generated from the sacrifice, his fierce features made the whole world afraid, and his personal effulgence diminished even the power of the demigods. Finding no other means of protection, the demigods began to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the enjoyer of all the results of sacrifice, who is supreme throughout the entire universe.

Being pleased with the demigods, the Supreme Personality of Godhead advised them to approach sage Dadhici to beg him for the bones of his own body. Dadhici would comply with the request of the demigods, and with the help of his bones, Vrtrasura could be killed. Following the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the demigods approached Dadhici Muni and begged for his body. Dadhici Muni gave up his gross body remembering the Supreme Personality Of Godhead. With the help of Vishvakarma, the demigods then prepared a thunderbolt or Vajrayudha from Dadhici's bones.

There is a very interesting story on how Dadhici muni's body became so strong as to enable Vajrayudha to be made out of it. Krishna willing, we shall see this in the ensuing offering.

Thank you very much.  
Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,  
Vaijayantimala devi dasi  
Abu Dhabi.

### Let Go to Let In The Lord - Part 3

**Date:** 08 Feb 2019

**Author:** Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled, "Let Go to Let In The Lord " wherein we saw how we waste our mental energy in seeking revenge. We were trying to meditate on the life of sage Dadhichi. Herein we see the interesting story behind the bodily strength of Sage Dadhichi.

Once sage Dadhichi was asked to safeguard the weapons of the devas, as they were unable to match the mysterious arts being employed by the asuras to obtain them. Sage Dadhichi agreed to the proposal to keep the weapons with him. But when his wife Swarcha heard this, she was not at all pleased. She was very thoughtful and she said, "You have done something which is improper. One should not accept responsibility for someone else's property, especially if you are an ascetic and has no material possession to own. Moreover you have agreed to safeguard the weapons of the Devas and does this not mean that those who are the enemies of the devatas will look upon you also as an enemy? And what are you going to do if something happens to the weapons? You will be blamed for that."

Dadhichi muni said, "Your points are well taken. But I didn't think of them before and I have already given the word to them and I can't go back on it now." A hundred years had gone and the devatas did not come back to collect the weapons. The weapons began to lose their luster. Sage Dadhichi did not know how the energy of the weapons can be preserved. He washed them with the holy water and the energy of the weapons got dissolved in the water. Sage Dadhichi then drank that water. Then we see that Dadhichi gave up his life to enable Vajrayudha to be made out of his bones.

But when his wife saw that her husband has given up his life like this, she was overcome by sorrow and wanted to immolate herself. But she was pregnant at that time and so she waited till the baby was delivered. Then she handed over the baby to a pippala or fig tree for rearing and she gave up her life. Since he was brought up by the pippala tree, this son of Dadhichi came to be called Pippalada and he was given nectar by Chandra or moon god for strength. When Pippalada grew up, he came to know about the story of his parents and how they lost their lives. He blamed the devatas for the death of his parents and he wanted to seek revenge. Chandra devata advised him that he is too young and first he should become learned and well versed in the usage of weapons. So he asked him to seek the blessings of Lord Shiva.

Pippalada pleased lord Shiva and Lord Shiva asked him what boon he wants. Pippalada asked for the boon that he should be able to destroy the devatas. Lord Shiva asked him to do austerities to see Lord Shiva's third eye. By performing severe austerities he could see the third eye and from there a demon appeared and he asked what Pippalada wants. Pippalada's mind was always thinking of revenge and thus overcome with so much negativity. Then he asked the demon to kill the devatas who are responsible for his parent's death and hence are his enemies. The demon immediately started attacking Pippalada himself. When he asked why, the demon replied that, "*You have been nurtured by Chandra devata which means you are a devata also, which means you are also to be killed.*" Pippalada thus saw the back firing of things. As Suniti mata says in Srimad Bhagavatam 4.8.17 to Dhruva Maharaj,

*māmaṅgalaṁ tāta pareṣu maṁsthā  
bhunkte jano yat para-duḥkhas tat*

**My dear son, don't wish for anything inauspicious for others. Anyone who inflicts pains upon others suffers himself from that pain.**

Then the story goes that Pippalada sought the shelter of Lord Shiva to save himself from the demon and the devatas also sought shelter of Lord Shiva for protection from Pippalada. So Lord Shiva advised Pippalada that there is no use seeking revenge against the devatas for the death of his parents. Everything happens according to the laws of Karma and hence he should not be wasting his efforts and time in seeking revenge forgetting the supreme goal of our life. This will only lead to further entanglement in this material world. Thus Pippalada listened to Lord Shiva's advice and stopped seeking revenge. Later we see that he became the author of Prashna Upanishad and a main teacher of Atharva veda thus turning his life into a positive contribution.

Herein we have to understand the way his selfless father Sage Dadhici acted and it is a great lesson for us and Krishna willing we shall see that in the ensuing offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

## Let Go to Let In The Lord - Part 4

**Date:** 09 Feb 2019

**Author:** Vaijayantimala devi dasi

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

This is in conclusion of the previous offerings titled, "Let Go to Let in the Lord" wherein we were meditating on the futility of keeping the idea of revenge. Herein we see the story of sage Dadhici and his broad heartedness. Now let us see further.

This story of Dadhici muni is mentioned by Srila Prabhupada in his purport to Srimad Bhagavtam 6.9.52, "*The great saint Dadhici had perfect knowledge of how to perform fruitive activities, and he had advanced spiritual knowledge as well. Knowing this, the Ashvini-kumaras once approached him and begged him to instruct them in spiritual science (brahma-vidya). Dadhici Muni replied, "I am now engaged in arranging sacrifices for fruitive activities. Come back some time later." When the Ashvini-kumaras left, Indra, the King of heaven, approached Dadhici and said, "My dear Muni, the Ashvini-kumaras are only physicians. Please do not instruct them in spiritual science. If you impart the spiritual science to them despite my warning, I shall punish you by cutting off your head."*"

After warning Dadhici in this way, Indra returned to heaven. The Ashvini-kumaras, who understood Indra's desires, returned and begged Dadhici for brahma-vidya. When the great saint Dadhici informed them of Indra's threat, the Ashvini kumaras replied, "Let us first cut off your head and replace it with the head of a horse. You can instruct brahma-vidya through the horse's head, and when Indra returns and cuts off that head, we shall reward you and restore your original head." Since Dadhici had promised to impart brahma-vidya to the Ashvini-kumaras, he agreed to their proposal. Therefore, because Dadhici imparted brahma-vidya through the mouth of a horse, this brahma-vidya is also known as Ashvashira.

Later Indra having come to know this, cuts off the head of Dadhici which is now a horse head, and then with the vidya they have learnt, Ashvini kumaras replace the head with his original head.

We find that later, the same Indra who was responsible for cutting off the head of sage Dadhici, comes to him asking for his body to make Vajrayudha. At that time, without having any feeling of revenge, the broad hearted Sage Dadhici voluntarily gave up his life to make weapons out of his body. This is because he perfectly knew that this is the desire and instruction of Lord Vishnu and the sage very submissively took this order of Lord Vishnu to his heart. The sage was very clear in his mind that satisfaction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the supreme perfection of our existence (*saṁsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam*). Any other thing or idea does not matter and there is no use holding on to these mental concoctions. Thus we have to refocus on our higher purpose in order not to hold grudges in our heart. As Sage Kulasekara alwar very beautifully says in his Mukunda Mala stotra 4,

*bhāve bhāve hṛdaya-bhavane bhāvayeyamī bhavantamī*

**I pray to Your lotus feet only so that I may remember You alone in the core of my heart, birth after birth.**

As our beloved Gurudev always says, "*Our heart is meant to be the residence of our dear Lord Shyamasundara. We contaminate it with so many other tendencies that there is no place for the Lord and how can the Lord tolerate His residence being taken over by these contaminations?*"

Let me always remember that the heart is the residence of Lord Krishna and make my best effort to let go all other unwanted tendencies to let in our dear Lord who is the owner of the place.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

## Leadership and Dharma - Part 8

**Date:** 10 Feb 2019

**Author:** Amogha-drk Krsna das

Dear Devotees,

Please accept my humble pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada, All glories to Srila Gurudev!

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled, "Leadership and Dharma", wherein King Ravana served as an example of adharmic leadership. In today's offering, we'll explore the dharmic leadership of Lord Rama.

Lord Rama is known as the *maryādā-purusottama avatar* of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who always by personal example shows the proper behavior or etiquette (*maryādā*) for all us leaders. I say 'all us leaders', since we're all meant to serve as leaders in one capacity or another, in relationship with those who are junior to ourselves. A general human duty (*sāmānya-dharma*) is to lead, help and protect juniors, just as another general duty is to take guidance from seniors. These are irrespective of the specific social statuses (*viśeṣa-dharma*) of varna and ashrama. Lord Rama practiced both *sāmānya-dharma* and *viśeṣa-dharma* perfectly.

The activities of dharma can be divided into *ācāra* (qualities of behavior), *vyavahāra* (regulatory laws) and *prāyaścitta* (atonement), out of which *ācāra* reigns supreme. Thus the Ramayana's Ayodhya Kanda teaches us ideal leadership by listing the exemplary qualities of Lord Rama.

1. Rama was beautiful in form, courageous and without envy. He was always peaceful in mind and spoke softly. He did not react to hard words spoken by others.
2. Lord Rama, because of his good bent of mind, felt glad by whatever way a good thing is done to him. He did not remember any number of bad things done to him. Whenever he found some time, even while practicing archery, He used to converse with elderly people, elder by way of conduct or wisdom or age or with good-natured people.
3. He was a wise man. He was the first man to initiate a talk. His speech was compassionate. He was valorous. But he was not arrogant of his mighty valor. He was not interested in actions which were not beneficial. He was a scholar. He had no taste in things opposing righteousness. His eloquent speech contained a series of strategies for action. He had a good body. He knew both time and place. He could grasp the essence of things.
4. He was a gentleman. He spoke truth. He was straightforward. He was properly trained by elderly wise men that knew righteousness. He knew the real form of desire, wealth and righteousness. He had good memory power. He had spontaneous wisdom. He had skills in cultural arrangements according to society's customs at that time.
5. He was humble. He did not let his feelings appear outwardly. He kept his thoughts to himself. He helped others. His anger and pleasure were not wasteful. He knew when to give and when not to give. He had a firm devotion and steadfast mind. He was not stubborn, nor did he speak evil words. He was free from idleness and was ever alert. He recognized his own errors and those of others.
6. He knew the theory and practice of sciences. He understood differences among men. He could discriminate whom to protect and whom to punish. He identified good men and protected them. He knew the ways of getting income and spending, as perceived by economic sciences.
7. He never remained inactive. He was acquainted with fine arts for entertainment. He knew how to distribute wealth. He was efficient in riding and taming elephants and horses.



8. He had no jealousy. He had conquered anger. He had no arrogance. He did not humiliate any living being.

9. Lord Rama, by his virtues, was a source of happiness to all the people and a source of joy to his father. As the sun shines with his rays, He was shining with his virtues.

Krishna willing, we'll explore more on Lord Rama's leadership in the following offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Amogha-drk Krsna das

ISKCON Norway.

## Leadership and Dharma - Part 9

**Date:** 11 Feb 2019

**Author:** Amogha-drk Krsna das

Dear Devotees,

Please accept my humble pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada, all glories to Srila Gurudev!

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled, "Leadership and Dharma", wherein we meditated on the qualities of Lord Rama, the personification of dharma (*rāmo vighrahavān dharmah*). Let us continue further. Ramayana 3.37.13 says,

*rāmo vighrahavān dharmah sādhuḥ satya parākramah  
rājā sarvasya lokasya devānām iva vāsavaḥ*

**Lord Rama is the embodiment of dharma and a perfect gentleman. Just like Indra is the ruler of gods, Rama is the ruler of all people, equipped with truthfulness as His might.**

One famous episode in which Rama shows His vow of truthfulness, is when the brother of Ravana, Vibhishana, comes to surrender to Rama (Vibhishana Sharanagati).

Lord Rama asked his five leading companions in the war against Ravana, for their opinion about whether accepting Vibhishana or not. Four of them were suspicious and did not readily want to accept Vibhishana on their team. "He is a spy", one of them said. "He will use the military tactic known as divide and conquer (*bheda*)." Another said, "By entering our camp as a seeming friend, he will later confuse us from inside by creating dissention (*bheda*) amongst us." Only Hanuman accepted Vibhishana, because Hanuman had one of the leadership skills of being able to read a person's motives from his outward appearance. "Nobody can hide their evil motives completely from a learned person", Hanuman said, "And I can see that Vibhishana comes without evil intent. He simply wants adharmic Ravana to be dismantled from the throne of Lanka, so that Vibhishana himself can take over the rule, now in a dharmic manner."

Vibhishana came in the mood of surrender by openly admitting his fallen position as having found no other option but escaping from his demoniac background in the service of Ravana, the enemy of Rama. Thus Rama was clear about accepting him from the very beginning. Rama declared, referring to scriptures on dharma, that it doesn't matter even the character of the enemy, if he surrenders sincerely, a truthful leader should not shun Raja dharma's injunction on having mercy on surrendered souls. Ramayana 6.18.33,

*sakṛd eva prapanno yas tavāsmīti ca yācate  
abhayaṁ sarvadā tasmai dadāmy etad vratam mama*

**It is My vow that if one only once seriously surrenders unto Me, saying 'My dear Lord, from this day I am Yours,' and prays to Me for courage, I shall immediately award courage to that person, and he will always remain safe from that time on.**

Thus Rama showed another leadership strength of ignoring the majority view and accepting Hanuman's view, simply because Hanuman's view resounded more with dharma. Another of the most famous truthful acts of Rama was his choice of banishing His wife Sita to the forest on the plea of unyielding obedience to His vow of dharmic rulership (*rājā dharmā*). At that time, in Treta-yuga, a King was considered being threatened by adharmic reactions if his wife had been sullied by even the minutest company of another man. Since *maryādā Purusottama Rama* had come to set an example of the topmost follower of dharmic restrictions (*maryādā*), He chose dharma or impeccable duty, sacrificing His personal family enjoyment of wife, children etc., for the sake of protecting His people from any tendency towards bewilderment about the purity of His own position. Thus Rama fulfilled the leadership quality of being able to sacrifice

his own happiness for the sake of the well being of others or society in general (*para-dukhā-dukhī*).

Krishna willing, we'll meditate more on the qualities of Lord Rama in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Amogha-drk Krsna das

ISKCON Norway.

## Understanding the Intention Behind Words

**Date:** 12 Feb 2019

**Author:** Vaijayantimala devi dasi

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

The power of the words we speak, can never be underestimated. It is said that words hurt more than swords. In Srimad Bhagavatam 4.8.36 we see that Dhruva tells Narada muni,

*surucyā durvaco-bāṇair na bhinne śrayate hṛdi*

**My stepmother, Suruci, has pierced my heart with her harsh words. Therefore your valuable instruction does not stand in my heart.**

What to talk of those who are inimical to us, life's ways are such that no matter how nice people are, when they are in some very difficult or painful situations, they will speak some hurting words and when these come from our near and dear ones, it becomes very difficult to take them and sometimes it permanently affects our relationships. In these situations, if only we can take a pause and understand that these harsh words were spoken because they were in some difficulty and it was not their intention to hurt us, then the relationship could be saved.

In Srimad Ramayana we find that when Maricha who took the form of the golden deer was chased by Lord Rama, the demon imitated Rama's voice calling to Lakshmana and Sita for help. On hearing this call, Sita mata was overwhelmed with great anxiety and urged Lakshmana to go to Rama's rescue. However Lakshmana realizing that it is not Rama's voice, said that it was only the demon imitating and Lord Rama was safe and he could not leave from taking care of Sita mata. But Sita mata in her great anxiety about Lord Rama's safety, accused Lakshmana of having ill intentions towards her. Lakshmana had always revered Sita as his mother and these words from her were like fierce sharp arrows. But later we see that Lakshmana never kept brooding on these words or referred to them, after all the war was over and Sita mata came back. This is because, Lakshmana understood that those were spoken out of anxiety to save the Lord who was dear to both of them. There was no ill intention behind that speaking and it was spoken out of spiritual anxiety for the safety of the Lord.

In the same way we also find that Vibhishana the younger brother of Ravana comes to take shelter of Lord Rama and at that time Sugriva and other monkeys became highly agitated, thinking that Vibhishana is coming to kill Lord Rama. Srimad Ramayana says that they started picking up trees and stones in order to kill Vibhishana. They also speak very strong words condemning him. But we find that Vibhishana remained very cool and he stood in the sky itself and he spoke to Sugriva. Herein Srimad Ramayan described Vibhishana as Maha praajna meaning very intelligent and Mahaan meaning very great. Srimad Ramayana 6.17.11,

*sa uvāca ca mahāprājñaḥ svareṇa mahatā mahān  
sugrīvam tāms ca samprekṣya khaṣṭha eva vibhīṣaṇaḥ*

**That great and highly intelligent Vibhishana, halting in the sky itself, saw Sugriva and those monkeys and spoke to them in a loud voice.**

Then Vibhishana speaks to the same Sugriva who spoke harsh words and told him that he is the brother of Ravana and explained how he tried to advise Ravana to hand over Sita to Lord Rama and how he was not listening to him and being humiliated by him how he had left his wife and children and came to take shelter of Lord Rama. Even in the presence of Lord Rama, he requested Sugriva to inform Lord Rama immediately that he has come seeking Rama's

shelter. We find that the reason why he is referred to as highly intelligent and great is because, he knew that it is not right to seek the shelter of the Lord directly but only through the Lord's dearest servant and hence he appealed to Sugriva. Also, even though Sugriva spoke harshly, Vibhishana did not become angry or hurt because Vibhishana understood that Sugriva and the monkeys were in anxiety regarding protection for their dear Lord Rama. Overwhelmed with that anxiety, they spoke these words with the only intention to protect Lord Rama. Vibhishana could understand this and later he was given the shelter by Lord Rama.

Let us pray for the intelligence and maturity to understand that words spoken in tension sometimes by our loved ones, have no ill intention behind them and thus learn not to become angry or hurt so that we will not end up spoiling a valuable relationship.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Vaijayantimala devi dasi

Abu Dhabi.

## Freedom from Anxiety

**Date:** 13 Feb 2019

**Author:** Sudarshana devi dasi

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

In Srimad Bhagavatam verse 1.6.34, while summarising the simple way to come out of despondency, Srila Narada Muni says to Srila Vyasadev the simple and sublime method of overcoming the miseries of this world. Narada Muni says,

*etad dhy ātura-cittānām mātrā-sparśecchayā muhuḥ  
bhava-sindhu-plavo dr̥ṣṭo hari-caryānuvarṇanam*

**It is personally experienced by me that those who are always full of cares and anxieties due to desiring contact of the senses with their objects can cross the ocean of nescience on a most suitable boat-the constant chanting of the transcendental activities of the Personality of Godhead.**

The words, "*ātura-cittānām*" means, "Always full of cares and anxieties". In this world we are always worried and anxious. Why? *mātrā-sparśecchayā* - *mātrā* means the object of sense enjoyment, *sparśa* means senses and *icchayā* means the desires. Due to our desire to enjoy the objects of sense-enjoyment through their contact with the senses, we are always anxious. Lord Krishna says in Gita verse 5.22,

*ye hi saṁsparśa-jā bhogā duḥkha-yonaya eva te  
ādy-antavantaḥ kaunteya na teṣu ramate budhaḥ*

**An intelligent person does not take part in the sources of misery, which are due to contact with the material senses. O son of Kunti, such pleasures have a beginning and an end, and so the wise man does not delight in them.**

But unfortunately we get tossed by one desire after another and get drowned in the whirlpool of miseries. How to come out of this whirlpool? Narada Muni guarantees based on his personal experience that this vast ocean of material miseries - *bhava-sindhu* can be overcome by boarding the boat - "*hari-caryānuvarṇanam*" - Constant chanting of the Holy Names of the Lord is the boat or *plavaḥ* which will take us out of the path of material miseries. Srila Prabhupada translates, "*ānuvarṇanam*" as "Constant recitation". By doing this Narada Muni got his spiritual body even in his previous birth.

Srila Prabhupada has nicely translated the word, "*dr̥ṣṭah*" as 'experienced'. So Narada Muni is guaranteeing Vyasadev that constant chanting of Lord's glories alone is the powerful boat which will take us out of the material world. In schools/colleges also we find that experienced teachers would be able to teach the children in a more efficient manner. Experience indeed is the best teacher. Likewise in his previous birth as son of maid-servant, Narada Muni had to undergo so many tribulations. In his childhood itself, he had lost his mother who was his only support. The sages who taught him about devotional service also were not physically around him all the time. The Supreme Lord also gave *darshan* for few moments and then vanished saying that he will no longer get any more *darshan* in this lifetime. But Narada Muni did not get dejected or discouraged. He took shelter of the Holy Names and was always chanting them and wherever he went he gave bhakti .to all whom he met.

May we follow the footsteps of Srila Narada Muni, Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev and always engage our senses in chanting/glorifying the Supreme Lord and thereby become free from all anxieties.

Hare Krishna.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,  
Sudarshana devi dasi.

## Taking the Ultimate Bath - Part 1

**Date:** 14 Feb 2019

**Author:** Amogha-drk Krishna das

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

The scriptures tell us that taking bath daily is a must. *sahasram vihāya snātavyam* - **even if you have 1000 engagements, leave them to take a bath.** Not only its hygiene but also a basic need for performing any Vedic rituals mentioned in the scriptures. But in Kali yuga, this basic hygiene itself is difficult to follow because of the influence of lower modes. So the Bhagavatam says that in Kali yuga one will be qualified to speak on spiritual subjects if he has just taken a bath.

We see that in modern times, taking bath in bathroom is also considered as not a mere activity but a great experience. Hence people like to spend money in decorating the bath rooms with modern fittings, bath tubs and attractive wall decorations in bath room walls and roof and the cost runs into lakhs of rupees and dollars. There are also 3D decorations for the bathroom walls and flooring and all these things are done to enhance the bathing experience. And apartments are built with swimming pools for the same purpose. In olden days, people used to take bath in rivers, lakes and ponds and align the life with nature and a rich experience. So, even now rich people build villas near lakes and rivers and stay there for few days to take bath in river/lakes. This is with respect to taking bath in normal lake/river by which one can get freshness and great relief from scorching weather.

But if we take bath in holy rivers such as Ganga, Yamuna, Cauvery and holy lakes such as brahma tirtha in Kurukshetra and Bhargava tirtha in ahobilam etc., one can get free from many varieties of sins committed in this and previous lives. But taking bath in these holy rivers does not prevent him from committing further sinful activities. In the Yaksha prashna section of the Mahabharata 3.177.1,

The Yaksha asks Yudhishtira - *snānam ca kim param proktam?* "**Which is considered as Ultimate bath?**"

Yudhishtira answers - *snānam mano mala tyāgaḥ* - "**The ultimate bath is removing all contamination in the mind and consciousness.**"

For purifying our mind and consciousness, the scriptures recommend a different kind of bath. The Mahabharata, Santi Parva, 171.50, recommends that one should take bath in the lake of the Supreme Absolute Truth (His name, His form, activities and qualities) and this will purify our consciousness and awaken the love of Godhead dormant in our heart,

*eṣa brahma praviṣṭo 'haṁ grīṣme śītam iva hradam  
śāmyāmi parinirvāmi sukham āse ca kevalam*

**Let me enter into the Supreme Absolute Truth who is like a cool lake in summer and who is tranquil. I will experience pure bliss and tranquility and my hankerings will be quenched by bathing in that lake.**

Krishna willing we shall meditate more on this topic in the subsequent offering.

Hare Krishna.  
Thank you very much.  
Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,  
Narahari Krishna das  
Chennai.



## Taking the Ultimate Bath - Part 2

**Date:** 15 Feb 2019

**Author:** Narahari Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,  
Please accept my dandavat pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev.

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled, "Taking the Ultimate Bath" wherein we saw how the Supreme Lord is like a lake in which one can take bath. We will meditate more on this subject.

Entering into a lake or river especially during the hot summer will relieve us so much from the suffering caused due to heat. In the same way entering into the lake/river of the Lord's glories will relieve us of the heat caused by the three fold miseries (*ādhyātmik, ādhibhautik and ādhidaivik*) called as *tāpa-traya* (three fold miseries). While taking bath in the lake, first one experiences that all the dirt on the body is cleaned. After becoming clean, the lake/river water gives him refreshment and joy. In the same way discussion of the Lord's glories (or taking bath in the Lord's glories) removes all the contamination in our mind and as we become pure, the same lake/river of Lord's glories gives immense joy and ever fresh experience.

The Bhagavata purana 4.7.35 glorifies the Lord as refreshing and purifying river in which everyone should take bath and attain the ultimate perfection of life,

*siddhā ūcuḥ  
ayaṁ tvat-kathā-mṛṣṭa-pīyūṣa-nadyām  
mano-vāraṇaḥ kleśa-dāvāgni-dagdhaḥ  
tṛṣārto 'vagāḍho na sasmāra dāvaṁ  
na niṣkrāmati brahma-sampannavan naḥ*

**Like an elephant that has suffered in a forest fire but can forget all its troubles by entering a river, our minds, O Lord, always merge in the nectarean river of Your transcendental pastimes, and they desire never to leave such transcendental bliss, which is as good as the pleasure of merging in the Absolute.**

Srila Prabhupada explains in the commentary, "*The example is given of the elephant who has suffered in a forest fire and who enters into a river for relief. If persons who are suffering in the forest fire of this material existence will only enter into the nectarean river of the description of the pastimes of the Lord, they will forget all the troubles of the miserable material existence.*"

Today is the auspicious occasion of disappearance day of our beloved Guru Maharaj HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj. He practically demonstrated this fact. Whenever we go to him with all our problems which burns us from within and without, the association of Maharaj either in person or over phone will be so comforting that we will be so much relieved and feel happy and fresh after talking to Him. We will feel like having taken bath in a lake/river of cool water after being scorched in heat. Our beloved Maharaj was able to give us this feeling because He himself was always immersed in the cool lake of the Lord's glories documented in the Srimad Bhagavatam which kept him fresh and joyful. He also induced everyone to take to the serious study of scriptures and chanting the holy names so that we can also take bath in the cool lake of the Lord's glories. After his disappearance also, He continues to keep us away from the heat of material existence by his lectures, instructions and association of His disciples and well wishers. Our heartfelt thanks to Srila Gurudev for his causeless mercy.

We will continue to meditate on this subject in the subsequent offering Krishna willing.

Hare Krishna.  
Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,  
Narahari Krishna das  
Chennai.

### Taking the Ultimate Bath - Part 3

**Date:** 16 Feb 2019

**Author:** Narahari Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhuji and Matajis,  
Please accept my dandavat pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev.

This is in conclusion of the previous offering titled, "Taking the Ultimate Bath" wherein we saw how the Supreme Lord is like a lake in which one can take bath. We will meditate more on this subject.

The great devotee named Kulasekhara Alwar in his famous Mukunda mala stotra, verse 8, compares the Lord to a beautiful lake as follows. My sincere thanks to HG Vaijayanti mataji for reminding me of this verse at the right time,

*kara-caraṇa-saroje kāntiman-netra-mīne  
śrama-muṣi bhujā-vīci-vyākule 'gādha-mārge  
hari-sarasi vigāhyāpīya tejo-jalaughamī  
bhava-maru-parikhinnaḥ kleśam adya tyajāmi*

**The desert of material existence has exhausted me. But today I will cast aside all troubles by diving into the lake of Lord Hari and drinking freely of the abundant waters of His splendor. The lotuses in that lake are His hands and feet, and the fish are His brilliant shining eyes. That lake's water relieves all fatigue and is agitated by the waves His arms create. Its current flows deep beyond fathoming.**

In the purport it is stated, "*In this prayer King Kulasekhara employs an elaborate metaphor comparing the Lord's all-attractive form to a rejuvenating lake. If a devotee dives into that lake and drinks its waters, all his exhaustion from material life will go away. We simply have to plunge into devotional service by hearing about Krishna, chanting His glories, and remembering Him.*"

This is the reason the Lord is called as '*maha hrada*' in the *Viṣṇu-sahasranāma* of Mahabharata, which means 'limitless lake' in which one should always take bath. Another important feature of bathing in a lake or river is that during summer the water will be cool and the same water during winter will be warm and hence will give pleasant sensation in both the seasons. In the same way, whether we are in happy situation or distress materially, immersing in the lake of Lord's glorification will give us spiritual happiness independent of our material condition.

Also in the 3rd canto of Bhagavata purana we hear of the lake called Bindu Sarovar in which Devahuti the mother of Lord Kapila took bath. She was very old and her body became full of wrinkles due to the austerities. But after taking bath in Bindu sarovar, she regained her youthful position. Similarly, by immersing in the lake of Lord Hari, one can regain one's constitutional position as eternal servant of the Lord and attain eternal youthfulness in the spiritual world. So Srila Prabhupada wrote commentaries on the scriptures like Isopanishad, Bhagavad Gita and Bhagavatam which are full of Lord's description and like a limitless spiritual lake/river. He also arranged for discussion of these scriptures in various temples so that one can take the ultimate bath daily in this river/lake and attain perfection of existence.

Like a buffalo takes pleasure in being immersed in lake/river, I pray at the lotus feet of our beloved Gurudev, Srila Prabhupada and the Supreme Lord so that I will get taste for immersing in the lake of Lord Hari.

Hare Krishna.  
Thank you very much.  
Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,  
Narahari Krishna das  
Chennai.

## Leadership and Dharma - Part 10

**Date:** 17 Feb 2019

**Author:** Amogha-drk Krsna das

Dear Devotees,

Please accept my humble pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada, all glories to Srila Gurudev!

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled, "Leadership and Dharma", in which we saw leadership qualities of Lord Rama, such as truthfulness. Now let us see further.

Recently one of the most revered leaders in ISKCON spoke the following during a class we were attending, "**I cannot find anything more despicable or low than a person who says that he will do something and then he doesn't do it.**"

When it comes to truthfulness we are all challenged, especially in this age riddled by deceit and other adharmas. The Itihaasa says, "**When dharma rules over adharma, it is the age of Krita (satya-yuga). When adharma rules over dharma, it is the age of Kali.**"

But sometimes truthfulness per se is not enough. Especially in leadership situations when truth is not readily accepted, one needs to be diplomatic by the four ways of appeasement (*sāma*), *dāna* (giving gifts), *bheda* (causing dissension in the other's camp) and *daṇḍa* (punishment). People in general have a tendency to find faults, and especially so in superiors, such as a leader. Although as per Srimad Bhagavatam verse 4.8.34, we should practice *guṇādhikān mudam lipped* (joy upon seeing a superior), *anukrośam guṇādhamāt* (compassion for juniors) and *maitrīm samānād anvicchen* (friendship with equals), in Kali we tend to practice the opposite. Rivalry with equals, putting juniors down for the sake of advancing one's own superiority, and finding fault with superiors. That's why we need to learn from the expert dealings of Lord Rama in this connection.

**1. Juniors:** When Lord Rama presented the case of surrendered Vibhishana from Ravana's demon camp, His ministers, except for Hanuman, more or less abhorred the idea of accepting him. Now Rama could have, justifiably so, chosen the fourth means of politics called chastisement (*daṇḍa*) to make His subordinates subordinate to Him. But instead, He empowered His subordinates to question His decision, and then by His sweet speech (utilizing the preferable means of conciliation called *sāma*), at the end making them all agreeable to His view. By taking each minister's objection into consideration, everyone felt their opinion had been valued and not prima facia dismissed.

**2. Equals:** In the fifth chapter of Ramayana, Lord Rama's friendship with peers (although He has no equals, He plays that pastime role) is shown. Rama made friends with other Kings, like Sugreeva, and even people of low social status such as Guha. He really showed how to be the sweetest of friends, even going to the extent of killing Vali for the sake of helping Sugreeva get the Kingdom. To Sugreeva He said, "You have done well. It is not easy to find a friend like you especially when I am down. One should rely at all times on a friend." He was not at all in a competition mode. After conquering Kishkindha, He gave it to Sugreeva. Also, when getting to know each other, after learning of Sugreeva's sincerity, Rama showed the ideal way to act as a friend, being magnanimous to apologize for initially having spoken harsh words to Sugreeva (Ramayana, Kishkindha Kandha).

**3. Seniors:** Since the Supreme Lord played the role of a human, He also accepted taking a junior role in front of seniors, like His mother and father, which He always obeyed unhesitatingly. When Rama was asked by Mother Kaikeyi to give up the throne and go to the forest, He immediately accepted the order without blinking an eye. Similarly He obeyed senior Vishvamitra in taking Him out of home as a youngster to kill demons in the sage's service.

Krishna willing we shall continue to meditate further on this topic in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,  
Amogha-drk Krsna das  
ISKCON Norway.

## Leadership and Dharma - Part 11

**Date:** 18 Feb 2019

**Author:** Amogha-drk Krsna das

Dear Devotees,

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled, "Leadership and Dharma", in which we saw Lord Rama's acting according to etiquette. Today we'll discuss Rama's specific style of leadership.

One may classify leadership into two types,

1) **Transactional:** Transactional leadership tries to employ the most efficient techniques of transaction available between leader and follower. Transactional leaders makes people follow their organization by economical, political or psychological rewards, trying to fulfill the current values and needs of both follower and leader in this way. For example, if a car merchant wants his salesmen to increase their sales, he takes good care of them, trying to enthruse their loyalty by encouraging words (*sāma*), promising rewards (*dāna*) like future promotion if they do better, etc. At other times he may threaten them (*daṇḍa*) with future bad prospects such as lower income etc., if they do not increase their performances.

2) **Transformational:** Transformational leadership, on the other hand, downplays techniques and skills for the sake of higher philosophy, values and morality, in seeking to transform or empower followers to become self-inspired assets of beneficial value, not only for the organization but for the world as well. A transformational leader comes up with an inspiring vision for his organization, which serves as a guiding light for developing higher performance in followers and leaders alike. Here thriving of the individual's personal growth in performance of duty is primary, which naturally increases great results as well, which is secondary. Or, plainly speaking, the outcome of 'happiness' is valued higher than the 'results' outcome.

Lord Rama's qualities of leadership are those of a Transformational Leader, viz., being a Change-agent, Courageous, Believer, Value-driven, Life-learner, Difficulty-coper and Visionary.

**i) Change-agent:** Rama changed Lanka from being a demoniac city ruled by Ravana (whom He killed), into a nice city of devotional activities under Vibhishana's rule. Similarly, he altered Kishkinda's throne to become Sugreeva's, from being ruled by Vali, and changed Sugreeva to become a pure devotee in the process.

**ii) Courageous:** In Bhagavad-Gita 18.43 Lord Krishna says, *yuddhe cāpy apalāyanam*, a kshatriya doesn't run away from the battlefield; once taking a stand, he stays there, facing the risk and consequences involved with a brave heart. Whenever Rama had initiated something, He didn't back out of the process. Ramayana tells of Dasharatha's promising to fulfil Kaikeyi's future desire, which became that Rama should be banished from Ayodhya for the sake of brother Bharata's rule, which Rama unblinkingly accepted. When later everyone, including Bharata himself, literally cried to make Rama change his decision, Rama fearlessly protected both His own and Dasharatha's word of honour to Mother Kaikeyi.

**iii) Believer:** Rama believed in people, having a positive approach to them all, irrespective of caste or creed. He readily accepted the service of tribeswoman Shabari and had a discourse with her on bhakti; He believed firmly in the Vanara monkey's military abilities in helping Him conquer Ravana and get back Sita and thus accepted their companionship; and Guha the boatsman, who very nicely served Lord Rama and rowed Him over the Ganga, He established as His good friend.

Krishna willing we shall continue to meditate further on this topic in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Amogha-drk Krsna das

ISKCON Norway.

## Leadership and Dharma - Part 12

**Date:** 19 Feb 2019

**Author:** Amogha-drk Krsna das

Dear Devotees,

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled, "Leadership and Dharma", in which we discussed Lord Rama's qualities as a Transformational Leader, viz., being a,

- i) Change-agent,
- ii) Courageous,
- iii) Believer,
- iv) Value-driven,
- v) Life-learner,
- vi) Difficulty-coper and
- vii) Visionary.

Previously we covered points 1-3, and in the following we will discuss points 4-7.

**IV. Value-driven:** Rama had core values, such as truthfulness, which He never deviated from. For example, in Ramayana's Aranya (forest) Kanda (chapter) (10.18), Rama explained Sita why He needed to go to Dandakaranya for killing demons thus:

*api aham jivitam jahyaam tvaam vaa site sa lakshmanaam  
na tu pratijnaam samshrutya braahmanebhyo visheshatah*

**Having promised (samshrutya) to protect the sages of Dandaka forest, I can give up my own life, even you O Sita, as well as Lakshmana, but I cannot swerve from My promise.**

In Yuddha Kanda (18.33) Lord Rama also showed this value when he accepted surrendered Vibhishana. "I have given my word (*dadāmy etad vrataṁ mama*) that once anyone surrenders to Me (*sakṛd eva prapanno yas*), I will protect him from all fear (*abhayaṁ sarvadā tasmai*)"

**V. Life-learner:** A transformational leader is a life long learner, ever ready to learn from others and find room for improvements. Lord Rama from His very childhood took lessons from Vasishtha Rishi and later rishis like Vishvaamitra, Bharadvaaja, and Agastya, who instructed Him in how to rule Ayodhya kingdom. Lord Rama showed the example that even a perfect leader is ever-ready to rectify himself; when He stopped being angry at the Ocean after hearing the Ocean's argument that His decision to become angry was wrong.

**VI. Difficulty-coper:** Rama faced difficult situations with a cool head. For example when He had to make the painful decision to banish His wife Sita from Ayodhya kingdom. As an ideal king He had to uphold the honour of His dynasty. He needed to set examples for all generation to follow (*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas, tat tad evetaro janaḥ*).



**VII. Visionary:** A leader's vision makes missions with goals to be fulfilled. Lord Rama created a vision for the welfare of Ayodhya and communicated that to His people before exiling for the forest. He also instructed His brother Bharata how to rule Ayodhya in the vision of Rama during Rama's exile. Lord Rama had a vision to rescue His wife Sita from the hands of Ravana, back to Ayodhya, where He would reinstall Themselves as King and Queen. For this end, He gave His monkey army the mission of defeating Ravana's demon army and get Sita back. Inside this mission, goals were set, such as sending out search parties for knowing the whereabouts of Sita, building a bridge to Lanka etc.

With this we conclude our descriptions of Lord Rama's dharmic leadership. Krishna willing we'll discuss transcendental leadership, viz. leadership beyond the boundaries of dharma, starting with the example of Dhruva Maharaja, in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Amogha-drk Krsna das

ISKCON Norway.

## Guru-mukha-padma-vākya

**Date:** 20 Feb 2019

**Author:** Sudarshana devi dasi

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

In Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 1 Chapter 7, we find that the sages of Naimisharanya inquire Suta Goswami on how Vyasadev spent his time after Narada Muni left. We find similar kind of inquiry made by Vyasadev in the 6th chapter wherein he asked Narada Muni as to what he did in the previous birth after the departure of the sages who gave him transcendental knowledge. Here in Bhagavatam is teaching us about what kind of inquiries we should make and also on how we should spend our time - when spiritual master departs. In Srimad Bhagavatam 1.6.26 Narada Muni says,

*nāmāny anantasya hata-trapaḥ paṭhan  
guhyāni bhadrāṇi kṛtāni ca smaran  
gām paryaṭams tuṣṭa-manā gata-sprhaḥ  
kālaṁ pratīkṣan vimado vimatsaraḥ*

**Thus I began chanting the holy name and fame of the Lord by repeated recitation, ignoring all the formalities of the material world. Such chanting and remembering of the transcendental pastimes of the Lord are benedictory. So doing, I traveled all over the earth, fully satisfied, humble and unenvious.**

When Vyasadev was despondent, Narada Muni appeared there and advised him to glorify the Supreme Lord - for such glorification alone can bring bliss to one and all. Suta Goswami says in verse 1.7.6 of Srimad Bhagavatam as to what Vyasadev did after the departure of Narada Muni,

*anarthopaśamaṁ sākṣād bhakti-yogam adhokṣaje  
lokasyājānato vidvāṁś cakre sātvata-saṁhitām*

**The material miseries of the living entity, which are superfluous to him, can be directly mitigated by the linking process of devotional service. But the mass of people do not know this, and therefore the learned Vyasadeva compiled this Vedic literature, which is in relation to the Supreme Truth.**

Both Narada Muni as well as Vyasadev have shown us by their personal example - that the duty of disciple is to simply execute or follow the instructions of the spiritual master. Yesterday our Godbrother HG Manmohan Prabhuji shared a nice point which he heard in the recent classes he attended in Sri Sri RadhaNeel Madhav dham. He mentioned a very sublime point told by our Godbrother HG Devakinandan Prabhuji - "**Whenever we are following the instructions of Gurudev, it is appearance day of Maharaj - and whenever we are not following, it is disappearance.**"

May we genuinely endeavour to always follow the instructions of Srila Gurudeva, so that he appears every moment in our life and never disappears.

Hare Krishna.  
Thank you very much.  
Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,  
Sudarshana devi dasi.

## Rareness of Human Birth - Part 1

**Date:** 21 Feb 2019

**Author:** Jyeshtha devi dasi

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

The following is a humble effort to transcribe Srimad Bhagavatam class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj on verse 11.9.29,

*labdhvā su-durlabham idaṁ bahu-sambhavānte  
mānuṣyam artha-dam anityam apīha dhīraḥ  
tūrṇaṁ yateta na pated anu-mṛtyu yāvan  
niḥśreyasāya viṣayaḥ khalu sarvataḥ syāt*

**After many, many births and deaths one achieves the rare human form of life, which, although temporary, affords one the opportunity to attain the highest perfection. Thus a sober human being should quickly endeavour for the ultimate perfection of life as long as his body, which is always subject to death, has not fallen down and died. After all, sense gratification is available even in the most abominable species of life, whereas Kṛṣṇa consciousness is possible only for a human being.**

Throughout this class Maharaj is insisting mainly on the words - "*bahu-sambhavānte*" - how much rare is this human birth. Now let us hear from Maharaj.

**Maharaj:** "Again very difficult to obtain. *bahu-sambhavānte* - *bahu* means 'many'; *sambhavānte* means 'at the end' and *sambhava* means birth. After millions of birth, at least one round we go. I don't know how many rounds we have completed. But one round at least - 8 million 400 thousand. In our language it is very nicely said 84 lacks and this figure is not a concocted figure, it is authorized figure by Padma Puran. You can count in lakhs and you will come to the 84 lakhs number. It is beautiful shloka from Padma Puran, that is,

*jalajā nava-lakṣāṇi sthāvarā lakṣa-vimśati  
kṛmayo rudra-saṅkhyakāḥ pakṣiṇām daśa-lakṣaṇam  
trimśal-lakṣāṇi paśavaḥ catur-lakṣāṇi mānuṣāḥ*

*jalajā nava-lakṣāṇi*, *jalajā* means the species that exist in water, fish, aquatics etc. and there are different innumerable species. In Singapore there is a glass tunnel you know and we can see the underwater world, seabed world and so many funny creatures we see. So there in all 9 lakhs. Then *sthāvarā lakṣa-vimśati* - *sthāvarā* means the species which don't move. They are 20 lakhs.

(Seeing a devotee after long time Maharaj says) It is said in Bhagavatam that if we meet again we should be pleased like rebirth. So nice. We cannot imagine that we meet each other again. Krishna is very kind. He allowed us to see each other again.

(Continuing with the verse) So we can calculate 2 species, one is water species that is 900,000, that is 9 lakhs, 20 lakhs trees and creepers etc. So 29 lakhs. *kṛmayo rudra-saṅkhyakāḥ* - *kṛmayah* means insects. Different types of insects. That is 11 lakhs. So 9, 20 and 11. How many together? (Maharaj is asking the devotees) how many together 40? Are you sure?"

**Devotee:** (laughter) yes I am sure.

**Maharaj:** "*pakṣiṅāṁ daśa-lakṣaṇam - pakṣi* means birds, they are 10 lakhs. *paśavaḥ trimśal-lakṣāṇi - paśu* means animals. You know cows, cats etc. They are 30 lakhs. That is 50 and 30. 80 lakhs. *mānuṣāḥ catur-lakṣāṇi*, In human beings 400 thousand different species of life. So there is so many different species. You know some are completely black, some have curly hair, and some are brown black. You know, 400 hundred thousand different species. But at least one round we have to complete ourselves, in order to come to the human nature. Because it is a natural evolution. Prabhupada says that Darwin's father may be a monkey. But my father was a man. Darwin's theory declares his father and grandfather were monkeys. But my father and grandfather was a man. So at least, the point is at least we have one round of 8 million and 4 hundred thousand species of life."

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more nectar from Maharaj in the subsequent offering.

Hare Krishna.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Jyeshta devi dasi

Chennai.

## Rareness of Human Birth - Part 2

**Date:** 22 Feb 2019

**Author:** Jyesta devi dasi

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled, "Rareness of Human Birth" - which is a transcription of the class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj on verse 11.9.29. In the previous offering we heard from Maharaj about the 84 lakh varieties of species mentioned in the shastras and how we all have gone at least one round in that cycle. Now we shall hear further.

"And so many times, each time we accepted a material body, we have to be born, we have to become old and death. Those who are born definitely have to die, sickness is also there and old age is also there. Singapore is a beautiful country and you have so much Lakshmi at your side. But we cannot tell Krishna that, "You take half a million and give my life back." No. It is not Indian customs. (laughter) You know we go to India and the custom officer will take bribe. The bribe will not work with Krishna. These are material laws and they are stringent laws and you have to undergo and this is process of advancement. *bahu-sambhavānte*, after many many births we have attained this human birth of life. And in that also we are very lucky to be in the group wherein we are sitting, because we have accepted Prabhupada. This is our great fortune, our great fortune. I am a born vaishnava. But only when I was of 40 years of age, I came in contact with Srila Prabhupada and his literature and as soon as we went through those books, it was in all one block. He gave all the information. It is his potency and if you take one word from one purport it will give you the same exactly the same light. You know, Light of Bhagavatam. There is one book. I don't, know whether you have seen, Light of Bhagavatam. He had translated 10th canto verses from Gopi's discussions. And he was to go to Japan for international religious meeting. He couldn't make it. In that already he had translated the verses and purport according to the instructions to be given to the world and that book is printed as the Light of Bhagavatam and nice verses and purports are there. Please I would advice you to read that book.

***Any book written by Srila Prabhupada if you read, the mind becomes completely satisfied. There is no difference between his literature and Krishna Himself. Anything related to Krishna is non different from Krishna. And that's why the mahamantra which we chant is also non different from Krishna.*** It is really our fate to believe that chanting mahamantra is completely different and Krishna is somewhere in Goloka Vrindavan. No. He is right in the process. Prabhupada has advised us to stick to 16, at least minimum. You may chant more, but 16 at least. And when we chant the rounds it is Krishna Himself. But we commit the mistake. We think that, "Oh no, Krishna is something else. I can just ignore chanting, or I can any way chant." You know that chanting is known as radar chanting. Our devotees, they get up at 3.30 in the morning and they feel sleepy in the japa period and so they keep the eyes open (Maharaj shows how they chant and everybody laughs),

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare  
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*

Radar - chanting like a radar. Because he has to sleep with eyes open. And some, they may sit by the wall or somewhere - Hare Krishna Hare Krishna (Maharaj imitates how people doze off leaning on the wall and everyone laugh) Because we don't believe that Krishna is there, we don't, have the idea that the process is Krishna. It is non different. It is very nicely said in Srimad Bhagavatam that communion with the Lord is a reality through transmission of the transcendental sound of the different verses and mahamantra and pravachan and all these things. This is Krishna. We are trying to understand and it enlivens our body. As soon as this knowledge goes into our brain, it enlivens all our existence. That is Krishna's quality and we don't want to stop many times. It is so very interesting."

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more nectar from Maharaj in the subsequent offering.

Hare Krishna.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Jyesta devi dasi

Chennai.

## Rareness of Human Birth - Part 3

**Date:** 23 Feb 2019

**Author:** Jyesta devi dasi

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled, "Rareness of Human Birth" - which is a transcription of the class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj on verse 11.9.29. In the previous offering we heard from Maharaj about,

1. The 84 lakh varieties of species mentioned in the shastras and how we all have gone at-least one round in that cycle.
2. Krishna and His Names are non-different and when we chant He is with us.

Now we shall hear further.

3. **Krishna and His Names, Glories are ever-fresh (nava-yauvanam):** (Explaining the reason why we are not attentive while chanting, Maharaj said) "Because we don't believe that Krishna is there. We don't, have the idea that the process is Krishna. It is non different, it is very nicely said in Srimad Bhagavatam that **communion with the Lord is a reality through transmission of the transcendental sound of the different verses and mahamantra and pravachan** and all these things. This **is** Krishna. We are trying to understand and it enlivens our body. As soon as this knowledge goes into our brain, it enlivens all our existence. That is Krishna's quality and we don't want to stop many times. It is so very interesting.

Frankly speaking we go to the temple or we come together in these programs. We are discussing the same thing. It is no new thing at all. But every time we discuss, it is new. It is very new. One verse you take from Srimad Bhagavatam and this one verse from Srimad Bhagavatam is the whole Bhagavatam. The same thing is repeated. Srila Prabhupada has given nearly 15000 purports, repeating the same thing. But every time we read the purport, it is a new purport. Something different we feel. But this difference doesn't, differentiate the Supreme Absolute Truth Krishna - *ekam jñānam pariṅyate* - always one jñān. And the same if we don't use our human existence, which is very difficult to obtain, which we have already obtained, then it is *śrama eva hi kevalam* - "**Whatever we do is useless hard labour**" , Srila Prabhupada translates it and this is very nicely described in this verse.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, whenever he was giving pravachan, he'll quote this verse, which is so very potent,

*labdhvā su-durlabham idaṁ bahu-sambhavānte  
mānuṣyam artha-dam anityam apīha dhīraḥ*

*mānuṣyam janma* - human birth is very difficult to get, but we have got it. But *artha-dam* - It has got the purpose to achieve and *apīha dhīraḥ; dhīraḥ* means sober person, sober persons like us. Srila Prabhupada called us rascals because we were behaving in many ways. We didn't know how to get up, we didn't know what time we should get up, we didn't know when to take rest, we didn't know what to do after getting up, we didn't know how to cook our prasadam, we didn't know how to eat our prasadam. We didn't have any idea. But he gave everything. That is *dhīra*. He transformed us into a very nice sober person."

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more nectar from Maharaj in the subsequent offering.

Hare Krishna.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Jyesta devi dasi  
Chennai.



## Rareness of Human Birth - Part 4

Date: 24 Feb 2019

Author: Jyesta devi dasi

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled, "Rareness of Human Birth" - which is a transcription of the class given by our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj on verse 11.9.29,

*labdhvā su-durlabham idaṁ bahu-sambhavānte  
mānuṣyam artha-dam anityam apīha dhīraḥ  
tūrṇaṁ yateta na pated anu-mṛtyu yāvan  
niḥśreyasāya viṣayaḥ khalu sarvataḥ syāt*

**After many, many births and deaths one achieves the rare human form of life, which, although temporary, affords one the opportunity to attain the highest perfection. Thus a sober human being should quickly endeavour for the ultimate perfection of life as long as his body, which is always subject to death, has not fallen down and died. After all, sense gratification is available even in the most abominable species of life, whereas Kṛṣṇa consciousness is possible only for a human being.**

In the previous offering we heard from Maharaj about the explanation of the first two lines of the above verse. Now we shall hear further.

4. **Take to bhakti immediately:** "And once you become *dhīra*, once you become sober, then you understand that *tūrṇaṁ yateta na pated anu-mṛtyu yāvan*. You understand one thing that we are all approaching the final day and it comes very fast. Time is faster than that and before that death consumes our existence, we must *tūrṇaṁ yateta*. *tūrṇaṁ* means immediately. *yateta* means try. Immediately you should try to make best use of your human existence. Otherwise when it is ending we don't know. That it is certain that it is ending. But when is a big question. May be after two seconds or may be when we are 50 years old, 100 years old, it doesn't matter. The end is bound to come. The *dhīra puruṣha*, the sober person always look to the end part of our existence and because they know that it is definite, so what ever period we have at our disposal, *tūrṇaṁ yateta*, immediately they start.

And sense gratification, *niḥśreyasāya* - in all species we had the sense gratification. As a cow we had sense gratification; as a dog we had sense gratification. Dog had its children at one stroke 10 or 12 children. It is the best, no worry. Just produce 10 children in one go. (laughter) What is human being? One child at a time, better to be a dog. (laughter) So this is sense gratification. We had it in every species, we had eaten in every species of our existence. We have slept in every species of our existence. We were afraid in every species of life. Everything we have done in every species of life. Now if you don't add something more to this life, then it is nicely said - *dharmeṇa hīna paśubhiḥ samānāḥ*.

Without *dharma*, *paśubhiḥ samānāḥ*. This is the main instruction and if you want to utilize our human existence, the main problem before is that we are forced. We were reading about Prabhupada discussions you know and he was telling. He was very sick. He knew that he was passing away. Somebody asked him, "Why do you want to leave us?" **"I don't want to leave. But I am obliged. I have to go. My time is coming near." We also don't want to go away from here. But we will be forced to, forced to go away. And one goal we have in front of us. And that is to stop this repetition of birth and death.** Because, where there is a birth, then all three things follow. If there wouldn't have been birth, then we will not die. Then we will not be old. Then we will not be sick. The root is the birth. The root is the birth. And how to cut this? We are trying to establish it from Srimad Bhagavatam. And what is the process to cut this vicious cycle is the main thing to be understood. Otherwise you don't understand. It is by

Prabhupada's mercy that these things have become familiar words. You know, 8400000 species of life, our *karma - janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhī*. This is birth, death, disease and old age. These words are now very familiar. Before ISKCON was started, these words were completely not allowed. If somebody talks about that, we stop. "Hey don't talk. That's all inauspicious." It is not inauspicious but because so many times we have died. We are afraid of it, we are completely scared, as if death comes we are allergic. We don't want to die but so many lives we have died and that is more horrible than the birth.

Krishna willing we shall continue to hear more nectar from Maharaj in the subsequent offering.

Hare Krishna.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Jyesta devi dasi

Chennai.

## Leadership and Dharma - Part 13

**Date:** 25 Feb 2019

**Author:** Amogha-drk Krsna das

Dear Devotees,

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled, "Leadership and Dharma", in which we discussed leadership by the example of Lord Rama. Now we'll discuss the transcendental leadership of Dhruva Maharaja.

King Dhruva is known as *artha-vit*; 'being very wise'. In Srimad Bhagavatam verse 4.9.28, Srila Prabhupada explains, "*An artha-vit is also called paramahamsa. A paramahamsa accepts only the active principle of everything; just as a swan accepts only the milk from a mixture of water and milk, a paramahamsa accepts only the Supreme Personality of Godhead as his life and soul, neglecting all external, material things. Dhruva Maharaja was in this category...*"

Liberated persons like Dhruva may seemingly appear as duty-bound persons in this world (*mahā-māyā*), but by studying their lives, we can see that they are acting under the Lord's internal potency (*yoga-māyā*). The following points shows a few of King Dhruva's transcendental characteristics.

1) Seeking revenge for his stepmother's deeming him unworthy to approach his father, five-year-old Dhruva chose to ignore his bodily dharma (*deha-dharma*) of staying home with Mom, for the sake of austerities in the forest. The goal of his austerities was to get a kingdom greater than his father. Following the instructions of Narada Muni, Dhruva constantly meditated on the lotus feet of the Lord while gradually reducing eating, resting and breathing, standing on one leg like an un-moving pillar. Narada had instructed Dhruva in Srimad Bhagavatam verse 4.8.41,

*dharmārtha-kāma-mokṣākhyam ya icchec chreya ātmanaḥ  
ekam hy eva hares tatra kāraṇam pāda-sevanam*

**Any person who wants to accomplish the four goals of life, namely dharma (religious duties), artha (wealth), kaama (pleasure) and moksha (liberation), must serve the lotus feet of the Lord for the complete fulfilment of these.**

2) After finally seeing the Supreme Lord Vishnu appearing before him, Dhruva said. "My Lord, O Supreme Lord, You are the supreme personified form of all benediction. Therefore, for one who abides in Your devotional service with no other desire, worshiping Your lotus feet is better than becoming king and lording it over a kingdom." (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.9.17)

Thus, after getting the darshan of the Lord, Dhruva condemned his previous desire for a kingdom. "...Although the Lord offered me His personal service, I wanted material name, fame and prosperity. My case is just like that of the poor man who, when he satisfied a great emperor who wanted to give him anything he might ask, out of ignorance asked only a few broken grains of husked rice." (Srimad Bhagavatam 4.9.35)

In this way, Dhruva renounced the four *puruṣārthas* of bodily comforts (*kāma*), wealth (*ārtha*), socio-religious duties (*dharmā*) and liberation (*mokṣā*) for the sake of devotional service to the Lord, the fifth goal of life (*panchama puruṣārtha*).

3) In spite of his no longer wanting to be a king, upon receiving the order of Vishnu to rule the world for 36,000 years, Dhruva perfectly accepted that service, as described in the Bhagavatam (4.12.11-12): "**Dhruva Maharaja rendered devotional service unto the Supreme, the reservoir of everything, with unrelenting force. While carrying out his devotional service to the Lord, he could see that everything is situated in Him only and that He is situated in all living entities. Dhruva Maharaja was endowed with all godly qualities; he was very respectful to the devotees of the Supreme Lord and very kind to the poor and innocent, and he protected**

**religious principles. With all these qualifications, he was considered to be the direct father of all the citizens."**

This is called a transcendental leader, whose nature is detachment from everything except the Lord's order. ***We must be ever-ready to change our position according to the Lord's plan.***

Krishna willing we shall continue to meditate further on this topic in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Amogha-drk Krsna das

ISKCON Norway.

## Leadership and Dharma - Part 14

**Date:** 26 Feb 2019

**Author:** Amogha-drk Krsna das

Dear Devotees,

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled, "Leadership and Dharma", in which we discussed the transcendental characteristics of Dhruva Maharaja. Now let us see further.

Previously, we learned that Dhruva had attained the transcendental position of devotional service, and thus ruled the world, unattached. The Bhagavatam 4.12.13 states the following,

*ṣaṭ-trimśad-varṣa-sāhasraṁ śaśāsa kṣiti-maṇḍalam  
bhogaiḥ puṇya-kṣayam kurvann abhogair aśubha-kṣayam*

**Dhruva Maharaja ruled over this planet for thirty-six thousand years; he diminished the reactions of pious activities by enjoyment, and by practicing austerities he diminished inauspicious reactions.**

How come Dhruva is described as having to deal with good (*puṇya*) and bad (*aśubha*) karmic reactions? In answer to this, we must understand that Dhruva played the role of a king in this world. The Bhagavatam 4.20.14 says, "**To give protection to the general mass of people who are citizens of the state is the prescribed occupational duty for a king. By acting in that way, the king in his next life shares one sixth (*ṣaṣṭham aṁśam*) of the result of the pious activities of the citizens. But a king or executive head of state who simply collects taxes from the citizens but does not give them proper protection as human beings has the results of his own pious activities taken away by the citizens, and in exchange for his not giving protection he becomes liable to punishment for the impious activities of his subjects.**"

So the leader has to do his austerity of properly protecting them from evil. The relationship is similar to that of a guru and his disciple. The guru's job is to make the disciple saintly, otherwise, if the disciple breaks the four regulative principles, the guru has to suffer sinful reactions together with his disciple. In the same way, when the citizens of a king indulges in sinful activities, such as illicit sex, meat-eating, gambling or intoxication, the king shares in the bad reactions of those. The karmic link is by the leader's accepting money or service from his subjects.

There is a deep meaning implied in the word kshatriya, 'one who protects (*trāyate*) from harm (*kṣat*)'; he does not protect people just externally from demons, criminals and the like; no, he protects people from being attacked by inner demons as well, by setting an example of excellent character (*sadācār*). Dharma shastras says that there are six enemies (*arishadvarga*) of the mind: lust (*kāma*), anger (*krodha*), greed (*lobha*), delusion (*moha*), pride (*mada*) and envy (*mātsarya*). The leader must conquer these by daily spiritual practice, and only then he'll be powerful in protecting others. Thus association in Krishna consciousness (*sat-saṅga*), is the most powerful form of leadership. Manu-samhita 1.108,

*ācāraḥ paramo dharmah śrutyoktaḥ smārta eva ca  
tasmādasmin sadā yukto nityam syādātma-vān dvijaḥ*

**Right behaviour is the highest dharma, and it is prescribed in the shruti [the Four Vedas] and explained in the smṛiti [the Fifth Veda]. Hence the twice-born person, desiring his own welfare, should always aim for right behaviour.**

Thus in order to help others, a leader must take help from spiritual life; dharma, and preach by his own example (*ācarati*)

), because people copy the leader. Bhagavad-gita 3.21,

*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas tat tad evetaro janaḥ  
sa yat pramāṇam kurute lokas tad anuvartate*

**Whatever action a great man performs, common men follow. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.**

Krishna willing we shall continue to meditate further on this topic in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Amogha-drk Krsna das

ISKCON Norway.

## Leadership and Dharma - Part 15

**Date:** 27 Feb 2019

**Author:** Amogha-drk Krsna das

Dear Devotees,

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled, "Leadership and Dharma", in which saw the transcendental leadership of Dhruva Maharaja, and how he benefited his subjects by acting exemplary himself. This is also called righteous rule or *sādhukrt*.

The Mahabharata (12.91.14-17) says,

*dharme vardhati vardhanti sarvabhutāni sarvadā  
tasmin hrasati hiyante tasmād dharmam pravardhayet  
dhanāt śravati dharmo hi dhāranād veti niścayaḥ  
akāryānām manuṣyendra sa simāntakaraḥ smritaḥ  
prabhavārtham hi bhutānām dharmah srṣṭaḥ svayambhuvā  
tasmāt pravardhayed dharmam prajānugrahakāranāt  
tasmād dhi rājaśārdula dharmah śreṣṭha iti smrtaḥ  
sa rājā yaḥ prajāḥ śāsti sādhuḥkrt puruṣarṣabhaḥ*

**All creatures grow in the growth of righteousness, and decay with its decay. Righteousness, therefore, should never be permitted to decay. Righteousness is called dharma because it aids the acquisition and preservation of wealth (dhana). The sages, O King, have declared that dharma restrains and set bounds ( *simāntakaraḥ*) to all evil acts of men. The self-born Brahma created dharma for the advancement and growth of creatures. For this reason, a king should act according to the dictates of dharma for benefiting his subjects. For this reason also, O tiger among kings, dharma has been said to be the foremost of all things. That foremost of men who rules his subjects righteously (*sādhukrt*) is called a king.**

The Vedic commentator Sayana defines dharma as the active form of satya, or the Absolute Truth. Thus we can understand, that if we want to benefit ourselves and others by the performance of dharmā, we must act in the service of Truth (satyavrata).

As Manu is the most prominent preceptor of the codes of conduct for man, as Manavadharma-samhita is the head of the dharma-shastras, so the would-be Vaivasvata Manu of our current Manvantara period showed the exemplary way of acting for the benefit of all, under the name Satyavrata. In the well-known Bhagavatam story of Matsya (the fish) avatara, King Satyavrata is engaged in a very common religious ritual, which is worshiping a holy river. He worships by standing in the river itself up till his waist, while offering oblations of water to the river goddess Kalindi with the water from that river, cupped in his hands. Suddenly a very small fish appears, fitting inside the water cupped in his two hands. Satyavrata throws the fish back into the river, but then the fish starts talking to him, SB 8.24.14, "**With an appealing voice, the poor small fish said to King Satyavrata, who was very merciful: My dear King, protector of the poor (dina-vatsala), why are you throwing Me in the water of the river, where there are other aquatics who can kill Me? I am very much afraid of them.**"

In his Chapter Summary, Srila Prabhupada continues the story, "*The fish appealed to the King for protection, asking the King to keep Him in a safe place. Although the King did not know that the small fish was the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, as a king he gave shelter to the fish and kept Him in a water jug. The fish, being the Supreme Personality of Godhead, wanted to show His potency to King Satyavrata, and thus He immediately expanded His body in such a way that He could no longer be kept in the jug of water. The King then put the fish in a big well, but the well was also too small. Then the King put the fish in a lake, but the lake was also unsuitable. Finally the King put the fish in the sea, but even the sea could not accommodate Him. Thus the King understood that the fish was no one else but the*

*Supreme Personality of Godhead, and he requested the Lord to describe His incarnation as a fish."*

Krishna willing we shall continue to meditate further on this topic in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Amogha-drk Krsna das

ISKCON Norway.



## Leadership and Dharma - Part 16

**Date:** 28 Feb 2019

**Author:** Amogha-drk Krsna das

Dear Devotees,

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

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled, "Leadership and Dharma", in which we saw Satyavrata, the kshatriya who cared for even the fish, and thus got to see the Lord as a Fish. Now we shall see further.

The features of a kshatriya are given in the Bhagavatam 7.11.22 as follows,

*śauryaṁ vīryaṁ dhṛtis tejas tyāgaś cātmajayaḥ kṣamā  
brahmaṇyatā prasādaś ca satyaṁ ca kṣatra-lakṣaṇam*

**To be influential in battle, unconquerable, patient, challenging and charitable, to control the bodily necessities, to be forgiving, to be attached to the brahminical nature and to be always jolly and truthful - these are the symptoms of the kshatriya.**

Why Satyavrata was chosen to enjoy the matsya-lila of the Lord? Due to his being patiently true (*satya*) to his vow (*vrata*) of charity (*tyāgaḥ*) to all creatures. *tyāgaḥ* means not only renunciation, but also magnanimity and charity. To ensure a person's proper progress from one stage of growth to another, magnanimous leadership is needed. As a person goes through the stages of infancy, boyhood, youth, manhood and old age, similarly, the jiva or soul progresses through five stages of consciousness (*panca - kośas*). Srila Prabhupada explains in his book Renunciation Through Wisdom, Chapter 5.1,

*"There are various stages of elevation the jiva goes through, which are like different shells (kośas) covering him. They are the coverings of food (anna-maya), life air (prāṇa-maya), mind (mano-maya, or jñāna-maya), and transcendental knowledge (vijñāna-maya). When the final shell is penetrated, the soul attains pure consciousness, enters the state of complete bliss (ānanda-maya), and experiences sac-cid-ānanda as universal. First the soul has covered consciousness, then he reaches the stage of budding consciousness, then blossoming consciousness, and finally fully blossomed consciousness."*

In a properly conducted society, for each stage of a person's development, a suitable field of activities is given. Thus a good leader facilitates a person's natural growth in life, both materially and spiritually. This is also called Parental Leadership. Just like a father wants to see his children succeed and become happy, a compassionate leader likes to see his prajasa happy; that is what gives him the highest happiness. This type of happiness is called *para-sukha-sukhi*; being happy on account of making others happy. It is constantly available to one who is self-purified to such an extent that he sacrifices his own well-being for the sake of helping others. That is called *para-duḥkha-duḥkhī*, and includes saving animals and plants from injury, too.

"The body is purified by water, and the intellect by knowledge; the inner self is purified by abstaining from injuring living beings, and the mind by truth (...) A man who distributes food, speaks the truth, and is full of compassion to creatures, is far better than any man purified by the different kind of penances." (Baudhayaana Dharmasutra 3.1.27 & 4.5.32)

After Satyavrata made Matysa thrive like a fish in water by facilitating His growth there, Satyavrata saved the plants and seeds from being drowned by storing them inside his boat. This is told in the Srimad Bhagavatam 8.24.33-38, wherein Matysa reveals, *"When all the three worlds merge into the water, a large boat sent by Me will appear before you. Thereafter, O King, you shall collect all types of herbs and seeds and load them on that great boat... Pulling the boat, with you and all the Rishis in it, O King, I shall travel in the water of devastation until the night of Lord Brahma's slumber is over. You will be thoroughly advised and favoured by Me, and because of your inquiries, everything about*

*My glories, which are known as param brahma, will be manifest within your heart."*

Krishna willing we shall continue to meditate further on this topic in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev,

Amogha-drk Krsna das

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