

KṚṢṆA

THE SOURCE OF HAPPINESS



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*grantha-dwārā vaiṣṇava-janer kṛpā pāi
vaiṣṇava-kṛpāy kṛṣṇa-lābha hoy bhāi*

“If all the devotees thus appreciate this book, then I will
receive the causeless mercy that they will shower upon me.
Oh brothers! And by the mercy of all these Vaiṣṇavas, I will
attain devotion to the Supreme Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa.”

(From Sri Sri Kalyāna Kalpa-taru
by Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura)



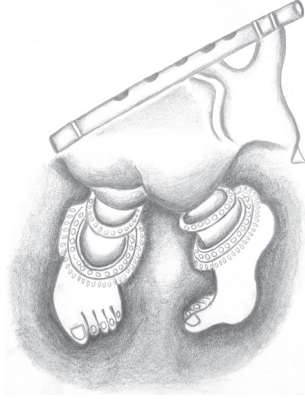
śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

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Gopal Krishna Goswami





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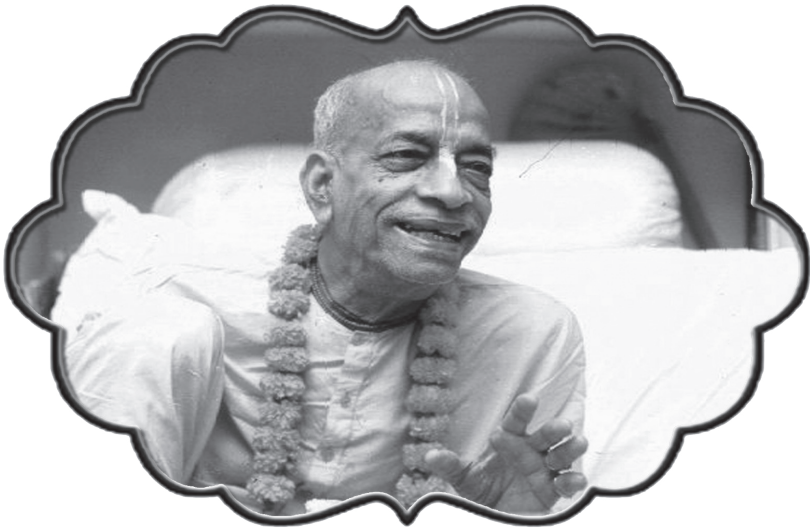
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Dedication



HIS DIVINE GRACE A. C. BHAKTIVEDĀNTA SWĀMI PRABHUPĀDA
FOUNDER-ĀCĀRYA OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS





CONTENTS

01 / Introduction

05 / Human Life is a Failure if the End is
Not Happy

19 / Become Anxious to Glorify the Lord

37 / The Tragedy of a Materialist

53 / Devotee and Materialist

75 / Divine Instructions

89 / The Glories of Saṅkīrtan Yajña

107 / A Celibate Life

123 / Humility in Chanting

139 / Be Broadminded—Think of Kṛṣṇa's Family

153 / Real Source of Happiness is Kṛṣṇa



INTRODUCTION

From time immemorial or from the beginning of the creation the living entity is searching for happiness in this mortal world. Happiness is the birthright of the living entity. The scriptures tell us that the nature of soul is *ānandamayo 'bhyāsāt*. Means, he is naturally full of bliss but misidentifying himself to this temporary body which subjects him to an endless cycle of changing bodies, with their aging, disease, and death.

We are trying to find happiness in this mortal world which is full of duality. In Bhagavad-gītā the material world is described as being full of miseries.

*ābrahma-bhuvanāl lokāḥ punar āvartino 'rjuna
mām upetya tu kaunteya punar janma na vidyate*

(BG 8.16)

“From the highest planet in the material world, down to the lowest, all are places of misery, where repeated birth and death take place. But one who attains to My abode, O son of Kuntī, never takes birth again.”

Misunderstanding the source of real happiness the

modern man is trying to get the pleasure from the dead matter by inventing many devices, luxurious facilities to pamper the body etc. but unable to get permanent happiness he leads life towards frustration. Srila Prabhupada says, “The ambition for happiness is natural and good, but the attempt to derive it from inert matter by so-called scientific arrangements is an illusory attempt doomed to frustration. Those who are befooled cannot understand this.”

In order to find this source, however, we need some knowledge of what that happiness is. To understand this Srila Prabhupada tells a story. There is a foolish man who had no experience with sugar cane. When he asked his friend about the characteristics of sugar cane, he was imperfectly informed that sugar cane resembles the shape of a bamboo stick. Consequently he began trying to extract juice from bamboo sticks, but naturally he was baffled in his attempts. This is the situation with the illusioned living entity who, in his search for eternal happiness, tries to extract happiness from this material world, which is not only full of miseries but is also transient and flickering.

Therefore, a wise man should be determined to find the real source of happiness. To understand this and how to access that source this small book is helping us.

This book is compiled from the lectures delivered in Montreal, Canada, by Srila Gopāl Kṛṣṇa Goswāmī Mahārāj, who is a swanlike personality whose only

Introduction

aim in life is to serve the mission of Lord Caitanya by spreading his transcendental teachings around the world for the benefit of conditioned souls who suffers in this material world.

I would like to thank Anuttam Hari Das & Bhakta Sushant Pati for arranging the design and layout. I also thank Vrindavan Vinod Das for his cover designing. We pray to Srila Prabhupada, Sri Sri Nitai Gaur Sunder, and our worshipable deities Sri Sri Radha Parthasarathi to bless them all with pure devotion.

Finding ourselves unqualified to take up this task, I beg the blessings of all the vaiṣnavas.

Sarvasākṣī Dāsa
Radha Govind Jhulan Yatra,
16 August 2005,
New Delhi, India.







- CHAPTER 01 -

HUMAN LIFE IS A FAILURE IF THE END IS NOT HAPPY

*pradhāna-kālāśaya-dharma-saṅgrāhe
śarīra eṣa pratipadya cetanām
kriyā-phalatvena vibhur vibhāvyaṭe
yathānalo dāruṣu tad-guṇātmakaḥ*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.21..35)

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is all-pervading, but He is also manifested in different types of bodies which arise from a combination of material nature, time, desires, and occupational duties. Thus, different types of consciousness develop, just as fire, which is always basically the same, blazes in different ways according to the shape and dimension of firewood.”

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is all-pervading, this includes the fact that he is present in the bodies of all living entities also. The Brahmā-saṁhitā says though the Supreme Personality of Godhead is situated in the spiritual abode of Goloka-Vṛndāvana, nevertheless, His presence is felt everywhere, and He is present everywhere.

THE SILENT OBERVER

The Supreme Personality of Godhead constantly lives with the individual soul as Paramātmā. The Lord expands and in the capacity of Paramātmā, He is present in every living entity's heart, and in that position his main concern is to direct the living entity according to his desires, and should the living entity desire to develop spiritual consciousness, to also direct him on the right path. The Paramātmā is also called the silent observer. Prabhupāda used to relate this story that when he was in the Scottish college in Calcutta, the British professor once asked him, "You Hindus believe in reincarnation, but who is actually witnessing all the sinful or good deeds that one may perform?" Prabhupāda was unable to reply at that time, but the real answer is that the Paramātmā is witnessing everything that one does.

Besides the Paramātmā, there are also many other witnesses of the different activities that a living entity performs, and this is confirmed by this brāhmaṇa Jaḍa Bharata's explanation to Mahārāja Rahūgaṇa in the fifth canto of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Jaḍa Bharata was a brāhmaṇa boy who in his previous life was a deer, and prior to that, he was Mahārāja Bharata, after whose name this whole planet was named. Today, of course, by Bhārata one understands the country of India, but thousands of years ago this whole planet was called Bhārata-varṣa, after the name of Mahārāja Bharata. Jaḍa Bharata explains to Mahārāja Rahūgaṇa that

there are innumerable witnesses to the activities that the living entity performs. A living entity may perform an activity even behind closed doors, but still there are innumerable witnesses. The star is a witness, the moon is a witness, the sun is a witness, the air is a witness and so on. Any sinful activity that one performs, either in the daytime or in the nighttime, either the sun is a witness, or the moon is a witness, or the stars, and you can not go anywhere without air. Besides this, the different demigods are also witnesses, and above all the Paramātmā is the witness. When the living entity performs sinful activities, it is not that nobody is watching it—there are many witnesses in fact.

A DEAR FRIEND

Based upon the consciousness of the living entity at the moment of death, and based upon the different activities that the living entity engages in during one's life, he obtains a body of that type. The Paramātmā is such a dear friend of the ātmā that He never leaves the ātmā alone in the material world. We generally see that when a friend is in difficulty, the other friend just leaves him alone. But the Paramātmā is such a dear friend of the individual soul that even if the individual obtains a lower species of body such as a dog, or a cat, or any animal, still the Paramātmā stays with the individual. He does not leave him. He does not say, "Oh, you had a human body before, but now you have a body of a dog, so I am not going to stay with you,"—No. The Paramātmā is the best friend of the living entity.

Therefore, He accompanies the living entity all the time. If in the human form of life one utilizes his life correctly then the Paramātmā makes sure that the next life is definitely in a higher form, maybe in the higher planets, or maybe a return to the original home—that is the kingdom of God, based upon the living entity's activities. The Paramātmā is just observing everything and based upon the desire of the living entity, guides everything. He is in everyone's heart, and if the living entity develops a genuine desire to come on the right spiritual path, the Paramātmā will make sure that He brings him to that path. Should the living entity desire to forget the Lord and His instructions, the Paramātmā also makes sure that the living entity is able to forget.

FOUNDATION OF SPIRITUAL LIFE

The advice of the Vedic scriptures here is that the human form of life especially should be utilized to cultivate God consciousness. Human being is therefore advised to associate with spiritually advanced personalities. It is important that the human life should be utilized to cultivate spiritual principles. Unfortunately we see that the present day society has very little respect for what the revealed scriptures are saying. They have faith in everything else that is printed, that they read or they get, but they have very little faith in what the scriptures, especially the Vedic scriptures proclaim.

Without faith one cannot realize anything in life. For example, an employee works very hard in the factory,

and at the end of the week, he just gets a piece of paper, and on that piece of paper it is written, “Pay this man, Mr. George so many dollars.” The man has faith that when he takes that paycheck to a bank and he gives that paycheck to the bank, the bank is going to give him some dollars in exchange, and with those dollars he will be able to maintain himself, plus engage in nonsense activities. In other words, he has faith that the paper is his guide to material prosperity.

When you get on the plane, you just buy a ticket and say, “From Montreal, I want to go to New York,” and you just get on the plane and sit down. You do not go to the pilot every few minutes to make sure whether he is really headed for New York or not. The point is that we have faith. Just as we have faith that a piece of paper will get us dollars when we go to the bank, or when we buy a ticket and get on the plane, we are going to reach a destination, similarly, we also have to have faith that what is written in these pages of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and the Bhagavad-gītā will guide us to spiritual prosperity.

THE FINAL EXAMINATION

This beautiful human form of life should be utilized for a beautiful ending. Prabhupāda used to say that something beautiful should not be utilized for an ugly ending. Everything is tested at the moment of death.

A student may say that he is studying very hard, but how much he has studied, is actually tested at the time of the examination. If he passes the examination with good

marks then the parents say, “Yes, he was really studying.” Similarly, all the activities that we engage in, the result will be tested at the moment of death. Presently we see that we are in a very beautiful situation—beautiful body, beautiful environment, beautiful facilities. Now this beautiful situation should somehow or the other be utilized for a happy ending. The ending should be happy—that is the Idea. If the end is not happy then the whole human life has been a failure.

Just like in India, they produce these Hindi movies. As some of you may know, India is the largest producer of movies in the world, but they have one common rule—the ending of the movie is always happy. It does not matter how much sorrow or crime there may be in the movie, the ending is always a happy ending, because the understanding is that when you walk out of the movie hall, you should walk out in a happy mood. Similarly, in this human life, the ending should be happy. That is conceivable and possible only if the human life has been used for a spiritual purpose, if the human form has been used correctly.

A SOCIETY OF MAD PEOPLE

Instead of engaging in spiritual activities, we see that people have just become completely mad. Prabhupāda used to say that everyone is mad. This is a society of mad people. They are trying to squeeze happiness from a sugarcane which cannot give any juice. They are trying to squeeze happiness from objects which do not have any

juice in themselves. It may appear that there is juice. Just like in a desert, it is a mirage, and the dog in the desert is thirsty, he just goes on running from one object to another to find that apparent water in the desert, but he does not find any water and in the end the animal dies in the desert. Similarly, the living entity is hoping that there is going to be some juice, there is going to be some happiness in these different material activities, and therefore he pursues different activities, one after another, but the end result is comparable to that of the dog in the desert. The living entity just dies completely frustrated.

The materialist, who is blind to the purpose of human life, tries everything for sense gratification. If we analyze the standards of morality in society today, we will see that they are trying everything to squeeze out some pleasure. For a long time the normal understanding was that a man would associate with a woman and a woman would associate with a man, but now they got tired of this business. Now the most common thing in the western society is becoming “gay” as they call it. This is a new process by which they are trying to get some happiness. They have tried all sorts of drugs, now we have heard that some of the human beings have been actually dancing with animals.

In Seattle, there was a party where some human beings were dancing with a hog and embracing the hog. This is the standard—we are trying to seek happiness by all means—we are embracing hogs, we are trying to

associate with people of the same sex and think that these will give us happiness. We are trying to shoot anything into our body. But still there is no happiness.

SA-VIJÑĀNAM

The living entity, who does not have faith in the scriptures, just becomes a madman. A madman will always perform any activity and can never be trusted upon. He may do anything at any moment. The society is composed of such mad people, and the devotees of the Lord are those who are considered to be saintly or in knowledge about the purpose of human life. Just having knowledge is one aspect, but Caitanya Mahāprabhu advised that those who are in knowledge have to act in that knowledge.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, “One who has this vidyā (knowledge), he must live by that knowledge.” Just like Prabhupāda used to say, “One must be an Ācārya. He must be an ideal example.” Just having knowledge is not complete if you do not live by it. If someone becomes an engineer or a lawyer, he goes to school for such a long time, and then if he does not practice that knowledge then of course he will lose that knowledge, and he will cease to be an engineer. The devotees of the Lord have the vidyā, the knowledge about the goal of human life, about the position of the Lord, and hence, they want to live by that knowledge. The transcendentalist is defined as one who lives by that knowledge. Knowledge that is not put into practice will just rust the individual. Just

like an iron rod—if it is not polished for some time, if it just lies in one place, after some time it becomes rusty. The devotees have this vidyā, and they want to lead their lives according to this vidyā, whereas the materialist is always contemplating the objects of sense gratification, and when one contemplates the objects of sense gratification, attachment develops. When attachment develops then lust develops, and when he is unable to fulfill that object of sense gratification, anger develops.

DEVOTEE AND MATERIALIST

The materialist is always contemplating the objects of the senses, he is always contemplating—how I can serve my different senses better. He is always rooting for how he can obtain a higher standard of sense gratification. That is his principle contemplation. The devotees are also always contemplating, but they are contemplating something different. The devotee is contemplating, “How can I become a better devotee? How can I serve the Lord a little better? How can I understand the Lord’s instructions better? How can I serve the spiritual master and thus the Lord better?” Because he is contemplating like that, he also develops an attachment that he should engage only in those activities, which will help him, realize the contemplation.

The difference is only in the area of contemplation. The materialist is contemplating, “How can I increase the pleasures of my senses?,” and the end result is anger

and frustration, whereas the transcendentalist is always contemplating, “How can I serve the Lord better? How can I understand the instructions of the Lord a little better?” When the devotee is just contemplating how his devotional service can be enhanced, how he can become a better devotee than the Lord who is situated as the paramātmā reciprocates.

In the Bhagavad-gītā Kṛṣṇa says:

*ananyāś cintayanto mām
ye janāḥ paryuṇāsate
teṣāṁ nityābhiyuktānām
yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham*

(Bhagavad-gītā 9.22)

“Those who worship Me with devotion and love, I make up what they lack, and I preserve what they have.”

He is very merciful unto those who are surrendered unto Him. Our contemplation or the contemplation of the transcendentalist is always how one can become a better devotee of the Lord. Since the devotee has knowledge or jñāna, he is not attracted to objects of sense gratification, though the opportunity may present itself.

Just like Sanātana Goswāmī. Sanātana Goswāmī was chanting in Vṛndāvana, and he had a touchstone with him, which could convert anything into gold. But Sanātana Goswāmī was not attracted by that touchstone. To him that touchstone was not very important. Therefore, he had it stacked away under some garbage. To him the most important jewel was the chanting of the holy name of

the Lord. Similarly, a transcendentalist is not attracted to areas of sense gratification, or any object that may give him some sense pleasure. To him, this is simply dirt. Just like, if you pass through a very dirty place, a very dirty house, you never want to go back to that house or that dirty place again. Similarly, the devotee realizes that sense gratification is dirt. It is filthy. Just like we say, “Oh that place is filthy, I do not want to go back there.” A devotee realizes that sense gratification is filthy. Therefore, even when the opportunity for sense gratification presents itself, he knows that it is but filth, and does not get attracted. Nobody gets attracted by filth. Nobody gets attracted by stool for example. When the devotee sees the opportunity for sense gratification, it is just like stool to him. Because he is jñānī, he is not attracted by it. Whereas the materialist, he is attracted to it, just like a hog is attracted to stool.

The devotee is always contemplating, “How can I serve the Lord better?” And a materialist is always contemplating, “How can I please my senses better?” So because of this contemplation, the materialist develops attachment to sense objects, whereas the devotee develops attachment to the lotus feet of the Lord. And the devotee, because of his jñāna, wants to act by that knowledge also. Acting by that knowledge means complete conviction that sense gratification is just like stool. Nobody enjoys sitting next to stool. When somebody goes to a toilet, they want to rush out, similarly to a devotee sense gratification is just like stool.

Whereas the materialist, who has the lowest standard of happiness and the lowest standard of enjoyment comparable to that of the hog, is attracted to garbage-like things.

MAKING UNHAPPY, HAPPY

Since the devotee is contemplating on the Lord and his instructions, the devotee is called *priya*. *Priya* means one who is very dear to everyone. *Priya* means one who has no enemies. A devotee literally has no enemies. Why? Because a devotee is interested only in giving. He is only interested in giving people information about God. He is only interested in giving people information about their constitutional position. He is not interested in taking anything for himself. To him, personal pleasures or possessions do not mean anything. They are not worth any value. The only thing the devotee wants to do is to give people information about the Lord so that the living entity can get up from his miserable position, and somehow or the other perfect his life. Just like the sixth canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* states, “The whole world can become happy by taking to this *saṅkīrtan* process.” And in the purport also Prabhupāda states, “Therefore the *saṅkīrtan* movement contributed by Supreme Personality of Godhead as Lord, is the most direct and easiest process for coming to the purest form of consciousness.” The devotee, because he is *priya*—dear to everyone, just wants to make the whole world happy by getting people to take part in this *saṅkīrtan*

process. The saṅkīrtan process is the process for making the unhappy, happy!

CONTEMPLATE ON LORD’S INSTRUCTION

In the Caitanya-Caritāmṛta, Caitanya Mahāprabhu tells Gopīnātha Ācārya that a devotee’s desires are so powerful that he can convert a stone-like man’s heart into a soft rose. Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura says that a devotee of the Lord is so powerful that each devotee can liberate a whole universe. The essence is that if we contemplate on the instructions of the Lord, if we contemplate on the saṅkīrtan movement of Lord Caitanya, if we contemplate on just giving people something—we do not want anything in return for ourselves, if we do request some donation, it is just for the Lord, it is just for the propagation of the Lord’s mission. If we want nothing for ourselves, if we just contemplate all the time these thoughts, the Lord who is situated in the heart as the Paramātmā will give us the intelligence by which we will be able to convert the cold-like heart of the men into clean, white hearts. Just as the materialist has faith that the paycheck he is getting is his guide to material prosperity, the devotees must have complete faith all the time that these instructions of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and the Bhagavad-gītā, these are the guide to spiritual prosperity. We must have complete faith and conviction, and execute the saṅkīrtan process always contemplating, “How can I increase my service to the Lord?”





- CHAPTER 02 -

BECOME ANXIOUS TO GLORIFY THE LORD

*astauṣīd dhaṁsa-guhyena
bhagavāntam adhokṣajam
tubhyaṁ tad abhidhāsyāmi
kasyātuṣyad yathā hariḥ*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.4.22)

“My dear king, I shall fully explain to you the Haṁsa-guhyā prayers, which are offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead by Dakṣa, and I shall explain how the Lord was pleased with him for those prayers.”

In this verse we see that Dakṣa is getting ready to offer the Haṁsa-guhyā prayers to the Lord. This chapter is called the Haṁsa-guhyā prayers. In this chapter Dakṣa is offering Haṁsa-guhyā prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and the important thing is, which is explained in Text 21, the verse prior to this, that Dakṣa became qualified to offer the Haṁsa-guhyā prayers because of his austerities.

DHRUVA MAHARAJA

It is stated that Dakṣa executed religious ceremonies and satisfied the Lord by offering austerities. And by practicing austerities, Dakṣa was able to please the Lord, and as a result he was able to glorify the Lord by offering the Haṁsa-guhya prayers to His lotus feet.

This is the important point that one becomes qualified to offer prayers to the Lord after practicing austerities. Without austerities one cannot glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead sincerely. One may repeat certain verses, just like there are professional reciters of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, and there are professional priests in almost every society who go and glorify the Lord, but sincerity is lacking in the offerings of those who have not performed, practiced austerities. By practicing austerities one becomes powerful.

Just like Dhruva Mahārāja—at a certain point he was even prevented from sitting in his father's lap, but later on, by performing austerities, this boy Dhruva became so powerful that just by pressing his toe on the earth, the whole earth would shake. If an elephant sits on a boat, the boat rocks, the boat really sinks deep. Similarly, Dhruva Mahārāja had become so powerful that just by pressing his toe against the earth, even the demigods would get scared. This power that Dhruva Mahārāja had obtained was by having executed austerities. Dhruva

Mahārāja gave the example by performing austerities, and by the passage of time, Dhruva Mahārāja gained greater spiritual bliss by the result of which, performing austerities did not present any problems at all. As one advances in devotional service, the spiritual bliss that one experiences gives him the strength to perform austerities. Dhruva Mahārāja, during the first month, ate on every third day, and he was only eating fruits. In the second month, he started eating every sixth day and he would only eat dried grass and leaves just to keep his body and soul together. In the third month, he started eating every ninth day. In the first month he was eating every third day, in the second month every sixth day, in the third month every ninth day, and in the fourth month every twelfth day, and in the fifth month he controlled his breathing, and in the sixth month he was able to stand with just one leg like a column. Dhruva Mahārāja was getting the strength to perform these austerities also from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As Kṛṣṇa states in the Bhagavad-gītā, “I am the source of remembrance and forgetfulness.” The determination to perform austerities for the pleasure of the Lord is also obtained by the mercy of the Lord which is released in proportion to the spiritual candidate’s desire.”

The process of devotional service is undoubtedly difficult, but Prabhupāda explains that it becomes easy to one who approaches the Lord in a humble frame of mind, completely depending upon the mercy of the

Lord. In the present age, it is not necessary to imitate the austerities that Dhruva Mahārāja had executed. Dakṣa also was able to offer the Hamsa-guhya prayers because he had performed austerities. Similarly, the present members of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement can also offer prayers to the Lord. They can also make spiritual advancement provided they agree to follow the principles of austerities that have been laid down by the great ācāryas.

Prabhupāda explains that it is not necessary for the devotees of Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement to imitate the activities of Dhruva Mahārāja. Due to the causeless mercy of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the austerities have been simplified. Imagine if we had to follow the path of Dhruva Mahārāja. For the first month when somebody would join the movement we would say, “Now you can eat prasādam every third day.” Then in the second month we would say, “Now you can eat every sixth day”; in the third month we would say, “Now you can eat every ninth day,” and in the fourth month every twelfth day. We would almost have nobody left in the temple. Caitanya Mahāprabhu has simplified the austerities for this age. These austerities, which have been greatly simplified, have to be accepted as outlined by the spiritual masters and Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Prabhupāda explained that the austerities in this age consist of chanting sixteen rounds of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, avoiding the ten offenses, attending the spiritual program needed for one’s spiritual rectification, and

following the regulative principles. That is all that one has to follow in this age of Kali in order to obtain the merciful presence of the Lord.

THE PLATFORM OF DUALITY

The devotee can realize the presence of the Lord based upon the sincerity of his endeavor. If one is sincerely endeavoring to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead then the Supreme Personality of Godhead will also reciprocate. If one is not genuinely practicing the spiritual austerities then, of course, the Supreme Personality of Godhead will also appear to be mysterious. To understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead one has to serve through his senses. As the scriptures explain, “As long as one is situated in duality on the sensual platform, gross or subtle, realization of the Supreme is very difficult.” The platform of duality is the platform of hankering and lamenting. Lamenting for what you have lost, and hankering for what you do not possess. This is known as the platform of duality. When people come to spiritual life also, they sometimes lament for the sense gratification that they had to give up, and they hanker for the sense gratification that they are unable to engage in. This is known as the platform of duality. As long as one is on the platform of duality, the Supreme Personality of Godhead will never be understood. But the moment one approaches the Supreme Personality of Godhead with love He will come within our reach.

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MIND

One can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead when he gives up the activities of the mind. What are the activities of the mind?—thinking, feeling, and willing. In other words we call it mental speculation. Sense gratification is also mental speculation, and the path of impersonal realization is also an aspect of mental speculation. Mental speculation is suicidal for the serious spiritual candidates. Mental speculation means that one is guessing as to what is the best course of action that he should take. As long as one is mentally speculating, the Supreme Personality of Godhead will always be very difficult to understand. Therefore, to approach the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one must give up the activities of the mind. In other words, the activities of the mind—thinking, feeling, and willing—have to be purified.

Thinking—how can you purify your thinking? The mind is very active. The nature of the mind is to be active. However, the mind should only think about spiritual subject matters. If the mind is not thinking about spiritual subject matters then making spiritual advancement again will be very difficult. Just as you may plant the best fertilizers and you may have the best soil, but if in an agricultural field there are crop diseases and there is drought then these fertilizers will not result in crops. Because as long as the crop disease is there, the crop will always be destroyed. Similarly,

as long as the thinking is not purified, as long as the mind is not brought under control, spiritual bliss will always be missing. So thinking is always very important, therefore again and again this point is emphasized that the thoughts have to be purified. We do not say that the mind can ever be devoid of any thoughts. That is an impossible stage to realize. The yogis made that path, but the bhakti-yogis do not follow that path.

The bhakti-yogis' position is that the mind is very active. Even Arjuna admits that. It is important that the thinking be directed towards the lotus feet of the Lord, that the thinking be directed towards the different pastimes of the Lord, that the thinking be directed towards the different desires of the Lord, that the thinking be directed towards the beautiful forms of the Lord, and if the thinking is directed in spiritual subject matters then the crops will grow—there will be a very good harvest. But if the thinking is not purified, in spite of the best attempts, the harvest will not be there.

The other activity of the mind is feeling. We often say, "Today I do not feel good," "Today I feel good," "Today I do not feel like doing my service," "Tomorrow I'll feel like doing my service." That is also one of the activities of the mind. Now why is it that our feelings vary from day to day? That is because we are listening to the material mind. This is one of the activities of the mind. The mind has three activities—thinking, feeling, and willing. The mind, if it gets something that it wants, it feels good, and if it does not get what it wants,

it feels bad. This stage has to be transcended. The spiritual candidate has to go beyond the stage of being influenced by the feelings of the mind. In other words, the devotee has to be transcendental to the moods of the mind, and one can be transcendental to the feelings of the mind only if the mind is fixed on the meditation of the spiritual instructions. This is so because with the assistance of the spiritual instructions, one can cut out the undesirable feelings of the mind. Just like if you have a sharp blade, you can cut off an unwanted boil; similarly this spiritual knowledge should act like the axe and the spiritual knowledge acting like an axe should destroy all the material thoughts and desires, and bad habits that are still lying in the body. This is explained by the Lord in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

*yad-anudhyāsinā yuktāḥ
karma-granthi-nibandhanam
chindanti kovidās tasya
ko na kuryāt kathā-ratim*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.15)

“With sword in hand, intelligent men cut through the binding knots of reactionary work [karma] by remembering the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, who will not pay attention to His message?”

The bad habits tend to influence the execution of devotional service, however if these are detrimental to the cause of spiritual advancement then certainly these bad habits should be cut with the sharp blades of spiritual knowledge. One has to sharpen his intelligence

so that one can easily cut the undesirable thoughts that may be motivating one's feelings in different directions.

When the thoughts are directed in spiritual subject matters then one's realization is beyond suṣupti. Suṣupti is a Sanskrit word which means deep sleep. As long as one is mentally speculating, he is in the stage of suṣupti, deep sleep. When one is in deep sleep and he dreams, he identifies with that dream, but when he wakes up he can then understand that dream was just an illusion. Similarly the process of devotional service is such that one wakes up from deep sleep, and when he wakes up from deep sleep and engages in devotional service then he can understand that those activities are foolish and not meant for the human form of life. One who is enlightened recognizes that the human form of life is meant to perform austerities for the pleasure of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If this was not the case then this point would not be emphasized again and again and again in different sections of the revealed scriptures.

DEVOTIONAL SERVICE IS ALL AUSPICIOUS

Pure devotional service is recommended in the scriptures because it is all auspicious, it frees one from all kinds of material distresses and it immediately gives one transcendental pleasure. The so called pleasure that one can obtain by materialistic activities is temporary—it can end at any moment. Śrīla Rupa Goswāmī explains

that the so called pleasure of impersonal realization is just like straws that one may find in the street. Rupa Goswāmī says that if the pleasure of impersonal realization is multiplied trillion-folds, still it cannot compare to a fraction of pleasure that one can get in pure devotional service. Therefore, pure devotional service is advocated because it gives one unlimited spiritual pleasure. Unlimited because there is no end—the more one engages in devotional service, the greater is the spiritual joy that one experiences. Therefore, Rupa Goswāmī also states that pure devotional service results in unlimited transcendental pleasure.

Further, pure devotional service is the only means by which one can attract Kṛṣṇa. If we want to attract Kṛṣṇa, this is the only alternative. Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura used to say, “Do not try to see God, but act in such a manner that God will see you.” So what does it mean? It means that we should endeavor sincerely in this process of devotional service so that Kṛṣṇa will try and see us. People want to see God without possessing the necessary qualifications. People want to see God without necessarily following the path outlined by the Lord. But Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura said that a devotee should act in such a manner that Kṛṣṇa will come and see him. One who is sincere, one who is always trying to please the spiritual master and Kṛṣṇa, will definitely gain the attention of Kṛṣṇa.

KRSNA'S PROTECTION PLAN

This is important—to always have this mentality in the mind, to concentrate on devotional service. The devotee is always hoping that the mercy of Kṛṣṇa will fall. This is one of the characteristics of one who is engaged on this path of pure devotional service. He is always praying for the mercy of the Lord, and he is confident that Kṛṣṇa will come to his rescue. The devotee is confident that if he is sincerely endeavoring, Kṛṣṇa will definitely come to his rescue. Therefore, the devotee is described to be fearless. The devotee is fearless like the wind because he knows that the mercy of Kṛṣṇa will definitely protect him. The devotee knows that the mercy of Kṛṣṇa is realized in proportion to the price that one is willing to pay. “Just like, we can purchase from a store based upon the ability to pay, similarly, based on the service that one renders, one obtains Kṛṣṇa’s protection plan to the same degree also. Based upon the premium you pay, you obtain different degrees of coverage. If you are paying a high insurance premium then you get a high coverage. If you are paying a low insurance premium then you get a low coverage. So exactly like that, based upon the spiritual premium that we are paying in our devotional service, the protection we obtain is also in the same proportion.

The important point in this discussion is that the devotee is always anxious to glorify the Lord, and the ability to glorify the Lord comes in proportion to the

degree of austerity that one undergoes. If one is willing to follow the process that is outlined then the results are guaranteed. There should never be any doubt about the results in the mind of the devotee. The devotee has the firm conviction that the process of devotional service is the only means to find real satisfaction. The pleasure potency that one gets by associating with the superior energy of the Lord is the real pleasure potency, the real pleasure that one should be hankering for in the human form of life. By associating with the inferior energy of the Lord, what actually appears to be pleasure, actually results in distress. Just like, when you have a sore and you scratch it, by scratching it, the sore gets worse even though there may be some sensation pleasure initially. Similarly, when one engages in sense gratification, there may be some so called appearance of happiness but actually the disease is getting worse and worse. Therefore, the path of sense gratification is not the cure of this disease. The cure of the disease is the engagement in devotional service.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF ASSOCIATION

Nārada Muni was instructing Dhruva Mahārāja about the importance of devotional service, and while instructing that he said if he ever gets the opportunity to associate with one who is more advanced, he shall rejoice at that. Nārada Muni explains the different types of association that one can obtain. You can associate with one who is more advanced, one who is equally advanced,

or one who is less advanced. There is no other fourth category of association that one can possibly obtain. Nārada Muni explained to Dhruva that when one associates with one who is more advanced, one rejoices, and when one associates with one who is equally advanced, he makes friendship, and when one associates with one who is less advanced then he becomes compassionate. This is the spiritual feeling that one experiences in different types of relationships. In comparison, in material situations, if you meet somebody who is more successful, you become envious. That is the material understanding. But in the spiritual situation, when you meet somebody who is more advanced, you rejoice. You do not become envious—why? Because here is the opportunity to destroy, to smash one's material doubts to pieces. When you meet somebody of an equal realization, or of an equal stage in a material situation, you try to show off your knowledge and put the other person down. When you meet somebody of an equal level in a material situation, you try to put the other person down by showing off your extra abilities. But in devotional service, when you meet somebody of an equal realization, you make spiritual friendship so that there can be further discussion on spiritual subject matters.

In a material situation when you meet somebody who is less advanced, you normally ignore that person. Just like there is a class consciousness in society—someone in a high class, in a rich society, does not like to associate with somebody who is materially less rich. Somebody

who is very rich wants to live in a very rich, exclusive area. He does not want to live in an area where people are less rich. So he despises others who are less successful. But in spiritual life when you meet somebody who is less successful then you become compassionate towards that entity. That compassion is exhibited by steps by which one who is less advanced can also be elevated to a higher level of spiritual awareness.

It is important to keep these different types of relationships that one can possibly obtain in mind, because if we understand how to deal, keeping these instructions of Nārada Muni in mind, with other vaiṣṇavas then there will never be any problems. Just like, the mountain gets decorated by the clouds. When the clouds are there it appears from a distance that the mountain is supporting the clouds. The mountain's beauty is enhanced when the clouds are there. Similarly, the devotee who is observing vaiṣṇava behavior, who is following the guidelines that are there in the śāstras in his dealing with others, his devotional service becomes more enhanced, becomes more beautiful, the relationship with each other becomes sweeter.

UNITED WE STAND DIVIDED WE FALL

The relationship amongst vaiṣṇavas is important. "United we stand; divided we fall." We have a mission to accomplish, and the mission is to project the philosophy of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu to the entire human society.

But the ability to project the philosophy for the benefit of human society will only be there in proportion to the degree to which we deal with each other, we respect each other, and the degree to which we exhibit vaiṣṇava behavior in character. Therefore, this instruction of Nārada Muni becomes very important because this tells us how a devotee should position himself in dealing with different vaiṣṇavas. The more we can appreciate the efforts of the vaiṣṇavas, the greater will be the satisfaction that one will obtain.

Prabhupāda used to often talk about the “Vṛndāvana vision”—that is looking at the good qualities of everyone. By looking at the good qualities of everyone, one can appreciate the effort that every vaiṣṇava is making, and by encouraging every vaiṣṇava to engage in devotional service, unlimited strength can be obtained. Prabhupāda used to give the example that the blades of grass on their own have no strength, but when the blades of grass are mixed together, they become stronger rope, and nobody can cut that rope.

Thus, to engage in devotional service means to follow the guidelines of vaiṣṇava behavior. We are here in the movement not just to chant sixteen rounds, but also to learn vaiṣṇava behavior, to learn vaiṣṇava etiquette and that will enable one to further chant the holy names of the Lord. After all, to go on chanting the holy names, one needs to constantly battle with the inferior energy of the Lord because the inferior energy of the Lord is always

trying to throw doubts in the mind to prevent one from chanting the holy names. So in order to be constantly victorious against the attack of the inferior energy, one has to execute a firm faith and determination. Firm faith means faith in the instructions of the spiritual master, faith in the instructions of the sādhus, faith in the instructions of the śāstras.

BECOME KṚSNA'S SERVANT

Therefore, we have to become completely detached from material enjoyment. We have to become determined never to give up Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and if we are determined never to give up Kṛṣṇa consciousness then we will also be able to glorify the Lord like Dakṣa is glorifying the Lord through the Hamsa-guhya prayers. The devotee is always glorifying the Lord because through the glorification of the Lord he is establishing the supreme position of the Lord. The supreme position of the Lord is always kept in front of the devotee's mind so that he knows how subordinate and junior his own position is. If the devotee is constantly thinking how junior and insignificant his position is in relationship with the Lord then he would always want to engage in devotional service. When one wants to please his senses, one is actually becoming Kṛṣṇa's competitor. To be Kṛṣṇa's competitor is the position of the materialists. We do not want to become Kṛṣṇa's competitors but we want to become Kṛṣṇa's servants. And being Kṛṣṇa's servant is the most glorious position, but our position

is just not mental, it has to be in reality, and one who is practicing this would always engage in devotional service.

The conclusion is to remain fixed in devotional service so one can be detached. By engaging in devotional service, one is constantly licking the honey from the lotus feet of the Lord, and one gets further away from material attachments by his absorption in devotional service. When you are flying in a plane, when the plane is taking off, as the plane gets higher and higher, the buildings appear smaller and smaller. When you are landing, as the plane is approaching the land, the building which from a distance appeared small, appears bigger and bigger. That is exactly what happens when you take to spiritual life. When you take to spiritual life, and as you are advancing in devotional service, when your enthusiasm is high, material activities appear smaller and smaller. As long as you are flying high, as you are engaged in active devotional service, material activities appear totally insignificant. But then again, when you descend to material consciousness that is when again you are beginning to flirt with Māyā, which is exactly like the plane that is landing. Once again, those material activities of which you lost sight, like the plane which is flying at the height of 32,000 ft., you can not even see anything on earth, but then as it begins to descend, everything begins to be visible. Similarly, as we flirt with Māyā then those activities of which we

had lost sight at one time, once again they come to our appearance and they appear bigger and bigger.

“We have to stay high forever” as Prabhupāda used to state. We can stay high forever if you are fixed in devotional service, if you are ready to perform austerities, and these austerities will enable us to capture Kṛṣṇa who is adhokṣaja (a name for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is beyond material sense perception, who is not perceivable by impure material senses).



- CHAPTER 03 -

THE TRAGEDY OF A MATERIALIST

*naivodvije para duratyayā-vaitaraṇyās
tvad-vīrya-gāyana-mahāmṛta-magna-cittaḥ
śoce tato vimukha-cetasa indriyārtha-
māyā-sukhāya bharam udvahato vimūḍhān*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.9.43)

“O best of the great personalities, I am not at all afraid of material existence, for wherever I stay I am fully absorbed in thoughts of Your glories and activities. My concern is only for the fools and rascals who are making elaborate plans for material happiness and maintaining their families, societies and countries. I am simply concerned for them with love.”

Prahlād Mahārāja is once again demonstrating the position of a vaiṣṇava. Prahlād Mahārāja is one of the topmost mahajans. He is one of the twelve mahajans, and Prahlād Mahārāja over here is versing a vaiṣṇava. He verses this by making two points. First of all he says, “I am not at all afraid of material existence for wherever I stay I am absorbed in thoughts of You.” This is the first

point that Prahlād Mahārāja is making, and the other point is that, “My concern forever is for the fools and rascals—that is the materialists—who are making very elaborate plans for material enjoyment.”

INSTRUCTION OF PRAHLAD MAHARAJA

Prahlād Mahārāja’s first point is that, “I am not at all afraid of material existence for wherever I stay I am fully absorbed in thoughts of Your glories and activities.” This instruction is very significant for every devotee of Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement because in attempting to broadcast the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, the devotees have to be in all types of situations. In attempting to broadcast Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the devotee sometimes have to be in nightclubs, sometimes they have to be in bars, sometimes they have to go house to house and see so many unpleasant things. But how is the devotee able to resist the temptations to participate in what he has seen? He is able to resist only if he follows Prahlād Mahārāja’s instruction. What is Prahlād Mahārāja’s instruction and example? That wherever he was, he was fully absorbed in thoughts of Kṛṣṇa’s glories and activities.

Prahlād Mahārāja was absorbed in thoughts of Kṛṣṇa all the time. There are nine processes of self-realization

*śrī-prahlāda uvāca
śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ
smaraṇaṁ pāda-sevanam*

*arcanam vandanaṁ dāsyam
sakhyam ātma-nivedanam*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.5.23)

Prahlāda Mahārāja said: Hearing and chanting about the transcendental holy name, form, qualities, paraphernalia and pastimes of Lord Viṣṇu, remembering them, serving the lotus feet of the Lord, offering the Lord respectful worship with sixteen types of paraphernalia, offering prayers to the Lord, becoming His servant, considering the Lord one's best friend, and surrendering everything unto Him (in other words, serving Him with the body, mind and words)—these nine processes are accepted as pure devotional service.

There are examples in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam how different great sages obtained self-realization by following these different processes. Prahlād Mahārāja was able to obtain self-realization by taking to the process of *viṣṇoḥ smaraṇam*—that is the process in which we all remember Kṛṣṇa, remember Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, and remember Kṛṣṇa's instructions. When Prahlād was in school, all his friends were trying to tempt him to come and enjoy and play. But he would refuse. When Prahlād would see the materialists forgetting Kṛṣṇa, he would not smile and say, "Oh, I am member of the privileged few who is going back to Godhead, and these people are condemned." No. Prahlād would feel very, very sorry, and he would think, "How can I save these conditioned soul? How can I take them back to Godhead?"

REAL HAPPINESS MEANS

The vimūḍhas, who are defined as the fools and rascals, they have absolutely no understanding about what is the real standard of happiness. Everyone is talking about happiness today, but the reality is that the materialist who are struggling for happiness, they have no understanding about what is real happiness. No one knows what real friendship is. For example, in the material world one is considered to be a friend, but in reality a friend is a friend only as long as he can go on exploiting. The moment one individual cannot exploit the other individual, he ceases to be a friend. The moment, in a boy-girl relationship, one cannot satisfy the other, the relationship terminates. Thus, the materialists who are the vimūḍhas, who are working very hard, they have absolutely no conception as to what is real happiness. The materialist is avoiding Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and while avoiding Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he is experiencing trouble.

The materialists have absolutely no conception of where real happiness lies. They think that those who take to this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement are actually missing a lot of value, they are missing the joys of life, and the materialists have to go through so much trouble just to stay out of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Just to stay out of Kṛṣṇa consciousness the materialist is going through so much trouble, because there are only two paths: the spiritual path and the material path. If one does not

want to take shelter of the spiritual path then he is forced to take shelter of the material path, and because the materialists, the vimūḍhas are trying to avoid Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they have to go through so much trouble, because everyone in the material world is full of misery. This is confirmed in Bhagavad-gītā—duḥkhālayam. It is also confirmed by the fact that Durgadevi is standing with a trident, which has arrows in 10 different directions, and she has the trident pressed against everyone's neck.

The conclusion is that the materialists can never be happy in the material world. Prabhupāda used to give the example of the picture of Durga in which she is holding a man by his hair, and she has a trident with ten arrows pressed against his neck. Prabhupāda explained that this is the position of the living entity in the material world. The invisible trident of Durga is always pressed against our necks. Someone may say, "I do not have that trident pressed against my neck, so I am not under the influence of Durga." But the trident is an invisible trident that is pressed against everyone's neck, and the effects of the invisible trident are represented by the miseries that we all have to experience such as birth, death, disease, and old age. The presence of these pressures are all over the world, whether they be in this country or India, whether they be in this planet or the other planets, except the Goloka-Vṛndāvana planet. Hence no one can be happy because no one in the material world can get out of Durgadevi's clutches.

In this verse Prahlād Mahārāja makes a reference to the river Vaitaraṇī. Between the material and the spiritual world, there is a river that separates the two. Just like there is the Atlantic Ocean that separates Europe from North America, similarly there is also the river known as Vaitaraṇī that separates the material world from the spiritual world. It is not easy to cross over this river. To cross over this river is a very difficult process. This is confirmed in the Gītā where the Lord says,

*daivī hy eṣā guṇa-mayī
mama māyā duratyayā
mām eva ye prapadyante
māyām etāṁ taranti te*

(Bhagavad-gītā 7.14)

This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome. But those who have surrendered unto Me can easily cross beyond it.

Kṛṣṇa says, “This material energy of Mine consisting of the three modes is very difficult to overcome” but if somehow or the other the living entity takes shelter of Kṛṣṇa then the same duratyayā becomes very easy. What is difficult becomes very, very easy. Just like the Caitanya-Caritāmṛta says,

*kathañcana smṛte yasmin
duṣkaram sukaram bhavet
vismṛte viparītaṁ syāt
śrī-caitanyaṁ namāmi tam*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Adi 14.1)

Things that are very difficult to do become easy to execute if one somehow or other simply remembers

Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. But if one does not remember Him, even easy things become very difficult. To this Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu I offer my respectful obeisances.

“One who takes shelter of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu, or by the mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu, whatever appears impossible becomes possible.” For example it says,

*mūka kavitva kare yāñ-sabāra smaraṇe
paṅgu giri laṅghe, andha dekhe tārā-gaṇe*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Adi 8.5)

By remembering the lotus feet of the Pañca-tattva, a dumb man can become a poet, a lame man can cross mountains, and a blind man can see the stars in the sky

“One who is blind can begin to see, one who is lame can begin to walk, one who is dumb can begin to speak, and one who is deaf can begin to hear.” Normally for a deaf man to begin to hear is not so difficult, but for a blind man to be made to see or a dumb man to be made to speak, or a lame man to be able to walk—these are almost impossible feats. The Caitanya-Caritāmṛta explains that by the grace of Kṛṣṇa all of this is possible. In the Bhagavad-gītā, the Lord also expresses a similar sentiment by saying that by taking shelter of Kṛṣṇa, one can overcome, cross over the ocean of material misery.

The tragedy of the materialist, as Prahlaḍ Mahārāja says is that they assume that they can squeeze happiness, sukhāya. Sukhāya means happiness. As Prabhupāda says in the purport that the tragedy is that they are

thinking that the duḥkhālayam can be converted into suḥkhālayam. They are thinking that what is miserable can become pleasurable. They are thinking that this misery can be converted into comfort. Therefore, they are making all these plans, though they are seeing at every moment that all their plans are being baffled. Still the materialist is busy making plans by which he can be successful. In other words he is not ready to admit that in material life there is no real happiness independent from God. The point is that the living entities independent of God are in a diseased condition. Just like a man in a diseased condition cannot be happy, cannot enjoy, similarly those who are independent of God cannot enjoy.

You all have experienced that when you are unwell, you cannot enjoy. When you are sick, you can not even enjoy pakoras and samosas. You can not even enjoy your favorite dish. When you are sick you can not even enjoy anything. But when you are sick what happens? When you are sick you go to the doctor, and the doctor says, “Now you please abstain from this, this, and this. Follow the following schedule, take medicines. Then you will be cured.” And when you are sick, why do you want to become O.K.? Because, you want to enjoy again. When you are sick, you have a headache, your body is aching, you cannot enjoy life. So you do not feel comfortable. Therefore, when you are sick, you follow the regulations of the doctor. Even if the doctor gives you a very bitter medicine, you take that bitter medicine because you

want to be cured and begin the process of enjoying again. When we are sick, we cannot enjoy, similarly when we are spiritually sick—spiritually sick means when you are not leading this life according to the directions of the Lord then we are spiritually sick—then also we cannot enjoy. That is the position of the materialists. They may think that they are very healthy. They may think that by going on jogging they will be able to keep their health very strong, but the reality is that they are spiritually sick. And because they are spiritually sick, they can never enjoy anything in the material world.

When one is sick, suppose one is a chain smoker and he is very sick with a bad cough then the doctor says, “Now you cannot smoke for a month, you have to give up smoking for a month so that you may recover your health again.” Or just like when somebody is suffering from some other disease and the doctor says, “O.K., give up drinking for a month.” And the person agrees to give up drinking for a month because he is hoping that he will recover his health, and then after he has recovered his health he can begin the process of so-called enjoyment again. Similarly, we are all materially sick, and because we are materially sick, we have to become cured. The process of getting cured in this human form of life is to have a spiritual link with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, to engage in yoga. Unless one takes to the spiritual process and abstain from illicit activities, one will not become healthy.

OUR REAL IDENTITY

Prahlād Mahārāja over here is expressing concern for the fools and rascals who are just interested in making elaborate plans for material happiness and maintaining their families, societies and countries. Our real identity is that we are parts and parcel of Kṛṣṇa. In reality there is only one real owner and all others are his servants. There is only one real master, and that is Kṛṣṇa. The living entity, instead of realizing that he is a part and parcel of God thinks that he is a part and parcel of his country. He is a part and parcel of his social club, he is a part and parcel of his family. Hence, he does not take the cure for becoming healthy. Because he remains sick, he can never enjoy. Just like some people are adverse to go to the doctor and take any medicine when they are sick, they continue to remain sick, they can never enjoy. Similarly, leading a life independent of God's instructions is leading a life of sickness, leading a life of cancer. If one continues in that direction then he is bound to die. He is bound to meet with spiritual death. Unless we take to yoga—yoga does not mean a body exercise by which one can become healthy, or press his nose against the ground. Yoga is defined in Sanskrit as “to link up.” When we talk about linking up, we are talking about two people. You can not link up to yourself. You have to have a connection with someone, and that connection is the Supreme Lord. Just like there are so many connections—there is the electrical connection,

there is a mechanical connection then there is a physical connection then there is a connection with rope—you tie each other with a rope. There are many different types of connections. Yoga means to have connection with the Lord.

Therefore, the process of becoming happy is to establish one's yogic link with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Just like a sick man. The sick man, in order to recover, has to follow the advice of the doctor, he has to go through some temporary austerities. Similarly, those who take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they are not scared of going through austerities because they know that by undergoing spiritual austerities, there will be a long-term gain.

PLEASE GET UP

The materialist has to undergo austerities even though he is trying to deny Kṛṣṇa. You cannot say that the materialists do not have to undergo austerities. They have to go through serious austerities. If you get up at four o'clock and go to any bus stop, you will see everyone going to work. The materialist does not want to get up at four and go to work. He does not even want to get up at nine and go to work. But he has to do it in order to survive. The purpose of material austerity generally is for some personal benefit, which is temporary, but if one takes to spiritual austerity then the result is unlimited happiness in the end because Kṛṣṇa means pleasure. Anyone who undergoes austerities for the pleasure of

the Supreme Lord is bound to experience nothing but pleasure.

Prahlād Mahārāja is voicing the concern that every vaiṣṇava should voice. Every vaiṣṇava should be concerned about the position of the living entities who are trying to live independent of God, and he should be convinced that the remedy or the ability to resist the different temptations is taking shelter of Kṛṣṇa, just by remembering Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in his prayers says, “Oh conditioned soul, please get up, please get up.” Just like when you are sleeping, the temple commander or your party leader comes up and says, “Get up. Its time to get ready to mangala-arati.” We do not feel like getting up, but we have to get up. Similarly, Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda is saying, “Oh sleeping souls, you are sleeping in the lap of the witch known as Māyā, now please get up. Please get up.”

Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda says, “When you were in your mother’s womb, you promised, you prayed to the Lord that you would take to devotional service when you came out, but now that you have come out of your mother’s womb, you have forgotten that promise, and again you are just trying to enjoy this witch, Māyā. Just like a married man who goes to a nightclub to enjoy a prostitute or something.” Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda is saying to the living entity that he had promised that he would serve the Lord when he would come out of his mother’s womb, but now that he has come out, he

has forgotten his promise, and instead of realizing real happiness by serving the Lord, he is trying to realize happiness by serving the witch, Māyā.

It is explained in the third canto that the living entity in the mother's womb is in a very uncomfortable position, and in that position when he is being attacked by the different worms, when even his breathing becomes difficult and when he is experiencing pain, he prays to the Lord

jantur uvāca

*tasyopasannam avitum jagad icchayātta-
nānā-tanor bhuvi calac-caraṇāravindam
so 'ham vrajāmi śaraṇam hy akuto-bhayaṁ me
yenedṛśi gatir adarśy asato'nurūpā*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.31.12)

The human soul says: I take shelter of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who appears in His various eternal forms and walks on the surface of the world. I take shelter of Him only, because He can give me relief from all fear and from Him I have received this condition of life, which is just befitting my impious activities.

Earlier we discussed that in the material world one is a friend only as long as he can exploit the other person. The moment your friend cannot benefit from your relationship with you, he wants to terminate that relationship. We can see that again and again. So Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda states, “Oh conditioned living entity, you have no other friend but one who is a disciple

of Lord Gaurāṅga.” Similarly, the conditioned living entities who are trying to forget their promise to the Lord, who are trying to maintain and develop so many so-called friendships, they should be warned that they can only be saved by the devotees of Lord Gaurāṅga, because except for the devotees of Lord Gaurāṅga, no one is interested in saving the conditioned entities.

A REAL FRIEND

If you analyze, you would conclude that Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda’s sentiments are no different from Prahlād Mahārāja’s that are being discussed in the verse today. Prahlād Mahārāja has voiced concern of the non-devotees who do not take shelter of Kṛṣṇa, and he says, “My dear Lord, I am concerned about them and I want to save them.” And similarly, Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda is also making the same point. Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda is also stating that, “Except for me, you have no other friend.” The implication is that except for the devotees of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement who are engaged in the saṅkīrtan activity, the society by and large has no friend. The political leaders are not our friends because they are your friends only as long as they need your votes. The moment they have obtained your votes they forget you. As we pointed out, all other relationships, whether they are relationships of huŚrīmad-Bhāgavatamand–wife, brother–sister, employee–employer, all these relationships exist only as long as one party can benefit at the expense of the

other. So they are not real friends. But the desire of the vaiṣṇava is to liberate the conditioned entity by giving him the science of Kṛṣṇa.

To summarize, Prahlād Mahārāja has expressed what every devotee from time to time may express. He says that, “I am not at all afraid of material existence because I am always fully absorbed in thoughts of rendering service to You.” When devotees are out on saṅkīrtan, this is the way to resist material desires, to resist material temptations, that is, always remember Kṛṣṇa by the process of viṣṇoḥ-smaraṇam. We emphasize this point again and again as this point is very important. And important point needs constant repetition. Prahlād Mahārāja is instructing us that he was able to resist the material environment because he was able to remember the transcendental glories of the Lord. Just like Prahlād Mahārāja is concerned at those who are trying to forget God and be happy, the members of this Kṛṣṇa consciousness society also have to be concerned for those materialists who are trying to lead lives independent of the desires of the Lord. The devotee, unlike the materialist, is not interested in a comfortable position for himself. A coffin is in which you bury a man, material comfort is a coffin for a devotee. The devotee, his concern is to become Kṛṣṇa Conscious through the medium of śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ smaraṇam and to display his anxiety for the conditioned entities by participating in the process of distributing the Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy.

This is what we should meditate upon. We should meditate upon different transcendental līlās of Kṛṣṇa, his instructions, and at the same time meditate on how the conditioned souls can be saved, and the more we take part in this saṅkīrtan process, the faster we can save the conditioned souls, and the faster we can save the conditioned souls, the lesser will be the burden of the Lord, because till the living entity returns to the Lord's home, the Lord remains very concerned. The desire of the devotee is to help the Lord realize his mission.



- CHAPTER 04 -

DEVOTEE AND MATERIALIST

*venasyāvekṣya munayo
durvṛttasya viceṣṭitam
vimṛśya loka-vyasanam
kṛpayocūḥ sma satrīṇaḥ*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.14.7)

“Therefore all the great sages assembled together and, after observing cruel Veṇa’s atrocities, concluded that a great danger and catastrophe was approaching the people of the world. Thus, out of compassion they began to talk amongst themselves, for they themselves were the performers of the sacrifices.”

We see in this verse that the great sages or the brāhmaṇa community of king Veṇa’s kingdom are very concerned of king Veṇa’s activities. They had hoped that when Veṇa became the king, he would follow religious practices, but now they are witnessing that king Veṇa is very proud and his activities are contrary to religious principles, and they are actually very concerned.

THE DIVISION OF SOCIETY

For the successful working of a society, there must be the division of society into different classes such as the brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas and śūdras. The role of the brāhmaṇas is to make sure that the people are God conscious. Therefore, we see that these brāhmaṇas were very concerned because king Veṇa who was in power was not interested in self-realization. For the successful working of the society, the presence of the head or brāhmaṇas must be there. Presently we see that no such division is being followed and everybody is actually leading a life of a śūdra.

In this age, almost everyone is leading a life of a śūdra, and we see that one part of the body is kicking the other part. For example, the legs are kicking the hands, the hands are kicking the head, and the legs are kicking the belly. That is, the labor movement which could be called the śūdras is beating against the vaiśyas. The capitalistic class is fighting with the labor class, and the labor class is fighting with the capitalistic class. The brāhmaṇas are compared to the head of a man, and the kṣatriyas are compared to the arms then we have the belly and the legs. We see that these different segments of the society are busy fighting with each other. Because there is no cooperation between the different parts or different segments of the society, one part of the body is beating the other part of the body.

DEFINITION OF A MATERILISTIC MAN

Since no knowledge about the Supreme is being imparted by the rulers, the rulers in the present day society are all similar to king Veṇa. We see the present position of the society, the dogs, hogs, camels, and asses are worshipping other dogs, hogs, camels, and asses. This is very nicely explained in the second canto of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,

*śva-vid-varāhoṣṭra-kharaiḥ
saṁstutaḥ puruṣaḥ paśuḥ
na yat-karṇa-ṭathopeto
jātu nāma gadāgrajaḥ*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 2.3.19)

Men who are like dogs, hogs, camels and asses praise those men who never listen to the transcendental pastimes of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the deliverer from evils.

The materialists are compared to the dogs, hogs, camels, and asses. How? We shall examine, for example, the dog. What are the characteristics of the dog? The dog serves the master very loyally. The dog will be very loyal to his master, because the master is giving him bread, and the dog is unable to discriminate as to what is the character of the master. The master may be a criminal, or he may be a saintly man, the dog is unable to discriminate, but because he is getting his bread from that individual, he is very loyal to him.

Similarly, the living entities are leading the life of a dog, because they are serving a master, who gives them

their paycheck, and they are not trying to discriminate as to what is the character of the employer. As long as they are getting their paychecks, they will be very loyal to that employer, and the moment they do not get their paycheck, they will retaliate. Therefore, the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam compares the materialist to a dog.

The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam further compares the materialist to a camel. The camel bites on thorns. When the camel bites on thorns, his tongue bleeds then he thinks that he is drinking thorn juice. Because he is thinking that this thorn juice is very tasty, he bites on the thorns even more, but he does not realize that this thorn juice is nothing but his own blood that is being obtained by his tongue being cut. Similarly, the materialists are engaging in sex life without discrimination, without realizing that in the semen they are discharging, so much blood is being lost. They are not realizing that the so-called temporary pleasure that they are experiencing is being obtained by the discharge of their very valuable blood. The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam says that these materialists who try and obtain pleasure by sex life are compared to the camel who thinks that thorns are very tasty.

Further, the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam compares the materialist to the hog. What are the characteristics of the hog? The characteristic of the hog is that he eats without discrimination. The hog does not discriminate what he is eating. If we were to approach the hog with a very palatable plate of prasādam, the hog would clearly

reject it and instead choose stool. Similarly, the materialists also reject spiritual food and they want to eat without discrimination. The hog is proudly thinking that he is enjoying. There is a nice story in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam about Indra. Indra was cursed, and hence he had to take birth as a pig. When Indra took his birth as a pig, Brahmā and the other demigods saw that the department of rain was not working properly, and they approached Indra saying, “Please resume your duties.” But Indra refused. He said, “I am enjoying the association of Mrs. Pig and the junior piglets, and I do not want to leave the association of Mrs. Pig.” It is only when Indra was threatened with a butcher’s knife that he decided to part with the company of Mrs. Pig. Similarly, the living entities today want to eat without discrimination and mate without discrimination. Previously, in the materialistic society the principle was that one would only mate with one’s wife. But today, they do not discriminate and they mate with anyone who comes in contact, just like the hog!

Lastly, the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam compares the materialist to an ass. What are the characteristics of the ass? The ass carries a heavy burden of load all day, and the moment the ass wants to take a little bit of rest he is kicked by his master. Some of you who may have been to India may have seen the ass at work. The moment the ass takes a little rest, the master kicks him. The ass carries this heavy burden of load all day, why? Because he thinks that the little bit of grass that he needs, can

be obtained only if he serves the master by carrying this heavy load. The ass is thinking that it is only because he carries this load all day will his master give him this little bit of grass in the evening. He does not understand that the grass grows on earth by the arrangement of the Lord, but he is convinced that the source of getting that grass is by giving pleasure to his master. Similarly, the materialists are carrying so many anxieties. Just like the ass is carrying a heavy burden of load, the materialist, one who does not want to be dependent upon the Lord is full of anxieties and he is very happily increasing his anxieties, because he thinks that if he does not please all the people around him, he will not be able to get his bread or happiness.

Dogs, hogs, camels, and asses—this is the definition of the present materialistic men. They are leading lives of dogs, hogs, camels, and asses, and they are glorifying other dogs, hogs, camels, and asses. They are just like a politician—he goes to give a speech and the supporters of his party will clap when he comes. A dog, hog, camel, and ass is glorifying the other dogs, hogs, camels, and asses. The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam says that the materialist who does not want to depend upon the Lord is simply wasting his time. From morning till night their only concern is sense gratification. Just like king Veṇa. King Veṇa's only interest was sense gratification and he was very proud of his kingdom. Similarly, the present materialists are very proud and they want to engage in sense gratification from morning to night. The only

restriction on their sense gratification is their financial budget, believe it or not. That is the only restriction on sense gratification—their finances. If the price is too high then they will restrict their sense enjoyment. Just like these days, meat is getting to be very expensive, so for economic reasons they are consuming vegetables. If meat was cheap, they would gladly buy meat. The only restriction to this sense gratification today, is their financial budgets.

AN ETERNAL MARATHON

Just like the devotees of Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, who in the month of December engage in a marathon to distribute the mercy of the Lord, the materialists are also engaged in an eternal marathon of sense gratification from morning to night. Even when old age comes, when they are about to die, when the notice of death is clearly visible, they still try to squeeze a little bit of sense gratification. They are never tired of their marathon efforts for sense gratification. Those materialists who lead their lives just believing in the principles of bodily realization instead of self-realization are called in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam as pashu. Pashu means an animal.

MATERIAL WORLD A DESERT

This material world in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is compared to a desert. If you are in a desert, you cannot be happy—why? First of all the heat is so strong. We

may hate the cold weather of Montreal but if you are in a desert, it is far more miserable. The heat is very strong, and due to the heat, one builds up temperature. If one is walking in the desert, it is very uncomfortable. Not only it is very hot, but also the sand is always blowing against the face. Similarly, material world is like a desert. The materialists are walking in this desert of miseries and the sand is constantly blowing against their face, that is, in the form of these miseries of life. And they are saying, “Oh, we have found an oasis.”

If a man mutters in a desert, “Oh, I have found the oasis,” an intelligent man is not going to believe it. He knows that in a desert there is no question of an oasis being found. Similarly, the devotees of the Lord, when they hear the materialists saying, “Here is a platform for peace and happiness”, know that this is the muttering of a madman—they do not take it seriously. The devotees of the Lord know that happiness can only be realized once the principles of God consciousness are being followed. When they hear the scientists claim that they will be able to produce a deathless life or saying that now all the problems will be solved, or when a politician is fighting a campaign he says, “I will solve your economic problems,” the devotee knows that this is just the muttering of a madman that oasis can be found in a desert.

DESERT DWELLERS

Materialistic life means the life of the desert dwellers. A desert dweller or a person who lives in a desert can

never be comfortable and he can never be happy. Just like the brāhmaṇas in this verse, the brāhmaṇas over here are expressing great concern, not only because king Veṇa is leading a godless life, but also because he is not concerned about the welfare of the people. Therefore, the brāhmaṇas eventually curse king Veṇa, and install his son, king Pṛthu to the throne. Similarly, as Śrīla Prabhupāda states in the purport, the devotees of the Lord are very anxious so that the people can be happy both materially and spiritually. Śrīla Prabhupāda says, “Ordinary karmīs are busy acquiring money for sense gratification, and ordinary jñānīs are socially aloof when they speculate on liberation. But actually devotees and saintly persons are always anxious to see how the people can be made happy both materially and spiritually.” Thus, the devotees of the Lord or the vaiṣṇavas are on a more elevated platform than the karmīs and the jñānīs. The karmīs are only interested in bodily-realization like the animals, and the jñānīs are only interested in speculation, and at the most, their personal liberation. But the vaiṣṇavas or the devotees of the Lord are interested in the benefit of the entire humanity.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A DEVOTEE

The characteristics of the devotee of the Lord are very beautifully explained in the fourth canto of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. The devotees of the Lord are very interested in distributing mercy. The first definition

of the devotee of the Lord is that he is very merciful, he wants to distribute compassion and somehow or the other, the devotee of the Lord is satisfied.

Nārada Muni says that the devotee of the Lord, somehow or the other, must be satisfied. We should understand this carefully. The word “somehow” in this verse is used to indicate that it is not necessary that the devotee will always be satisfied. It is not that every time a devotee will get exactly what he wants. Just like we can see from our day to day life, we do not necessarily get everything the way we want. But still Nārada Muni says, “somehow or the other you must be satisfied.” So the characteristic of a devotee is that somehow or the other he must be satisfied with whatever the Lord provides.

We see even amongst devotees that when they are not able to realize what they were waiting for, they get frustrated. They also become angry. That is the nature of a materialist. The materialist is thinking that everything is under his control. Just like the scientists. The scientists are proud of the fact that they can control everything, including nature, but Kṛṣṇa says,

*mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ
sūyate sa-carācaram
hetunānena kaunteya
jagad viparivartate*

(Bhagavad-gītā 9.10)

This material nature, which is one of My energies, is working under My direction, O son of Kuntī, producing all moving and nonmoving beings. Under its rule this

manifestation is created and annihilated again and again.

Thus, the devotee is dependent upon the Lord. He knows that the Lord is the eventual controller of everything. If I have not been able to obtain what I was hoping for or expecting, I will not be frustrated. I will be satisfied with whatever the Lord provides for my maintenance, and I will only be frustrated if I cannot distribute mercy.

The materialists get frustrated when they cannot obtain sense gratification. That is why they are frustrated. Why do they throw one party out? Why did the Americans throw out President Carter? Not because they didn't like his face, but they threw him out because he was not able to give them enough sense gratification. He could not give them enough economic gains. So they have thrown him out and have elected somebody else who has promised them economic gains. The materialist gets frustrated when his sense gratification is curtailed. But the spiritualist does not get affected when some personal facility is curtailed. Rather, he is frustrated when he cannot distribute the mercy of the Lord.

So this verse is listing three points. First point is to distribute mercy. The second point is that somehow or the other we must be satisfied. The third point is that somehow or the other we have to control all our senses. The devotees of the Lord, if they can follow this three point program are bound to be successful in executing

the mission of human life. These senses must be controlled.

SENSES ARE LIKE SNAKES

We must always keep these three points in front of our mind. Prabhupāda gave a nice example of the senses, as follows: The snake—its body is very cool. The snake's body is even cooler than the breeze you can get from an air-conditioned room. When it is very hot and somebody takes the snake and wraps the snake around his neck, what is going to happen? The snake is just going to bite him.

I was reading in the paper that recently a man in South Africa was claiming that he was the world-record holder of living with snakes. The previous record was that he had lived in the company of the most dangerous snakes for 19 days without being bitten. Now he was trying to beat that record, but on the 18th day one snake bit him and he died. He was very proud that he had performed so many feats all over the world and that the snakes wouldn't bite him, but he ended up dying from a snake-bite. These senses are compared to the snakes. Just like the snake cannot be trusted, similarly, even though the snakes may be very cooling, even though it is very hot for example in the middle east or India, you do not see people putting snakes around their bodies. They prefer to suffer the heat, rather than put a snake around their neck. Because a snake is very dangerous. Similarly, if we attempt to satisfy

our senses, that is just like having a snake around your neck.

NATURE OF MATERIALISTIC LIFE

Thus, those who are trying to enjoy their senses, especially the materialists—they are actually just winding a snake around their neck. Prabhupāda used to give the example of a moth. A moth sees a beautiful fire, and he seeks to enjoy the beautiful fire and meets his death. That is the nature of materialistic life. We think that there is a mirage in the desert, and we are running after that mirage. We are running after that happiness, and we go on running, running, running, and in the end we get thirsty, we fall, we faint and we die. That is the nature of materialistic life. They are always looking for water in the desert, but actually there is no water in the desert. Similarly, the living entities are trying to look for happiness in this material world, but there is no happiness in the material world. Real happiness can only be realized if one is engaged in devotional service of the Lord.

BECOME A SNAKE CHARMER

The devotee understands that he is carrying a snake with him all the time, that is, the senses. Now what do the snake charmers do? They take the teeth out of the snake, because the teeth of the snake are poisonous. Even if the snake bites, without teeth no poison is going to come out of it. The snake charmers keep the snake,

because this is their profession. This is how they earn their bread. But they have pulled the snake's teeth out. Similarly, the devotee cannot do away with the senses, but he takes away the poison out of the senses. What is the poison of the senses? The poison of the senses is engaging them like the animals.

Instead he follows the advice of the Nārada-pañcarātra. The advice of Nārada-pañcarātra is:

*sarvopādhi-vinirmuktaṁ
tat-paraṭvena nirmalam
hṛṣīkeṇa hṛṣīkeśa-
sevanam bhaktir ucyate*

(Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.1.12)

“If one utilizes these senses for the service of the Lord who is the proprietor of these senses, Hṛṣīkeśa then one will become free from all designations, and the senses will get purified.”

THE REAL DESIGNATION

What are these designations? We have just explained that Nārada Muni is saying that if the senses are employed in the service of the Lord then you become free from all designations. In the material world, everyone is after designations. Everyone wants to be a big man in society. Everyone wants to hold some position. But what are these designations? These designations are identification with the body. I am thinking, “I am American, I am Canadian, I’m a man, I’m a woman, so let me please my senses. I must please my senses.”

Like sometimes even devotees cannot keep themselves awake. That is, they become slaves of their senses. So these are different designation. The Nārada-pañcarātra says that if these senses are employed in the service of the Lord then you can become free from all these designations then you are only left with one designation. What is that? That you are Kṛṣṇa's subordinate servant. The first result of engaging in the service of the Lord is that there are no designations left, and your senses are completely purified. And you realize that you are the eternal servant of the Lord.

The Caitanya-Caritāmṛta states

*ekale īśvara kṛṣṇa, āra saba bhṛtya
yāre yaiche nācāya, se taiche kare nṛtya*
(Cc Ādi 5.142)

Lord Kṛṣṇa alone is the supreme controller, and all others are His servants. They dance as He makes them do so.

“There is only one Supreme Master, and all others are his servants.” That is the real designation that there is only one Supreme Master, Kṛṣṇa, and we are all His servants. This is realized if one is able to utilize his senses in the service of the Supreme Lord. Therefore, even in this very body that we have, we have to purify ourselves. There is this very nice verse in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam where Nārada Muni says, “That very activity which is the cause of disease, if it is applied in a purifying manner, it becomes the cure of that disease.” And Prabhupāda used to explain this by giving the example of milk. Milk

at times, causes disorder of the stomach, but the same milk when it is applied in a purifying way, that is, when yogurt is made out of that milk and when it is fed back into the stomach, it cures the stomach-ache. Devotional service means that we perform our activities.

The materialists getting into so much trouble because they are utilizing their senses for their personal pleasure. But the devotees do not have to utilize something else. They utilize the same senses which the materialist utilizes for nonsense activities, but for the pleasure of the Lord. By employing those very senses, which can also be employed in nonsense activities, in the service of the Lord the devotee is able to purify himself and get cured of this material disease.

The devotees of the Lord definitely do not want to become slaves of their senses. As we said, the materialists are on an eternal marathon of sense gratification. The devotees know that this sense gratification is eating one's spiritual progress. In other words, sense gratification is detrimental to spiritual progress. The devotee abstains from sense gratification, and rather he engages in those activities which are helpful in cultivating spiritual life.

IDENTIFY THE ENEMY

The devotees of the Lord must be able to identify their enemy. We see in the material world, everyone is identifying one's enemy. America thinks that their

biggest enemy is Russia. And Russia thinks their biggest enemy is America. The capitalists think that their enemy is the economist system of government. The economists think that their enemy is the capitalistic system of government. Similarly, one company manufacturing one toothpaste brand thinks the other companies are their enemies. They are competing with the other companies. So they are very watchful so as not to lose ground to the other companies. Just like these days, there is an arms race going on between America and Russia. What is this arms race? Arms race means that America is trying its best to make sure that Russia does not get the upper hand. Russia is trying its best to make sure that America does not get the upper hand. Because they have identified the enemies, now, they are preparing to face the enemies. Similarly, the devotee of the Lord also identifies his enemy. This enemy is the desire for sense gratification. He knows that this enemy is responsible for his taking birth, one after another in the material world, and therefore, he wants to protect himself against this enemy. He wants to protect himself against this enemy not by building nuclear warheads, but by taking shelter of the holy name of the Lord.

THE HARE KRISHNA MANTRA

If we want to develop the three qualities that we have discussed, advised in the fourth canto—the quality of mercy, the quality of satisfaction, and the ability to control our senses then we have to take shelter in the

holy name of the Lord with sincerity and conviction. The Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, it is custom made for the age of Kali. Just like a rich man does not buy furniture from a regular store. He will go and order custom made furniture. That is more prestigious. Or a rich man does not buy ready made suits. He goes to a tailor and gets a custom made suit. Similarly, this Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra is custom made by the Lord for this age of Kali. Just like in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Sukadeva Goswāmī says,

*kaler doṣa-nidhe rājann
asti hy eko mahān guṇaḥ
kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya
mukta-saṅgaḥ paraṁ vrajet*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 12.3.51)

“In this age of Kali, there are so many inauspicious symptoms, but there is one boon, that is the holy name of the Lord, which can give love of Godhead.” So the holy name of the Lord, that is the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, is custom made for the people who are to take birth in the age of Kali.

THE MAGIC OF MANTRA

The Caitanya-Caritāmṛta also confirms this same point, “In the age of Kali, the Bhagavān, Hari can be pleased only when one takes shelter of the holy names of Kṛṣṇa.” Thus, the holy names of Kṛṣṇa are the only means for deriving shelter in this age of Kali, and it is said in the Īsopaniṣad that “The holy name of Kṛṣṇa is more powerful in the age of Kali than reading all the Vedic texts.”

To summarize, the holy names of Kṛṣṇa are the only names by which one can learn to control his senses, one can learn to distribute mercy, and one can learn to be satisfied with what the Lord provides. This is the magic mantra. Just like sometimes in business, you come up with a magic technique, that the moment you use it, everything works. So this is a magic mantra. If you use this mantra, chant it properly, with faith, with conviction, one is guaranteed to succeed. The brahminical qualities will develop further. Just like in this verse we see that the brāhmaṇas are very concerned about the welfare of the society. When we are concerned about the welfare of the society then we are exhibiting our brahminical qualities. When we are not concerned about the welfare of society then we are not exhibiting brahminical qualities, because a real brāhmaṇa means one who understands his relationship with the Lord and also one who is concerned about others who do not understand their relationship with the Lord.

One thing to meditate upon when reading about king Veṇa is that thousands of years ago, there was only one king Veṇa. But now, there are millions of king Veṇas. In fact, in every corner that you see, you only see king Veṇa's representatives. You do not see king Pṛthu's representatives anywhere. All the rulers, all over the world are completely blind. Prahlād Mahārāja says that they are so blind that they do not know wherein their real benefit lies. The present day rulers are all like king Veṇas. Whether you go to the local leader,

the local member of Parliament, the local mayor, the Prime Minister or the President, they are exactly like king Veṇa—very proud of their position and interested in sense gratification. King Veṇa had no time to meet the brāhmaṇas. He was too busy in sense gratification and he was too proud. There are millions of king Veṇas all over, and the members of Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement have to play the role of the brāhmaṇas. But fortunately or unfortunately, we are not as powerful as the brāhmaṇas of those days. The brāhmaṇas of those days, just by their curses were able to destroy this king. But if we all sit down here and start to curse the present day king Veṇas, they would still continue with their power. We have to curse them, but we have to curse them in the manner that Lord Caitanya taught us—that is, by defeating their atheistic views.

Of course, we would like to have the same powers as those brāhmaṇas, because then we would not have to go out on the street when it is -30°F . We could all sit down in our well-heated rooms and just curse these king Veṇas. Then nobody would grumble. But we all have to surrender as per Lord's plan. According to the Lord's plan, we are not so blessed that we can just sit down and curse the king Veṇas. We have to curse them by actually making the effort and distributing this mercy, this love of God, and then the myths of these Veṇas can be destroyed when they receive this higher transcendental knowledge.

We have to become expert brāhmaṇas and develop the quality of mercy; then the king Veṇas will automatically be checked. That is the present system of taking care of the king Veṇas.





- CHAPTER 05 -

DIVINE INSTRUCTIONS

*aham daṇḍa-dharo rājā
prajānām iha yojitaḥ
rakṣitā vṛttidaḥ sveṣu
setuṣu sthāpitā pṛthak*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.21.22)

“King Pṛthu continued: By the grace of the Supreme Lord I have been appointed as the king of this planet, and I carry the scepter to rule the citizens, protect them from all dangers and give them employment according to their respective positions in the social order established by Vedic injunction.”

Pṛthu Mahārāja acknowledges that he has been made king by the grace of Supreme Lord, so it is his responsibility to protect the citizens from all danger, plus give them employment according to their respective positions in the social order.

THE DUTY OF THE KING

According to the Vedic system, if the society is based on the Vedic way of life then there is no question of

unemployment. In this verse and purport it is clearly stated that based on the divisions of the social order and based on the qualities that the individual possesses, everyone in the society is employed in accordance to his ability—there is no question of unemployment. It is being stated in the purport that it is the duty of the king or the government not only to provide employment, but also to make sure that the employment is given according to one's abilities. If a person is qualified to do a particular job it must be given to him. But what we see presently, it is just the opposite. First of all, a lot of the people can not get a job even if they want a job. Secondly, a person is just doing any job in order to maintain his livelihood.

Ideally, the head of the state considers himself to be an agent of the Lord and as an agent of the Lord, he understands that all living beings are created by the Lord. Therefore, as an agent of the Lord, it is his business to extend protection to all of them, including the animals. This is signified by the words “prajāyate iti prajā.” For example, when Mahārāja Parīkṣit saw that someone was attempting to kill a cow, he at once drove that person out of his kingdom, because the Sanskrit word prajā means population. The present-day leaders all over the world misunderstand this word prajā. Prajā just does not mean human population that has come out of the mother's womb, but prajā also means that population that is in the mother's womb, or in forms of species that have lesser intelligence.

The essential point is that the present-day understanding of the world leaders is completely illusory. Instead of trying to be exemplary in their public and private lives, the leaders of society today are just the opposite. They are not exemplary in the area of self-realization, they are just becoming exemplary in the area of sense gratification. The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam gives us information of many Vedic monarchs, who were completely God conscious, and whose outlook in terms of their responsibilities was similar to Mahārāja Pṛthu.

IDEAL GOD CONSCIOUS MONARCH

Mahārāja Pṛthu was an ideal God conscious monarch. There is also the example of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, who is also an ideal God conscious king. It is said that Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira's enemy has never been born. He was so God conscious that he had absolutely no enemies. Then there is the example of Lord Rāmacandra, who was so concerned about the welfare of the people that He would walk at night in disguise to find out if the people had any complaints and if He found any complaints, He would try to solve them. There is the example of Bali Mahārāja, and there is the example of Mahārāja Śibi who even offered his own flesh from his body in order to protect a pigeon who came to him for protection. The head of state means taking up of responsibility—spiritual responsibility.

The head of the state takes spiritual responsibility that somehow or the other he must make sure that

everyone in the state can be protected and guided on the path back to Godhead. Mahārāja Śibi displayed how a God conscious king would even sacrifice his own flesh in order to protect someone who came to him for protection. Like, when the pigeon, being chased by the eagle, sped to Mahārāja Śibi, he gave the pigeon complete asylum, and told the eagle that I cannot let this pigeon go away, but if you want, you can take the flesh from my body equal to the weight of this pigeon. Thus, a God conscious king or the head of the state is willing to make sacrifices also in order to protect the weaker sections of the society, and not just worry about his personal sense pleasure.

Today, the leaders or kings, instead of acting as the representatives of the Lord, are specializing in the areas of sense gratification. For example, in the Middle East countries where there is a lot of oil and hence a lot of wealth, the kings are utilizing this wealth just for their own sense pleasure. They are making a big show that our country is being run on economic principles by banning prostitution and liquor consumption in public, but they themselves are engaging in these illicit activities behind closed walls and in areas outside their own countries.

A MADMAN

The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam states however that any individual, whether he be the king or he be a pauper—any individual who thinks that sense gratification is the goal of life, is certainly a madman. It is said that

one who considers performing vikarma (vikarma means activities which are completely contrary to the religious principles) as the goal of life is certainly a madman.

The Bhagavad-gītā states that any activity that the individual performs falls in one of the three areas. Karmic activities are those where one follows the karma-kāṇḍa portion and the goal is elevation to higher planets. Then there are vikarmic activities which are against the religious principles. Then there are akarmic activities which means activities performed according to the laws of the Lord. So the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is stating,

*nūnaṁ pramattaḥ kurute vikarma
yad indriya-prītaya āpr̥ṇoti
na sādhu manye yata ātmano 'yam
asann api kleśada āsa dehaḥ*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 5.5.4)

When a person considers sense gratification the aim of life, he certainly becomes mad after materialistic living and engages in all kinds of sinful activity. He does not know that due to his past misdeeds he has already received a body which, although temporary, is the cause of his misery. Actually the living entity should not have taken on a material body, but he has been awarded the material body for sense gratification. Therefore I think it not befitting an intelligent man to involve himself again in the activities of sense gratification by which he perpetually gets material bodies one after another.

When one considers that sense gratification is the goal of life then such an individual definitely becomes

mad, and this mad individual is not realizing that this human body which he has is already giving him misery. The reason he has this body is because he has performed vikarmic activities in his past life. So now instead of stopping vikarmic activities, because he has become mad after sense gratification, he is again performing vikarmic activities. Such an individual must be considered to be definitely a madman.” Anyone engaged in sense gratification is to be considered a madman. This is not our statement, this is found in the fifth canto of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

TWO PATH

Thus, there are essentially two paths—the path of sense gratification and the path of self-realization. Those who are mad pursue the path of sense gratification, and those who are intelligent, they pursue the path of self-realization. They pursue this path with the greatest of determination, because on the path of self-realization there will also be a lot of impediments, difficulties, obstacles, but if one is convinced then success awaits such an individual. Śrīla Rupa Goswāmī states in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* that, “If the path of self-realization is available, please take to it at any cost, because if this opportunity is missed, you may not get this opportunity again.” He is saying that if this Kṛṣṇa consciousness or the path of self-realization is available, please take to it at any cost.

What is the cost? For everything you have to pay a price. If you pay a high price, you can get a good car. If you pay a lower price, you get something ordinary. So what is the price for taking to Kṛṣṇa consciousness? Rupa Goswāmī says, “The price that you have to pay for taking to this Kṛṣṇa consciousness is simply your eagerness.” If one is eager then this Kṛṣṇa consciousness will appear to be very easy. The first point that Rupa Goswāmī is making is, “Take to this Kṛṣṇa consciousness if it is available, at any cost,” and then he says that the cost that you have to pay for taking to this Kṛṣṇa consciousness is simply your eagerness. And what is the result of this then? That is the third step. The third stage is that once you take to this Kṛṣṇa consciousness then this will result in the following: It will result in jñāna—jñāna means knowledge, which will result in vairāgya. The conclusion is that if we take to this path of self-realization enthusiastically, with our eagerness then this will result in knowledge, and this knowledge will mean knowledge that will create in us the spirit of vairāgya—renunciation.

This jñāna must result in vairāgya. Jñāna is very often misunderstood. For example, the Bhagavad-gītā talks about many different subject matters—karma, jñāna, bhakti, but what is jñāna? Jñāna does not mean knowledge by which one speculates about the Supreme Lord. Jñāna means knowledge by which one understands his constitutional position in relationship with the Lord. Karma—karma does not mean just performance

of duties, but karma means performance of duties which results in renouncing the fruits for the pleasure of the Lord. We must understand what vairāgya is. In order to understand what is vairāgya, we must also understand what is the real meaning of karma, what is the real meaning of jñāna. If we understand the real meaning of karma and jñāna then this will result in taking to the path of bhakti with determination.

VAIRAGYA MEANS

Vairāgya means that when the opportunity for sense gratification is there, I voluntarily abstain from it. For example, if a poor man in India says that he does not want to go to America, there is no vairāgya. He can not afford it. If you are passing in front of a big car showroom and you say, “I do not want that Mercedes,” that is no vairāgya. If you do not have the money to buy it, you are forced not to buy it. But if the opportunity for sense gratification is there, but I still abstain from it—why—for a higher cause, for pleasing the Supreme Personality of Godhead then that is vairāgya. I even performed an action against my wishes, but I am performing it strictly for the pleasure of the Lord. That is vairāgya.

The summary is that in order to cultivate a spiritual path, in order to cultivate Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one must develop vairāgya. This vairāgya will come after jñāna is there. Prabhupāda used to give the example that the desire to please our senses is there, but we have to rectify it. For example, a man has a diseased eye. If

the eye is diseased you do not pull it out. But rather you remove the cataract so you can see again. Similarly, the senses have to be purified, and they have to be purified by constant engagement in service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If a person is physically weak and there is an epidemic of flu or hay fever or whatever, that weak person will get exposed to sickness very fast. But if somebody has a very healthy body then even if there is a big epidemic, it will not affect him. Isn't that a fact? Just like that, in spiritual life also, if the senses are constantly being employed in the service of the Lord then this epidemic of Māyā will not be allowed to penetrate and capture you. But if we are not constantly engaged in devotional service, that means we are weak spiritually. If we are weak spiritually then this Māyā or disease will easily catch us.

CURE FOR THE DISEASE

Therefore, Nārada Muni states in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, "It is a fact that the same activities which are the cause of the disease, if applied in a purifying manner, becomes a cure for that disease." Our goal is to make ourselves spiritually healthy. If the goal is to make ourselves spiritually healthy then the next question is how do we realize that goal? That is being informed by Nārada Muni—to utilize our senses to engage in activities which have a purifying effect—the purifying effect in this case is the process of pure devotional service. Milk is the cause of bad stomach, but the same

milk if it is applied in a purifying manner, namely in the form of yogurt then the same milk becomes the medicine for a bad stomach. Nārada Muni is saying that the same activities which take you to hell, if the same senses are applied in the process of pure devotional service, they can be the cause of your liberation.

As Nārada-pañcarātra states, “In order to become free from the designations (designations means identification with the body, and identification with the body means identification with the senses, and identifications with the senses means to satisfy the senses. So these are all related) then there is only one solution and that is to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hṛṣīkeśa, who is the proprietor of the senses.”

BECOME SPIRITUALLY RICH

Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu was describing to Sanātana Goswāmī different aspects of devotional service. He explained the word “ātmārāma.” The word ātmārāma also means that there are different types of transcendentalists. There is one type of transcendentalist who aspires to serve the Lord. Another is one who is absorbed in serving the Lord. Yet another is one who may desire liberation. Thirdly, there is one who is already liberated. Then there is one who is actually engaged in his constitutional position of serving the Lord. After explaining the different meanings of the word “ātmārāma,” Caitanya Mahāprabhu also explained that this word ātmārāma also means three other things.

Actually the word “ātmārāma” has several meanings, but Caitanya Mahāprabhu explained three other meanings after this. One is “ātmārāma” means perseverance. Another meaning of “ātmārāma” is tolerance. And the third meaning of “ātmārāma” is endeavor.

Thus, Caitanya Mahāprabhu concluded his teachings to Sanātana Goswāmī by saying that unless one endeavors to succeed on the spiritual path, one cannot succeed. This is also confirmed in the Bṛhan-Nāradiya Purāṇa. Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu quoted the Bṛhan-Nāradiya Purāṇa to Sanātana Goswāmī to point out that unless one makes the effort, he cannot succeed on the spiritual path. The point is that without making the effort, without making the endeavor, one cannot hope to succeed even on the material path. In material life one cannot hope to become rich without making the effort. Similarly, one cannot hope to become spiritually rich without making the effort. The conclusion was that one should make the effort in order to succeed on this spiritual path. Caitanya Mahāprabhu also pointed out different conditions in which one can be considered surrendered on the spiritual path.

PRINCIPLE OF SURRENDER

Further, Caitanya Mahāprabhu told Sanātana Goswāmī “One of the principles for surrender in spiritual life is that one accepts everything that is favorable for devotional service, and he accepts this with determination.” Along with this is the second point

that “One rejects everything that is unfavorable for devotional service, and he rejects with determination.”

We should reject with determination. That is, one may find it a little difficult to reject something, but we must reject with determination. When you know that you are getting a dangerous disease, you run to the doctor and pray, “Please get this disease out of my body” because you know that this disease will eventually kill you. Similarly, the devotee rejects everything unfavorable with determination because he knows that this thing is detrimental to his spiritual progress, and if he does not get rid of it now, it will kill him spiritually.

Another principle of surrender is that one understands that the Lord is the maintainer of everything. The materialists are thinking that they are the maintainers, but like king Pṛthu is stating in this verse, “The Lord is the maintainer and since, the Lord is the maintainer, my desires can only be fulfilled by the Lord.” Then one understands that nothing can be fulfilled independent of the Lord. The different demigods are just the agents of the Lord, they are not capable of fulfilling the needs of the individual. It is only the Supreme Lord who can fulfill the needs of individual. The last principle of surrender is to consider oneself to be very low in the process of devotional service. To consider oneself to be totally insignificant, not to think that I am so elevated and it is because of me that these things are happening. This is clearly explained by Caitanya Mahāprabhu to Sanātana Goswāmī that a devotee considers himself

to be totally insignificant. And with that mentality he executes devotional service.

DIVINE INSTRUCTIONS

In order to succeed on the path of self-realization which Rupa Goswāmī is strongly recommending, we should be eager, and if we are eager, that results in genuine vairāgya, and as we understand genuine vairāgya, we will understand also the principles of surrender which includes rejecting everything which is unfavorable for devotional service, and if one pursues a path according to the instructions of the Lord then the Lord guarantees that such an individual will never return to this material abode.

We should meditate on these topics that we hear from the revealed scriptures, such as the different principles of surrender, such as the price that one has to pay for becoming Kṛṣṇa Conscious, such as the meanings of karma, jñāna, bhakti, such as the real mission of human life, and if we constantly meditate on these instructions of the revealed scriptures then the desire for sense gratification will not develop. Then as soon as the desire for sense gratification comes, we will reject it because we know that it is detrimental to spiritual progress. But if we do not meditate on these divine instructions, if we do not listen to these divine instructions regularly then our position will be spiritually weak. Just as we said, a weak man can catch disease very fast. If we are spiritually weak, we can get diseased very fast, and the

result of getting diseased will be that we will say bye–bye to spiritual life.



- CHAPTER 06 -

THE GLORIES OF SANKIRTAN YAJYA

*nāca, gāo, bhakta-saṅge kara saṅkīrtana
kṛṣṇa-nāma upadeśi' tāra' sarva-jana*

(Cc Adi.7.92)

“My dear child, continue dancing, chanting and performing saṅkīrtan in association with devotees. Furthermore, go out and preach the value of chanting Kṛṣṇa-nāma, for by this process You will be able to deliver all fallen souls.”

TWO TYPE OF DEVOTEES

This verse of the Caitanya-Caritāmṛta is very important. You see, the spiritual master says that the disciples just go out, dance, chant and perform saṅkīrtan. This activity of saṅkīrtan which all of you are performing is a very elevated activity. In the same Caitanya-Caritāmṛta it is said that the whole universe is thankful to the Pañca-tattva, because the Pañca-tattva did saṅkīrtan all over the planet. Srila Prabhupāda in

his purport says that there are two types of devotees—Goṣṭhānandī and Bhajanānandī—that is those who are only worried about their own selves, and those who are also worried about others. We are not Bhajanānandīs. Bhajanānandī is one who only wants to worry about his own soul, he chants Hare Kṛṣṇa in a secluded place, and people will worship him and say, “Oh, look at this man, he is so renounced, he does not do anything; he only chants Hare Kṛṣṇa.”

CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME

Hence the Bhajanānandīs are those who are just worried about their own spiritual realization, and sometimes, as I have said in India and in many parts of the world, people come to the temple and say, “You Hare Kṛṣṇas use everything, just like we modern people do. Then what is the difference between you and an ordinary materialist?” The real difference is that we understand that everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa, and therefore, we use everything only in the service of Kṛṣṇa. Now the Goṣṭhānandīs are not only interested in the welfare of the other conditioned souls, but they are also interested in their own welfare. Like Prabhupāda used to say, “Charity begins at home.” We, first of all have to be concerned about our own welfare, and if we can take care of our own welfare then we can take care of the others also.

There are different types of vaiṣṇavas—there is the kaniṣṭha-vaiṣṇava, there is the madhyama-vaiṣṇava

and there is the *uttama-vaiṣṇava*. The same thing is being stated here in a slightly different manner. There are the *Bhajanānandīs* and the *Goṣṭhānandīs*. The *Goṣṭhānandīs* are like *Prahlād Mahārāja*. As *Prabhupāda* has said in this purport, it is a very beautiful verse. He used this verse a lot in his lectures. In the Seventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Prahlād Mahārāja* is saying, “My dear Lord, as far as I am concerned I have no problems.” The devotee has no problems because he is completely dependent upon *Kṛṣṇa*. You see, the materialists are worried—they have so many problems; but a devotee has no problems because whatever *Kṛṣṇa* does, He does it for the devotee’s benefit.

THE MOOD OF PRAHLAD MAHARAJA

You must have that firm conviction that *Kṛṣṇa* is the controller of everything, and whatever *Kṛṣṇa* does, He does it for your benefit. Thus, the devotee is completely dependent upon *Kṛṣṇa* for everything, whereas the materialist has so many problems, and he is working so hard to solve these problems. Even though he is working so hard to solve his problems, he is still frustrated. *Prahlād Mahārāja* says that the tragedy of the materialist is that he is frustrated at every step. There is absolutely no happiness for the materialist. He is always tired. He is always frustrated, and he is always angry. When you walk on the streets, you see so many conditioned souls, but they are all so frustrated, angry and unhappy, because they are trying to defy God’s laws. Because

they are trying to defy God's laws, material nature is not cooperating with them. Material nature will only cooperate with us if we are leading a life according to God's laws.

The Goṣṭhānandīs (we are talking about the Goṣṭhānandīs because the devotees of this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement are expected to be like Goṣṭhānandīs) are expected to be in the mood of Prahlād Mahārāja. Prahlād Mahārāja says,

*naivodvije para duratyayā-vaitaraṇyās
tvad-vīrya-gāyana-mahāmṛta-magna-cittaḥ
śoce tato vimukha-cetasa indriyārtha-
māyā-sukhāya bharam udvahato vimūḍhān*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.9.43)

“O best of the great personalities, I am not at all afraid of material existence, for wherever I stay I am fully absorbed in thoughts of Your glories and activities. My concern is only for the fools and rascals who are making elaborate plans for material happiness and maintaining their families, societies and countries. I am simply concerned with love for them.”

“I am satisfied by chanting Your holy names, therefore I have no problems,” because the holy names of Kṛṣṇa are all satisfying. It completely satisfies the living entity. Prahlād Mahārāja says that “I am satisfied by chanting Your holy names, but I am worried about something else. I am worried about others who are rotting in material existence for transient material pleasure.” Transient material pleasure means those who are in this material

world and they are looking for material pleasure that is very temporary.

THE DEFINITION OF A BROTHER

Prahlād Mahārāja is saying that “I am worried about the other souls who are looking for material pleasure that is bound to go away in a short time.” After all, if you analyze any activity of the material world—the pleasure it gives is very, very temporary. It can end at any moment and you can get it for only a few minutes, a few seconds. Therefore, Prahlād Mahārāja is saying that he is very concerned. Just like if you have a relative, let’s say you have a brother, and you see your brother on the road, and your brother is suffering, he has just met with a car accident. You feel very sorry that your brother was involved in a car accident, and is in pain now. Similarly, the devotees like Prahlād Mahārāja consider everyone to be their brother. They consider everyone to be their sister. Why? Because they consider that we are all children of the same father. After all, what is the definition of a brother? A brother is a child of the same father and mother. Anyone who comes out of the same womb as your mother and from the same father is called your brother. Prahlād Mahārāja is saying, “I am concerned about all these people,” because being a genuine vaiṣṇava, he considers everyone to be his relative.

A vaiṣṇava considers everyone to be like his real blood relative. Therefore, when he sees somebody enjoying

independent of Kṛṣṇa, he knows that the person is on the wrong track, and becomes very, very concerned. That is the mentality that we ought to have. When you go out on the street, you may look at a person's face and say, "This man is a stranger. I have never seen this man." But actually, he is not a stranger, because he is a child of the same father who has given birth to you. And because he is a child of the same father who has given birth to you, he is also your blood relative. Kṛṣṇa says, "I am the seed-giving father of all living entities." Do not think that anyone you see on the street is not your brother or sister. We are part of a universal family. We are not just identifying, "I belong to this family, to this province or this country,"—No! We belong to one family—the family of God, the family of Kṛṣṇa. All living entities are parts and parcels of Kṛṣṇa. When we see that certain other members of Kṛṣṇa's family are not listening to their father, we become very concerned. We have to engage them in devotional service.

SANKIRTAN MEANS

Caitanya Mahāprabhu says, "Go and perform saṅkīrtan in association with devotees." What does "saṅkīrtan" mean? "Saṅkīrtan" means congregational chanting of the holy name of the Lord. Saṅkīrtan means to engage in an activity in which you can engage the other person in some type of devotional service. In the sixth canto of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, it is stated that "By this process of saṅkīrtan of Viṣṇu, the whole world can

become a happy place to live in.” The devotees of our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement should dedicate themselves to this saṅkīrtan yajña. Yajña means sacrifice.

In the olden days, even after Dvāpara-yuga, the brāhmaṇas used to perform very elaborate yajñas. They used to utilize plenty of butter, milk and lots of other rich ingredients for the yajña. But in Kali-yuga, the big Vedic rituals are not recommended. In Kali-yuga, the only yajña that is recommended is this saṅkīrtan yajña. Those of you devotees, who are performing this saṅkīrtan yajña, are performing a service that is the dearest to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

In the Caitanya-Caritāmṛta, there is a dialogue between Haridāsa Ṭhākura and Caitanya Mahāprabhu, where Caitanya Mahāprabhu says, “Haridāsa, looking at the condition of these yavanas who are not following the Vedas, my heart is bleeding. What should I do?” And Haridāsa Ṭhākura replied, “My dear Lord, please do not worry. Somehow or the other these yavanas will be saved by taking to the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.”

So we have to give people our association. Giving association to the non-devotees is very important. In this purport, Prabhupāda makes a very nice point, “A devotee gives the non-devotees his association, but is not affected by their miśrīmad-Bhāgavatamehavior.” We go out and give our association to the karmīs, but we do not get affected by their activities. It is not that by giving our association that we buy their activities,

you understand? We do not get affected by the activities of the karmīs. When we see the karmīs engaging in sense gratification, we know that it is the activity of the animals. It is not that when we go to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and we see the karmīs enjoying in the materialistic mood, we begin to also think, “Oh, maybe I should also enjoy.”

SENSE GRATIFICATION IS LIKE STOOL

A devotee does not think that he has left behind something. Sometimes, you know, our devotees think, “Oh, I left behind that happiness.” Seeing these other young people enjoying, sometimes they feel sorry that they left behind something. A devotee does not think that he has left behind anything, because to a devotee, sense gratification is something as obnoxious as stool. Just like nobody really feels sorry if one sees something dirty on the way, similarly for the devotee, the karmī is engaging in sense gratification which is like stool; and the devotee has left behind that stool. So when you go out and do saṅkīrtan, sometimes you go to races, sometimes you go to these baseball games, hockey games. Sometimes, our men go to the bars, they go to the nightclubs—actually our men are operating in hellish planets. This is what is known by hellish planets. Like Lord Śiva tells Pārvatī in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, “Pārvatī, do not underestimate these vaiṣṇavas. These vaiṣṇavas are so powerful that they would even go to hell to talk on behalf of Kṛṣṇa.” Our saṅkīrtan devotees are actually going to hell everyday.

OUR VACCINATION

When we return to the temples of Kṛṣṇa, this is Vaikuṇṭha. Actually, Vaikuṇṭha means wherever Kṛṣṇa is. So even though you may be on St. Catherine street, talking to a prostitute or somebody, you are still on Vaikuṇṭha if your vision is fixed on Kṛṣṇa. Still, the atmosphere there is hellish. But we are ready to go over there to preach. You are ready to go over there, and you are completely protected. When there is an epidemic in a town, the weak ones fall sick, but the doctor has taken a vaccination and he goes to all the sick people in town gives them injections and takes care of them. The doctor is not scared of going to the sick people, because he has taken a vaccination that will prevent him from being affected by the disease. Our vaccination is chanting the names of Kṛṣṇa, hearing the Bhagavad-gītā and Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, and thinking of Kṛṣṇa all the time. When we go out on the streets to talk about Kṛṣṇa, we are not affected by it. Our mind must be fixed on Kṛṣṇa over there. When you are on the street trying to sell a book, or trying to sell a sticker, or trying to get someone to take a flower, what should be your meditation?

OUR MEDITATION

Your meditation should be, “Kṛṣṇa, here is a conditioned soul who has gone away from You. Please make me an instrument so I can bring him back to You.” Have you ever imagined a situation where a family loses

a child, and you find the child and take him back to the family. How happy is the father, the mother? They are very happy. They are so grateful to you, for you have brought their son back, and they are ready to do anything for you, because they were in so much anxiety when the child was lost, and now you have found the child and brought it back. This is what the devotees of the saṅkīrtan movement are doing. Every day, you all are meeting and bringing hundreds of lost children of Kṛṣṇa back to Kṛṣṇa. So Kṛṣṇa is very grateful.

When you engage someone in taking a book, a sticker, a flower, a painting or whatever, your mentality should be of engaging him in Kṛṣṇa's service from which he will benefit. We should not think that we want to do big then we can go back to the temple and everybody will say, "Look, how great he is, he has the highest score." Of course, it is good to compete to serve Kṛṣṇa, just like the gopīs. The gopīs were also always competing. Lalitā was competing with Viśākhā. Viśākhā was competing with other gopīs, and so on. But what was the nature of the competition? Not that who would become more famous, but who could serve Kṛṣṇa more.

Our mentality upon saṅkīrtan should be, "I want to engage this conditioned soul in some type of devotional service so I can take him back to Godhead." If that is our prayer, our meditation then Kṛṣṇa who is within the heart will hear—normally when you want to speak to somebody you have to speak loudly, but when you want to speak to Kṛṣṇa, you can actually speak from

within your heart. You actually do not have to really say something loudly. Kṛṣṇa within the heart understands everything. Kṛṣṇa who is within the heart understands, hears our sincere prayer, and will give us the necessary intelligence. Kṛṣṇa gives you the intelligence, and also gives intelligence to the person you are trying to talk to. He is within the heart of both the living entities.

GET CREDIT FROM KRISHNA

We have to understand that we cannot hide anything from Kṛṣṇa. We have to understand that Kṛṣṇa is aware of each and everything. If our intention is sincere, if our motive is sincere then Kṛṣṇa will actually engage the other person also in devotional service, but we will get the credit. Prabhupāda used to say that this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is bound to spread everywhere in the world. It is because Caitanya Mahāprabhu has predicted that in every town and village this movement will spread. But if you spread it, you will get the credit, and if you do not spread it, somebody else will spread it and he will get the credit. But it is bound to spread. Here is an opportunity to get credit from Kṛṣṇa. Here is an opportunity to receive Kṛṣṇa's mercy.

This saṅkīrtan movement, this saṅkīrtan activity that we engage in, is an activity of love. Just like a mother. She serves her child with love. When the mother serves the child, the mother does not expect the child to do anything in return. Similarly, the devotees who engage in this saṅkīrtan activity are definitely experiencing

some difficulties, problems, but we should not worry about these difficulties, we should not worry about these problems. We have to understand this is simply a burden of love. If we carry this burden with love then we will be able to understand Kṛṣṇa and His devotees a lot better.

LIVINGS BY PHILOSOPHY MEANS

Those devotees, who do not go out and preach, who do not go out and do saṅkīrtan, do not understand the philosophy. Because if you understand the philosophy then you would want to live by that philosophy. For example, these professional politicians, they will find out what the problem is in the society, what is the problem in your area, and then they will come and just speak about that problem. But they do not live by it in their hearts. Similarly, we may, like the professional politician, understand that we are not this body, but we are the soul, that the soul is eternal; do not listen to the mind, higher than the mind is intelligence. But if we are not practicing this day by day then we haven't understood the philosophy. Then it is just theoretical. Like in schools these days, just before the exam, they will just cram everything up, and when the exams come, they just go write that thing out. We cannot cram the philosophy. We cannot just learn some śloka and some key things. We have to live by that philosophy.

Living by the philosophy means you show it in action. What is the action? The action is to be engaged in devotional service for Kṛṣṇa all the time. There are

many different types of services one can do. But for some reason or the other in all the scriptures, the greatest emphasis is on this activity of preaching. We can read the Bhagavad-gītā, read the Caitanya-Caritāmṛta, read the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. The Lord says that He makes His devotees the most glorious, the devotee who takes the risk of talking about Him.

In the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, there is a story of Vidura. Vidura was a brother of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, who was nothing but a sense gratifier. Dhṛtarāṣṭra, even after his children had died, he was still thinking, “Let me live like a king, let me live comfortably.” But Vidura came and told him “You are only blind from birth, and now in old age your hair is falling, your teeth are falling, yet you are still thinking that you can live.” We have to be like Vidura. We all have to go from morning to night, seeing how we can engage people in devotional service.

Sometimes our devotees say, “But I’m just giving them a flower,” or “I’m just giving them a painting; how am I engaging people in devotional service?” This is explained by Prabhupāda in a conversation with a devotee. Prabhupāda explains that there are two types of benefits that you can give the living entity, the human being. One is that he renders devotional service under the full knowledge that he is serving Kṛṣṇa. This is known as jñāta-sukṛti. And the other is known as ajñāta-sukṛti that is serving Kṛṣṇa without knowledge that you are going to get benefit.

Just like a child, the mother wants to give the child the medicine, but the child does not want to take it, because he does not know that the medicine is going to cure him. The mother gives a candy to the child and says, “Take this candy and then the medicine.” And the child takes it—he is tricked into it. That means that without the child knowing that the medicine can cure him, he takes the medicine. Similarly, *ajñāta-sukṛti* means to engage someone in devotional service without their knowing that he is going to get some benefit. That is what we have to do. Engage people in devotional service without their knowing that they will get spiritual benefit. Because in many cases, people may not take Kṛṣṇa consciousness directly. So we let them give their *laxmī* for Kṛṣṇa. It is explained how by giving *laxmī* for Kṛṣṇa the individuals benefit. First he does not take the sinful reaction for the time he spends in earning that *laxmī*. Secondly, if he gives 10 dollars to a devotee, he has less money left, which means he can do less nonsense activities. And thirdly, with this service, you are making him dedicate to Kṛṣṇa, what actually belongs to Kṛṣṇa.

LISTEN TO THE PURIFIED MIND

Therefore, the important thing is our mentality. Do not listen to this contaminated mind when you go on *saṅkīrtan*. This contaminated mind cannot see clearly. You have to listen to the purified mind. You have to listen to the purified mind of the spiritual master, the bonafide representative of the Lord, and with his

assistance decide what is right and what is wrong. If you are trying to just decide on your own what is right and what is wrong then again things will not work. So when you are out on saṅkīrtan, and the mind is saying, “Do this, do that,” do not just listen to the mind, but listen to the spiritual intelligence which you have. And the spiritual intelligence says, “Do not do anything that is against scriptural injunctions.” If we do anything against the injunctions of the scriptures or the spiritual master, it is like poison.

FIRE OF DEVOTIONAL SERVICE

To be successful in saṅkīrtan, we should always keep ourselves in the fire. Always keep ourselves in the fire of devotional service. Always be absorbed in serving Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes a devotee says, “I’m tired, or fried, or exhausted,” or something. How many times do we say that? But if we look at it spiritually, like we are supposed to look at it, there is no such thing as being tired, or fried. There is no such thing. Because the Bhagavad-gītā informs us that, “The soul cannot be fried. The soul cannot be tired.” It is only the mind which is saying that you are tired or fried or whatever. Actually, that at no point can you listen to your mind. If you listen to your mind, you will go to hell. But if you listen to a liberated person then you can execute devotional service, and you can be successful in your execution of devotional service.

THE REAL FORTUNE

We should carefully understand what saṅkīrtan is. We should consider ourselves very fortunate. The first fortune starts in Kṛṣṇa consciousness when you come in contact with a pure devotee and get initiated. But that is not the final fortune. The real fortune comes after that when you are engaged in this saṅkīrtan activity. When you are engaged in preaching the Lord's message from morning till night then that is real fortune! Please do not forget this. Please do not forget how important this activity of saṅkīrtan is. The population of this country, like Canada is nearly 23 million, but we only have about 50 devotees on saṅkīrtan. That is not enough. That means each devotee has to try and save so many hundreds of thousands of people. The task before us is very huge. The task before us is to make the whole planet Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Especially those who are in Montreal should worry about the province of Quebec, make everyone here Kṛṣṇa Conscious. Those who live in Toronto can try and make the people of Ontario Kṛṣṇa Conscious. Those who live in Vancouver can try and make the people of western Canada Kṛṣṇa Conscious. This is prabhu dattādeśh, which means the place which has been ordered to you by the spiritual master to preach in.

A WRESTLING MATCH

The spiritual master decides that everyone become Kṛṣṇa Conscious. We have to take our prabhu dattādeśh

very seriously. We should always keep ourselves in the fire by remembering Kṛṣṇa's instruction. We should be very careful in executing devotional service. We know that we are serving Kṛṣṇa with the highest service, but at the same time we should be very humble. Not that I am doing such an elevated service, so I should become puffed up. A devotee never gets puffed up. The moment he begins to get puffed up he gets away from Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa has clearly said that "My devotee must be humble." We have to be humble. We have to be tolerant. We have to be merciful. The real point to remember is that we should remember Kṛṣṇa all the time, understand that nothing material can give us happiness—Only something spiritual. The harder you will work for Kṛṣṇa, the more benefit you will get. Prabhupāda used to say, "Spiritual life is like a wrestling match. A wrestler, the more he practices, the stronger he becomes." Spiritual life is that—the more you give to Kṛṣṇa, the more Kṛṣṇa will give back to you.

There is a story of this old lady selling some fruits. She went to Kṛṣṇa's house. She was very attracted by this young boy's beauty. Kṛṣṇa asked her for the fruits. She was thinking in her mind, "Oh, if I give these fruits then I will be left with nothing." But she still gave because she was attracted to Kṛṣṇa. Then when she looked back in her basket, she had fruits made of gold. So similarly, the devotee is sometimes thinking, "If I give Kṛṣṇa my body, my mind, and my senses then how will I do sense gratification." It is not necessary that you have to do gross sense gratification. You can also do subtle sense

gratification—subtle means that you are just meditating on sense gratification. But that is also harmful, because the Bhagavad-gītā says, “If you meditate on something, you will gradually develop attachment.” And what is going to happen from that attachment? —Lust. And then what happens after lust?—Anger. And then?—greed.

So by meditating on it we will eventually develop greed. We become greedy for sense gratification and thereby, destroy the whole purpose of human life. We have to be very careful in executing devotional service. We should be very alert. We should give our body, mind and senses to Kṛṣṇa. We should not hold back anything from Kṛṣṇa. If we do not hold back anything and give everything to Kṛṣṇa then Kṛṣṇa will give us more intelligence to be successful on this saṅkīrtan assignment.



- CHAPTER 07 -

A CELIBATE LIFE

*maitreya uvāca
sanakādyā nāradaś ca
ṛbhur haṁso 'ruṇir yatiḥ
naite grhān brahmā-sutā
hy āvasann ūrdhva-retāsaḥ*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.8.1)

“The great sage Maitreya said: The four great Kumara sages headed by Sanaka, as well as Nārada, Ṛbhu, Haṁsa, Aruṇi, and Yati, all sons of Brahmā, did not live at home, but became ūrdhva-retā, or naiṣṭhika-brahmacārīs, unadulterated celibates.”

Maitreya Ṛṣi is describing about the four Kumāras and Nārada. Lord Brahmā, the father of the four Kumāras, wanted his sons to get married so that the population would expand, but the Kumāras refused to obey the instruction of their father on this account, because they wanted to be celibate. The key point here is the advantage of leading a celibate life.

IMPORTANCE OF PRESERVING SEMEN

In the present society, because one does not have any spiritual education, he does not have any understanding of the value of preserving one's semen. To them, semen is just meant for discharging, and they do not realize that this semen, which they are discharging, also contains blood, and the unnecessary discharge of the semen results in loss of intelligence. Therefore, it is said that preservation of this semen, that is raising the semen up to the head by preserving it, this is very essential for one serious in spiritual life, because preserving of semen results in increased intelligence.

This same fact was also confirmed recently by one very famous Ayurvedic doctor who wrote an article in India in which he confirmed that the discharge of the semen results in loss of intelligence because semen contains blood. It is just like the camel. The camel enjoys the thorns thinking the thorns are very tasty, but actually the camel is getting that taste from the blood which is coming because the thorns are cutting his tongue. Likewise foolish people think that the discharge of semen is actually very enjoyable. But the transcendentalist knows that the discharge of semen will result in loss of intelligence.

Śrīla Prabhupāda used to give the example of Mahātmā Gāndhī. Though Mahātmā Gāndhī was a politician, still he was very strong-willed, and he single-handedly drove the entire British Raj out of India. Śrīla Prabhupāda

said that this Mahātmā Gāndhī derived his strength from the fact that he was celibate. Mahātmā Gāndhī was married but he used to boast that he had not engaged in sex life for the last thirty or forty years, and because he had not discharged semen for thirty or forty years, he had become very strong. He was so strong that when he used to go to England to meet with the British in the extreme winter and would walk with just an ordinary chadhar(shawl) on his body, he would not even wear an overcoat or anything, and the people would call him the naked man. He had obtained his willpower, which resulted in the Englishmen being driven out, he had obtained the strength to even stand in winter with just one chadhar(shawl) on the basis of his controlling the discharge of his semen.

In the Nectar of Instruction, Śrīla Rupa Gosvāmī has listed six characteristics which are detrimental for progress in spiritual life, and one of them is attachment to the genitals. In the purport Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that one should not engage in the discharge of semen for any purpose, except for procreation. Discharge of semen by natural or artificial means is sinful. The transcendentalist or the one who is serious about progressing in spiritual life must appreciate the value of semen that is, preserve it within the body because preservation of this will lead to higher intelligence, and higher intelligence would mean increased determination to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

GOAL IS TO SERVE KṚṢṆA

The division of the society into four āśramas is created by the Lord. Kṛṣṇa states in the Bhagavad-gītā

*cātur-varṇyaṁ mayā sṛṣṭaṁ
guṇa-karma-vibhāgaśaḥ
tasya kartāram api mām
viddhy akartāram avyayam*

(Bhagavad-gītā 4.13)

According to the three modes of material nature and the work associated with them, the four divisions of human society are created by Me. And although I am the creator of this system, you should know that I am yet the nondoer, being unchangeable.

He is dividing this society into four varṇas and four āśramas. This system is actually called Daivī-varṇāśrama. Daivī-varṇāśrama means that this system is completely transcendental and it is for the pleasure of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus, the varṇa and āśrama means the division of the society into four social and spiritual orders. The four varṇas are the brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, and śūdras, and the four āśramas are the brahmacārīs, grhasthas, vānaprasthas, and sannyāsīs. Now because this system of varṇāśrama is called Daivī-varṇāśrama, whatever varṇa or āśrama one may belong to, the goal is to serve Kṛṣṇa completely.

WALKING OVER A WELL

The brahmacārī is advised to lead a completely celibate life. As we said there are four āśramas, beginning with

the brahmacārī. The brahmacārī receives education in the gurukula and he dedicates his life to fulfilling the instructions of his spiritual master, and he leads a very simple life. It is described in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam that the brahmacārī or one who wants to be celibate must not even allow the thoughts of sex life to come into his mind. Actually these thoughts may come, but by spiritual training one has to learn to throw it out right away. Hence one who is serious about progressing in spiritual life must be very careful to avoid associating with situations by which his spiritual life can be checked.

Associating with the opposite sex for the purpose of sense gratification is described as walking over a well, which is covered by green grass. When one walks over a well that is covered, one does not know that actually there is a well inside, and if one walks over that well he falls into the well, and then even crying will not save the individual. Similarly, if one utilizes this valuable human form for associating with the opposite sex for the purpose of sense gratification then one fails to utilize the special privilege of this human form of body. Therefore, it is advised that to whatever āśrama one may belong, the association with the opposite sex should be minimized, especially in the brahmacārī āśrama.

BUTTER AND FIRE

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Mahārāj used to give the example of butter and fire, and he used to say that where there is fire, the butter will automatically melt. This

does not mean that the Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy is that we hate the women or something—No, both the men and the women have to be considered as spirit souls, and if they are viewed from a spiritual angle—they are both parts and parcels of the Lord and they are both parā-prakṛti. It is natural, if they are parā-prakṛti, it is their constitutional position to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead all the time. So the brahmacārīs especially have to be very, very cautious.

We have the example of Choṭa Haridāsa. He was a brahmacārī but once he only lustily looked at a woman and then Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu refused to have him back into his association, and in the end Choṭa Haridāsa had to commit suicide. When Lord Caitanya was informed that Choṭa Haridāsa had committed suicide, Lord said, “Very good!” When one is practicing the brahmacārī āśrama, one has to abide by the expectations of that āśrama in thoughts, words, and actions. One has to be very careful and one should not adopt a particular āśrama of life just for the purpose of making a show.

Especially in India, you see a lot of spiritualists dress up in saffron just to get respect from the society, but at the same time they are engaged in sense gratification. There was one Indian spiritualist who was pretending to be a sannyāsī and at the same time was carrying on illicit activities with a lot of women. Gradually the city, where he was living, people came to know and they started wondering, “What type of man is this?”—and

this sannyāsī went and bluffed that all these charges are bogus, but eventually now this man has left and is probably in the company of these women he was associating with. In spiritual life, if one is adopting a particular āśrama, he has to abide by it with thoughts, words, and deeds. One should not adopt saffron robes or the life of a transcendentalist if one is not going to execute the principles one has to abide by.

THE HOUSEHOLD LIFE

Then there is the grhastha āśrama. The grhastha āśrama does not mean that one has the license for sense gratification. As we said earlier, this division of the society into varṇa and āśrama is called Daivī-varṇāśrama which means it is completely transcendental and it is all meant for the pleasure of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the grhastha āśrama, which a brahmacārī is allowed to enter after being celibate for the first 25 years, their business also is to create an environment in which Kṛṣṇa can be served, and sex life can be indulged, that is, semen can be discharged, but semen can only be discharged for the purpose of procreation. If semen is discharged only for the purpose of procreation and for no other purpose then even though one may be engaged in this grhastha āśrama, he is considered to be like a brahmacārī. That is, even in the grhastha āśrama one is expected to completely control his senses.

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Mahārāj stayed as a brahmacārī for a very long period and he would tell

his disciples, “If I could guarantee that I will send all my dependants back to Godhead then I wouldn’t mind engaging in sex life one hundred times.” If in the grhastha āśrama one has children then one must guarantee and ensure that these children are guided on the path back to Godhead. We witness today that the materialistic society which believes in the grhastha āśrama, however, does not believe in the accompanying responsibilities. They do not understand that sex life is only for procreation, and even if there are children then these children have to be guided on the path back to Godhead. The transcendentalist, or one who is Kṛṣṇa Conscious, must understand the responsibility of the grhastha āśrama. The grhastha āśrama should not be considered as a license for an easy life.

The transcendentalist, regardless of the āśrama he may belong to, is expected to be a jitendriya. Jitendriya means one who has control over his senses. The grhastha āśrama also means that the individual controls his senses and every minute of one’s time is utilized to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Sometimes we meet people in our society who think that because they belong to the grhastha āśrama, they can afford to take life a little bit easy or have some special fringe benefits. Actually ideal grhastha āśrama, that is, in the transcendental system of varnāśrama is that one lives just like a brahmacārī though one may be a grhastha. But the only facility is that in the grhastha āśrama, one is allowed to have sex life under religious principles for the

purpose of procreation. In the Bhagavad gītā Kṛṣṇa says, “I also become the sex life.” That sex life means sex life for the purpose of procreation. There is no harm if one is in the grhastha āśrama but one must understand the accompanying rules of the grhastha āśrama and abide by them.

A LITTLE RISKY BUSINESS

However, those who are very, very serious about advancing in spiritual life, they have a tendency to refrain from taking to the grhastha āśrama. Just like the verse in the discussion, the Kumāras’ father Brahmā was forcing them to marry, but the Kumāras said no, they would not marry because grhastha life is a little risky business, and if one can avoid it, the śāstras clearly explain that one should avoid it. The Kumāras here are setting the example that if one can avoid taking to the grhastha āśrama then it is very, very good for spiritual life, and the Kumāras resisted the pressure from their father, Brahmā, to take the grhastha āśrama for the purpose of expanding the population. Celibate brahmacārī life, if it is practiced in thoughts, words, and deeds, is the best way to progress in spiritual life. But if one is experiencing difficulties then with consultation with the local spiritual authorities, the individual can be allowed to take the grhastha āśrama, but even if he does take the grhastha āśrama he should know that the grhastha āśrama is not a license for sense gratification, but only under certain very rigid circumstances is one

allowed to engage in sexual act just for the purpose of procreation, and for no other purpose.

Then there are the other āśramas, such as the vānaprastha and sannyāsī, in which also no association of women is allowed. Of the four āśramas, in the three āśramas: brahmacārī, vānaprastha, and sannyāsī, there should absolutely be no association of women at all. This is completely prohibited. Only in the grhastha āśrama is one allowed association with women, and that too, the intelligent grhastha is advised to keep it to a minimum so that he can concentrate on spiritual life.

THE VARNSRAMA SYSTEM

Now besides these four āśramas, you have the four varṇas that is, the brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, and śūdras. For a body to be complete there must be a head, the hands, the thighs, the legs, and so on. Similarly for a society to be complete there must be the brāhmaṇas, the kṣatriyas, the vaiśyas, and the śūdras. Each of them again has a role to play in society.

The brāhmaṇas are compared to the person's head. Just like in an individual's body, the head is the most important. A man can live without his hands, he can live without his legs, he can live without his eyes, he can live without his tongue, but he cannot live without his head. The moment the head is no longer there, the person dies. The brāhmaṇas are considered to be the head of the society, and the brāhmaṇas' business is to advise the kṣatriyas, who are supposed to be the

administrators, to ensure that the entire population is engaged in a spiritual path. These brāhmaṇas are such, that for their own selves, they do not want anything, but it is only for the pleasure of the Lord that they want to live. The present advisors of the various governments are such that they want to maximize their personal benefit. The brāhmaṇas during Lord Rāmacandra's reign were offered huge pieces of land because of the advice they were providing to the government, but these brāhmaṇas refused to take all this land, saying that they would only take what they needed for their maintenance, and they didn't want the rest. The brāhmaṇas are the head of the society, and when they see that something is going wrong, they strive to stop it. Just when Mahārāja Veṇa was empowered, he was very puffed up, and he was disobeying the advice of the brāhmaṇas, therefore, the brāhmaṇas had to curse him because they could see that the population was not getting God consciousness.

Then, we have the kṣatriyas. The kṣatriyas are the rulers and the administrators, and it is the responsibility of the kṣatriya to protect the weaker section of the society. The weaker sections of the society are the old people, the womenfolk, and the children. The weaker sections of the society have to be protected. Today we see that the so called people who have assumed the position of kṣatriyas have no respect or understanding of their responsibilities, and hence we see that it is becoming a much degraded society in which everyone is unsure about oneself.

THE STORY OF KING SIBI

The weaker sections of the society are protected by the kṣatriyas, and the kṣatriyas also display the quality of compassion. The present day kṣatriyas, they only display the quality of greed, but the genuine kṣatriya displays the quality of compassion and desire to see everyone's welfare. In the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, in this connection there is a nice story of Mahārāja Śibi. Mahārāja Śibi was a ruler of a big kingdom and he was very, very compassionate towards everyone. Once the demigods decided to test Mahārāja Śibi's compassionate quality, so it was decided that the god of heaven would take on the role of a pigeon, and the fire-god Agni would take on the role of an eagle. The pigeon was being chased by the eagle, and the pigeon came to Mahārāja Śibi for shelter, and Mahārāja Śibi very politely gave the pigeon shelter on his lap. Very soon the eagle came and said, "I want to eat that pigeon." And Mahārāja Śibi said, "This pigeon has taken shelter of me. I cannot let you eat this pigeon. I will arrange for some other meat for you." The eagle said, "No. I must have the meat from this pigeon." Then Mahārāja Śibi said, "I will give you meat from my body. You can eat the flesh from my body." A deal was made that Mahārāja Śibi would give as much flesh from his body as the pigeon had. By the transcendental tricks of the Lord, the pigeon started weighing heavier, heavier, and heavier. Mahārāja Śibi just could not understand how much flesh he will have to give, so finally he put himself on the scale with the pigeon on the other side.

That is he offered his entire body to the eagle to give protection to the pigeon. Then the Supreme Lord was very pleased with him and they revealed their real identity—that is the fire-God and the God of heaven. The purport of this story is that a kṣatriya king or a kṣatriya ruler is very, very compassionate towards the entities that are under his protection, and in order to give them protection, he is even willing to undergo personal inconveniences. The kṣatriyas are meant to administer and protect the weaker section of the society.

WOMEN’S LIBERATION

Presently, we see that there is an increasing trend towards what they call “Women’s liberation, or equal rights.” Actually, according to the Vedic system, the woman at no state is independent. She is always in someone’s protection. Either she is under the protection of the parents, or under the protection of her huŚrīmad-Bhāgavatamand, or under the protection of her son. But the woman is never considered to be independent. Actually Śrīla Prabhupāda said that those women who are in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, serving Kṛṣṇa, they are directly under the divine protection of Kṛṣṇa. Then we have the vaiśyas, in the third varṇa. The vaiśyas are the mercantile class whose business is to see that the agricultural production and the business transactions are being taking care of. Lastly, we have the śūdras whose business is to serve the other three orders.

LOVE AND LUST

This division of the society into the system of varṇa and āśrama is actually very, very scientific. Practice of this system successfully will definitely result in developing love of God. The purpose of this varṇāśrama system is to promote the individual to the point where he can develop love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. At the present moment we see that this love, instead of being focused on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is being focused on objects that are temporary, subjected to destruction and therefore, the people who are presenting their love in this way are actually simply wasting their valuable human form of life. The Caitanya-caritāmṛta explains the difference between love and lust.

*kāma, prema,—doṇhākāra vibhinna lakṣaṇa
lauha āra hema yaiche svarūpe vilakṣaṇa*

(Cc Adi 4.164)

Lust and love have different characteristics, just as iron and gold have different natures.

It says that just like gold and an iron bar, they are both metals but still there is a difference of day and night between gold and an iron bar. Similarly, love and lust are of opposite elements. Love means love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and in the material world the feeling that is being passed off as love is actually not love, but it is lust. We should understand that when we talk about love, we are talking about love

to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One of Kṛṣṇa's names is Madana-Mohana. Madana-Mohana means one who can attract even the demigod Cupid, who can attract even the goddess of lust. Madana-Mohana can attract everyone. So even if one has lusty desires, one is advised in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead because all of one's desires can be fulfilled if one serves Kṛṣṇa, the reservoir of all pleasures, or the object of whom pleasure can be obtained to an unlimited degree.

ADVISE FOR MAN AND WOMEN

This attraction for the opposite sex which is based upon this gross physical body which is subjected to destruction is actually not a sign of intelligence. Therefore, the transcendentalist, whether he be a man or a woman, is advised not to dwell up attachment to the opposite sex's body, but rather focus one's attachment on the transcendental lotus feet of Govinda, Mukunḍa, the provider of liberation, or Madana-Mohana, and thereby attain happiness permanently. One must be completely convinced that the only object of enjoyment are the lotus feet of Sri Kṛṣṇa, and the divine form of Sri Kṛṣṇa. In the material world, by no combination can one ever be happy. If one understands that one's only shelter are the divine lotus feet of Sri Kṛṣṇa, and one can obtain happiness only by being fixed up in devotional service to Kṛṣṇa then one is practicing love and that love is for the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

In that position one will definitely experience nothing but spiritual bliss, and this spiritual bliss is of a nature that the more one surrenders to Kṛṣṇa, the more it goes on increasing and increasing. That is devotional service or the pleasure of service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, that is increasing and increasing, and the more it increases, the lesser is one's desires to ever get involved in anything material.

As aspiring transcendentalists, we should strive to focus our mind on Kṛṣṇa, to focus our love on Kṛṣṇa, and to focus every activity that one may be engaged in towards Kṛṣṇa. And when one is engaged in that mood then one will definitely succeed in executing devotional service and then return to the kingdom of God, and when he returns to the kingdom of God, one will see very beautiful forms of women and very handsome men, but still one does not get to the opposite sex, instead both the sexes, the beautiful women and the handsome men just engage in glorifying the Supreme Personality of Godhead through singing very nice songs.



- CHAPTER 08 -

HUMILITY IN CHANTING

*sa prasīda tvam asmākam ākāṅkṣatām
darśanaṁ te paribhraṣṭa-sat-karmaṇām
kīrtiyamāne ṛbhīr nāmni yajñeśa te
yajña-vighnāḥ kṣayaṁ yānti tasmai namaḥ*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.7.47)

Dear Lord, we were awaiting Your audience because we have been unable to perform the yajñas according to the Vedic rituals. We pray unto You, therefore, to be pleased with us. Simply by chanting Your holy name, one can surpass all obstacles. We offer our respectful obeisance unto You in Your presence.

PROTECTION FROM KṚṢṆA

In this verse there are two things that come out significantly. One is the statement that “simply by chanting Your holy name, one can surpass all obstacles.” The second point that comes out significantly is that, one whom Kṛṣṇa wants to protect, no one can annihilate and one whom Kṛṣṇa wants to annihilate, no one can protect. It is said, “māre kṛṣṇa rākhe ke, rākhe kṛṣṇa māre ke” —

he whom Kṛṣṇa wants to protect, no one can harm.” A devotee of the Lord is always engaging or passing his life under the strict confidence that Kṛṣṇa is protecting him. Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna to declare to the world that my devotee will never perish—“na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati.” The devotee of the Lord is one who is confident that my Lord will protect me. If a devotee is worried whether he will be protected or not, that means he does not have complete faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The devotee is one who knows that Kṛṣṇa is his guardian, and he is completely under Kṛṣṇa’s protection.

In the purport, Śrīla Prabhupāda gives the example of Rāvaṇa. Rāvaṇa’s army was thousand times bigger than Lord Rāmacandra’s, and Rāvaṇa was a great devotee of Lord Śiva. Rāvaṇa prayed to Lord Śiva, “Please protect me from Lord Rāmacandra,” and Pārvatī, the wife of Lord Śiva, also took compassion upon Rāvaṇa, and she told Lord Śiva, “Can not you protect Rāvaṇa, he has been your devotee all your life and now he is in danger, please protect him.” Lord Śiva replied, “I can not do anything for him,” and he went on to say, “Whom Kṛṣṇa wants to kill, no one can protect.” The shelter for the living entity is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Kṛṣṇa. At the present moment, the material energy of the individual is incorrectly placed. Instead of being placed at the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the material energy is being employed for the service of the senses, and hence, the individual does not

have anyone who can protect him. The devotee, even if in great danger, is always rescued by Kṛṣṇa. There are numerous examples in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to highlight this point.

PROTECTION OF THE PANDAVA’S

We see from the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam that the Pāṇḍavas were put through such great difficulties by Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Dhṛtarāṣṭra wanted to usurp the kingdom to which they were rightly entitled. From the very beginning, he put them through so many difficulties, but the Pāṇḍavas always escaped unhurt. For example, Dhṛtarāṣṭra was acting as a guardian of the Pāṇḍavas; once he made a house of lac, and he told the Pāṇḍavas, “I have made a very nice house for you, so please go and live in that house.” His plan of course was that as the house of lac catches on fire very fast, the house would catch on fire and the Pāṇḍavas would die inside the house. But Vidura, the brother of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, came to know about this plan and he warned the Pāṇḍavas so they were able to escape from the underground tunnel when the fire was set.

Similarly, there is the story of Draupadi. In the game of dice, which was being played by the Kurus and the Pāṇḍavas, the bet was Draupadi. The Kurus wanted to see Draupadi naked, so they started pulling her sari, and the Pāṇḍavas were helpless then Draupadi’s only shelter was Kṛṣṇa. Draupadi in the initial stages, was trying to hold her sari, and prevent the Kurus from pulling, but in

the end they overpowered her, and she just gave up, and she just prayed to Kṛṣṇa saying, “My dear Kṛṣṇa, I am completely under your care. If you desire, you may save my honor, but if you do not desire, you may not save it.” Then Kṛṣṇa relieved unlimited amount of cloth, and the Kurus kept on pulling her sari, but the cloth never ended, and thus they were not able to see Draupadi naked. Her honor was saved by Kṛṣṇa.

When Parīkṣit Mahārāja was in the womb of his mother Uttarā, a very dangerous weapon was released by Asvattama, but Kṛṣṇa protected Parīkṣit Mahārāja, who was destined to be a great devotee of the Lord, by entering the womb and not letting the nuclear weapon hurt him. Similarly, Bhima was passing through the forest and Dhṛtarāṣṭra had employed some demons to kill him, but Bhima was able to kill all of them single-handedly. These are some examples, there are so many others of how a devotee of the Lord is always protected by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

FOUNDATION OF SPIRITUAL LIFE

Kṛṣṇa advises, through the pages of the Bhagavad-gītā and the scriptures that one should take shelter of Him. Now, how does one take shelter of Kṛṣṇa? This is also explained in this verse where it is said, “Simply by chanting your holy name, one can surpass all obstacles.” We have already established the point that one who takes shelter of Kṛṣṇa is protected by Kṛṣṇa even in the most difficult circumstances. Even the parents of Lord

Kṛṣṇa were put through so many difficulties, but they were always saved. Then how does one get to become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa? That is the next question. That is answered here, “Simply by chanting your holy name, one can surpass all obstacles.” That is, by taking to the chanting of the holy names of Kṛṣṇa, one can reach the stage where he develops love of Godhead, and in that stage the devotee is engaged in an eternal relationship of service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

KEY FOR SPIRITUAL PROGRESS

This process of śravaṇam kīrtanam of hearing and chanting is the foundation on which one’s spiritual life is built. If the foundation is weak then the building is also weak. Similarly, if the foundation, the basis of devotional service that is the process of hearing and chanting is weak then the rest of the execution of devotional service will definitively be accompanied by defects. This chanting of the holy names of the Lord is the process by which avidyā, that is nescience, can be turned into jñāna, or knowledge. The heart of every living entity is completely contaminated, and because it is contaminated, he cannot appreciate the absolute nature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He thinks that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is an ordinary, mundane person, but one who takes to the chanting of names, he then begins to appreciate the transcendental nature of the Supreme Lord.

This chanting is the key by which one can progress spiritually. Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, “Because the individual is in a diseased condition, he cannot appreciate the glories of this chanting.” When a man is sick with jaundice, and you give him some sugar candy, he will say this sugar candy is very bitter. But a man who is not diseased with jaundice knows that the candy is very sweet because it is sugar. Similarly, one who is in this diseased condition, one who is in the material world, one who is full of materialistic desires and thoughts, he cannot appreciate the transcendental nature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, or the transcendental effectiveness of the chanting of the holy names.

Śrīla Rupa Gosvāmī Prabhupāda says, “One who takes to the chanting will be elevated from his position of avidyā.” Śrīla Rupa Gosvāmī says that the chanting of the holy name is very bitter for the materialist, but for one who goes on chanting, this chanting which may originally appear to be bitter, becomes sweet like a sugar candy, and then one will be able to appreciate the transcendental Supreme Personality of Godhead. The individuals who are in the material world cannot appreciate the beauty of this chanting, or the beauty of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. But if one follows the instructions of Śrīla Rupa Gosvāmī and takes to this chanting then this chanting will definitely enable one to recover from this material disease. A man who is sick cannot appreciate good food. One who is full of material desires is diseased and because he is diseased, he can-

not appreciate the transcendental Supreme Personality of Godhead. The medicine, the process for recovering from this diseased condition, is the chanting of the holy names of the Lord.

IMPORTANCE OF SOUND

One who does not utilize this tongue for chanting the holy name or for tasting Kṛṣṇa-prasādam, he is actually just inviting death near. By the croaking of the frog, the snake comes to know the location of the frog, and then the snake goes and attacks him. Similarly, when this tongue is not vibrated for chanting of the holy name, or for tasting prasādam then this tongue is actually just inviting more sinful reactions and more suffering.

This chanting of the holy name of the Lord is not some material activity, or material sound. This sound is coming from the topmost planet known as Goloka-Vṛndāvana, and this planet is millions and millions of miles away, and this chanting is coming from that planet. We can see practically in the working of the material world also that sound is more important than even vision. People these days say, “Can you show me God?” But sound is definitively more important than vision. For example, if a person is sleeping at night, and there is fire next door, if the individual is going to wait till he sees the fire then he may get burned to death. But if on the other hand, somebody comes running and says, “Get out, there is fire next door,” he will be able to hear it and then by this process, save himself. So hearing

is definitively more important than even seeing. This chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa is coming from a distance of millions and millions of miles, and this sound is completely transcendental. Transcendental means it is beyond the influence of the material modes.

ABSOLUTE NATURE OF SOUND

This chanting is described as complete, pure, and which guarantees eternal liberation. The great sages have said that this name of Kṛṣṇa is like *cintāmaṇi*. Just like you have these trees in the material world where one type of tree can only give one type of fruit, you have these spiritual trees which can fulfill all desires. The name of Kṛṣṇa is *cintāmaṇi*, and it is complete in all respects, and it is the purest, and it guarantees eternal liberation.

*nāma cintāmaṇiḥ kṛṣṇaś
caitanya-rasa-vigrahaḥ
pūrṇaḥ śuddho nitya-mukto
'bhinnatvān nāma-nāminoḥ*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya 17.133)

“The holy name of Kṛṣṇa is transcendently blissful. It bestows all spiritual benedictions, for it is Kṛṣṇa Himself, the reservoir of all pleasure. Kṛṣṇa’s name is complete, and it is the form of all transcendental mellows. It is not a material name under any condition, and it is no less powerful than Kṛṣṇa Himself. Since Kṛṣṇa’s name is not contaminated by the material qualities, there is no question of its being involved with *māyā*. Kṛṣṇa’s name is always liberated and spiritual; it is never conditioned

by the laws of material nature. This is because the name of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa Himself are identical.’

There is no difference between the chanting of the holy name and the person whose name is being chanted. This is the absolute nature of the transcendental name of the Lord. In the material world, there is always a difference between the substance and the name. For example, if one is thirsty, and he says water, water, water, just utterance of the word water will not satisfy one’s thirst. But the spiritual sound of Kṛṣṇa is not of this type. This sound of Kṛṣṇa, the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, can give one liberation and free the yavanas of this age. In the Antya-lila there is a very nice piece of conversation between Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, “Oh Haridāsa, looking at these yavanas, my heart is filled with anxiety and unhappiness.” And then Haridāsa Ṭhākura says that these yavanas can be saved and says, “But by taking the name of Rāma these people will be saved.”

In the Bhagavad-gītā Kṛṣṇa also says, “By constant chanting of the holy name can I be served.” One who is chanting the holy name, he is at once under the divine protection of Kṛṣṇa. He is not in the material world. One who is chanting the holy name, he is at once transferred from the material prakṛti to daivi-prakṛti, that is the divine energy of Kṛṣṇa.

Therefore, this chanting of the holy name is the only source of relief for the miseries of the materialist, or for

any individual who wants to take shelter and experience happiness. After Lord Kṛṣṇa had left this planet 5,000 years ago, Parīkṣit Mahārāja asked Sukadeva Gosvāmī the question, “Now that Lord Kṛṣṇa has left this planet, is anything auspicious left behind?” Sukadeva Gosvāmī replied, “Yes.” He said,

*kaler doṣa-nidhe rājann
asti hy eko mahān guṇaḥ
kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya
mukta-saṅgaḥ paraṁ vrajet*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 12.3.51)

My dear King, although Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults, there is still one good quality about this age: Simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom.

“In this age of Kali, there is only one way to go.” What is that? Just by Kṛṣṇa’s kīrtan, one can get eternal liberation. One should be convinced that there is no other process for gaining eternal liberation, or gaining any type of happiness except by chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. This is also confirmed in the śāstras where it is said, “In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy, the only means of deliverance is the chanting of the holy names of the Lord. There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way.”

The Brhan-naradiya-Purāṇa says,

*harer nāma harer nāma
harer nāmaiva kevalam*

*kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva
nāsty eva gatir anyathā*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Adi 7.76)

“For spiritual progress in this Age of Kali, there is no alternative, there is no alternative, there is no alternative to the holy name, the holy name, the holy name of the Lord.’

It rejects all other processes of self-realization—three times. They represent no jñāna, no type of yoga, no karma. only bhakti. Because this seed of bhakti-yoga is planted when one takes to the process of chanting the holy name.

THREE STAGES OF CHANTING

One who chants the holy name goes through three different stages. The first is what is known as suddha-nāma—this is the pure stage of chanting where Kṛṣṇa fully reveals Himself, together with the entirety of His innumerable potencies. A devotee who chants suddha-nāma observes Kṛṣṇa appearing personally on his tongue. As an effect of this chanting, he is bestowed pure love of God. Then the second stage is nāma-ābhāsa—this is chanting on the clearing stage, with the deliberate endeavor to avoid offences and to hear the holy name with full attention. In this stage, pure love of God will not manifest immediately—it is only attained by suddha-nāma. Nāma-ābhāsa is considered very auspicious, because it leads to pure chanting and destroys all sins. By serving the spiritual master with full

attention while chanting nāma-ābhāsa, one gradually rises to the platform of suddha-nāma and thus attains the final goal, pure love. Then the third stage is called nāma-aparādha. On this stage, pure love is even further away than the clearing stage. As long as chanting is performed with offenses, it is absolutely impossible to attain love of God. Nothing else should be aspired than to progress to the next stage as quickly as possible. Offenses have to be given up.

PURPOSE OF CHANTING

Those who have taken initiation have entered the stage known as bhajana-kriya. The stage of bhajana-kriya refers to the individual who has gone through the neophyte stage and who takes initiation from a bonafide spiritual master, and who chants a certain number of minimum rounds. In the stage of bhajana-kriyā, the devotee is advised by Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu that he must be very cautious of the offenses. This caution is there because if one is not cautious of these offenses that one should avoid, it is not that the chanting will not have any effect---this chanting is so pure that even if one chants it in a ridicule manner, he will still benefit, but it will not have the desired spiritual effect. If one is diseased, he goes to a doctor, and if he takes the medicine strictly according to the regulation and advice of the doctor then the medicine has the greatest effect in the shortest time.

Offenses which are against the holy name, should be very cautiously avoided. One must not be inattentive while chanting the holy name. We have to chant these sixteen rounds, once we enter the stage of bhajana-kriya, but that does not mean that the sixteen rounds are accepted as a mere ritual, and one can just run through them. One is advised to very carefully hear the vibration of the holy name. Then, another offense is to commit sins on the strength of chanting. That is like saying, “I have taken to the chanting of the holy name, I know that the holy name is potent, so I know that I am accumulating good deeds, therefore I can commit some sins side by side.” This should be avoided. Then another offense which is very serious is to maintain material attachments even after chanting the holy name. The purpose of chanting the holy name is to get rid of one’s false ego. It is this false ego that makes the living entity commit different crimes, subtle and physical. The purpose of chanting the holy name is, as we said earlier, to cleanse the heart of all the dust which is represented by impious desires. This chanting must be accompanied by gradually diminishing our material desires.

BACKBONE FOR SPIRITUAL ADVANCEMENT

Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu advised that one can chant the holy names of the Lord in a humble state of mind, this humility is the backbone for spiritual advancement. I think I mentioned the other day Śrīla Prabhupāda’s formula for developing love of God. When Śrīla

Prabhupāda was asked if he knew the formula for the medicine by which one can develop love of God, Śrīla Prabhupāda replied that the tonic for developing love of God consisted of this sloka of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In the material world, the entity is full of this ahaṅkāra (false ego), and if this ahaṅkāra is carried over in spiritual life then spiritual life is not pure. The goal of taking to devotional service is to get to the stage of complete purity. This complete purity is there if this ahaṅkāra, all false ego is completely smashed with the weapon of transcendental knowledge.

Lord Caitanya is saying that this chanting of the holy name is most successful when one considers himself even lower than the straw on the street. Just see how tolerant the straw is—everyone walks over the straw, but still the straw is sitting over there silently. Just see how tolerant the tree is—the tree is standing naked, being exposed to both the summer and winter, and the tree is just standing there still. One who executes the process of śravaṇaṁ kīrtanam with a humble frame of mind then he is guaranteed the reward, and the reward is unalloyed love of God. This love of God can be experienced and felt when there is no ahaṅkāra in the material body. In that position the material body is not material. Although one may be appearing physically in this material world, this body is completely spiritual when it is devoid of all types of ahaṅkāra. One should seriously keep these instructions of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu in mind, and if one keeps these instructions in mind and then executes

service based on the principles of śravaṇam kīrtanam then one is guaranteed to return to the kingdom of God.

This chanting of the holy name, if attentively done, guarantees the individual entrance into the kingdom of God. As we said earlier, Haridāsa Ṭhākura said that these yavanas can only be saved by somehow or the other being brought to the platform where they can be made to chant the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. The holy names of Kṛṣṇa are non-different from the message of the Lord, which are there in the revealed scriptures. When we distribute these books, we are automatically making people chant the holy names of the Lord.

The holy name consists of sixteen words and each page of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam or whatever scripture that we may distribute, consists of at least thirty-two lines, and within each line, there are at least ten words. Say one ends up reading even one page in a book, it would mean that you have forced him to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra a few times. If one reads the whole book then you can just imagine, unconsciously how many rounds that individual has chanted. So it is only this saṅkīrtan process which demands the distribution of transcendental literature, the distribution of the transcendental message of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, that can bring hope to the suffering humanity.





- CHAPTER 09 -

BE BROADMINDED—THINK OF KRISHNA’S FAMILY

TODAY’S VIṢṆUDUTAS

Ajāmila, at one time was pure, but later on became impure. But with the association of the Viṣṇudutas, he realized the mistake that he had committed and he atoned by vowing never to commit those sins again. The Viṣṇudutas today in this age of Kali are the members of this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. The members of this movement have to purify themselves to such an extent that each of them is like a Viṣṇuduta. Once I was sitting with Prabhupāda and two sannyāsīs just came in from America and Vṛndāvana and Prabhupāda said, “Oh, you look so beautiful, just like from Vaikuṇṭha.” So we have to become Viṣṇudutas. We have to look just like Vaikuṇṭha men so that when we give our association to these worldly minded people, somehow or the other they all realize what they are doing is wrong.

When we go out for preaching we always meet people who are sincere. Sometimes one will feel desperate and think, “Oh, everyone is so conditioned, everyone is so fallen.” Just like last night on Young Street, almost everyone we met in the dark hours were so far gone. But that does not mean that Young Street is like that all day. There are also portions when you meet a lot of good people and you also meet a lot of bad people. So by the same token, there are a lot of conditioned souls who are just waiting to be touched by a certain spiritual magnet, who are just waiting to be preached to. There are innumerable living entities waiting to be brought to the family of Kṛṣṇa. The number of liberated souls far outnumber the number of conditioned souls. The number of liberated souls are far in excess. In this planet it appears that the number of conditioned souls are in excess, but if the devotees of Kṛṣṇa absorb themselves in preaching then Prabhupāda says in Caitanya-Caritāmṛta that in Kali-yuga, Satya-yuga can be revived. People still talk about Rāmarājya because when Lord Rāmacandra was ruling, he was so concerned about the welfare of the people that nobody was in distress at all.

A BAMBOO ROD

At the present moment the society is in great distress. Just like the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam gives a nice analogy of a bamboo rod. If there are ants in the middle of a bamboo rod, and if there is fire on both sides then the ants in the middle will be burnt. Similarly, the people today in

society are being burnt. On one end of the bamboo rod is the demoniac government that is thinking of every way of extracting more and more taxes, and plundering whatever wealth the people have, and on the other end of the rod are the thieves and wolves who are very anxious to plunder more wealth and make life more difficult for everyone. The living entities are in the middle and they are just being crushed from all sides. Very often in our preaching we meet people who complain, “Oh, I’m being crushed from all sides.”

They are being crushed from all sides because the rulers today are like king Veṇa. The devotees of Kṛṣṇa have to become like the brāhmaṇas, and we have to meditate on how we can do something for the benefit of the people. Devahūti inquires from her son, Kapiladeva, “Please describe for myself and for the benefit of other people in general the science by which they can free themselves of their misery.” When Lord Kapila heard that His mother was asking this question, he was very happy. He said this is very wonderful, because the nature of the devotee is that he is very merciful upon all living entities, and Caitanya Mahāprabhu has emphasized this saṅkīrtan movement as jīva-rakṣā-auśadhiḥ (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Antya.19.35) the medicine for the people in this age. All of us should understand how important this activity of saṅkīrtan is? This message is preached again and again, and at times our devotees become very resentful. They have heard this record many times, but unfortunately in conditioned life we

have to hear the same record again and again. Actually, if you read the Bhagavad-gītā you will see it is the same record but it is just being played at different speeds. It is the same philosophy which Kṛṣṇa could have given in one verse, but he gives the same philosophy again and again but from slightly different angles. Prabhupāda says that repetition is necessary in order to drive the point home.

DESIRE OF KṚṢṆA

Our anxiety is not our own welfare. Our anxiety is not what I want. Our anxiety is what the spiritual master wants, what Kṛṣṇa wants. And what does Kṛṣṇa want? Kṛṣṇa wants every conditioned soul to be brought back to His abode. This is the desire of Kṛṣṇa. This is the desire of the genuine spiritual master that every conditioned soul be brought back to the platform of devotional service. We have this huge task before us, to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We have so many millions of people in this part of the world who are dying of hunger. Someone may argue that they are all so well fed, how are they dying of hunger? They are all dying of spiritual hunger. Because they are spiritually hungry, they are feeling weak. Just like, when the blood is not pure, one feels weak and one has no strength. Because they are not being fed with spiritual foodstuff, they are all feeling weak and tired and frustrated.

BRINGING LAXMI BACK TO NARAYANA

We want to go and rejuvenate them. Just like, sometimes when our devotees do not feel very blissful, another godbrother comes and says, “Prabhu, what’s wrong? Why aren’t you feeling blissful?” We have to go and make them feel blissful, because we are concerned about their welfare. We can display this concern if we get absorbed in this saṅkīrtan movement. This is one activity that differentiates this movement from any other movement. The emphasis in this movement is on preaching. The emphasis in this movement is not on becoming a good salvationist, who is only worried about his own soul salvation, but upon preaching this Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Now we are approaching the most opportune time for engaging conditioned souls in devotional service, and that is the month of December. The month of December is only three months away. Some of us may say, “Oh, it’s still three months away. Why are we talking about it so early?” The karmī companies start planning about December in January. Starting in January they are making plans how they are going to increase their sales in December, because about 40% of their revenue comes from only one month. So that month is so important.

We are entering the last three months of the year. We have entered the last quarter of this year, and historically in this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, the last quarter is always the best for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

The last quarter is always the best because people get into the spending mood. Someone may argue, “But the unemployment is so high.” But it does not matter that the unemployment is so high, because the government is providing revenue through unemployment insurance, welfare and so on, so that people can go on with this sense gratification.

People get into this spending mood in this last quarter, and we can take advantage of it by bringing laxmī back to Nārāyaṇa. The constitutional position of Laxmīji is to be on the side of Nārāyaṇa. Whenever you talk of Nārāyaṇa, you do not talk of Nārāyaṇa alone, but you talk of Laxmī Nārāyaṇa. Laxmī is always with Nārāyaṇa. Laxmī is never alone. When you talk of Rāma, you do not talk of Rāma, you talk of Sita Rāma. Sita is always on the side of Lord Rāmacandra. So just like Sitādevi was kidnapped by Rāvaṇa, Laxmī has been kidnapped by the present day Rāvaṇas, and we have to make efforts toward bringing Laxmīji back to the lotus feet of Nārāyaṇa. Now, there are so many Rāvaṇas. Once upon a time there was only one Rāvaṇa, but today there are so many Rāvaṇas, and they are all stealing Kṛṣṇa’s property. They are always trying to defy Kṛṣṇa’s instructions.

We all have to work together to take care of all these Rāvaṇas, which means that we should all be determined to take part in the saṅkīrtan process. Caitanya Mahāprabhu has said, “Those who swim in this ocean of saṅkīrtan process, they are just tasting nectarean sweet water.” Normally, the water from an ordinary ocean is

salty, but the water from this ocean is very sweet, and the more one drinks it, the more one feels like drinking it.

MARATHON MEANS

So our request now is that in our last month of the year every devotee makes a desperate effort to take part in the marathon—it's a 1-month marathon, not a 10-day marathon. Marathon means when you sacrifice body, mind, effort, everything. Actually, Prabhupāda said that we are on an eternal marathon, but in a marathon one should definitely make greater efforts than one would normally make.

Saṅkīrtan forces us to be very humble. Saṅkīrtan gives us the opportunity to free ourselves from the false ego that has been building within us. When you do not go out, when you do not go on the street, when you just stay in the temple, a lot of false ego gets built. Just like a man, if he does not do exercises then a lot of fat gets built on his body. When you do not go out on saṅkīrtan, a lot of fat gets built on the body in the form of false ego, and that false ego further enhances the opportunity to develop material desires.

Therefore, saṅkīrtan means dumping out our false ego. Saṅkīrtan forces us to be very humble. That's why we would like to request that all the devotees take part in this marathon for the last month. Every temple is watching what the devotees in other temple do. They

are watching, “Oh, how many books are they giving out? How many devotees are they making?” Like Prabhupāda said once, “Preaching means preaching must result into something practical, not that you be proud in going, giving a lecture and coming back.”—everything has to be measured.

TIMESLESS BOMBS

The devotees should also feel that there is no reason why they should not be able to do as well as the other godbrothers and godsisters are doing in other parts of the world. If we all make an effort there is no reason why we shouldn’t be able to do it. It is not that we are operating in a fourth-world country where the opportunities are not the same. We are operating in first-world countries—that is advanced materially, not spiritually—and there is no reason why we should not be able to do as good as the other devotees in other temples. We have a huge responsibility and we would like to distribute these books to the conditioned souls. Our goal should be to give each house at least one book a year. That may not be possible right today, but if we work toward that goal, it will be possible. Nothing is impossible by the grace of Kṛṣṇa.

We should work toward flooding this place with Prabhupāda’s books. When we go out and collect *laxmī* through paintings or candles, or whatever the paraphernalia may be, it is not that this money is going to come for anything else except temple maintenance

and book distribution. Saṅkīrtan means collecting for temple maintenance and book distribution. What we collect through this extra effort that every devotee will make, can go for purchasing books which can be distributed to the conditioned souls. Everyone is worried about the bomb; everyone is worried about when the bomb will fall, but Prabhupāda said these books are timeless bombs. They can fall at any time and destroy the illusion, which the living entity is suffering from. We would like to request that every devotee of this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement make a very constant effort for the book distribution.

DEFINITION OF FAMILY

If we only believe in taking care of our family members—the family just does not consist of what is known as immediate father, mother, or wife and children, but family consists of all living entities who are children of Kṛṣṇa. The materialist is always worried just about his wife and kids and therefore he will commit sin or do anything. We are also worried about our family, but our definition of family is broader than what the materialist's definition of family is. Our definition of family life is that we have to take care of everyone because they are all children of the same father. All these people are children of Kṛṣṇa. So when a transcendentalist views someone walking in the street and trying to enjoy material life, he says, "Oh, here is my brother. He is trying to forget Kṛṣṇa. Let me see how

I can save him.” So there is no reason why we should try and enjoy Christmas with one or two or five family members when Kṛṣṇa is giving us the opportunity to save hundreds of family members in those days.

We should not have a limited vision. Just like people say, “Do not be so narrow-minded, only chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. You have to be more broad-minded.” So we should not be so narrow-minded that we only think of just our wife and children. We have to be more broad-minded and think of Kṛṣṇa’s family. We do not want to have time just for socializing. We have socialized for hundreds of births and deaths, still we are unsatisfied. Now let us socialize with Kṛṣṇa’s intentions, let us socialize with Kṛṣṇa’s desires. This society is not formed to create managers. Prabhupāda said, “Good management follows good preaching.” If everyone is out in the front preaching, if everyone understands that preaching is the most valuable service one can do rather than trying to manage then one will be happy. So everyone should look forward to go out and do saṅkīrtan.

We have a pretty big load (work) to do and do not take this goal lightly. Prabhupāda always wanted us to double our remittance to the book fund. In this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement success is measured in just two characteristics—how many devotees you make and how many books you give out. No one is interested in hearing anything else, because that is the standard Prabhupāda taught us. Prabhupāda did not teach us any third dimension of success. If we want to be proud in the

eyes of this movement that we are also actively living in, we have to be light-weights not dead-weights. We can be heavy-weights in preaching, but we do not want to be a dead-weights in this ISKCON society. Being a dead-weights in ISKCON means not doing anything positive to expand saṅkīrtan. This is a saṅkīrtan movement and everything is just measured in one characteristic—to what extent is saṅkīrtan expanding.

ONLY ONE SPECIES IN ISKCON

Therefore, please take part in this. We have discussed the philosophy of this saṅkīrtan many times. It is not impossible. It is possible. The only thing that is necessary is faith in what Śrīla Prabhupāda has said. Śrīla Prabhupāda emphasized saṅkīrtan higher than any other service that one can perform, and there should be no question about it. Just like there are 8,400,000 species of life, within this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement there is only one species—that is of preachers. And varnāśrama-dharma means preaching. Regardless of which varṇa or āśrama one belongs to, the real nectar is the extent in which one takes part in saṅkīrtan. It is so unfortunate that sometimes devotees say, “I’m fried from saṅkīrtan. I can not go out. I can not do this. I can not do that.” That is so unfortunate because here is an able-bodied man, here is a man whose body is being kept intact by Kṛṣṇa so that Kṛṣṇa’s name can be propagated, and we are not using our able bodies for that and want to use it for something else. Anyone who is able-bodied, anyone who has strength in his legs and

hands, and who can see, can go out and take part in this saṅkīrtan process. We had devotees who were crippled and who were going out on wheelchairs to do saṅkīrtan in many parts of America. Kṛṣṇa has given us this body. No one knows how long one will live. Just because we are devotees of Kṛṣṇa does not mean we are destined to live for 80 years. One can die at any moment. And whatever we give to Kṛṣṇa, that will be remembered eternally, that will be appreciated eternally. One feels very grateful to somebody else when one is saved.

Just like when you are being burnt and a fireman comes and rescues you from the fire, how indebted you feel to the fireman who rescued you from the fire. Similarly, the devotees of Kṛṣṇa are like the firemen who have to go and rescue all these conditioned souls who are being burned from the fire of material desires. Once we save these souls, they will be eternally indebted to us. Ajāmila was eternally indebted to the Viṣṇudutas, because the Viṣṇudutas came and woke him up. Dhṛtarāṣṭra was eternally indebted to Vidura because Vidura woke Dhṛtarāṣṭra from the ignorance in which he was. The crocodile became indebted to Gajendra because Gajendra was a devotee of the Lord and because of that the crocodile got liberation because Nārāyaṇa came and killed the crocodile.

LORD CAITANYA'S PRIORITY

Those who are non-devotees, those who are crows at the moment, in the sense that they are attracted to

garbage, these same crows when they become swans, will appreciate the work that we are doing. Right now because they are completely intoxicated, when they see us they say, “Why have you Hare Kṛṣṇas come here?” They want to throw us out. But when their level of intoxication lessens then they will appreciate what we have done.

If we all from top to bottom become Kṛṣṇa's dolls—a devotee is like a dancing doll who just dances to the tune of the dance director. Prabhupāda has given us the formal instruction that saṅkīrtan is the highest service, and we should take part in this. We have to believe in the principle of self-analyses, not that we falsely fool ourselves and say, “Oh everything is going nicely.” We have to give up our personal priorities, and just accept what is Lord Caitanya's priority. And Lord Caitanya's priority is that everyone should take part in the saṅkīrtan process for our entire existence. This is another misconception that some devotees have—saṅkīrtan is for a few years. Just like in the army, you go in front of the battlefield for a few years and then you retire to the barracks. We also have that understanding—few years in the front line and then retire. That should not be our mood. Of course if we want to force ourselves that, Kṛṣṇa will give you that. But the highest mood is when you have no vested interest, but you just want to be in the front line of Lord Caitanya's saṅkīrtan army. This is a very privileged position to be in the front line of Lord Caitanya's army.

In the vedic days, even the kings would go right in the front of the battle to fight, and the king would not come back unless he was hurt. So everyone from top to bottom should take part in this saṅkīrtan process; this is the highest priority. We should all take part, whether one is a grhastha—if there are children then organize a nursery, so one mother can take care of all the children and the other mothers can go out. Kṛṣṇa consciousness grhastha life does not mean that once you have children then one forgets to save the other children of Kṛṣṇa. These are all Kṛṣṇa's children and they all have to be saved. It is understandable that a mother can have a little more concern for one's own children than other's children, but not such a concern that one drops everything and just takes care of one's children. That is not Kṛṣṇa consciousness grhastha life. Kṛṣṇa consciousness householder life means being absorbed in serving Kṛṣṇa all the time.



- CHAPTER 10 -

REAL SOURCE OF HAPPINESS IS KRISHNA

*karmaṇy evādhikāras te
mā phaleṣu kadācana
mā karma-phala-hetur bhūr
mā te saṅgo 'stv akarmaṇi*

(Bhagavad-gītā 2.47)

You have a right to perform your prescribed duty, but you are not entitled to the fruits of action. Never consider yourself the cause of the results of your activities, and never be attached to not doing your duty.

Kṛṣṇa is telling us here that we have a right to prescribe our duty, but we are not entitled to the fruits of action. Further Kṛṣṇa says, “Never consider yourself to be the cause of your activities.” I may be engaged in performing some task, I may be engaged in doing some business, I may be engaged in some profession, but the gain which is coming should not be viewed as coming from my intelligence, but rather we must understand that this is coming due to the mercy of the Lord. Kṛṣṇa is saying

that one should not be attached to doing one's duty, but at the same time we should not consider ourselves to be the cause of the results.

INFLUENCE OF ILLUSORY ENERGY

Presently, due to the influence of the illusory energy which is known as *Māyā*, we think that we are the cause of everything. And therefore we want to utilize the results for our own sense pleasure, but if we understand that the cause of the results is not we, but the Supreme Lord then our whole consciousness will change. Since the Lord is the cause of the results, he is the proprietor of that result. If the Lord is the cause then he is the proprietor of that result, and if he is the proprietor of that result then the result should also be used in the service of the proprietor. Just like if I go to a bank, and I take a loan then I have to return that loan to the bank because the cause of my having that money is the bank. But if I do not return that loan to the bank then I would be considered to be a thief.

As someone may say, "What is the use for Kṛṣṇa giving us this instruction? We do not need this instruction." Actually there is a purpose for giving this instruction of the *Bhagavad-gītā*. The purpose of giving this instruction of the *Bhagavad-gītā* is to give us an opportunity to once again regain our eternal position of happiness. In fact, we have lost that position by misusing our independence. When a child is young, his parents tell him, "Please go to school. Please study hard, so that when you grow up

you can get a good job.” But if the child does not go to school when he is young, he loses the opportunity to build a good future. Similarly, we have lost our eternal position of happiness by descending to this material planet. And we have descended to this material planet because we thought that we would be happy over here. But after having descended over here we can see that actually there is no happiness.

GET OUT OF THIS SUFFERING

Therefore, we are making the statement that in this material world nobody can be happy. Now someone may question, “What is the basis of our authority.” Everything should have an authority of the source, and the basis of our authority is the Bhagavad-gītā. In the Bhagavad-gītā, Lord explains

*mām upetya punar janma
duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam
nāpnuvanti mahātmānaḥ
saṁsiddhiṁ paramām gatāḥ*

(Bhagavad-gītā 8.15)

After attaining Me, the great souls, who are yogīs in devotion, never return to this temporary world, which is full of miseries, because they have attained the highest perfection.

Kṛṣṇa says that this material world is a place of misery, where everyone is just taking repeated birth and death. In this material world, when we talk about the material world—we talk about life outside the spiritual world,

wherever one may go there will be misery. In India, people may think that if we come to Canada or America we will become happy. And in America and Canada where people have enough opulence, people may think that if I become a renunciate I will become happy. But the reality is that in this material world wherever one may go one will have to suffer.

Has anyone ever seen a child being born who has come out laughing or smiling? This has never taken place. The child, whether he is born from the womb of a millionaire or the womb of a beggar woman, the child always comes out crying. From the very moment the living entity comes in contact with this material world, he is suffering. And that suffering just continues. Kṛṣṇa here says, “Please get out of this suffering.” One can get out of this suffering by actually understanding the purpose of this human form of life. The Padma-Purāṇa explains

*jalaja nava-laksani
sthavara laksa vimsati
krmayo rudra-sankhyakah
paksinam dasa-laksanam
trimsal-laksani pasavah
catur-laksani manusah*

There are 8,400,000 different species of bodies, of which only a small percentage—400,000—are human. This life begins first with aquatic life. In the beginning of the creation there was just water, so every entity was in the form of an aquatic entity then from an aquatic

the individual moves up to the form of a tree or a plant then the entity moves up to the form of a bird—there are so many different types of birds that fly. Then the entity moves up to the form of a beast, and then he moves up to the form of a human being.

This human life, which we presently have, has been obtained after going through a long evolutionary process. And if even after having obtained this human life we do not utilize it properly then the śāstras say that we are kṛpaṇas, or miserly people, that is, we are very unfortunate.

Kṛṣṇa explains in the Bhagavad-gītā,

*bhūmir āpo 'nalo vāyuh
khaṁ mano buddhir eva ca
ahaṅkāra itīyaṁ me
bhinnā prakṛtir aṣṭadhā*

(Bhagavad-gītā 7.4)

Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego—all together these eight constitute My separated material energies.

First are the gross elements which are earth, water, fire, air and ether. These gross elements combine and produce everything that is visible to us, be it the universe, or be it a form of human being, or be it a form of a building. Anything we see is a combination of earth, water, fire, air and ether. Beyond these five gross elements, there are three subtle elements which are mind, intelligence, and false ego. And beyond these is the spirit soul. This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is teaching the

public the position of the soul. The Bhagavad-gītā explains that this soul is the real identity. This soul is transmigrating or moving from one body to another body, which is decided by the type of activities that one engages in.

AS YOU SOW SO SHALL YOU REAP

In this very assembly there are individuals with different types of dresses, different types of features of their body, similarly there are different types of bodies as we have explained, and the type of body that one obtains is based upon the activities that one performs. Even Lord Jesus Christ said, “As you sow, so shall you reap.” For different types of activities, there are different types of punishments. If I kill a person then I may be hanged. If I just stab a person then I may just get some jail sentence for a few years, and if I commit a parking violation then I just get a fine. So in the material world we can see that for different types of crimes, there are different types of punishments. The same law extends itself, and that law is known as the law of karma, which says that as we sow, so shall we reap. If we learn that the result of the activities that we are engaging in is produced due to the mercy of the Lord, and that he is actually the enjoyer then we will not take on any sinful reactions. But if we think that this result is due to our own hard work, and therefore we should enjoy it then that enjoyment will actually end in misery.

We may think that we are the cause of the results of our activities, but if we analyze very carefully, we will conclude that the Lord is the cause. For example someone is running a factory and is producing a product. Any product that we produce is a result of a combination of some natural resources which are provided by whom?—by the Lord! Modern scientists have attempted to imitate God's abilities by trying to create artificial commodities, synthetics of chemicals, but there is a limit to that. A few years ago some company in America attempted to produce artificial rain, and they were completely unsuccessful. We produce some product in our factory, or we are able to perform some action. We are able to perform it only because the ingredients have been granted by the Lord and also the ability to perform it has been granted by the Lord. If an individual was born handicapped then he would not be able to perform his normal duties, so everything is actually coming (if one analyzes) from the Lord. The Lord is the cause, He is the cause in the form of giving ability to man, and He is also the cause in the form of supplying the ingredients that are necessary for making any activity successful.

THE PAYMENT OF OUR BILL

In the material world we are living, let's say in an apartment, we have to pay a rent for the apartment. We have to pay our water bills. We have to pay our telephone bills, and if we do not pay these normal bills then at the

end of the month that particular service is disconnected. Similarly, we also have bills to pay to the different demigods who are providing us with the necessary ingredients. The Sun God is supplying us the sunlight. Imagine if we had to use the electricity 24 hours a day. Right now we only have to use the electricity for six or seven hours a day and there is a severe energy crisis. If you had to use this electricity for 24 hours daily, imagine what the situation would be. Then without any rainfall, there cannot be any food, nobody can produce food in factories. Nobody has been able to produce synthetic food. They have succeeded in producing synthetic fuel, but nobody has been able to produce synthetic food. That can only be produced by the rainfall that comes from the Lord. The rainfall is also being given by a demigod known as Indra. The point is we are getting these different gifts from the Lord directly or through His agents, and we have a certain obligation, that is, we have to pay our bill towards them also. If we do not learn to pay our bills that are due to the Lord then the whole mission of human life is wasted.

The payment of our bill to the Lord is in the form of sacrifice. It is in the form of following the instructions of the Lord. This verse is especially reminding the individual that we must always understand that the Lord is the cause of the results, and if we understand that the Lord is the cause of the results then we would also want to use the results in the service of the Lord.

Kṛṣṇa says in the Bhagavad-gītā,

*yat karoṣi yad aśnāsi
yaj juhoṣi dadāsi yat
yat tapasyasi kaunteya
tat kuruṣva mad-arpaṇam*

(Bhagavad-gītā 9.27)

Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer or give away, and whatever austerities you perform—do that, O son of Kuntī, as an offering to Me.

We have to learn the science by which this human form of life can be lived in accordance with the principles of the Lord. And that is the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This Kṛṣṇa consciousness is actually giving us the process by which we can lead our life as obedient children of God. Let us say we are living in Canada at the moment, we have to abide by the laws of the Canadian Government. If we disobeyed the laws of the Government, thinking that these laws are bogus, we will be punished at once. Similarly, if we lead a human life independent of the principles of the scriptures, or defying the bonafide scriptures then we will also be severely punished.

PLEASE INQUIRE

This human form of life which we have obtained now should not be taken lightly. Therefore, the Vedānta-sūtra say, “Now that you have this human form of life, please inquire,” And what should you inquire? We should inquire, “Where is everything coming from?”

And the answer is there in the revealed scriptures. The answers have to be obtained by the bonafide religious scriptures. Religion means the word of God. Religion is not something which can be fabricated by anyone. This is explained in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

*dharmam tu sākṣād bhagavat-praṇītam
na vai vidur ṛṣayo nāpi devāḥ
na siddha-mukhyā asurā manuṣyāḥ
kuto nu vidyādhara-cāraṇādayaḥ*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.3.19)

Real religious principles are enacted by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although fully situated in the mode of goodness, even the great ṛṣis who occupy the topmost planets cannot ascertain the real religious principles, nor can the demigods or the leaders of Siddhaloka, to say nothing of the asuras, ordinary human beings, Vidyādharas and Cāraṇas.

“Religion means the word of God.” When we are talking about God’s words, we are talking about authorized religious scriptures. We are not talking about some books that some self-styled guru or yogi may write and claim “This is a religion.” Just like in India, there is one famous so-called spiritual leader who is advocating that one can realize God by unrestricted sex life, and who is not enforcing any religious principles and is still claiming it is a religion. Actually this is a great offense, because in the name of religion, irreligion is being advocated.

When we develop the desire to inquire about something higher, that is something higher than the materialistic

activities we may be engaged in, we should carefully examine the various sources we are turning to because religion today is also being used by a lot of people as a business commodity. Just as people do business just to make some money, there are so many people who are using religion as a means to make some money. But the actual religion should be tested against the bonafide scriptures. If a lawyer is arguing a point, and if he is able to quote the law book then the Judge will accept it. But if the lawyer presents his own view points, or concocted view points then the Judge will not accept it. Similarly, when we talk about religion, it strictly has to be on the basis of the authorized scriptures. And if we are basing our lives based upon authorized scriptures then we could say that we are following a religious process.

DO NOT WORRY

This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is based upon the principles of the Bhagavad-gītā and the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Some of us may question, what is the Bhagavad-gītā and the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam? The Bhagavad-gītā and the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam are part of the Vedas—they are called the Purāṇas, and these are the oldest scriptures. The Bhagavad-gītā, for example, was spoken 120,400,000 years (Bhagavad-gītā. 4.1) ago. Kṛṣṇa says that it was first spoken to the Sun-god, Vivasvan, but was put in writing only 5,000 years ago. And this Bhagavad-gītā gives us the most complete information about the position of the living entity. This does not mean

that the other scriptures are not bonafide. We have used the word “complete.” That means the other scriptures are also bonafide, but the Bhagavad-gītā gives us details, which we sometimes find it hard to get from other sources.

For example, you have higher and lower levels of mathematics. When we are studying mathematics in school, we also learn that two and two is four. And when we are studying mathematics in college, we are also taught that two and two is four, but at the same time one also learns more complicated things like trigonometry, algebra and so on. Similarly, the Supreme Lord speaks or reveals information based upon time and circumstances. When this Bhagavad-gītā was being spoken 5,000 years ago, it was being spoken to Arjuna who was a very enlightened being. Arjuna could grasp the entire Bhagavad-gītā in the matter of only few minutes. Since Kṛṣṇa was speaking this science to a very enlightened being, He gave very indepth information about the position of the living entity. Kṛṣṇa declares,

*sarva-yoniṣu kaunteya
mūrtayaḥ sambhavanti yāḥ
tāsāṁ Brahmā mahad yonir
ahaṁ bīja-pradaḥ pitā*

(Bhagavad-gītā 14.4)

It should be understood that all species of life, O son of Kuntī, are made possible by birth in this material nature, and that I am the seed-giving father.

“I am the seed-giving father of all living entities.” Whether they be born in this country or that country. He is the father. There is one Sun that shines over all the countries, similarly Kṛṣṇa claims that he is the father of every living entity.

We should not think that Kṛṣṇa is a Hindu God or is a foreign God. The Lord is neither Hindu or Muslim or Christian or Jewish. The Lord means ishvara, one who is the proprietor of everyone. Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord; this is confirmed in all the revealed scriptures, and this Bhagavad-gītā is His message to humanity by which humanity can be saved. We should take to this knowledge of the Bhagavad-gītā that is being presented by this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and try to perfect our life. What is the harm in trying it? If someone is giving you a product that guarantees you complete satisfaction and which is free, what is the harm in trying it. When you go to buy a product and your retail storeman tells you, “This product is guaranteed” then at once you have confidence and you buy it. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa in the Bhagavad-gītā says

*sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpēbhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

(Bhagavad-gītā 18.66)

Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear.

Kṛṣṇa is guaranteeing that if we take the steps forward in surrendering then He will protect us and give us permanent pleasure, or happiness.

The present society is being led by people who are not scared of increasing expenditure on sinful activities, but when it is a question of expenditure for the cause of the Lord, they say, “Oh you people are a burden to the society.” So many millions and millions of dollars are being spent on sinful activities, and nobody cares about it. This is an unfortunate position. When it comes to glorifying the Lord, everyone is scared, but when it comes to increasing expenditure for sinful activities no one blinks an eye about it. It is a very unfortunate position in the society and this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is presenting this philosophy of the Vedas so that the human being can somehow or the other re-establish his contact with the Lord and once again obtain a happy state.

It is said in the scriptures that in this present age of Kali, the Lord appears in His holy name. We have talked earlier about paying our bills to the Lord, and we have said that we have to pay our bills to the Lord for the different benedictions that we are receiving by engaging in yajña. In this age, the Lord has recommended this yajña of chanting the holy name of the Lord. When we learn to chant the holy name of the Lord and we take to this chanting, we automatically begin to pay our debts to the Lord and by this chanting all our sinful desires are gradually eradicated, and then we develop higher intelligence, and that higher intelligence motivates us

to remain on the right path. At the present moment our intelligence is clouded and polluted. That pollution has to be removed. If there is a mirror and there is dust on the mirror then you can take a clean piece of cloth and wipe off that dust. Similarly, we have to wipe out the dust that has polluted our intelligence and mind, and the process for wiping out that dust is this process of chanting the names of the Lord.

OUR BIRTH RIGHT

In the material world, everyone is talking about experimentation. Even the scientists are bluffing. They are being believed to some extent because they are able to experiment and produce something. Similarly, we have also done some experiments to show the results that one can obtain by chanting this Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahāmantra*. And the result is that thousands of devotees of this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement who are chanting this Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra around the world are experiencing happiness. This happiness is our birth right. because the Lord is always happy and we being His parts and parcels are also entitled to that happiness. We can receive it, but in order to receive it we have to qualify ourselves. And the process of qualifying ourselves is this process of chanting the holy name of the Lord. And we can see practically that so many thousands and thousands of people have perfected their lives by taking to this chanting. This chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra is not something new. This is being done since millions of years and in India

there are millions of people who are doing it, and since the expansion of this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, people all over the world are chanting this Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahāmantra* and perfecting their lives.

The Lord has requested that in this age of Kali, one can perfect his life by chanting these holy names. Our request to everyone who is assembled over here is to please take to this path of perfection. As soon as you walk out of this temple you will see billboards saying, “Come and drink this whiskey, come and try this cigarette, come and try this car, come to this movie-house.” But we are also presenting our promotion and that is, “Please take to this chanting of the holy names of the Lord and perfect your lives.” You will not be able to perfect your life by following the newspaper ad, or by following this cigarette ad, but if you follow the instructions of the Lord then you will be able to perfect your life and obtain happiness. The process of perfecting your life in this age of Kali is to take chanting of the holy name. Our request is that you all may stay in whatever position you all are, whether with a family, doing a job, running a factory, but please take to this chanting of the *mahāmantra*. This mantra is also called the *mahāmantra*. *Mahāmantra* means the Supreme Chant by which one can bring peace to the mind. By chanting this Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahāmantra*, one will obtain real peace and real happiness and have no anxieties.

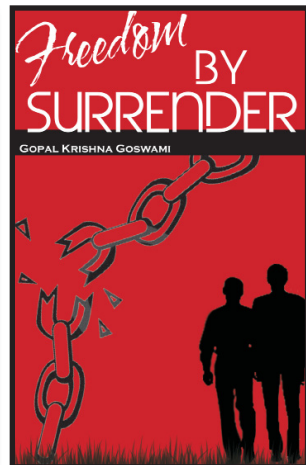
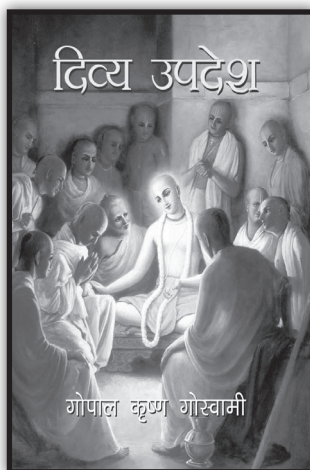
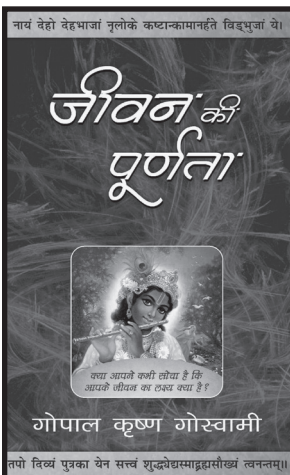
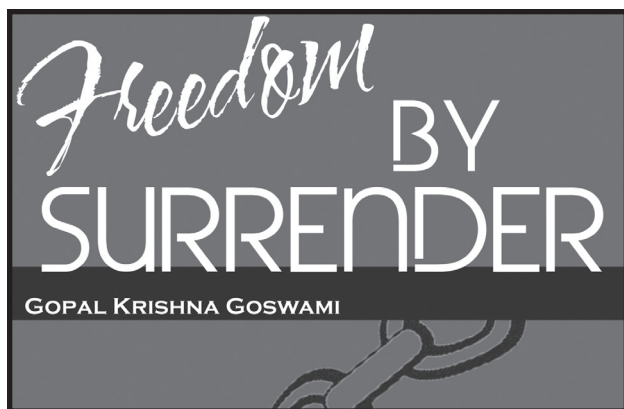
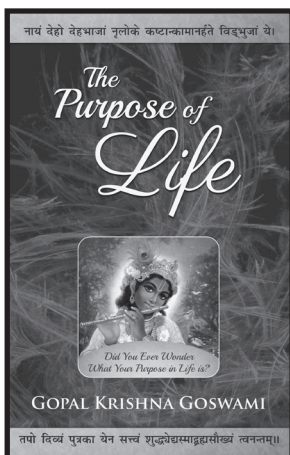
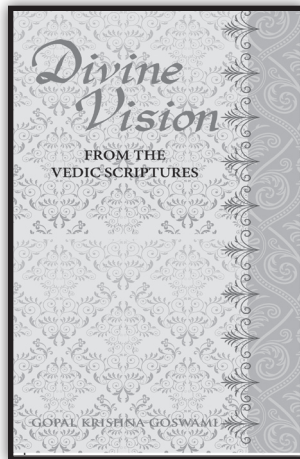
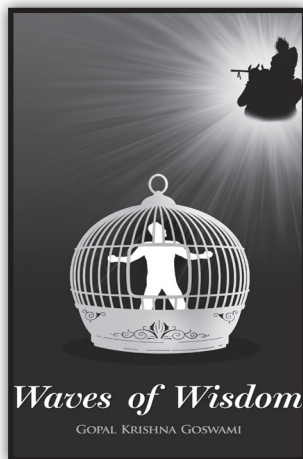
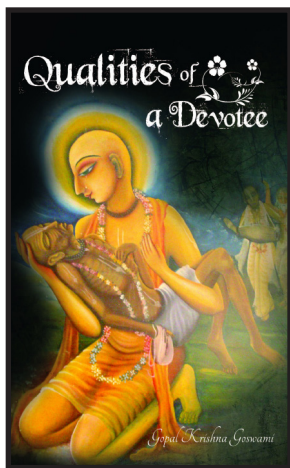
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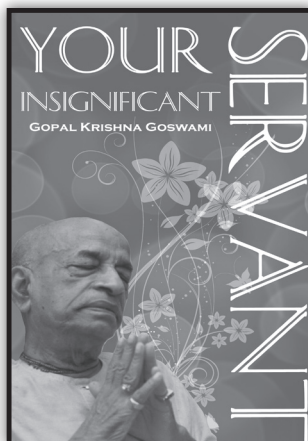
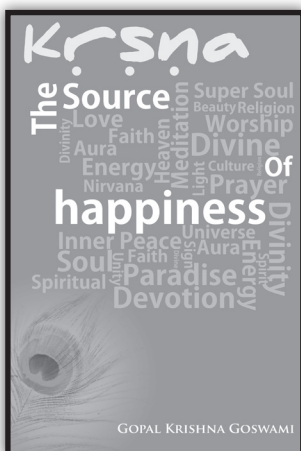
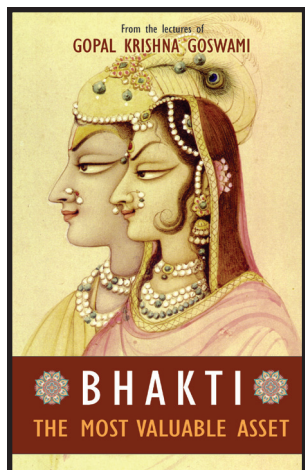
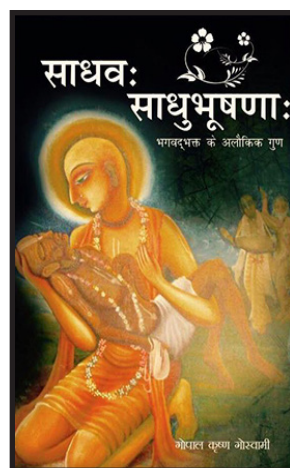
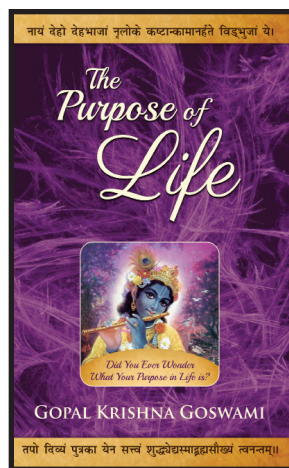
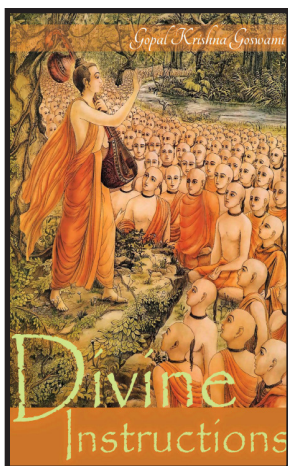
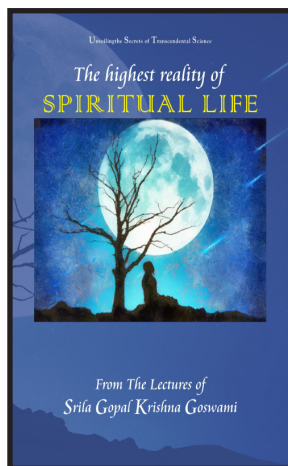
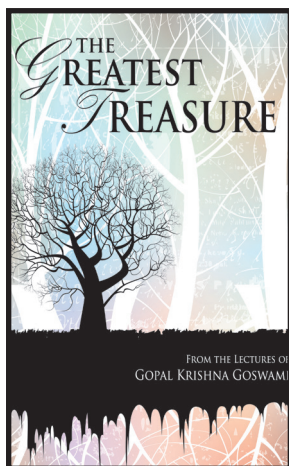
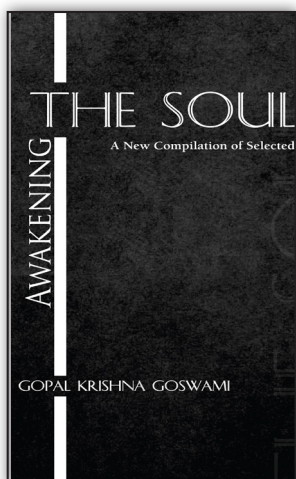
We would like to end our discussion today by requesting

all of you to please chant this mantra, O.k.? “*Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*” Did anybody find this chanting difficult? Does anybody think that some misfortune may come by chanting this mantra? Does anybody think that he will lose his head or money, or anything? Does anyone have any negative feelings about chanting? That means that everyone has positive feelings towards the chanting. So how many people will chant this Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra regularly at home? Why not everyone? None of you had any negative feelings towards this chanting, so why should you not chant?

If I tell you that we have a Mercedes car to give out to one of you lucky ones, how many of you will want it?—everyone is going to put his hand up, isn’t it? But this Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra is thousand times more powerful than the Mercedes. If you go to the spiritual planet then you will fly in aeroplanes made up of gold and diamonds. This is a fact. In the material world, all the cars are made up of aluminium and steel, but in the spiritual planet everybody has an airplane which is made of gold. And anybody who chants this Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra sincerely, after the expiry of this life term, can go back to the kingdom of God. You are being offered the most expensive vehicle, so why shouldn’t you take it?

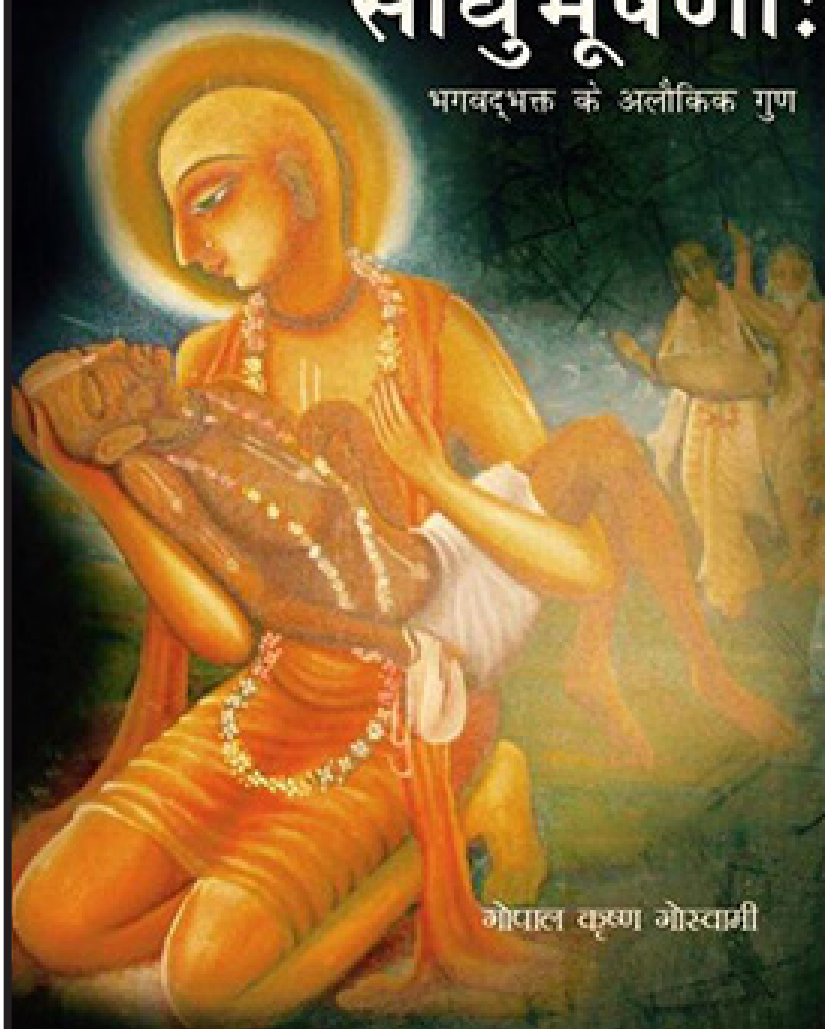
Even the king of Saudi Arabia does not have an aeroplane made up of gold. And everyone in the kingdom of God has a private plane made of gold. So please chant this Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.





साधवः साधुभूषणाः

भगवद्भक्त के अलौकिक गुण



गोपाल कृष्ण गोस्वामी