

Bhāgavatam Rasamālayam

The Abode of Supreme Nectar

Meditations & Reflections from the lectures of His Holiness Bhakti Charu Swami

MARCH 24, 2019 | ISSUE 12



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Tasting the Sweetness of Surrender

So Narad Muni was pointing out that dharma, artha, kama, moksha. Kama is not actually satisfying our heart, rather making the heart full of distress and as a result of that they want to get out from material nature, moksha. "Oh, this material nature is a place of suffering, so let me get out of it." But then when we come across a saintly personality then what we do, as he is pointing out, "You mentioned all the way after moksha, but that is not going to satisfy their heart. You can see even that your heart is not satisfied, what to speak of those who listen or those who read your writing. How will their hearts be satisfied?" So he has just presented in such a simple way. Therefore involve bhakti yoga tad-vāg-visargo janatāgha-viplavo (SB1.5.11). These words about bhakti yoga will create a very nice atmosphere. It will create a revolution in the society janatāgha-viplavo, means revolution, it creates a revolution. What kind of revolution, not French revolution, not Russian revolution. It is a revolution of consciousness. Revolution, means the wheel is moving in one way. Now you make it move in another way, so revolution in consciousness.



Instead of material attachment the people now become interested in spiritual substance. Instead of running after money, people will run after Krishna, that is the revolution- yasmin prati-ślokaṁ abaddhavyaty api(SB 1.5.11); Every single verse that describes the glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is going to cause a revolution of consciousness. Now you all have consider what your mentality was before and what happened to you (after). Is there a change, change of consciousness?

Now you are not interested in those things that you were interested in. Now your interest increased for your spiritual propensities. As a result of that, what is happening, you are developing the taste for hearing. That's why you all have come and that's why you all are listening to this class. You have so many other things that you could do but you are not interested in those things. Now, you have come here to listen, you are listening about the glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Nāmāny anantasya yaśo- 'ñkitāni yat (SB1.5.11); the Lord's unlimited names are synonymously glorified. His names are synonymous to His qualities, His pastimes, His transcendental activities and these expands the glory of Supreme personality of Godhead. Sṛṇvanti gāyanti grṇanti sādhaḥ(SB1.5.11).

The Sadhus or the devotees of the Lord (although) they like to hear the glorification and they sing the glorification of the Lord, śṛṇvanti means sravanam and gāyanti means kirtanam and chant the Holy Name. So this is the simple process.

And this śravaṇam and kīrtanam is the beginning of hearing and chanting. Then, as a result of this hearing and chanting, there will be remembering, smaranam. When you remember the Lord, then you will gradually become engaged in serving His lotus feet. Smaranam, pada sevanam, archanam; worshiping Him. Vandanam, singing His glories through the selected verses. Dasyam, sakhyam, atma nivedanam. Become a servant of the Lord, develop your friendship with the Lord and surrender yourself unto Him. So that is the goal of life. So that is what everybody should understand, that is what everybody must learn and that's why the sadhus, the saintly personalities must broadcast the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

This is the beginning of Srimad Bhagavatam and in this way we can see that this is actually a pastime. Who is Vyasaḍeva? Vyasaḍeva is an incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. So where is the question of Vyasaḍeva being bewildered? Like Arjuna, the pure devotee of the Lord. Where is the question of Arjun becoming bewildered? He is so pure that he is always associating with the Lord, so where is the question of Arjuna bewildering? But in order to give Bhagavad Gita Krishna made that situation that Arjun is bewildered. Arjuna is saying, "I don't know what I should do? Pṛcchāmi tvāṁ dharma-sammūḍha-cetāḥ (BG2.7); I am asking you because I don't know what to do, I don't know what is dharma, what is the real dharma. In Bhagavad Gita Arjuna is telling that to Krishna, "Krishna, I am completely bewildered." Then Krishna gave Bhagavad Gita: "Siṣyas te 'haṁ śādhi māṁ tvāṁ prapannam(BG 2.7); I am surrendering myself as your shishya, as your disciple. Krishna is actually Arjuna's cousin. Is it easy to accept your cousin as your Guru? Very difficult, especially when your cousin is your friend.

Become a servant of the Lord, develop your friendship with the Lord and surrender yourself unto Him. So that is the goal of life.



That's why Arjuna actually told Krishna imaṁ vivasvate yogaṁ proktavān aham avyayam (BG 4.1); Krishna, you said that you gave the knowledge to Vivasvan. Then Krishna told him aparāṁ bhavato janma paraṁ janma vivasvataḥ(BG 4.4); you were born the other day and Vivasvan was born millions of years ago - katham etad vijānīyāṁ tvam ādau proktavān iti(BG 4.4); how can I understand that you gave this knowledge to Vivasvan?"

Cultivating the Process of Surrender

So we can see Arjuna's relationship with Krishna is like a cousin brother of the same age, therefore they are intimate friends. But here becoming completely bewildered Arjuna is telling Krishna, "I am accepting you as my spiritual master, please guide me. Accept me as your disciple and guide me in the spiritual way." So that is what one has to do, like one must surrender to a bona fide spiritual master. Arjuna is very fortunate that he had the Supreme Personality of Godhead as a spiritual master but we don't have that good fortune. But there is nothing to worry about, Krishna sends His representatives. He may not come but He sends his representatives. Therefore Guru is always available. We have to find out. We have to see who is the real Guru.

But here is a problem, if we are materially motivated then we find the materialistic Guru. Only when we become spiritually inclined we get bona fide spiritual master. Therefore it is said guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja((Cc. Madhya 19.151); by the mercy of Guru one receives the seed of bhakti lata. This bhakti lata bija is there in Krishna's instructions. Krishna's instructions are the source of bhakti lata bija. The Vedas are the words of Krishna. But from the Vedas we have to find the essence of the Vedas. That is why Krishna gave Bhagavad Gita. Although He gave the Vedas and in the Vedas, the secret of pure devotional service has been kept. Here we are seeing the process. The essence have to be found and Krishna very mercifully gave the essence through Bhagavad Gita.

Now we are finding another essence that He is giving through Vyasa-deva. Here we can see it was Krishna's arrangement that it seems that Vyasa-deva became bewildered. Vyasa-deva felt discontentment that my work hasn't been completed but actually what was the purpose of Krishna? To point out that bhakti is the highest. Vyasa-deva has done everything that could be presented through the Vedas. Vyasa-deva divided the Vedas into four branches; Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda, Atharva Veda and then he gave the Upanishads, the Puranas, Dharma Shastras, Samhitas. He gave everything that could be presented through the Vedas. Then he gave Mahabharata.

The Mahabharata is meant for less intelligent persons. The people with advanced intelligence can understand philosophy but the less intelligent people do not have the ability to understand philosophy. Therefore he presented the philosophy through Mahabharata which is the Itihaas, history. But what Mahabharata is doing? That's what he pointed out, Mahabharata is simply dealing with Karma Kanda. Mahabharata is not even going to Jnana kanda. Mahabharata is all karma based. Therefore Vyasa-deva is not satisfied but the thing is although Mahabharata is dealing with Karma yoga, but when we read Mahabharata what we find, Bhagavad Gita. Bhagavad Gita is giving the directions of devotional service. After explaining everything in Bhagavad Gita what is the final instruction that Krishna gives sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja(BG 18.66). That is the ultimate point.

Here we can see although Mahabharata has been presented in the form of stories of the activities of great kings, especially Pandavas and Krishna. Even Krishna is present in Mahabharata but do we recognize so much that Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead? Yes we do, but what should we do with Krishna, what should be our attitude towards Krishna that has been presented in Bhagavad Gita - sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja. And where Bhagavad Gita ends, Srimad bhagavatam begins. Dharmah projjhita-kaitavo 'tra paramo nirmatsarāṇāṁ satām(SB1.1.1)

Bhagavad Gita says at the end surrender to Krishna, giving up all your material attachments, giving up all your mundane senseless activities and that's where Bhagavatam is beginning, when by giving up all these material attachments one heart becomes completely purified, free from all the contaminations of lust, greed, anger; kama, krodh, lobh etc. Nirmatsarāṇāṁ, when the heart becomes free from all these impurities, vedyam vāstavam atra vastu śivadam tāpa-trayonmūlanam then one become qualified to understand vedyam means Krishna consciousness.



Inquiries of the soul

Devotee: What is the difference between kirtanam and vandanam?

HH BCS: Vandanam is more like doing it for the sake of pleasing the Lord, through chanting selective verses and Kirtanam is the spontaneous glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When you sing the glory of Lord that is kirtanam but when you recite the verses for the pleasure of the Lord, that is vandanam.

Devotee: (How does one deal with a competitive mood in devotional service?)

HH BCS: How does it come? It comes by the mode of passion. So the passion will lead to this competitive mood but the thing is that devotional service can be rendered in the mode of goodness. Eventually all of us have to come to the mode of goodness. Then all these materialistic tendencies will go away but when you see that somebody is developing this kind of competitive mood or so forth, due to mode of passion just tolerate with the understanding that in course of time by practicing devotional service they will transcend the mode of passion and ignorance and come to the platform of mode of goodness.

Devotee: (How does one convince people when preaching, especially those who are willing to listen...?)

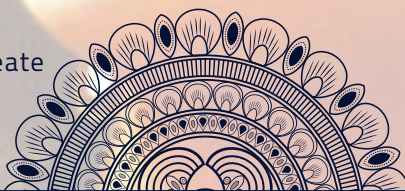
HH BCS: Okay I got the point. When you are preaching, when you are coming across some fortunate soul, you recognize that he is very fortunate, that he came in contact with you and you are giving him an opportunity to get the real knowledge. So present Prabhupada's books and tell him that here is what Prabhupada has done and by coming in contact with Srila Prabhupada's teachings how your life has changed. In this way you generate the interest in him. Your sincere desire to give Krishna to him and that will create his good fortune. You begin with the point that it is his good fortune that he is come in contact with you and in this way you can give him Srila Prabhupada's teachings and give Prabhupada's books, teach him about Srila Prabhupada's instructions. In this way it will create interest.

Devotee: (How does one develop the mood of being humble - "Trnad Api Sunicena?")

HH BCS: Well, you see this mood of trinad api sunicena will develop as we become aware of Krishna's greatness and Krishna's devotees' greatness because it is ultimately a question of relativity, like when do I feel myself small? When I am standing next to someone who is bigger, isn't it? In this respect sometimes I give an example of an incident. Akbar had a minister called Birbal.

Birbal was very intelligent and Akbar used to have a very special relationship with Birbal and as a result of that the other ministers became envious. Akbar got to know that other ministers are envious of Birbal. In order to prove to them about Birbal special quality, one day when Akbar came to the assembly he drew a line on the floor with the chalk and he asked that anyone can make this line smaller without rubbing it off. Everyone thought that without rubbing how it is possible. So everyone failed then Akbar asked Birbal, "Can you make this line smaller?" Birbal replied, "Yes, there is no problem". He picked up the chalk and he drew a line next to the line which was longer. So we recognize our humble position only when we are in contact with someone who is greater than us.

Now tell me who is the greatest? Krishna is the greatest. So the more we become aware about the Krishna's greatness we begin to see our insignificant position. So the way to become really humble is by becoming Krishna conscious. It is not an artificial practice " Oh, from today I will become humble, no matter whatever somebody says I will not say anything in response, even if somebody insults me, I will tolerate and then tolerate, tolerate and one day it reaches to the optimum point and I explode. So that is not the way. To become humble is to recognize our position in relation to Krishna. When we develop this humble attitude there is automatically tolerance and you see how Krishna is taking care of us. Why should we worry about anything when Krishna is taking care? So we can tolerate any difficulty that comes.



Srila Prabhupada - Our Lord & Master

So, these are the basic qualifications of a devotee. Devotees are always "sarva-bhuta-hitah-ratah" (BG 12.3-4), a devotee is benefiting always others and not harming others. And as a result of that he doesn't see anyone as enemy. He is friendly to everyone. And that is why since he is not body conscious he does not want to protect himself. He does not take care of his body. Like we see in this case Jada Bharat was about to be killed. Did Jada Bharat protest? Did Prahalad Maharaj protest when Hiranyakasipu was trying to kill him? No. That is the attitude of a pure devotee. From this we learn a lesson, how we should react. If somebody comes to kill what should you do? If we are real devotees then simply depend on Krishna. Srila Prabhupada demonstrated very wonderfully. When Calcutta was about to be bombed in 1944 during the peak of world war II. Japan was going to bomb Calcutta because Calcutta was the base for the British military during that time, the fort William just to cripple the British army. So, naturally everyone was leaving the city. Even one of Prabhupada's Godbrother who was staying with him decided to leave. So, he asked Prabhupada, "aren't you going"? Prabhupada said, "no". So, his Godbrother said, "so what are going to do here"? Prabhupada said, "I will go out on harinam". Prabhupada said if I chant the holy name either the Lord will protect me or even if I die chanting the holy name I will achieve the ultimate goal. Either way is no loss. Now the question is, Japan was all set to bomb Calcutta. Now why did they stop all of a sudden? At least we know that because of Prabhupada's going out on harinam sankirtan in the city the city was saved. This is the attitude of a devotee and this is how Lord reciprocates a devotee's dedication and surrender to him. Because Prabhupada was depending on Krishna fully, Krishna protected.

The best thing will be to depend on Krishna. Can Krishna protect? That is the big test. That will be your test on how much faith you have on him. And that is why you will have to read the scriptures and when you read the scriptures what you will get to know? How Krishna always protects his devotees. If Krishna protects all those who take shelter of him then the best recourse is to take shelter of him at the time of difficulty. Therefore, best thing to do is to depend on the Lord. He will take care. If he can supply food to the Jews, who naturally surrendered to him so if we surrender unto him won't he take care of us. Yes, he will. That faith we should all have.

