

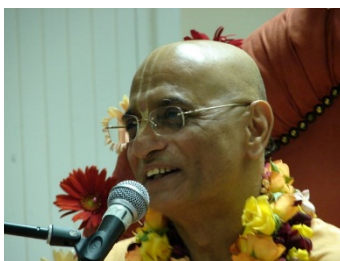
Ocean of Nectar

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1. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS WITH GURU MAHARAJA

↓ Being a westerner and not knowing about Mahaprabhu it's very foreign but the knowledge we keep on learning is infinite and going deeper and deeper. I wonder, we come here, do the yatra and go to the places of Mahaprabhu. It's very helpful for me I can see, feel, touch and experience what has gone on making the leelas real but at the same time it's a bit overwhelming. What is the point of it all at the end of the day? What is the point of acquiring the knowledge and going to these places?

Very nice question, not only the West but all over the world there is an acute shortage about knowledge about God. I can very clearly say that it's only ISKCON that is giving real knowledge about God everywhere. I am coming from an Indian background and I have seen many Sadhus and not a single one knows about God. What they don't have let's not worry about that the question is what we have, that means what Srila Prabhupada gave us. He gave us perfect

knowledge in the most perfect way. The problem is Caitanya Mahaprabhu is God as a devotee and that may seem even more difficult and that's why this morning I elaborately spoke on that to make everyone understand who Caitanya Mahaprabhu is. The thing is that is the problem. God as a devotee and not only that. He is completely averse to anyone identifying Him as God. So why is He doing that? To make everyone understand who the real God is. God came as a devotee to teach us who God is.



Therefore even if we don't recognize Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu as the Supreme Personality of Godhead doesn't matter, what matters is what He is saying and how He is acting as a devotee teaching us how a devotee should act and that is what He is teaching. As you pointed out what's the purpose of coming to pilgrimage like this? The purpose of coming to pilgrimage is that when you hear about Krishna, when you hear about Caitanya Mahaprabhu and come to the place where They acted then you realize it's not just some stories, it's not some fantastic ideas you have developed in this way, it's REAL! When you come here you can see the tree that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu planted, the places where Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu enacted His different pastimes. Then you go to Vrindavan and you see where Krishna performed His pastimes that is the place where He danced with the Gopis that is the place where He stole butter and that is the place where He had a fight with the Gopis.



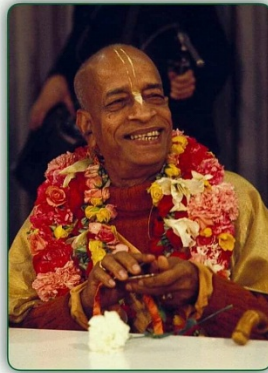
Then Krishna becomes so real you begin to wonder had I been here 5 000 years ago I would have witnessed this, had I been here 500 years ago I would have witnessed Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's presence. And that is why pilgrimage is very important because you go to the places where the Lord enacted His pastimes and as a result of that our understanding about Him becomes dearer.

↓ How does one serve selflessly? It feels paradoxical when you do something for others but you do it for yourself, through serving others you receive joy for yourself. I am looking at service for personal gain as much as it's for service. How do I serve selflessly, how can I be selfless?

You see you can take it as self-less or for the Supreme self. Self-less becomes a rather dry consideration, nobody wants to act without any benefit. When you recognize that Krishna is the Self of the Self, Krishna is the Supreme Self, meaning when you do something for Him then the benefit that you derive is inconceivably greater and not only that, when you do that then everybody benefits so that is why the motivation for doing something becomes even more intense or exciting. Let us put it in this way: everybody wants to do something for some benefit, now if you do something that benefits you manifold and it also benefits everyone else then won't you be inspired to do it again and again? It can be put in this way: there is some food and the hands take the food and says, "I am so happy I got this food and this is my food!" The hands hold onto that food the hand may derive some pleasure out of that but when the hand puts the food into the mouth then the mouth relishes it and it goes to the stomach and the whole body gets nourished. So that is the difference between doing things with a selfish motivation with the real self. Like one is holding the thing in the hand is the selfish motive. You may say this is not my food I won't hold it, selfless but the real benefit comes when you put it in your mouth. When you do things for Krishna that actually derives the ultimate benefit. Selfless means give it up, selfish means hold onto it and doing it for the real self is putting it into proper use and the whole body benefits.

2.

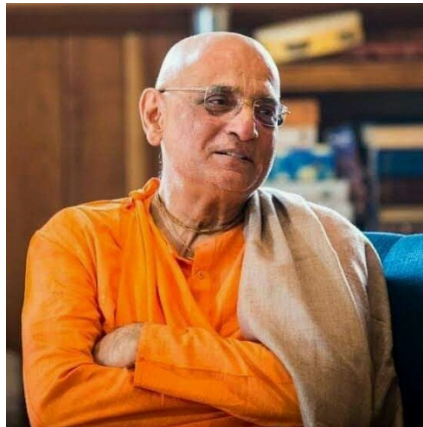
SRILA PRABHUPADA APPRECIATION



What they don't have let's not worry about that the question is what we have, that means what Srila Prabhupada gave us. He gave us perfect knowledge in the most perfect way.

3.

GURU MAHARAJA'S INSTRUCTIONS



- ⇓ The purpose of coming to pilgrimage is that when you hear about Krishna, when you hear about Caitanya Mahaprabhu and come to the place where They acted then you realize it's not just some stories, it's not some fantastic ideas you have developed in this way, it's REAL!;
- ⇓ And that is why pilgrimage is very important because you go to the places where the Lord enacted His pastimes and as a result of that our understanding about Him becomes dearer;
- ⇓ When you recognize that Krishna is the Self of the Self, Krishna is the Supreme Self, meaning when you do something for Him then the benefit that you derive is inconceivably greater and not only that, when you do that then everybody benefits so that is why the motivation for doing something becomes even more intense or exciting; and

↓ When you do things for Krishna that actually derives the ultimate benefit.

*(The content of this E-magazine was based a lecture given by His Holiness Bhakti Charu Swami on 10 December 2019 an evening class at Jagannath Puri during the 2019 Divine Pilgrimage)
(Compilation & editing by Hemavati Radhika dasi)*