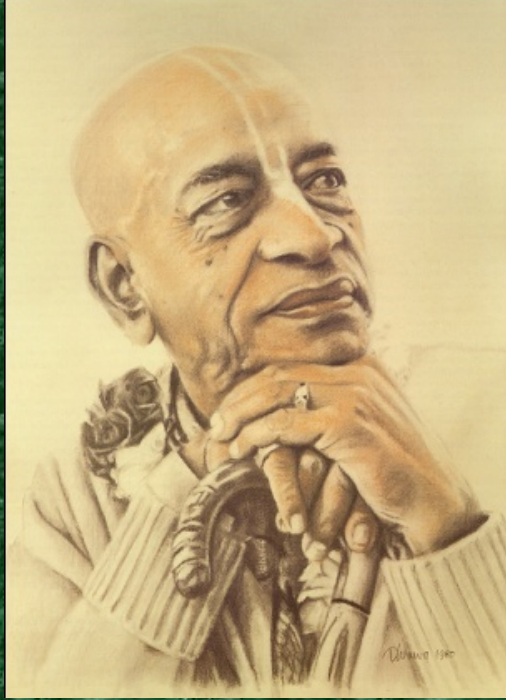


International Society for Krishna Consciousness
Founder-Acarya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



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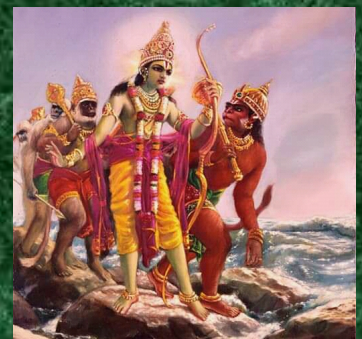
OCEAN OF NECTAR

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1. HOW VIBISHAN SURRENDERED TO LORD RAMACHANDRA

Although Vibishan was Ravana's brother, he was very pious. And in this way, he tried to pacify Ravana and bring him back to his senses, saying that "Ravana return this lady back to her husband and spare your own life and spare the lives of all the Rakshashas. Because if you don't do that, then the entire Rakshasha kula, will be destroyed." Ravana didn't want to hear that. Whenever somebody advised him to return Sita, Ravana became very, very upset. He was completely possessed with the desire to have Sita. Many others also advised him earlier to return Sita, but Ravana didn't listen to anybody. Vibishan also started to advise him. Vibishan was always giving Ravana good council, but Ravana did not listen. So Ravana then dismissed the assembly and returned to his quarters. He just didn't want to hear Vibishan's words. So next morning, Ravana was, when he woke up and all the birds were singing his, that is, the brahmanas were singing his glorification and chanting auspicious mantras, then Vibishan again came to him and he started to give him the same advice, saying that "Look, you can see what Hanuman has done, just one monkey has done. Rama himself didn't even come as yet. Just one of his monkey associates caused so much damage. So, you can very well imagine what is going to happen to Lanka when Rama comes with his entire force." And he started to glorify Rama, that "this Rama is not an ordinary person, He is Visnu Himself. So, at that time Ravana became extremely angry. Ravana just told him that "You are not my brother"... no he first told him that, "Had you not been my brother, I would kill you right now." He said that "What kind of ally you are, that instead of glorifying me, you glorify my enemy. You are minimizing me, right in front of me, which nobody ever dares to do." Vibishan said, "They don't do that, because they are simply your flatterers. They're not your friend,

HOW VIBISHAN
SURRENDERED TO
LORD RAMACHANDRA



they're not your well-wisher. They're actually causing your destruction. They're just the cause of your destruction. So, do not succumb to their flattery, rather come to your senses." So, in this way, Vibishan tried to reason with Ravana, but Ravana became so furious, that Ravana just told Vibishan to just leave him, he banished him, he told him to get out and not to come back to him again. So being insulted in this way, Vibishan just left and along with Vibishan went his four associates. Vibishan had four associates, or four ministers, who always used to be with Vibishan. They also left with Vibishan.



So Vibishan went across the ocean and came to Rama. And in the meantime, Sugriva and Hanuman and other monkeys saw, these Rakshashas coming, so they immediately wanted to accost them. So Vibishan told them that "We have come here to surrender to Rama." Sugriva didn't want to believe them, so they wanted to get into a fight with them, or he wanted to kill them, thinking that they were spies. Vibishan at that time told him that "We came to submit to Rama, so please go and report to Rama with that message. I am Ravana's brother, Ravana's younger brother and I have come to surrender to Rama." So, Sugriva then went to Ramachandra. So, Rama asked Sugriva, "So what do you think about their intention? And what we should do?" Sugriva said that "We shouldn't trust them, after all, he is a Rakshasha and if we trust them, he'll probably cause a great damage to us. So, we shouldn't take a chance." And then Rama asked other monkey leaders also what they thought, and they all practically thought the same way, that this shouldn't be trusted. Some said "Maybe we can watch them for some time and see if they are really trustworthy." But then Rama said, "No, we don't have the time to watch them and then make the decision. We have to make the decision right away." So, then Rama asked Hanuman, "Hanuman, what do you think?" Hanuman said that "I think, that his intention is honest." And he gave various reasons: A person who is pretending or is duplicitous, he cannot be so composed. Vibishan, the way he spoke, from his speech it appeared that he was speaking the truth and, in this way, Hanuman gave his impression of Vibishan. Like, he is honest, from his approach, from his way of speaking and so then Rama told, "Yes, I agree with Hanuman." and Rama also said that "If somebody had to spy, if Ravana had to send a spy, why would he send his brother, such an important person to spy, when he has so many trained spies to do that job?" and then Ramachandra said something very, very wonderful, he said "On top of everything, if somebody comes to surrender to me and says that he is surrendering to Me, I accept him, even if he is not honest about his admission, even if one pretending to surrender comes to me, still I accept him." And

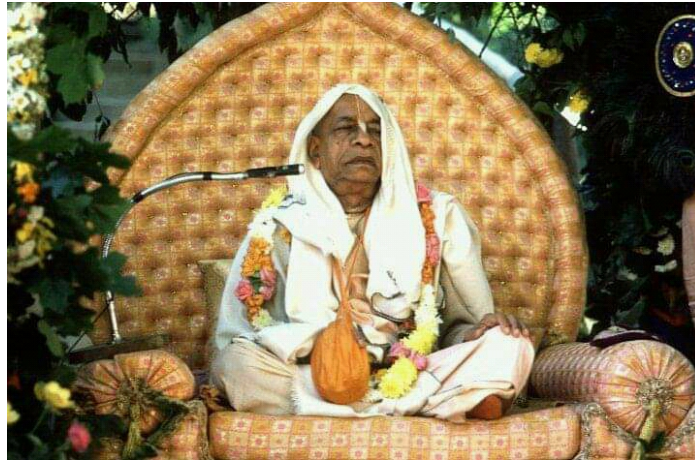
then he said that "And I take care of him, not only throughout his entire life, I take care of him life after life."



So that is the reward and the result of someone surrendering to Lord Ramachandra, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If one approaches him with, even if his intention may not be that pure, but still if he comes with a mood of surrender, Lord accepts him. And by accepting him, the Lord purifies him, whatever he's lacking, He compensates for that. So, in this way, Lord Ramachandra declared the reward for surrendering unto Him. And in the meantime, Vibishan was brought to Rama. Vibishan immediately fell flat at Ramachandra's lotus feet with respect and surrender. So, then Rama asked Vibishan what happened and Vibishan narrated everything of all that happened between him and Ravana.

So pious means, what is the ultimate consideration of piety? The ultimate consideration of piety is to become a devotee of the Lord. There are relative considerations of punya. That is achieved by austerities and penances and performing sacrifice and truthfulness and so forth. But they're relative piety. The result of those piety remains on the material nature. But the ultimate consideration of piety is to surrender to the Lord and become his devotee and that result is both in the material as well as in the spiritual nature. When one becomes a devotee of the Lord, he becomes most pious and as a result of that piety, he derives benefit in the material nature and when he leaves the material nature and goes back to the spiritual sky there also, he receives the actual benefit of becoming a devotee of the Lord. So Vibishan was a perfect example of that. So, he submitted to Lord Ramachandra and Rama asked Vibishan, "So tell me about Ravana and his strength, his background".

2. SRILA PRABHUPADA APPRECIATION

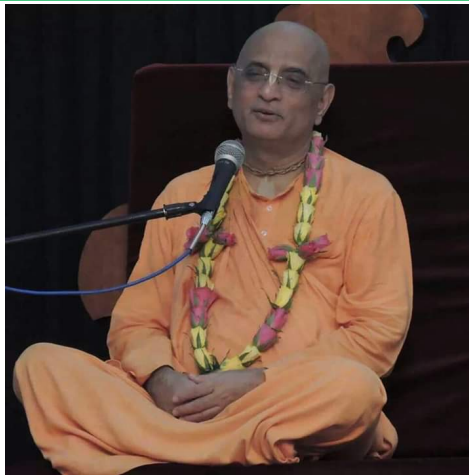


I first met Srila Prabhupada in a dream. I got a book written by Srila Prabhupada, Nectar of Devotion and as I started to read it, from the very first page it occurred to me that this is what I was actually looking for. And the next night I had a dream of Srila Prabhupada. I saw Srila Prabhupada sitting on a majestic throne and those days I did not know what a vyasasana was because in India the saintly people they sit on a rather simple seat they don't sit on such a gorgeous throne; it looks rather like a throne. So, I saw Srila Prabhupada sitting on a throne. And there was a brilliant light around Srila Prabhupada, as if the light was coming out of his body. And just the sight of Srila Prabhupada made me feel that finally I found my spiritual master.

(Excerpt from "Prabhupada Realizations" by HH Bhakti Charu Swami)

3.

GURU MAHARAJA'S INSTRUCTIONS



Ramachandra said something very, very wonderful, he said "On top of everything, if somebody comes to surrender to me and says that he is surrendering to Me, I accept him, even if he is not honest about his admission, even if one pretending to surrender comes to me, still I accept him." And then he said that "And I take care of him, not only throughout his entire life, I take care of him life after life."

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(The content of this E-magazine was based on an excerpt of a Ramayan Seminar given by His Holiness Bhakti Charu Swami in the North American Retreat Day 4)

(Compilation & editing by Hemavati Radhika dasi)