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LEARN FROM THE LIVING BHAGAVAT

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

*naiṣāṃ matis tāvad urukramāṅghriṃ
sprṣaty anarthāpagamo yad-arthaḥ
mahīyasāṃ pāda-rajo-'bhīṣekhaṃ
niṣkiñcanānāṃ na oṣṭita yāvat*

Krishna consciousness cannot be developed unless one takes the dust of the lotus feet of a pure devotee. This is Prahlad Maharaja's remark. In other words, unless one comes in contact with a pure devotee, Krishna consciousness cannot be developed. It is not possible. Therefore here it is recommended by Suta Goswami that *jīvaṅ chavo bhāgavatāṅghri-reṇuṃ na jātu martyo 'bhilabheta yas tu. Reṇu* means dust. One must try to secure the dust of the lotus feet of a *bhāgavata*, a pure devotee of the Lord.

One *bhāgavata* is this book *Bhāgavata*, another *bhāgavata* is the person *bhāgavata*. He who lives by the book *Bhāgavata* is the person *bhāgavata*. We have to learn *Bhāgavatam* from the living *bhāgavata*.

Many poets and writers used to come and visit Chaitanya Mahaprabhu when He was at Jagannath Puri, and they would present some writings. But these writings would not be presented before Chaitanya Mahaprabhu unless there were sanctioned by His secretary Svarupa Damodar. That was the system. One

brāhmaṇa wrote a poem, the purport of which was that "Jagannath is Krishna. But He cannot move. He is wooden Krishna. And Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is also Krishna, but He is moving Krishna." That means that he distinguished between Jagannath and Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. This is not *siddhānta*; it is not the conclusion of *śāstra*. The *śāstric* conclusion is that the deity and Krishna are the same, there is no difference between them. We have explained this many times. The worshipful deity in the temple is not different from Krishna. So Svarupa Damodar did not approve of the poetry he wanted to present to Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. He chastised him, "You do not know the conclusion, and you dare to write some poetry. Don't do this." And he said, *yāha, bhāgavata paḍa vaiṣṇavera sthāne* — "If you want to understand *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, then you should go and study *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* from the pure devotee. Then you will understand. Otherwise you'll write all nonsense. If one does not surrender unto the living *bhāgavata* he cannot understand *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*." [Cc. *antya* 5.131]

I have seen many scholars, but they cannot understand the *Bhāgavata*. Sanskrit scholars will read, but they will not be able to understand. Similarly, *Bhagavad-gītā*. If anyone studies *Bhagavad-gītā* from a scholarly point of view, a-b-c-d, he'll not understand it. Krishna therefore says, "Arjuna, I shall

speak the lessons of *Bhāgavata* unto you because you are My very dear friend and you are My devotee." Krishna did not want to speak *Bhāgavad-gītā* to a scholarly student. No. These books are not to be understood by mundane scholarship. That is not possible. ❀

— From a lecture on Śrīmad Bhāgavatam given in Los Angeles on 20 June 1972.

A HUNDRED WARNINGS AGAINST MUNDANE MELLOWS *Prākṛta Rasa Śata Dūṣiṇī* Sri Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

Originally published in Sajjana Toṣaṇī magazine during its nineteenth year, 1916-17.

(Continued from the previous issue)

*anartha nā gele śiṣye jāta-rati bole nā
anartha-viśiṣṭa śiṣye rasa-tattva bole nā*

As long as one's disciple's impediments (*anarthas*) are not removed, one should not ascribe deep devotional attachment (*rati*) to him nor teach him the science of intimate devotional mellows (*rasa-tattva*). (59)

*aśakta komala-śraddhe rasa-kathā bole nā
anadhikāṛtre rase adhikāra deya nā*

One should never speak on the topics of devotional mellows to one who has weak, pliable faith, nor should one give the qualification for *rasa* to one who is unqualified. (60)

*vaidha-bhakta-jane kabhu rāgānuṅgā jāne nā
komala-śraddhake kabhu rasika to' jāne nā*

Devotees performing regulated devotional service (*vaidha-bhaktas*) cannot understand the *rāgānuṅgās*, the practitioners of spontaneous devotional service. Those of weak faith cannot understand the *rasikas*, those who relish pure transcendental mellows. (61)

*śvalpa-śraddha-jane kabhu jāta-rati māne nā
śvalpa-śraddha-jane rasa upadeśa kare nā*

One should not consider those possessing little faith to have genuine loving devotional attachment. One should not instruct those possessing little faith in topics concerning transcendental mellows. (62)

*jāta-rati prauḍha-śraddha-saṅga tyāga kare nā
komala-śraddhere kabhu rasa diyā seve nā*

Those with genuine loving devotional attachment do not give up the association of those endowed with mature faith. Even if

devotees of pliable faith are instructed in devotional mellows they will never be able to actually experience them. (63) ❀

A MATTER OF PERCEPTION

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Generally it is said that a *brahmacārī* should not see a woman. So, do you think that the woman community is very bad, that it should be condemned? No. It should not be condemned. And this is applicable for both man and woman. We say that woman is *māyā* for men and man is *māyā* for women. We say this, but we should understand in which way it is true. If when seeing a woman you think, "She is the object of my enjoyment," then that is *māyā*. That a *brahmacārī* should not see a woman means that he should not see her as an object of enjoyment. It's not that the woman community is bad. No. You should understand that Krishna is the only enjoyer and that woman is to be enjoyed by Him, not by me. I am not the enjoyer. For example, one may see a piece of rope and become afraid, thinking that it is a snake. But it is only a piece of rope. Is this is the fault of the rope? No, it's your fault! Similarly, if by seeing a woman you develop the thought that she is an object of enjoyment, is she at fault or are you at fault? You are agitated; you have not controlled your mind and senses. Thus it is your fault and not hers. This is applicable for both man and woman. If a woman sees a handsome man and thinks, "Oh, he is an object of my enjoyment." Then is the man at fault? No. The lady is at fault. This is *tattva-vicāra*. It's not that the rope is at fault, but rather you are at fault because you have defective vision.

In the material world everything is variegated. But is that variegatedness a fault? You just don't know the proper utilization for it, therefore you are at fault. Everything, whatever one may find here, is all paraphernalia for Krishna's enjoyment. If you can utilize it in Krishna's service then it is not condemned but is appreciated.

Krishna is the only enjoyer. This is our teaching. It's not that a *brahmacārī* should not look at a woman. If that is the fact then you should poke out your eyes! "Oh, I see a woman." All right, then blind yourself. No. You should learn how to look at a woman. You should think, "Oh, she is to be enjoyed by Krishna. She is not the object of my enjoyment." Another point is that she is mother. Follow Chanakya Pandit's moral code: Except for your wife, all women

are mothers. As soon as you see a woman, in your mind you should offer her your obeisances. Then you will never be affected. You will have no lusty desires. Otherwise definitely you will be affected. These two things are our tactics. ❁

— From a lecture on *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* in Bhubaneswar, Orissa on 2 May, 1995.

Mora Prana Tumi, Part 4

THE WONDERFUL DANCING OF VIRABHADRA PRABHU

From Narahari Chakravarti's
Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara 9.578-669

Sri Raghunandan directed his followers to assemble in the courtyard of the Gauranga temple without delay. They decorated the pavilion, brought *mṛdaṅga* drums, *karatālas*, and other musical instruments, and prepared everything for the *kīrtana*. After the arrangements were made, Raghunandan invited the *mahāntas*. They first performed the *sandhyā-ārati* of the deity of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and then began the *saṅkīrtana*. Raghunandan had carefully prepared sandalwood paste and flower garlands for each *mahānta* in separate containers, and he personally requested each *mahānta* to accept them. They also offered sandalwood paste and flower garlands to the *mṛdaṅga* and *karatālas*. With great ecstasy Sri Raghunandan then decorated the body of Sri Virabhadra with sandalwood and offered him a garland. Prabhu Virabhadra then motioned to Srinivas to give him some sandalwood paste and a garland, which he in turn offered to Sri Raghunandan with great happiness. Embarrassed and perplexed by Virabhadra's behavior, Raghunandan turned and affectionately offered sandalwood paste and a flower garland to Srinivas. It was a beautiful scene with the great *mahāntas* all exchanging sandalwood and garlands amongst themselves.

As they stood beneath a beautifully decorated canopy, some of the *mahāntas* began the *saṅkīrtana* with musical instruments. An auspicious roar resounded through the air and hundreds of lamps were lit around the compound where the *saṅkīrtana* was being held. The sounds of the drums and other instruments were a veritable shower of nectar. The main singers started *kīrtana* by introducing their songs distinctly. The sounds of the musical scales, the modulations of the voices, the various beats performed in time, and the other

sounds of the instruments were all amazing. They stole away the pride of the heavenly *gandharvas*. Whoever took part in the *kīrtana* felt as if they had regained their youth. The ecstatic waves of the *kīrtana* swelled like the ocean. Everyone who saw, including the beasts, birds, men and demigods, became entranced. The compound was soon overcrowded, and both the audience and the participants in the *saṅkīrtana* were seen with tears streaming down their faces. The demigods came and, mixing with the general populace, enjoyed the *saṅkīrtana*, floating in an ocean of happiness. The *mahāntas* forgot their own existence while madly chanting and dancing, mesmerizing the entire universe. How can I describe the dancing of Sri Krishna Mishra and Sri Gopal?

Whoever saw the dancing of Sri Virabhadra Prabhu forgot all of his miseries. All of the devotees there lamented that they only had two eyes to watch him. There was one blind man also present, and just hearing about Virabhadra Prabhu's wonderful dance agitated his heart. He began moving in all directions, trying to find out the identity of the dancer. Someone told him that it was the son of Nityanananda Prabhu. "What is his name?" the blind man asked. They told him it was Virabhadra, who was famous throughout the universe. Just hearing the name "Virabhadra", the blind man became jubilant. Offering prayers within his mind, he considered that Virabhadra's name alone contained the power to take away all inauspiciousness. The word "*vīra*" means he who annihilates the wicked, and "*bhadra*" means he who destroys the misfortune of all living entities. Lamenting, he thought, "Due to providence I am unable to see Virabhadra Prabhu. If He considers it appropriate, may the Lord correct this misfortune." Thinking like this, he cried and cried. Knowing his mind, the merciful son of Lord Nityananda glanced affectionately at that blind man. The pious blind man got back his vision and freely began to watch the dancing of Virabhadra Prabhu. The world resounded with the cries of, "All glories! All glories! All glories to Virabhadra Prabhu!"

The *saṅkīrtana* continued the whole night. Crying, the *mahāntas* remembered the glories of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Remembering the Lord's associates, they could not maintain their patience. Raising their hands in the air, they loudly called out the names of Gauranga Mahaprabhu and His intimate associates. They said, "Where is the moonlike Gaurachandra

Prabhu, the son of Sachi-mata? Where is Nityananda Rama, the life of everyone? Where is Sri Adwaita Acharya, the source of all good qualities? Where is Sri Pandita Gadadhar, the reservoir of divine love? O Haridasa, Srivasa, Svarupa Damodara, Ramananda, Sri Madhava, Vasu Gosh, Murari and Mukunda, where are you now? Where are our Gadadhara Das and Narahari? Chanting the names of the Lord and His devotees, they began to loudly weep. They prayed to Mahaprabhu to appear before them with all His followers. Their bodies became covered with dust as they rolled on the ground in sorrow, the sound of their crying filling the air. Mahaprabhu could not restrain His affection toward such sincere devotees and He suddenly appeared before them. In this miraculous appearance, for some time Mahaprabhu consoled His devotees in many ways, taking away all their miseries and drowning them in an ocean of divine happiness. In great ecstasy the devotees bowed down to each other, embraced, and shed tears of joy. Seeing that the night was over and that morning had come, with great happiness they observed the *maṅgala-ārati* ceremony for the deity of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and offered Him their obeisances.

After seeing the *kīrtana* of the associates of Mahaprabhu, everyone in the village began to chant, “Hari! Hari!” The people of the village

began to express various opinions about the festival that had just taken place. One villager lamented the short duration of the night, and blamed providence. In his opinion, such an *ekādaśī* day as this came very rarely in one’s life. On that day, he said, they had all been fortunate to witness a downpour of divine love caused by the *mahāntas*. Another villager said, “Just see how the *mahāntas* observed the *ekādaśī* fast by staying up all night!” Another said that it was only possible for the associates of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to observe *ekādaśī* in such a way. One villager felt that no one should ever take food on the day of *ekādaśī*. Whoever took food or offered food to anyone on that day, he said, would be a great sinner. Another villager felt that only one who received the mercy of Mahaprabhu’s associates could properly observe the *ekādaśī-vrata*. One said, “I am a sinner. How can I get such firm attraction to perform *ekādaśī*?” Another said that persons who are always engaged in performing sins cannot understand the importance of *ekādaśī*, and are fallen. Yet another lamented his great misfortune that he did not take the opportunity to fall flat at the feet of the *vaiṣṇavas*. Others consoled them, “Don’t worry. All of your desires will be fulfilled.” They all went to the place of the *saṅkīrtana* and fell flat at the feet of the *vaiṣṇava mahāntas*, while profuse tears poured from their eyes. Seeing their behavior, the dear associates of Mahaprabhu bestowed their mercy upon them.

The *mahāntas* appreciated the sincere efforts of Sri Raghunandan. They praised him, saying that whoever received Raghunandan’s affection would certainly get the mercy of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu life after life. One *mahānta* especially appreciated Raghunandan for his kindness towards poor, worthless, and miserable people. Another appreciated his humility and gentle behavior. Someone else was enchanted by his beauty, which he compared to that of Cupid. One *mahānta* appreciated his expertise in singing, playing musical instruments, and dancing, while another appreciated his arrangements for the *kīrtana* that had brought them all so much happiness. While the *mahāntas* were speaking about him, Raghunandan arrived at that spot. Hearing them glorifying him, Raghunandan became very shy and embarrassed. Seeing Raghunandan’s humility was intolerable for the *mahāntas*. Tears came to their eyes and they firmly embraced him for a long time.

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