



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

Issue No. 356

Śrī Kāmikā Ekādaśī

10 August 2015

Circulation 8,030

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IRRESPONSIBILITY IN BHAKTI

*His Divine Grace A. C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

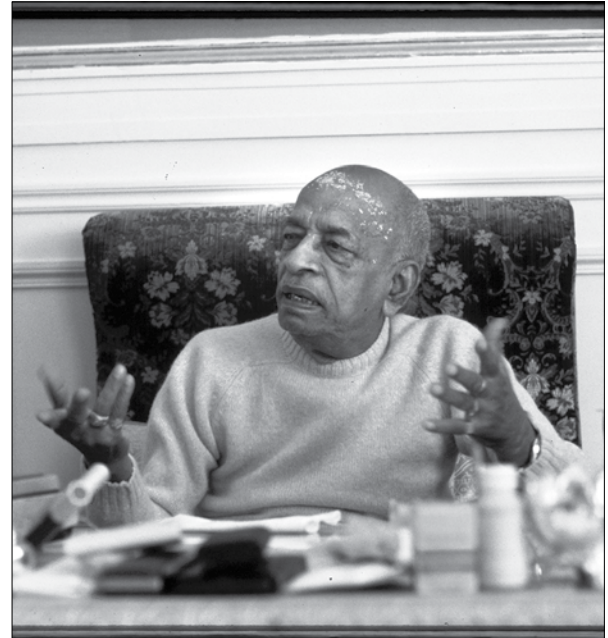
We should never think of our advancement as being conditioned by or dependent upon some set of material circumstances such as marriage, *vānaprastha*, or this or that. A mature understanding of Krishna consciousness means that whatever condition of life I am in at present is Krishna's special mercy upon me, therefore let me take advantage in the best way possible to spread this Krishna consciousness movement and conduct my spiritual master's mission. If I put my own personal progress or happiness as the priority, that is a material consideration. If getting married was an unhappy adjustment, why did you do it? Whatever is done is done, that is a fact. I am only pointing out that you did something without proper study of your real responsibility, and now you are contemplating again some drastic action in a similar manner.

Consider it carefully in this light. Krishna speaks a verse in *Bhagavad-gītā* (12.15):

*yasmān nodvijate loko lokān nodvijate ca yaḥ
harṣāmarṣa-bhayodvegair mukto yaḥ sa ca me priyaḥ*

He for whom no one is put into difficulty and who is not disturbed by anxiety, who is steady in happiness and distress, is very dear to me.

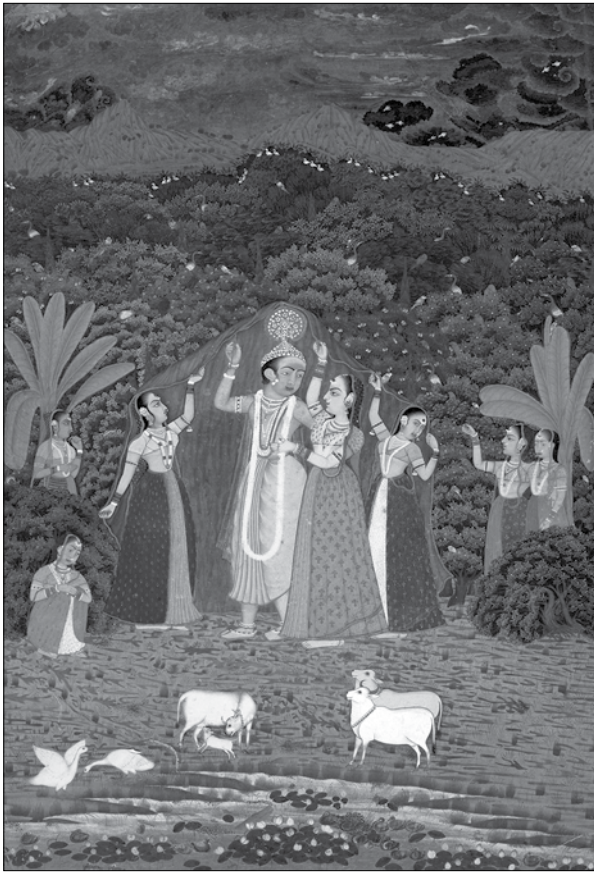
One mistake of judgment often made by the neophyte devotees is that when there is some disturbance or difficulty they consider the conditions or the external circumstances under which the



*His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

difficulty took place to be the cause of the difficulty itself. That is not the fact. In this material world there is always some difficulty, no matter in this situation or that situation. Therefore simply by changing my status of occupation or my status of life, that will not help anything. The real fact is that if there is any difficulty with others then that is my lack of Krishna consciousness, not theirs. Is this clear? Krishna says that his dearest devotee is one who does not put others into difficulty, so try to judge the matter on these points, whether or not you are putting

Painting by unknown artist. Rajasthan-Jaipur.1760.



Radha Krishna and the gopis

either your wife or yourself into some difficulty. The right understanding of *Bhagavad-gītā* is Arjuna's understanding. In other words, Arjuna came to the conclusion that he must perform his occupational duty, not as a material obligation — for reasons of wife, family, friends, reputation, professional integrity, like that — no. Rather, he must conduct the functions of his station of life only as devotional service performed for Krishna. That means that devotional service is what is important, not my occupational duty. But it does not mean that because occupation duty is not the real consideration that I should give it up and do something else, thinking that devotional service may be carried on under whatever circumstances that I may whimsically decide. Krishna advised Arjuna to remain as he was and not disrupt the order of society and go against his own nature just for the sake of convenience. Our occupational duty is not arbitrary, which means that if we are advanced in our understanding then once we have taken up some field of action we shall not change it for another. Rather, our devotion is the important factor.

How does it matter what I am doing as long as my work and energy are completely devoted to Krishna?

Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He has no work, neither does he have anything to do. Still he comes here to teach us. He accepts not only his occupational duties as a cowherd boy and royal prince, but he also accepts married life, he enters politics, and he is a philosopher. He is even a chariot driver during a great battle. He is not an example of avoiding one's occupational duty. So if Krishna himself is exhibiting by his own conduct the perfection of existence, then if we are intelligent we should heed his example. A wife at home with children does not matter. They are no hindrance to our spiritual life. Once we have accepted these occupational duties, we should not lightly give them up. That is the point. Of course, our ultimate occupational duty is as preachers of Krishna consciousness. We must stick to that business under all circumstances. That is the main thing. Therefore married, unmarried, divorced — in whatever condition of life — my preaching mission does not depend on these things. The *varṇāśrama-dharma* system is scientifically arranged by Krishna to provide facility for delivering the fallen souls back to home, back to Godhead. If we make a mockery of this system by whimsically disrupting the order, that will not be a good example. If so many young boys and girls casually get married and then go away from each other, if we set this bad example, then how will the entire thing go on properly? Householder life means wife, children, and home. These things are understood by everyone. Why have our devotees taken it in a different way? They simply have some sex desire, get themselves married, and when the spouse does not fulfill their expectations, immediately there is separation. These things are just like material activities, prostitution. The wife is left without a husband, and sometimes there is a child to be raised. In so many ways the proposition that you, and some others also, are making is distasteful. We cannot expect that our temples will become places of shelter for so many widows and rejected wives. That will be a great burden and we shall become a laughing stock in the society. In that situation there will be illicit sex life and unwanted progeny. We are seeing this already. Being the weaker sex, women require husbands who are strong in Krishna consciousness so that they may make progress by sticking tightly to their husband's feet. If their husband goes away from them,

what will they do? There are so many instances already in our society — so many frustrated girls and boys.

I have introduced this marriage system in your Western countries because you have a custom of free intermingling between male and female. Therefore marriage is required to engage the boys and girls in devotional service. But our marriage system is a little different than in your country. We do not sanction the policy of quick divorce. We are supposed to take husband or wife as an eternal companion or assistant in Krishna consciousness service, and there is a promise to never separate. Of course if there is any instance of very advanced married disciples who have agreed that the husband shall now take *sannyāsa* or renounced order of life, being mutually very happy by that arrangement, then there is ground for such separation. But even in those cases there is no question of separation. The husband, even if he is a *sannyāsī*, must be certain that his wife will be taken care of nicely and protected in his absence. Now there are so many cases of unhappiness by the wife who has been abandoned by her husband against her wishes. How can I sanction such a thing? I want to avoid setting any bad example for future generations. Therefore I am considering your request cautiously. If it becomes so easy for someone to get married and then leave his wife under the excuse of married life being an impediment to spiritual progress, that will not be good at all. That is a misunderstanding of what is advancement in spiritual life. Occupational duty must be there, either this one or that one, but once I am engaged in some occupational duty, then I should not change or give it up. That is the worst mistake. Devotional service is not bound by such designations. Therefore once I have chosen my duty it is better I stick to it and develop my devotional attitude into full-blown love of Godhead. That is Arjuna's understanding of the *Gītā*. ❧

— From a letter dated 4 January 1973.

NATURAL DETACHMENT FROM MATTER

Commentaries on a verse of Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhuḥ

Srila Rupa Goswami has written in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.254):

rucim udvahatas tatra janasya bhajane hareḥ
viṣayeṣu gariṣṭho 'pi rāgaḥ prāyo vilīyate

The enormous attachment for material sense enjoyment is almost nullified for a person who has attachment for the devotional service of Lord Hari.



Painting by Sahib Ram, Jaipur. 1800.

Sri Krishna

Comments by Srila Jiva Goswami: Earlier (in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.250), *vairāgya*, renunciation, was discouraged for an entrant into *bhakti-yoga* due to the fact that it hardens the heart. Therefore [one could conclude that the author of this literature meant that] unrestricted sense enjoyment is allowed for such an entrant. However, the scriptures say:

viṣayāviṣṭa-cittasya kṛṣṇāveśaḥ sudūrataḥ
vāruṇī-dig-gataḥ vastuḥ vrajan naindrīm kim āpnuyāt

To those whose hearts are embroiled in sense enjoyment, attainment of Krishna remains far away. How can an object lost in the west be found by searching in the east?

Thus, the proposition of unrestricted sense enjoyment is against the scriptures. In reply to this, it is said here [by Srila Rupa Goswami] that a mere fraction of attachment in *bhakti* is the cause of the nullification of material attraction for the entrant, and therefore there is no need for the hard-heartedness that manifests in one who practices dry renunciation.

[Translator's Note: In this section, Srila Rupa Goswami is not referring to *yukta-vairāgya*, which is not discouraged nor does it harden the heart.]

This is the conclusion spoken by this verse. The meaning of this verse is that as soon as attachment [for *bhakti*] arises, the attachment for sense-enjoyment is

almost nullified (*prāyo viliyate*). Therefore, such attachment will be thoroughly nullified [in due course of time] as a result. Moreover, genuine knowledge is produced for this practitioner as a side-effect [as given in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 1.2.7]:

*vāsudeve bhagavati bhakti-yogaḥ prayojitaḥ
janayaty āśu vairāgyam jñānam ca yad ahaitukam*

By rendering devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna, one immediately acquires causeless knowledge and detachment from the world.

Comments by Srila Vishwanath Chakravarti Thakur [repeating the same concepts as Srila Jiva Goswami but offering a few more details]: The term ‘*rucim*’, attachment, implies a special deep faith produced after spending a certain amount of time in the process of *bhakti*. When the verse says ‘*prāyo viliyate*’, almost nullified, it means that after entering into *bhakti-yoga* there is no fault if the practitioner displays some attachment for sense enjoyment. The mood [of the author] is that such attachment to sense enjoyment will be thoroughly vanquished as soon as maturity is attained in *bhakti*.

Comments by Sri Mukunda Goswami: This verse speaks about the duration it takes for detachment from sense enjoyment according to the natural progress of *bhakti*. The term ‘*rucim*’ here indicates

the stage of *bhakti* after *śraddhā* (faith), *sādhu-saṅga* (association of devotees), *bhajana-kriyā* (engagement in processes of devotion), *anartha-nivṛtti* (removal of obstacles) and *niṣṭhā* (firm faith in the process of *bhakti*). The term ‘*prāyah*’ (almost) in the verse indicates that when complete attachment to Hari is produced, attachment to sense enjoyment will be thoroughly destroyed.

[Translator’s Note: The conclusion is that Srila Rupa Goswami neither sanctioned a forced cultivation of renunciation, nor recommended unrestricted sense gratification for an entrant in *bhakti*. Srila Rupa Goswami’s conclusion is that a small trace of genuine attachment to the process of *bhakti* will naturally nullify any attachment to sense enjoyment, and renunciation will be generated naturally in such a practitioner. Thus, the primary attainment of *bhakti* is love of Krishna, with renunciation being a natural side-effect.]

— Translated by Hari Parshad Das from the Sanskrit available at Gaudiya Grantha Mandira (www.granthamandira.com).

GAURANGA’S GLORIOUS GLORIES

Srila Raghunandan Goswami’s Gaurāṅga-virudāvalī (115)

Here the literary ornament known as anuprāsa (alliteration) has been utilized to glorify Lord Gaurāṅga. For more on anuprāsa, see the purport by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada to Caitanya-caritāmṛta ādi 16.46.

*gaurāṅgo ‘gaṇitaṁ gato guṇa-gaṇaṁ gīrvāṇa-gotro gavāṁ
glāniṁ gāḍhatamāṁ gilān grha-rucir gāndhāra-gīter guruḥ
gañjan gotrasamaṁ gajaṁ gatrucā gāmbhīryato gonidhim
gāṅgeyaṁ guru-gauraveṇa gadato gīḥpaddhatiṁ gāhatām*

Gaurāṅga is decorated with infinite qualities. He is the protector and deliverer of even the denizens of heaven. Having destroyed the guilt of the fourteen worlds, he exhibits a bodily luster similar to Sri Radhika. He is the *ācārya* of the special type of musical *rāga* named Gandhara. He defeats the gait of a huge elephant by his walking, the gravity of the ocean by the gravity of his behavior, and even a personality like Bhishma by his faith in his guru. May that Lord Gaurāṅga appear on the pathway of these words of glorification.

— Translated by Hari Parshad Das from the edition published by Sri Haridas Shastri. Kalidah. Vrindavan. Gaurabda 498.

SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:

Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

Website: www.gopaljiu.org

Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya: His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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