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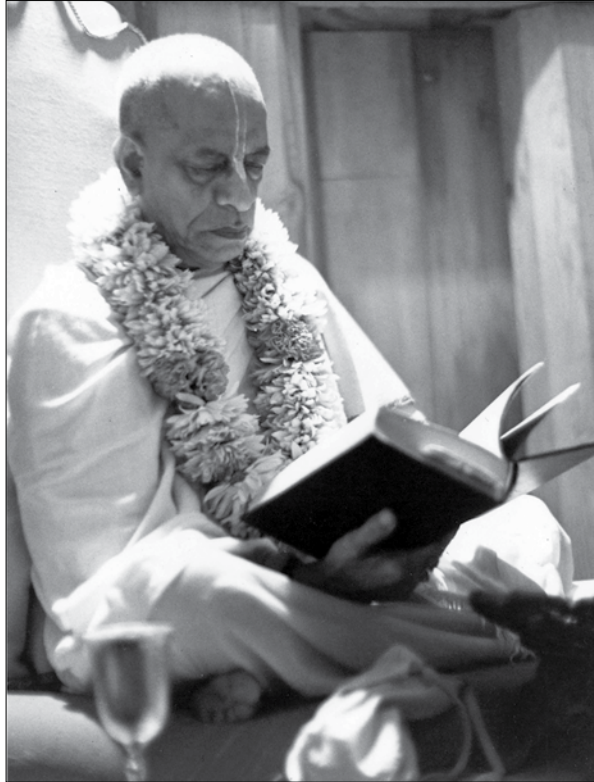
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EVERYONE CAN GO BACK TO GODHEAD

His Divine Grace A. C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

I beg to submit herewith that by the Grace of Sri Krishna through his mercy personified — my spiritual master — I have realized most thoroughly that going “Back to Godhead” is the highest privilege of mankind and the supreme perfection of human life.

Unfortunately, the present day human civilization is very much attracted with the beauty of *aparā-prakṛti*, the illusory material nature, and as such it is overpowered by a demoniac propensity in the form of the atheistic set up of civilization manifested in the matter of sense gratification. This tendency is dangerously harmful to real progress of life.

The aim of life should be to make a sincere effort to go “Back to Godhead” but, contrary to this, the tendency is to go back to hell or into the cycle of evolutionary animal life as it is described in the 16th chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Please therefore save them from the great fall down. Believe me or not, I have got the clue of going “Back to Godhead” just after leaving my present material body and in order to take along with me all my contemporary men and women of the world, I have started my paper “Back to Godhead” as one of the means to the way.

Please do not think of me as wonderful or a mad man when I say that I shall go “Back to Godhead” after leaving my present material body! It is quite possible for all of us.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is said very clearly that whosoever adopts the specific principle of accepting Sri Krishna, the Personality of Godhead, will be able to achieve the highest transcendental goal of life — never mind if he is born untouchable, a fallen woman, a laborer, or a man dealing in *rupees*, *annas* and *paisa*. What then is the difficulty for a pious “Brahmin” and devoted king to go “Back to Godhead”? Everyone should therefore adopt this principle of

going “Back to Godhead” in order to get released from temporary existence in this world of miseries.

This fact is corroborated by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. As the practical demonstrator of *Bhagavad-gītā* and as the most magnanimous incarnation of Sri Krishna, Sri Chaitanya has made the path of going “Back to Godhead” so easy for everyone that even a boy of the world can swim across the ocean of religiosity, although it is full of so many dangerous animals ready to devour a fallen person in that great massive water. I have simply adopted the easy method of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu as just suitable to the modern people in general. As such I am feeling as sure of going “Back to Godhead” as I feel without any doubt after taking my dinner that I have eaten to my satisfaction. This feeling is a necessary concomitant factor of the great science of devotional service in the approved line of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

I am therefore very eager to broadcast the secret of my success to all men and women of the world as a natural consequence and I am seeking Your Excellency’s help and co-operation in this great attempt of transcendental service. ❧

— Letter to Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Indian Union. 21 November 1956.

DON’T TAKE THE LORD’S NAME IN VAIN

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

Pure devotees do not chant the Lord’s names to counteract sinful reactions, accumulate piety, attain heavenly pleasures, to mitigate famine, devastating epidemics, social unrest, disease, civil strife, or to obtain wealth or an earthly kingdom. Since the Lord is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, to ask him to fulfill our wishes is to treat him as our servant. This is an offense. Therefore, calling the Lord’s names for any reason other than to attain his devotional service is useless. Jesus Christ told us not to take the Lord’s name in vain.

However, this does not mean we do not need to always chant the Lord’s names — while sleeping, remaining awake, eating, or enjoying happiness. To chant the Lord’s name, begging for his service, is not a useless activity. It is our only duty.

But to make a show of chanting for some other purpose — in other words, to fulfill our own desires — is useless. We should not take to the chanting of the Lord’s names uselessly. We should not chant



Unknown artist

Radha and Murali Manohar Krishna

to attain religiosity, economic development, sense gratification, or liberation. Instead, we should always chant to attain the Lord’s service. ❧

— *Amṛta Vāṇī*, a collection of statements from Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. Originally compiled in Bengali by Sri Bhakti Bhagavat Mayukha Maharaja. Translated into English by Bhumipati Das. Touchstone Media. Mumbai. 2004. Page 166.

WHERE IS BHAKTI FOUND? PART 2

Srila Jiva Goswami’s Bhakti-sandarbha (115)

[*Srila Jiva Goswami continues explaining how bhakti is found in all types of people:*]

Bhakti can be found in the learned as well as the non-learned. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.11.33) specifies this as *jñātvājñātvātha ye vai mām* — “Whether my devotees know me or not, [I consider them to be the best of all].”

Similarly, the *Brhan-nārādīya Purāṇa* says, *harir harati pāpāni duṣṭa-cittair api smṛtaḥ* — “Hari takes away all sins even if he is remembered by those who have a polluted heart.”

Such statements are also to be found at other places in *śāstra*.

Bhakti can be found in the materially attached (*rāgī*) as well as the materially detached (*vairāgī*). The Lord says:

*bādhyamāno ’pi mad-bhaktō viṣayair ajitendriyaḥ
prāyaḥ pragalbhayā bhaktyā viṣayair nābhibhūyate*

My dear Uddhava, if my devotee has not fully conquered his senses he may be harassed by material desires, but because of his unflinching devotion for me he will not be defeated by sense gratification. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 11.14.18)

Implicit in this verse is that those who are detached will also not be defeated by sense gratification.

Bhakti is also found in those who desire liberation (*mumukṣu*) as well as those who have already attained liberation (*mukta*). Regarding the *mumukṣus*, the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (1.2.26) says:

*mumukṣavo ghora-rūpān hitvā bhūta-patīn atha
nārāyaṇa-kalāḥ śāntā bhajanti hy anasūyavaḥ*

Those who seriously desire liberation are certainly non-envious, and they respect all. Yet they reject the horrible and ghastly forms of the demigods and worship only the all-blissful forms of Lord Vishnu and his plenary portions.

Regarding the *muktas*, those who are already liberated, the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (1.7.10) says:

*ātmārāmās ca munayo nirgranthā apy urukrame
kurvanty ahaitukīm bhaktim ittham-bhūta-guṇo hariḥ*

All different varieties of *ātmārāmas* [those who take pleasure in the *ātmā*, or spirit self], especially those established on the path of self-realization, though freed from all kinds of material bondage, desire to render unalloyed devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead. This means that the Lord possesses transcendental qualities and therefore can attract everyone, including liberated souls.

Bhakti is also seen in those who have not perfected their love of God (*bhakti-asiddha*) as well as those who have perfected their love of God (*bhakti-siddha*). That an imperfect devotee can also perform bhakti is specified in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (6.1.15) as follows:

*kecit kevalayā bhaktyā vāsudeva-parāyaṇāḥ
aghaṁ dhunvanti kārtsnyena nīhāram iva bhāskaraḥ*

Only a rare person who has adopted complete, unalloyed devotional service to Krishna can uproot the weeds of sinful actions with no possibility that they will revive. He can do this simply by discharging devotional service, just as the sun can immediately dissipate fog by its rays.

For those who have perfected their love, the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.2.53) says:

*na calati bhagavat-padāravindāl
lava-nīmiṣārdham api yaḥ sa vaiṣṇavāgryaḥ*

A pure devotee of the Lord can never forget those lotus feet in any circumstance. He will not give up his shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord for a single

moment — indeed, not for half a moment — even in exchange for the benediction of ruling and enjoying the opulence of the entire universe. Such a devotee of the Lord is to be considered the best of the *vaiṣṇavas*.

Bhakti is found even in living entities when they attain the eternal association of the Lord. For example:

*mat-sevayā pratītam te sālokyādi-catustayam
necchanti sevayā pūrṇāḥ kuto 'nyat kāla-viplutam*

My devotees, who are always satisfied to be engaged in my loving service, are not interested even in the four principles of liberation [*sālokya*, *sārūpya*, *sāmīpya* and *sārṣṭi*], although these are automatically achieved by their service. What then is to be said of such perishable happiness as elevation to the higher planetary systems?

Bhakti is also seen in those who are ever liberated (*nitya-siddha*) [i.e. who never have seen any material existence, such as Lakshmi Devi]. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (3.15.22) says in this regard:

*vāpīṣu vidruma-taṭṣv amalāmṛtāpsu
preṣyānvitā nija-vane tulasībhīr iśam
abhyarcatī svalakam unnasam iḥṣya vaktram
uccheṣitam bhagavatety amatāṅga yac-chriḥ*

The goddesses of fortune worship the Lord in their own gardens by offering *tulasī* leaves on the coral-paved



Krishna and Mother Yasoda

banks of transcendental reservoirs of water. While offering worship to the Lord, they can see on the water the reflection of their beautiful faces with raised noses, and it appears that they have become more beautiful because of the Lord's kissing their faces.

(3) **In all countries:** The different varieties of bhakti performed in all tracts of land, all planets, all universes and even in the space outside the universes are specified in various literatures such as *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* etc. In other words it is to be understood that bhakti can be found in all locations.

(4) **Through all senses:** That bhakti is performed through the senses is specified in a verse (from an unknown source):

*mānasenopacāreṇa paricarya harim mudā
pare 'vān-manasāgamyam tam sākṣāt pratipedire*

Having joyously worshipped Hari through mental offerings, devotees have obtained a direct vision of that Lord who is beyond the power of speech and mind.

This verse specifies bhakti through the mind. In a similar way, bhakti through other senses is also described in various places.

[**Translator's Note:** Srila Jiva Goswami has given the example of performing bhakti through the mind. An example of performing bhakti through other senses and limbs is seen in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 9.4.18 – 20.]

(5) **In all objects** — That bhakti can be performed while using all objects is specified by the Lord in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (10.81.4):

*patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam yo me bhaktyā prayacchati
tad ahaṁ bhakty-upahṛtam aśnāmi prayatātmanaḥ*

If one offers me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water, I will accept it. (To be continued). ❧

[Part one of this article was titled: "Bhakti Pervades Everything".]

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

SIMPLY BY THE PROPER ATTITUDE

*Srila Sanatan Goswami's
Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.4.210*

*siddhiḥ syād bhagavad-dṛṣṭyā tṛṇa-sammānanād api
sakṛd uccāraṇān nāmā-bhāsasya śravaṇāt tathā*

One can reach perfection by honoring even a blade of grass — provided one sees within it the presence of the Supreme Lord — or by just once uttering or hearing even a faint semblance of the Lord's name. ❧

— Translated by Gopiparanadhana Das. Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. Los Angeles. 2002.



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