

News from Hawaii

By Vrndavana dasa prabhu (of Govinda's juices)

Introduction—Generation x finds their Prabhupada

New life has been brought to the devotees in Hawaii. For a long time, the level of bhakti being practiced in Hawaii, has been waning since the disappearance of our beloved Srila Prabhupada. Yes, there have been some bright moments, but the trend has surely been on decline, but now things are changing. Om visnupada Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja has been coming to the north shore of Oahu to do writings and translating work. Currently he is working on Rupa Gosvami's Ujjvala Nilamani. The gentle climate and natural setting by the ocean is very conducive for the important service that Srila Narayana Maharaja is performing. The community has grown to such an extent that the residence on the north shore can no longer handle the amount of devotees (young, old, new, and senior), now coming to hear his hari-katha. A festival site was chosen on the beach of the north shore. Devotees eagerly donated their time, money, and hearts to hear the hari-katha of one of the foremost proponent of Gaudiya Vaisnava philosophy. Many commented that the sweet mood, which pervaded was much akin to when our beloved Srila Prabhupada was with us. Generation x happily surrendered to his lotus feet as they knew they had found someone to whom they could surrender their hearts to without any reservations. The word spread quickly and each day the amount of devotees coming grew. To see the faces of Srila Prabhupada's disciples light up as if they had been given a second chance was miraculous. Everyone was realizing their good fortune as they knew Srila Prabhupada and Krsna had sent Srila Narayana Maharaja to help them, take them home, back to Godhead.

The following is a transcription of one of the lectures given by Srila Narayana Maharaja.

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

ON RENUNCIATION

Honolulu, Hawaii: April 17, 2001

It is written in the Vedas and Upanisads that there was a very learned and high class of person in ancient times whose name was Yajnavalka. He was a realized soul. He had two wives, named Katyayani and Maitreyi. He was the prominent brahmajnata in the counsel of Maharaja Janaka, the father of Sita devi. When he reached the age of fifty, he called his two wives and told them, "You see? I have thousands and thousands of cows. I want to divide them between you. You should take half, and you take the other half. You have two sons and one daughter and you also have two sons and one daughter. Whatever gold I have received as donations from Maharaja Janaka and other parties, I am dividing in two. You should both be happy and allow me to go the forest to chant and remember the

Supreme Personality of Godhead. I am now growing old, and this is our system in Vedic culture."

Both wives became very happy. Katyayani told him, "You are my husband. You have given me a good palace in which to live, a good garden, two sons and one daughter, so much wealth, and so many cows. You have given me everything. So now you can go and practice as you desire."

The second wife said, "I want to know something from you, and then you can happily go. First, please answer my question. You are now giving me sons, a daughter, wealth, reputation, so much gold, and so many cows. You are giving me everything. My question is, can these make me happy forever?"

Maitreyi said, "You are giving all these things to me, and previously you had all these possessions with you. Why are you giving them up and going to the forest? If these things can give me eternal happiness, why did you not get happiness from them? Why are you giving them up and going to the forest? I know that these material things could not actually make you happy. They only gave momentary happiness." Yajnavalka became very happy. He embraced her and said, "Truly, you are my svadharmani, my religious wife. That is why I like you so much. No ordinary person can ask a question like this. Such a person is very rare. Now I want to tell you a hidden secret." He then took that wife with him to the forest and, helping each other, they began to practice bhakti-yoga.

You should know that this is not merely a myth. This history is real. I know that you want bhakti. You all want bhakti, but you want material things for sense gratification still more. This is why you are not giving your whole attention and energy for bhakti. You have more faith in material things than in bhakti. If you have bhakti for chanting, remembering and serving Gurudeva, then why are you engaged here? Why not always chant and remember?

Actually, what we are now doing is not bhakti. It is not svarupa-siddha bhakti. What we are doing now is not constitutional, transcendental bhakti. You should know this.

Druva Maharaja had worldly desires. Pahlada Maharaja was a very bona fide bhakta, and he never wanted anything worldly, but he could not serve Krsna. His bhakti was mixed with jnana, knowledge of the Lord's opulence. If you have some worldly desire, or any desire, then your bhakti may be sanga-siddha bhakti or aropa-siddha bhakti, but not pure transcendental bhakti. You should know what is aropa-siddha bhakti and sanga-siddha bhakti. When all this is clarified for you, then you can engage all your senses in svarupa-siddha bhakti. Otherwise not. If you are doing any business, and by that business you make a very beautiful garden with many fruits and flowers, and you want to offer all these fruits and flowers to Krsna, this is not pure bhakti. Pure bhakti consists only of sravanam, kirtanam, visnu-smaranam, pada-sevanam, arcanam, vandanam, dasyam, sakhyam, atma-nivedanam. In pure bhakti one always chants and remembers Krsna, and hears His pastimes in a high class of association. Among all the limbs of bhakti, five limbs are most superior: sadhu-sanga, nama-kirtana, bhagavat-sravana, vrndavana or mathura-vasa, and sri murtira sraddhaya sevana.

If you are chanting the holy name, but you are not under the guidance of pure Vaisnavas, your chanting will be like a zero. After some time you will give up chanting and you will engage in worldly life—again taking meat, fish, eggs, and so on. You will lose everything. This association of self-realized Vaisnavas and being under their

guidance is therefore essential. Sadhu-sanga, nama-kirtana. You should perform nama-kirtana, but under the guidance of a very pure Vaisnava guru. You should read Bhagavatam, but under the guidance of high-class Vaisnavas. This is stated everywhere in sastra: "Sadhu-sanga sadhu-sanga, sarva sastra koya, lava-matra, sadhu-sanga sarva-siddhi haya." Oh, in a moment you will be changed and pure bhakti will come. Even if a drop of bhakti comes, you will at once be happy. This is the first symptom. Second, renunciation is bound to come, and third, all your suffering will go away. This is because in its first stage bhakti is klesagni. It takes away all kinds of suffering.

We see, however, that we are all suffering with so many diseases and other problems. Therefore our bhakti is not pure. It may be sanga-siddha, mixed with karma or mixed with jnana. Try to give this up, totally surrender in the lotus feet of your Gurudeva, and be always under his guidance. You can see an example of this in the life of Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami. When he was a baby, Krsna managed a very pure and high class of Vaisnava association—his guru, Yadunandana Acarya. At that time Raghunatha dasa did not know anything. He is an eternal associate of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, but he is posing as a conditioned soul for our benefit. He is teaching us how a person can develop his Krsna consciousness. Right from the beginning Krsna managed that he would have good association. Yadunandana Acarya was a very powerful devotee, in the disciplic line of Sri Advaita Acarya. He was a disciple of Advaita Acarya's parivara, family of devotees. Raghunatha dasa also had the association of Sri Haridasa Thakura. Who arranged this? Did Raghunatha dasa Gosvami arrange it? Or, was everything coming by the arrangement of Krsna?

According to your impressions from previous lives and this life, if you are hankering for bhakti, it will come through service to your Gurudeva and it will come with renunciation. From his boyhood Raghunatha dasa Gosvami did not like wealth, praise, or anything else of that nature. He was trinadapi sunicena. Try to follow his life from the beginning. He depended on Krsna and thought, "Oh, Krsna can do anything. He is powerful enough to do what is impossible to be done." All is possible for Krsna because He is acintya-sakti-sali. He can do anything.

You should therefore determine, "O Krsna, I have surrendered. I want Your pure bhakti." Then Krsna will send a guru. Krsna sent Naradaji for Druva Maharaja, he sent Narada for Valmiki, and He sent Narada for Vyasa and Prahlada Maharaja. He sent Narada everywhere. You should be like them.

You should know that in this world there is no happiness—only problems and problems. You saw today at the annaprasana grain ceremony that the boy was deeply sleeping. I wanted to awaken him, but he was too absorbed in sleeping. Then I did something like a message and he began to weep. Then, while he was weeping, I put some sweet rice in his mouth, and after that he began to smile and laugh.

We are all sleeping. The whole world is sleeping, and therefore Krsna sends high class of gurus like Srila Swami Maharaja, your Prabhupada. He came when everyone was engaged in sense gratification and totally sleeping. What did he do? He chanted, "Sri Krsna Caitanya Prabhu Nityananda Sri Advaita Gadhadara Srivasadi Gaura-bhakta Vrnda—Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare."

He told them, "Oh, you are a hippie. You are giving me cigarettes, you are giving me alcohol, wine and everything like that. You are my best friend. You should come and

join me." And they joined. What were they are doing? All the hippies began to dance. After some time the 'hippies became happies', and now they are preaching the mission of Caitanya Mahaprabhu throughout the entire world. So many persons began to follow him. They left their homes, their wives, their children, and their husbands, and you should also be like that. Many devotees who were at that time very beautiful teenagers are now preaching everywhere, and they are quite renounced and satisfied. If you want to be happy, eternally happy, try to be like that.

Follow Raghunatha dasa Gosvami. Somehow he received the mercy of Nityananda Prabhu. Baladeva Prabhu, who is akhanda guru-tattva, whole sale guru-tattva, is Nityananda Prabhu—and all real gurus are manifestations of Nityananda Prabhu. Bhogus gurus are not His manifestations. At present, real gurus are very rare, and the number of fallen ritviks are now growing. They are doing bhogus things, and you should not have any belief in them. Remain far away and careful to guard against these animal creatures. They don't know the meaning of guru-tattva. They were cheating before and now they want to cheat in this way, and therefore they are cheating themselves and others. Be very far away from them.

In this regard, you may know about the life of Sri Haridasa Thakura. Once while walking, he saw a snake-charmer who was playing on a flute and making his snake dance. When Haridasa Thakura heard the snake charmer singing the Kaliya-damana-lila, he at once began dancing, and soon he fainted. Seeing his display of devotion, all began to take his foot-dust. A very cruel and nonsensical brahmana was watching this and thought, "All are taking the foot-dust of Haridasa Thakura. I shall dance like him, and then all will come and take my foot-dust." As that snake charmer continued singing about the sweet pastimes of Kalya-damana Krsna, that brahmana began to dance in imitation, and he fell on the ground. The snake charmer had a very good stick and beat him three times very strongly, and thus that brahmana quickly ran away from there. Imitation is not good. Don't imitate the high class of devotees and think, "I am now a realized soul. I am guru. I can help others." Don't think in that way.

Regarding Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, he received the mercy of Nityananda Prabhu who told him, "I have taken away all your obstacles. Now you can meet with Caitanya Mahaprabhu." He then went to Puri, giving up his very young wife who was as beautiful as Miss Universe. He also gave up his very big kingdom and vast wealth. He left everything. But what are we doing? Although we say we are devotees, we are collecting all these things. If we want to decorate ourselves to become more beautiful, what is this? This is nonsense.

Why is detachment not coming? It is because there is a defect in your chanting and remembering. You are not doing much bhakti, and you are totally engaged in making money. You think, "By money I can be happy." Give up this idea. Only by chanting the holy name can you be happy, and you can see this in the lives of Haridasa Thakura and Raghunatha dasa Gosvami. Even though Raghunatha dasa's father sent him money and brahmana cooks, he rejected everything. What was he doing? He was begging some prasadam at a market—but then he even rejected that. He also rejected standing at the Simhadvara gate because he considered, "I have been thinking, 'Someone will come and give me something.' This activity is like that of prostitutes." How renounced he was. If you want to be this kind of devotee, you will have to follow his life's activities. If you are not following, then you are doing sanga-siddha bhakti—not pure bhakti. You are also

doing aropa-siddha bhakti. You should know that when bhakti is mixed with jnana and karma, yoga, tapasya, and other worldly desires, that bhakti is not pure. We should try to do pure bhakti.

Even if one is in family life he can do bhakti, as we can see in the life of Draupadi. Although Draupadi was in family life, Krsna was controlled by her. Arjuna was also in family life, and all the gopis were in family life—but they are superior to jagad-guru Narada Rsi. Narada is the guru of Yogamaya Purnamasi devi, but they are guru of Narada Rsi also. Who? The gopis—and they are also the gurus of Krsna. Krsna has admitted this fact. He has stated, "The gopis are My friends, the gopis are My servants, they are My gurus, and they are My everything." You should know this. The gopis are everything to Krsna. They are His servants, His gurus, His friends, His generals, and His everything.

Krsna has surrendered at the lotus feet of Radhika. He wants to massage Her feet, and He wants to take a 'stamp' made from the red lac on Her lotus feet on His head. That stamp would 'certify' Him so that He would be able to announce, "I am a dasa of Radhika." This is called pure bhakti, and this is very, very high, and it is invaluable.

If you want to buy some vegetables from the market, you must take some money—even one dollar, two dollars, or three dollars is sufficient. If you want to purchase a golden chain, then you will have to have more dollars. If you want to buy that krsna-prema, which is the highest commodity, you will have to give the greatest amount of wealth to purchase it. You will have to possess nistha in guru and nistha in krsna-bhakti. Without these, that prema is not possible to achieve.

Don't depend on worldly things. Don't think that money and wealth will help you. Don't think that big, big rooms or houses, equipped to control cold, heat, and everything else, will help you. Don't think, "I want a car in which everything is there— singing, seats that go forward and backward so that I can sleep, and so on."

We should try to realize this bhakti, which is called nirguna-bhakti. You can find everything in the life of Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, and if you really want bhakti you should try to follow him. Don't run after worldly money, praise, or anything else. Be happy forever. Gaurapremanande!