

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja
HUMILITY

(A Lecture on Bhajana Rahasya)

New Braja, Badger, CA: June 1, 2002 – Part 1

I offer my millions of humble obeisances unto the lotus feet of my paramaradhyadeva, Om Visnupada Sri Srimad Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja, and the same unto the lotus feet of my siksa-guru, Om Visnupada Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja.

In the morning I visited the school and saw the students and teachers, and I became very satisfied. I want this school to advance more and more. The students should learn Vaisnava etiquette, they should learn to honor all Vaisnavas, they should fully learn our siddhanta, and they should be very polite and humble. The teachers should be very humble. If they are not humble, polite, and honoring their superiors, they will not be able to teach these principles to their students. I know personally that Vrajendrananda Prabhu and Nitya Manjari dasi are very humble and polite. I like them very much, and I want the other teachers to be like them. Because some of the teachers are young, sometimes they may become upset, but they should always see that they must practice themselves in order to teach. The students will learn by the behavior of the teachers. I want this school to advance still further, so that devotees may send students from every part of the world.

I heard that today, at midday, there was a very good nagara-sankirtana. I heard that only one hundred devotees attended, but I was hoping there would be more than five hundred. Nagara-sankirtana and distribution of books is the most important preaching. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu preached His mission at the Sankirtana Rasa-sthali in Srivasangam (the house of Srivasa Pandit), and from there He preached everywhere in India. You may be a very high class of sannyasi, or you may have any other high position, but you can never be greater than Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu and Srila Haridasa Thakura. Try to follow their examples. Now I am old and I have heart problems; otherwise I would be in the front line of the sankirtana party. So don't be idle. If you go and preach, then Krsna, Radhika, and Caitanya Mahaprabhu will give you inspiration.

The day after tomorrow is Annakuta Mahotsava. Therefore, beginning from today, you should all try to arrange this festival. You can make so many preparations, not less than the number you made last year. This festival should be like the one in India, at Govardhana, where we made many beautiful preparations. Decide among yourselves what you will each do, and thus make excellent preparations. There should be a very good cow to worship, as well as any high class of brahmana-vaisnava whom we will respect and worship. You should also perform nagara-sankirtana and try to help others to become pure devotees. This is our mission.

Now we will come to the subject of our class on Bhajana Rahasya. We are explaining nistha (the stage of steadiness in bhakti), and in this regard Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura has quoted the third sloka of Sri Siksastakam:

trnad api sunicena taror api sahisnuna
amanina manadena kirtaniya sada harih

["Thinking oneself to be even lower and more worthless than insignificant grass which has been trampled beneath everyone's feet, being more tolerant than a tree, being prideless, and offering respect to all others according to their respective positions, one should continuously chant the holy name of Sri Hari." (Sri Siksastakam, verse 3)]

It is important to remember this sloka, but it is still more important to follow and practice it in your daily life. Merely remembering will not suffice. You should try to be humble, but you cannot become humble simply by artificially acting so. If your bhakti increases, humility will come naturally. If you're not increasing your sadhana-bhajana of chanting Hare Krsna, not serving your Gurudeva and Vaisnavas, not giving proper respect to all Vaisnavas, not engaging in sadhu-sanga, nama-kirtana, bhagavat-sravaṇa (hearing Srimad-Bhagavatam), mathura-vasa (living in Mathura), sri murtira sraddhaya sevana (serving the Deity with faith), and at the same time you want to be humble, you will not be successful.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was engaged in conversation with Sri Raya Ramananda and Sri Svarupa Damodara. Svarupa Damodara is Lalita in Krsna's pastimes, and Raya Ramananda is Visakha. The three were in the Gambhira, where gambhira-bhava is manifest. The word gambhira means extremely deep, like the deep separation moods of Caitanya Mahaprabhu. He was always weeping there, and He was also making Svarupa Damodara, Raya Ramananda, Sikhi Mahiti, Gopal Guru Gosvami, Govinda, and so many other devotees weep.

Although Mahaprabhu's servant Govinda Prabhu also wept by the influence of Mahaprabhu's ecstatic moods, he often worried, thinking, "Why do these two persons, Svarupa Damodara and Raya Ramananda, come here? They should not come here, because they make Caitanya Mahaprabhu weep throughout the night." He did not want those two devotees to come to the Gambhira, but he understood that if they were not with Mahaprabhu, Mahaprabhu would have wept still more and He may even have become unconscious. He therefore allowed them to come.

ye-rupe la-ile nama prema upajaya
tahara laksana suna, svarupa-rama-rama

"Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu continued, 'O Svarupa Damodara Gosvami and Ramananda Raya, hear from Me the symptoms of how one should chant the Hare Krsna maha-mantra to awaken very easily one's dormant love for Krsna.'" (Cc Antya 20.20)

trnad api sunicena
taror api sahisnuna
amanina manadena
kirtaniyah sada harih

"One who thinks himself lower than the grass, who is more tolerant than a tree, and who does not expect personal honor but is always prepared to give all respect to others can very easily always chant the holy name of the Lord." (Cc Antya 20.21)

uttama hana apanake mane trnadhama
dui-prakare sahisnuta kare vrksa-sama

"These are the symptoms of one who chants the Hare Krsna maha-mantra. Although he is very exalted, he thinks himself lower than the grass on the ground, and like a tree, he tolerates everything in two ways." (Cc Antya 20.22)

vrksa yena katileha kichu na bolaya
sukana maileha kare pani na magaya

"When a tree is cut down, it does not protest, and even when drying up, it does not ask anyone for water." (Cc Antya 20.23)

yei ye magaye, tare deya apana-dhana
gharma-vrsti sahe, anera karaye raksana

"The tree delivers its fruits, flowers and whatever else it possesses to anyone and everyone. It tolerates scorching heat and torrents of rain, yet it still gives shelter to others." (Cc Antya 20.24)

uttama hana vaisnava habe nirabhimana
jive sammana dibe jani' `krsna'-adhisthana

"Although a Vaisnava is the most exalted person, he is prideless and gives all respect to everyone, knowing everyone to be the resting place of Krsna." (Cc Antya 20.25)

ei-mata hana yei krsna-nama laya
sri-krsna-carane tanra prema upajaya

"If one chants the holy name of Lord Krsna in this manner, he will certainly awaken his dormant love for Krsna's lotus feet." (Cc Antya 20.26)

It is stated in Srimad-Bhagavatam:

tad asma-saram hrdayam batedam
yad grhyamanair hari-nama-dheyaih
na vikriyetatha yada vikaro
netre jalam gatra-ruhesu harsah

"Certainly that heart is steel-framed which, in spite of one's chanting the holy name of the Lord with concentration, it does not change and feel ecstasy, at which time tears fill the eyes and the hairs stand on end." (Bhag. 2.3.24)

If a person is chanting Krsna's holy name but tears do not fall from his eyes and his hairs do not stand up on end, then dhik tvam. Fie on him! Fie on his life! It means that he is not following the principles of trinadapi sunicena, etc. Also, if a person hears harikatha but no tears fall from his eyes and no hairs stand on end, then fie on his life as well.

kahite kahite prabhura dainya badila
`suddha-bhakti' krsna-thani magite lagila

"As Lord Caitanya spoke in this way, His humility increased, and He began praying to Krsna that He could discharge pure devotional service." (Cc Antya 20.27)

premera svabhava--yahan premera sambandha
sei mane,--`krsne mora nahi prema-gandha'

"Wherever there is a relationship of love of Godhead, its natural symptom is that the devotee does not think himself a devotee. Instead, he always thinks that he has not even a drop of love for Krsna." (Cc. Antya 20.28)

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] There are three kinds of holy name. Actually, nama is perfect; there are not different kinds. Pure nama is of only one kind. However, according to the stage of the sadhaka, nama has been especially divided into three kinds.

Nama-cintamani-krsnah caitanya-rasa-vigraha purnah suddho nitya-mukto. All the rasas are in the holy name, and the essence of all madhurya is there. Radha and Krsna Themselves, along with Their love that reaches up to mahabhava, is in the name; but we poor and fallen jivas have no realization of this. When the jivas commit many offences at the time of chanting nama, that nama is called nama-aparadha. When there is no aparadha but some anarthas are still present, that nama may be called nama-abhasa. And, when there is no nama-aparadha and no nama-abhasa, that nama is called suddha-nama, or pure name. Pure nama also has so many categories, according to the category of the devotees in the stage of rati, prema, sneha, mana, pranaya, raga, anuraga, and so on. Srimati Radhika's mood is madanakhya mahabhava. Therefore, when She utters the names of Krsna, She tastes all the asta-sattvika bhavas, such as dipta, sudipta, pradipta, and even more than that. Caitanya Mahaprabhu exhibited Her exalted moods of meeting in separation at the Gambhira.

First try to chant the holy name without nama-aparadha. Try to chant nama with a mood of indifference to worldly desires, because material desires create problems and obstacles in your chanting. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura has said that if you want to chant nama, you must give up all worldly desires and intoxications, the heart disease of lust, attachment to wealth and reputation, and so on. Then, when you give up these, natural humility will manifest in your heart.

Nirmal-daya means showing mercy without ever wanting anything in return. The trees are an example of this. Offering their entire lives to others, they never ask any return

from anyone. You can become like these trees only by chanting and remembering, and by serving Guru and Vaisnavas. To the proportion you engage all your senses and moods in devotion to Krsna, to that proportion nirmal-daya may awaken. Nirmal-daya is the mercy of helping others in Krsna consciousness. If you turn someone's mood from worldly desires to serving Krsna, this is the best mercy and compassion. Giving donations of money or food, or giving your daughters for marriage, are worldly things, and by doing so you will be engaged in matter.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura has also glorified the symptoms of nirmala-daya. He has said that it is very hard to try to turn an ordinary person into a devotee; it takes so many hundreds of gallons of blood, or in other words, so much energy. Try to come to the platform on which you can practice nirmala-daya. Become devotees yourselves and try to make others devotees.

Try to give up all false ego: "I am very learned," "I am the most qualified devotee," "I am very wealthy," "I am very beautiful," "I can attract others." Otherwise, you will not be able to chant.

Most importantly, give proper respect to devotees according to their advancement. It is for this purpose that Srila Rupa Gosvami has described the symptoms of different classes of devotees. If you cannot give proper respect to all Vaisnavas, you are dambika, arrogant. If you want bhakti, always remember Krsna's words:

tad viddhi pranipatena
pariprasnena sevaya
upadeksyanti te jnanam
jnaninas tattva-darsinah

["Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized soul can impart knowledge unto you because he has seen the truth." (Bhagavad-gita 4.34)]

If you do these three activities, Gurudeva will automatically give you knowledge. From today, try to give proper respect to Vaisnavas according to their level of bhakti, as kanistha, madhyama, or uttama-adhikari. You cannot realize who is uttama and who is on another level, but try to give proper respect. If you do not do so, you are not even a kanistha-adhikari. You should think that those who are chanting krsna-nama, whether they are initiated or not, are in our family. But always remember this: they should not be mayavadi and they should not be Buddhist. Buddhists are even more dangerous than mayavadis. Sahajiyas are also dangerous, but they are better than mayavadis and the Buddhists. Also, be careful regarding stri-sangi. Stri-sangi means lusty persons who mix with ladies or men and at the same time think, "We are in an advanced stage of bhakti. We are doing parakiya-bhajana." Lusty men create children by mixing with widows and call that parakiya-rasa. If you follow them, Mahaprabhu will reject you forever.

Krsna bhaktas are more humble than trees and grass. If you want to do bhajana, you must follow these four principles (trinadapi sunicena...). Don't desire to be respected by anyone, and try to give others proper respect. Also, remember that you are all refugees in this world, and you will have to give up this land one day very soon. Your relatives, your position, and everything you claim as your own will disappear in a moment. Even if you cry out, "Oh, let me have one more minute, or one more second's time," all your possessions will disappear.

idam sariram sata-sandhi-jarijjaram
pataty-avasyam parinama-pesalam
kim-ausadhim prchasi mudha durmate
niramayam krsna-rasayanam piba

["O fool! O dull-headed creature! This constantly mutable body, which is afflicted by innumerable attachments, will surely perish one day. What medicine are you seeking to remedy this situation? Just incessantly drink the medicine of the holy name of Sri Krsna which destroys the disease of this material existence, the source of all other diseases." (Mukunda-mala stotra, 37, by Srimad Kulasekhara)]

Yamunacarya, the Guru of Ramanujacarya, has written this in his Mukunda Mala Stotra. He is telling that if you are suffering from any disease and going to doctors here and there, and always busy being worried. Throughout the day and night, in dream or in sleeping. Remember this sloka:

tat te 'nukampam su-samiksamano
bhunjana evatma-krtam vipakam
hrd-vag-vapurahir vidadhan namas te
jiveta yo bhakti-pade sa daya-bhak

["One who seeks Your compassion and thus tolerates all kinds of adverse conditions due to the karma of his own past deeds, who engages always in Your devotional service with his mind, words and body, and who always offers obeisances unto You, is certainly a bona fide candidate for becoming Your unalloyed devotee." (SB 10.14.8)]

You should think: "This suffering has come as a result of my previous activities." Or, "Krsna has mercifully given this suffering; I should happily accept it." If you can think in this way, you will become the rightful heir of bhakti. Bhakti will surely manifest in your heart. If you have taken birth, you are bound to die, and if you want to enjoy this world, you cannot. You have tried to enjoy this world in your previous millions of lives. The husband or wife of your present life is not your first, for you have enjoyed husbands and wives when you were hogs and pigs. So don't be worried for these objects of enjoyment. One day you will have to die and give up all these things, at that time your body will be either burned to ashes, changed into worms, or it will become the 'prasadam' of wild beasts, dogs, and jackals. You should think, "O my wicked mind, why are you thinking, 'This is mine. I am this body. This is my relative. This is my property.' You should believe only: 'I am an eternal servant of Krsna. Krsna is mine, and all His associates are

mine.'" Try to take the medicine of krsna-nama: Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare.

Unfortunately we do not have strong faith in nama. We see that another person is chanting Hare Krsna and still he has a heart disease or any other disease, and he is still dying. Seeing this, we sometimes develop doubts. Don't think like this. Our soul is eternal. The only disease is our misconception that, "I'm this body and everything in relation to this body is mine." This disease will not go away by any worldly medicine. It will go away only by krsna-nama.

No soul can be killed. It is said that Krsna killed Putana. You should know, however, that she was not killed. She received new life and went to Goloka to live there forever. Similarly, if you die while chanting nama, all your diseases will vanish forever. This was the case of Ajamila and others, so don't disbelieve it. Even if you see that you have diseases and anarthas while you chant, you should know that these anarthas are going away, but you are not realizing it. You should have strong faith in this. Always pray to Krsna, Mahaprabhu, and Nityananda Prabhu: "I am very offensive and wretched. I have committed all kinds of offences and all kinds of sins in my millions of lives. O Krsna, what shall I do?" Repenting and chanting Hare Krsna is the only remedy. If any big problem comes, try to always chant. This is the remedy; nothing else. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura has written the following prayer in his song, Gopinatha (verse 1):

gopinatha, mama nivedana suno, visayi durjana
sada kama-rata, kichu nahi mora guna

"O Gopinatha, please hear my request. I am a wicked materialist, always addicted to worldly desires, and I possess no good qualities."

You should always pray in this way. If you are always engaged in making money and maintaining your life you will not be able to do so; but you should try. Don't give up hope.

Editorial advisors: Pujoyapad Madhava Maharaja and Sripad Brajanatha dasa

Transcriber: Dhanvantari dasa

Editor: Syamarani dasi

Typist: Radhika dasi