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Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

THE GLORIES OF HANUMAN

[A lecture for Rama-Navami]

San Francisco: May 23, 2003

[Every year, on every tour, in practically every country, Srila Narayana Maharaja discusses the five kinds of bhaktas and their five kinds of bhakti. He does this in order that his audiences understand what is real bhakti, what kind of bhakti they should choose, and what they will have to do and give up to attain it. In San Francisco, On May 23, 2003, his discourse concentrated on the glories of Hanuman, the perfect example of a premi-bhakta. You are receiving this lecture today, because of Rama-Navami.]

Now we are coming to our subject – where we left off in Badger. Why do we prefer Ambarisa Maharaja over Prahlada Maharaja? Prahlada Maharaja is a siddha-bhakta and parama-mahabhagavata (a perfected devotee situated at the stage of prema, love of God), and Ambarisa Maharaja is a sadhaka-bhakta (a practitioner at the stage of bhava-bhakti). So why do we want to follow Ambarisa Maharaja?

Prahlada Maharaja serves Lord Nrsimhadeva, an expansion of Krsna, whereas Ambarisa Maharaja was serving Krsna Himself. He was serving Krsna, but in the form of a deity. He used to do pranama to the deity. He used to travel in Vraja-mandala when Sri Krsna was not there. It is very rare to see Sri Krsna playing in Vrndavana. He told Sri Narada Muni, "Hanuman is superior to me – much more superior. If you want to see a high class recipient of Sri Krsna's mercy you should go to Hanumanji. You can see him in Saket, , Ayodya. So please go there." The following verse is the barometer of bhakti.

anyabhilasita-sunyam
jnana-karmady-anavrtam
anukulyena krsnanu-
silanam bhaktir uttama

"Uttama-bhakti, pure devotional service, is the cultivation of activities that are meant exclusively for the pleasure of Sri Krsna, in other words, the uninterrupted flow of service to Sri Krsna, performed through all endeavors of body, mind, and speech, and through expression of various spiritual sentiments (bhavas). It is not covered by jnana (knowledge of nirvisesa-brahma, aimed at impersonal liberation) karma (reward-seeking activity), yoga or austerities; and it is completely free from all desires other than the aspiration to bring happiness to Sri Krsna." (Sri Bhakti rasamrta-sindhu 1.1.11)

The symptoms of pure bhakti explained in this verse will be applied everywhere – in the case of Dhruva Maharaja, in the case of Prahlada Maharaja, and also in the same way for Ambarisa Maharaja. This verse is the barometer, and we can judge the supremacy of any devotee by it. You should know the meaning of "anukulyena krsnanu silanam". There should be no worldly desire. Bhakti should not be covered by any jnana or karma. Our bhakti should be continuous, like honey flowing, and under the guidance of any exalted Vaisnava. "Anukulyena" – it should be without pratikula-bhava, an unfavorable mood.

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"Silanam" – it is performed by all endeavors of the senses, mind, body and more over, mood – the mood of bhava, sneha, mana, pranaya, raga, anuraga, and so on. "Anu" means under guidance of pure devotees.

Now we may see what Hanuman is doing. We may see whether or not his bhakti is covered with jnana (knowledge aiming at impersonal liberation) or karma (fruitive activity).

He never has any worldly desire. His only desire is to serve Lord Sri Rama. His activities therefore, are uttama-bhakti. He cannot forget Sri Rama for even a moment. Which high class Vaisnava is he under guidance of, in his performance of all his services to Sri Rama? Can you decide? Hanuman is the incarnation of Sankara, Lord Siva, and Sankara always worships his Istadeva (worshipable deity), Sankarsana. Do you understand this? Sankarsana is Balarama, and in rama-lila Balarama appears as Laksmana. So Hanuman is always serving under the guidance of Laksmana.

How can you understand that he is always in the guidance of Laksmana? Is there any pastime to give evidence for this? There are so many. He took Lord Ramacandra on his shoulders, and he also served Laksmana in the same way, on many occasions.

When Lord Rama was looking for Sita devi, Hanuman disguised himself as a brahmana, and by questioning both Rama and Laksmana and thus realizing their identities, he told them both, "Come and sit on my shoulders. I will take you to Kiskinda, there Sugriva is very upset. I think it will be very important for you to be friends with him." He told Rama, "Sugriva will discover your Sita and somehow bring her to You, but you will have to kill his enemy – who has taken his kingdom and very beautiful wife."

Another time, when a sakti weapon was thrown by Meghanatha at Laksmana and Laksmana became unconscious, as if he was dead, it was Hanuman who brought sanjivani (a powerful life-returning herb). While looking for that plant, Hanuman could not recognize it. He had been told that he would be able to recognize it because it would be situated on a certain mountain and was illuminated like light, but it so happened that the demons made all the plants in that mountain illuminate. He therefore took the entire mountain on his head and returned to Laksmana on the very same night.

Susena was Ravana's ayurvedic doctor and he was not willing to come to help. Therefore, Hanuman lifted up his whole house, brought him there, and convinced him to serve. He told the doctor, "Your business is to serve all, without any prejudice. For a doctor there is no consideration of enemy or friend. If an enemy comes to you, you should help him. So you should cure Rama." And he did so.

Once, Sri Rama and Laksmana were bound by naga-pasa (snake-ropes). They had fallen unconscious and were about to die. By the instruction of Narada Rsi, Hanuman brought Garuda from Vaikuntha. When Garuda arrived, just by smelling the scent of his body, all the snakes fled. Garuda then had a doubt. He thought, "Who is this person? Can it be Rama, the Supreme Personality of Godhead? No, this person can never be Rama. I'm the

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servant of Lord Rama. By the mere glance of Rama those snakes would have all left immediately. They would not be able to even come to Rama, yet they were binding this person. When I came, by my influence, they quickly gave up this person. So who is He?"

Garuda went to his Gurudeva, Sankara, but his Gurudeva told him, "I have no time; I'm going just now. You should go to Kakabhusundi. You are the king of birds, so you should go to the most wretched among all birds – a crow. You should go there."

Sankara gave this instruction in order to remove Garuda's pride. Garuda approached Kakabhusundi. He heard from him the glory of Sri Rama for many years and all kinds of doubts went away. This was only due to Hanuman.

Hanuman was doing "anukulyena krsnanu-silanam." As honey flows from a jar without obstruction, Hanuman served Lord Rama day and night. We should learn how to serve from him.

Ambarisa Maharaja was serving Sri Krsna, but in the form of a deity – not directly. A deity will not say to His worshipper, "Oh, you should bring water." In some rare cases – in the case of a high class of devotee like Srila Rupa Gosvami or Srila Sanatana Gosvami, He may say, "I am very thirsty", or anything like that. But He will not generally say anything.

Sita devi, Bharata, Laksmana and Satrugna are all servants of Lord Rama. Sita devi is His wife and the others are His brothers. They had a meeting and complained to each other, "Hanuman is always serving Rama, from the beginning of the day to the end of the day. He gives no time for us to serve. He is fanning with a camara, massaging, bringing food, and performing a multitude of other services. When can we serve? We four, combined together, should take over all of Rama's services, day and night. Hanuman should have no time to even enter the palace." Thus they divided all Rama's services amongst themselves.

They decided that at night time, no one would be allowed to approach Rama, for that was Sita devi's time to serve. In the daytime sometimes Bharata, sometimes Laksmana, and sometimes Satrugna would serve. In this way they divided all the services of the eight yamas (parts of the day).

Hanuman began to weep, and prayed to them, "Please don't do this to me. Please give me any insignificant service – otherwise I cannot survive. I will die." Can you be like Hanuman, thinking that without service you will die? When you think like that you will actually be a servant of Sri Krsna. Hanuman was always meditating, always performing kirtana, always hearing hari-katha from the gandharvas, and always offering pranama.

sa vai manah krsna-padaravindayor
vacamsi vaikuntha-gunanuvarnane
karau harer mandira-marjanadisu
srutim cakaracyuta-sat-kathodaye

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"Maharaja Ambarisa always engaged his mind in meditating upon the lotus feet of Krsna, his words in describing the glories of the Lord, his hands in cleansing the Lord's temple, and his ears in hearing the words spoken by Krsna or about Krsna. He engaged his eyes in seeing the Deity of Krsna, Krsna's temples and Krsna's pastime places like Mathura and Vrndavana, he engaged his sense of touch in touching the bodies of the Lord's devotees, he engaged his sense of smell in smelling the fragrance of tulasi offered to the Lord, and he engaged his tongue in tasting the Lord's prasada. He engaged his legs in walking to the holy places and temples of the Lord, his head in bowing down before the Lord, and all his desires in serving the Lord, twenty-four hours a day. Indeed, Maharaja Ambarisa never desired anything for his own sense gratification. He engaged all his senses in devotional service, in various engagements related to the Lord. This is the way to increase attachment for the Lord and be completely free from all material desires."(S.B. 9.4.18-20)

Ambarisa Maharaja was doing the same thing as Hanuman, but Hanuman was doing it in a superior way. Maharaja Ambarisa was traveling throughout Vraja, doing parikrama; and what was Hanuman doing? He was jumping over the ocean to bring Sita devi back to Lord Rama. He burned Lanka. He did everything needed. He engaged his mind, his body, his soul, his senses and his moods. He was directly serving – not serving a deity as Ambarisa Maharaja was.

Hanuman told Sita, Laksmana, Bharata and Satrughna, "Please give me any service. It may be a third class bogus service, but I want it." They thought, and they discussed amongst each other, "What service can we give him?" "Nothing," they decided. Then he said, "I have a suggestion. Sri Ramacandra has never yawned – but it may come. I will stay outside his room, and when He will yawn I will snap my fingers. This service should be given." Snapping of fingers when a person yawns is a message to "take care" and to remember Krsna. The four discussed Hanuman's proposal and decided that, since in His whole life Ramacandra had never yawned, there would be no harm in Hanuman taking that service.

Hanuman remained sitting on the outside of the house. He sang, "Jaya Rama, Jaya Rama, Jaya Jaya Rama," and snapped his fingers continuously. Lord Ramacandra then began to yawn – only yawning throughout the entire day and night – and all services by Sita, Laksmana, Bharata and Satrughna had to be stopped. They began thinking, "What to do now? This Hanuman is the root of all evil." They went to Rama, and Rama advised them, "Oh, please give him service; otherwise he will not be able to remain alive."

We should try to be like Hanuman – always serving. You cannot directly serve Sri Krsna or Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. You can serve Them in Their deity forms, but not directly. Fortunately, however, Krsna has appeared in the form of Sri Guru, in the form of the most elevated devotee. He appears as the bona fide diksa- and siksa-gurus. The symptoms of Sri Guru are told in Srimad Bhagavatam and other sastras. Why we should not always serve them?

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Don't be like a pendulum. Never give more importance to your jobs and money than to bhakti. During a discussion at a devotee's house earlier today, I asked another devotee, "What job do you do?" He said, "I have such and such job." "What is your income monthly?" "At least \$1000." "What do you do with this money?" "I give some money to pay the rent of the house, some to support my children and wife and others, some for a car, and some for here and there." "How much do you save?" "Oh, hardly anything." "But can they help you? Can they make you happy? They can never do so. Even if you can collect millions of dollars for them, are they able to help you and make you happy? No."

Then I asked him, "What is the aim of your life?" "Krsna-bhakti," he replied. "Then how much are you spending out of each thousand dollars for Guru and Vaisnavas, and for bhakti?" He began to think, and replied, "Nothing." "You are giving so much importance to your job. Because of your job you cannot come to Badger to hear harikatha, and you are not even coming here. You are not spending even a part of one penny for Krsna. You are giving importance to your worldly relatives – not to bhakti, bhaktas, or Krsna. Are you doing something for Krsna?" "Oh, I am remembering." "But what are you doing with that money? Are you even spending a single penny in His service?" So you should also see what you are doing.

Hanuman was a brahmacari from the beginning of his life. He never married because he thought, "My energy will then go towards family members. Why should I not serve Lord Rama from the beginning?"

Once he saw Sita devi, whom he considered to be "Mother Sita," when she was in the dressing-room. She had already bathed, and now she was decorating herself to prepare for entering the assembly of Sri Rama. She had put on all of her ornaments, and now she was placing sindu (vermilion) powder on the part of her hair. This is the symptom of a chaste lady whose husband is alive, and this is considered a very fortunate condition for a woman. Hanuman said, "Mother, I was searching for you. What are you doing here? What is this red color, and why are you anointing your head with it?" She replied, "I am wearing this so that your Prabhu, my husband, will be always glorious, have a long life and always be happy. By this he will surely be benefited."

Sita devi then left and Hanuman entered in the dressing-room. He took all the red powder, mixed it with oil, and colored himself from top to bottom. When he reached the assembly of Lord Rama, all those present laughed when they saw him.

Lord Rama asked him, "What have you done?" Hanuman replied, "Oh Prabhu, I have done this because, if by Mother Sita keeping a small amount of this reddish powder on her hair You will be happy and have a long life, then I should put it everywhere on my body." This is how he serves Lord Rama.

He also becomes the chariot of Rama. He creates a fort by his tail and no one can enter the gate. He sits as a heroic guard, protecting Rama. He brings fruit and everything else required by Rama, Laksmana and Sita devi. Thus, in all ways, he is Lord Rama's most

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obedient servant – and he can give his life for Rama. He is therefore an even greater servant than Ambarisa Maharaja.

By his hands, Hanuman massages and brings Rama whatever he requires. By mind he always remembers Sita and Rama. By his tongue he always sings kirtana of Rama, and by his ears he hears Rama's glories. Moreover, by feet he jumps here and there and serves in that way. He hears the very sweet words of the gandharvas, the celestial demigod singers, and watches their many drama plays. Those gandharvas are far less than him in bhakti; nevertheless as a father and mother hears from her child, Hanuman hears from the gandharvas.

When Rama came in Dvarapa-yuga as Svayam Bhagavan Sri Krsna in Dvaraka, all the princesses of Janaka-puri became gopis and queens like Rukmini and Satyabhauma. There, Hanuman, in the form of Bhima, is serving in a still greater way. Therefore, when Sri Narada Rsi came to Hanuman to glorify him as the greatest devotee of the Lord, Hanuman denied the glorification and sent him to the Pandavas in Dvaraka.

Do you understand why I am telling you all of these truths? It is so you will know what is devotional service, what is the meaning of the verse "anyabhilasita sunyam jnana karmadi anavrtam," and what is the special gift Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu brought to this world.

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