

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME

Murwillumbah, Australia: February 7, 2004

Srila Narayana Maharaja giving this lecture in Murwillumbah.

[May 3, 2004 is the divine appearance day of Lord Nrsimhadeva. Here is a discourse – first published appearance – that you may like to read for that occasion.

This is the definition of pure devotional service:

anyabhilasita sunyam
jnana karmady anavrtam
anukulyena krsnanu
silanam bhaktir uttama

["The cultivation of activities which are meant exclusively for the pleasure for Sri Krsna, or in other words the uninterrupted flow of service to Sri Krsna, performed through all endeavors of the body mind and speech, and through the expression of various spiritual sentiments (bhavas), which is not covered by jnana (knowledge aimed at impersonal liberation) and karma (reward-seeking activity), and which is devoid of all desires other than the aspiration to bring happiness to Sri Krsna, is called uttama-bhakti." (Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu 1.1.1)]

When service to Lord Krsna is not covered by jnana, impersonalism, karma, fruitive activities, yoga or severe austerities, when it is continuous and performed exclusively for Krsna, by body, mind, words and soul, with moods up to madanakya-bhava (the mood of Srimati Radhika), that is bhakti or pure devotion. Our bhakti is surely not uttama-bhakti.

Some of you may have kanistha-bhakti, some sakama-bhakti, misra-bhakti or aisvaryamayi-bhakti, and there will be many defects on these levels. Some of you have madhyama-adhikari bhakti.

Here we are giving examples of different stages of pure, uttama bhakti. Yesterday we explained that the bhakti of Dhruva Maharaja is not in the category of uttama (topmost, first class) or even madhyama (second class). It is not pure bhakti at all. The verse defining uttama-bhakti indicates that its devotees (bhaktas) are divided into five stages or categories: jnani-bhakta, suddha-bhakta, premi-bhakta, premapara-bhakta and prematura-bhakta. After this there are no "bhaktas"; rather, all are kaya-vyuha (direct bodily expansions) of Sri Krsna or Srimati Radhika. They are not called bhaktas; they are called eternal associates of Radha and Krsna.

First we are going to explain the jnani-bhakta. There are of two kinds of jnana (knowledge). Those who want to merge with the Supreme Lord are called jnanis. They misinterpret the verse: "Sarvam khalv idam brahma – everything is brahman"

(Chandogya Upanisad 3.14.1) They think. "Yes, everything is brahman. Even the trees, creepers, birds and animals are the Supreme Lord – Brahman." We do not like this idea. Every living entity is part and parcel of God, but it is not that everyone in God. On the other hand those who have tattva-jnana, knowledge of all the established philosophical truths – who know who is Krsna, who is Srimati Radhika, what is maya or illusion, what is prema or pure love of God, what is rasa or the mellows of that love – are called jnani-bhaktas. They are not jnanis; they are bhaktas who have knowledge of Lord Krsna's divinity and of the Divinity's unlimited opulence.

Sri Prahlada Maharaja is an example of the jnani-bhakta. He is a maha-bhagavata and an uttama-bhakta. Other jnani-bhaktas are Bhismadeva, the four Kumaras (Sanaka, Sanat-kumara, Sanandana and Sanatana) and Srila Sukadeva Gosvami in the beginning of his life. They are jnani-bhaktas, not jnanis.

Prahlada Maharaja was an unparalleled devotee and he was extraordinarily humble, pure and tolerant. If you want to be a devotee, you must follow him. First of all you will have to give up all your desires for sense gratification and have no other desire than bhakti. Your bhakti should not be covered by jnana, karma or other materially contaminated activities. You will have to engage in spontaneous service performed by the body and mind and by all endeavors of the senses, and also with a transcendental mood, called bhava or rati. Then your activities will be bhakti.

Prahlada Maharaja's father, the demon Hiranyakasipu, had a boon from Lord Brahma granting that he will not die in the air, on the earth, or on any planet. He will not die by any weapon, nor by any man, animal, bird or snake created by Brahma. He will not die in any month, nor inside or outside the house. Thus, he had a boon that he had become almost immortal.

Hiranyakasipu's son Prahlada was the youngest of his four sons, and Prahlada was sent to the school of Sanda and Amarka. Sanda means "bull" and Amarka means "darkness". Those who are like bulls and are always in darkness and ignorant of tattva-jnana are "sanda" and "amarka."

One day Prahlada came home from school, he was decorated by his mother and he was put on the lap of his father Hiranyakasipu. His father became happy to see his very beautiful and humble son. He kissed him and asked, "My dear son, I want to hear from you what you have learned from your teachers."

Prahlada replied:

tat sadhu manye 'sura-varya dehinam
sada samudvigna-dhiyam asad-grahat
hitvatma-patam grham andha-kupam
vanam gato yad dharim asrayeta

"O best of the asuras, King of the demons, as far as I have learned from my spiritual master, any person who has accepted a temporary body and temporary household life is

certainly embarrassed by anxiety because of having fallen in a dark well where there is no water but only suffering. One should give up this position and go to the forest [vana]. More clearly, one should go to Vrndavana, where only Krsna consciousness is prevalent, and should thus take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.5.5)

Hearing this from his son, Hiranyakasipu began to laugh, and questioned,

"Who taught you this? Your guru?"

Hiranyakasipu called Sanda and Amarka and asked them if they had given these teachings to Pahlada.

"Never!" they replied. "We do not teach such things."

"Well, what outsider came to the school, then?" Hiranyakasipu demanded. "Narada? Or any other devotees? He ordered his men, "You should keep a guard at the school to make sure that no devotee of Visnu enters the area of the school." He then ordered the teachers to return Pahlada to school and give him very good instruction on politics and diplomacy, on how to control subjects, and on how to conquer and become very powerful like himself.

After four or five months Pahlada's mother again decorated and brought him to the lap of his father. Again Hiranyakasipu was very happy to see his son, and he asked the same question: "What have you learned at school from your gurus?"

Pahlada replied:

sravanam kirtanam visnoh
smaranam pada-sevanam
arcanam vandanam dasyam
sakhyam atma-nivedanam

iti pumsarpita visnau
bhaktis cen nava-laksana
kriyeta bhagavaty addha
tan manye 'dhitam uttamam

"Hearing and chanting about the transcendental holy name, form, qualities, paraphernalia and pastimes of Lord Visnu, remembering them, serving the lotus feet of the Lord, offering the Lord respectful worship with sixteen types of paraphernalia, offering prayers to the Lord, becoming His servant, considering the Lord one's best friend, and surrendering everything unto Him (in other words, serving Him with the body, mind and words)-these nine processes are accepted as pure devotional service. One who has dedicated his life to the service of Krsna through these nine methods should be

understood to be the most learned person, for he has acquired complete knowledge."
(Srimad Bhagavatam 7.5.23-24)

The nine limbs of bhakti, namely sravanam, kirtanam visnu-smaranam (hearing, chanting and remembering Krsna or Visnu) etc. are not bhakti if they are not first offered to Sri Gurudeva. Gurudeva is also God, in the sense that he is His manifestation. He is asraya-bhagavan, a manifestation of God in the form of His servant. He is the supreme personality of servitor-godhead.

Lord Krsna will not accept your hearing, chanting or remembering about Him without it being offered first to Gurudeva. Rather than bhakti coming from such execution, false ego and many other unwanted mentalities will come. First go to a bona-fide, qualified Guru who has some realization of Krsna and who is detached from worldly desires and attractions. Go at once to such a Guru if you want to be happy. Surrender yourself to him, hear from him, and then perform hearing, chanting, and the other limbs of bhakti. Prahlada Maharaja had done this.

Hearing Prahlada's words, Hiranyakasipu became very angry. He threw Prahlada from his lap and loudly called, "Sanda and Amarka! Come here! What have you taught my son Prahlada?! You have not taught him duplicity or politics? If you have taught him about devotion to Visnu I will have to punish you!"

"We have not done this! We have not taught him these things!" Sanda and Amarka implored. "Prahlada naturally speaks in the way he does. It is his nature."

The demon Hiranyakasipu then turned to Prahlada and asked, "Who taught you this? These gurus – or who?"

Sri Prahlada replied,

matir na krsne paratah svato va
mitho 'bhipadyeta grha-vratanam
adanta-gobhir visatam tamisram
punah punas carvita-carvananam

"Because of their uncontrolled senses, persons too addicted to materialistic life make progress toward hellish conditions and repeatedly chew that which has already been chewed. Their inclinations toward Krsna are never aroused, either by the instructions of others, by their own efforts, or by a combination of both." (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.5.30)

na te viduh svartha-gatim hi visnum
durasaya ye bahir-artha-maninah
andha yathandhair upaniyamanas
te 'pisa-tantryam uru-damni baddhah

"Persons who are strongly entrapped by the consciousness of enjoying material life, and who have therefore accepted as their leader or Guru a similar blind man attached to external sense objects, cannot understand that the goal of life is to return home, back to Godhead, and engage in the service of Lord Visnu. As blind men guided by another blind man miss the right path and fall into a ditch, materially attached men led by another materially attached man are bound by the ropes of fruitive labor, which are made of very strong cords, and they continue again and again in materialistic life, suffering the threefold miseries." (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.5.31)

naisam matis tavad urukramanghrim
sprsaty anarthapagamo yad-arthah
mahiyasam pada-rajo-'bhisekam
niskincananam na vrnita yavat

"Unless they smear upon their bodies the dust of the lotus feet of a Vaisnava completely freed from material contamination, persons very much inclined toward materialistic life cannot be attached to the lotus feet of the Lord, who is glorified for His uncommon activities. Only by becoming Krsna conscious and taking shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord in this way can one be freed from material contamination." (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.5.32)

Now Hiranyakasipu became still angrier. Fearful, he instructed the commander-in-chief of his army to kill the young boy Prahlada. You have heard that Hiranyakasipu will not die from anyone created by Brahma, nor will he die in the daytime or at night, nor inside nor out, nor in a month. Still he became very afraid. He felt totally helpless and he was bewildered as to what to do.

Sanda and Amarka said to the demon, "Why are you fearing? All the demigods are afraid of you. We will return the boy to school for some time and bring our Guru and father Sukracarya. He will surely teach Prahlada all the necessary subject matters. Don't worry."

Prahlada was thus returned to school to again hear explanations of duplicity, politics, hypocrisy and other matters. One day the teachers told the students that they were both going out for a couple of hours. Prahlada was the monitor at the school, and he was now instructed to look after all the boys in the teachers' absence. "You should not quarrel", the teachers told the boys. "Be peaceful under Prahlada's guidance, and soon we will return."

The teachers proceeded on their way, and the boys began to run around and play, very happy that their gurus were not there and they were not controlled. Prahlada said he had something to tell them, and he very humbly requested them to come and hear what he had to say. Even though he was only five or six years old, the boys had so much honor for him that he was able to control them. They assembled, and Prahlada began to speak to them.

He addressed them, "O my brothers, my friends, please listen to me. From the very beginning of your life we should meditate on the Supreme Lord. Nothing in this world

can exist independently of Him. Some say that nature has created everything, and that by nature everything is manifesting, but what is the meaning of nature? Nature is the power of the Lord Krsna. Lord Krsna can control and create millions of universes, destroy them, and in a moment recreate them. He is very powerful. He knows all of you, but you don't know Him. I know something about Him, though.

"From the beginning of your life, don't waste your time. Old age and death are bound to come. What you collect in this life – wealth, reputation, position, and so on – you will have to give up. You cannot take a farthing from this world. Do you agree?"

The students replied, "O yes! Why not? You are telling the truth. We will also be old, and we will have to die."

Prahlada Maharaja continued, "From the beginning of your life, don't waste your time in politics, duplicity and hypocrisy. Remember that the Supreme Lord is Krsna. He is very powerful; He is causelessly merciful and He has invested all his power, beauty, sweetness and mercy in His holy names."

And Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu made these names are still more powerful by investing all His love and affection in them. So chant and remember these names.

Among the boys, one who was a leader said, "Prahlada, why should we chant the name of Krsna? Why not, while we are now young, play and be expert in making money and doing other activities by which we can be happy?"

Prahlada Maharaja replied, "Don't do so. Don't do so. Who knows whether or not you will have time to become old? Old age is coming; you will die tomorrow or the day after tomorrow, or just now." A thunderbolt may come and in a minute you can be killed."

You are going somewhere by airplane, and in a moment the machine can fail and all on the plane – seven hundred persons – can be killed. Where your body and bones will go, no one will know. And, if in case you can avoid this and you become old, then after eighty you will not be able to sit straight. You will not be able to chant, because so many groups of diseases will come. And your son and daughter-in-law will create many problems Be assured of this – so you will not be able to chant and remember.

Prahlada Maharaja said:

kaumara acaret prajno
dharman bhagavatan iha
durlabham manusam janma
tad apy adhruvam arthadam

"One who is sufficiently intelligent should use the human form of body from the very beginning of life-in other words, from the tender age of childhood-to practice the activities of devotional service, giving up all other engagements. The human body is most

rarely achieved, and although temporary like other bodies, it is meaningful because in human life one can perform devotional service. Even a slight amount of sincere devotional service can give one complete perfection." (Srimad-bhagavatam 7.6.1)

Sri Prahlada continued, "Try to develop Krsna-prema and Krsna consciousness from the beginning of your life, or whenever you have first received this knowledge by good association – whether you are fifteen years old or any age. By your previous sukrti (past spiritual pious activities) you associated with pure devotees and this knowledge may therefore come at an early age in this present life; so begin from then.

"We should not waste our time in sense gratification, which is also reserved for you in animal life. If you are a hog or a pig you can collect numerous wives, and there will be no need to spend any money. You will not have to divorce to enjoy many new mates. There will be no court case and no need of maintenance of children. In this life you can have only one son or daughter in a year – not more than that – and if twins come, you can have two, three or four. But hogs, pigs and dogs have eight, ten, twelve, or sixteen children at a time. They are superior to you in that. At any time, in any species of life, you can have sense gratification. Animals are more expert in sense gratification than you, so don't waste time worrying that you won't get it. Rather, from the beginning of this life you should chant, remember and meditate on Sri Krsna.

"As suffering and all kinds of problems – such as death, old age, disease, quarreling with neighbors, and problems created by the government come without invitation or desire, similarly, if by previous fruitive karma you are destined to great happiness, it will also come automatically. So there is no need to do anything for that. Just believe in God. Whatever is destined by fate will come. Why are you so anxious for this? In this life, don't desire happiness and don't desire to remove difficulties. This is not the aim and object of our life. These good and bad situations will come forcibly and you will have to taste them. You are bound to taste them; so why are you wasting your time? Begin chanting the holy name of Krsna. His names are very powerful, merciful and beautiful, and they are full with all His sweet pastimes. Don't think the holy name is merely a name. It is very powerful and it is Krsna Himself. From the beginning, chant these names."

In the previous age, Satya-yuga, the human lifespan used to be more than one million years, and in some cases even more than this; some were immortal. In Treta-yuga it was ten thousand years, and in Dvarapa-yuga one thousand years. In Kali-yuga, due to uncontrolled life, smoking cigarettes, drinking whiskey and wine, eating meat and eggs, the lifespan is lessened; it is only one hundred years at best. There are diseases like tuberculosis and cancer, and so many kinds of new diseases like AIDS, that cannot be controlled in hospitals, by scientists or by anyone else. People don't realize that so many diseases are coming due to uncontrolled lifestyles.

Prahlada continued, "Now, suppose you have one hundred years to live. Half of that time is lost in sleeping, and if you are not controlled it is more than that. Youth, up until age twenty or twenty-five, goes in vain, in becoming expert in playing and studying. And the age from eighty to one hundred is useless, for at that time you can hardly even see.

This leaves ten more years. During these years you will have to marry, and not only one time. You will divorce and remarry – and again divorce and again remarry – and nothing will be gained from this. Children will come and you will have to provide for their education and so on. In the meantime you must have a car. You must have all the necessary equipment of a home – television and so many ever-new other apparent needs, and especially a computer. When will you do bhajana? There is no time at all."

"What should we do?" The students asked Prahlada, and he replied:

guru-susrusaya bhaktya
sarva-labdharpanena ca
sangena sadhu-bhaktanam
isvararadhanena ca

sraddhaya tat-kathayam ca
kirtanair guna-karmanam
tat-padamburuha-dhyanat
tal-lingeksarhanadibhih

"One must accept the bona fide spiritual master and render service unto him with great devotion and faith. Whatever one has in one's possession should be offered to the spiritual master, and in the association of saintly persons and devotees one should worship the Lord, hear the glories of the Lord with faith, glorify the transcendental qualities and activities of the Lord, always meditate on the Lord's lotus feet, and worship the Deity of the Lord strictly according to the injunctions of the sastra and guru." (Srimad Bhagavatam 7.7.30-31)

NEXT DAY

Feb 8, 2003

We have been explaining about bhakti, and I have been discussing its many stages. We have just about completed the discussions up to Prahlada Maharaja, who is in the category of a jnani-bhakta. He is a maha-bhagavata (first class devotee) and there is no anyabhilasa or even anyabhilasita in his devotional services. In other words he has no material desire in his natural state or even in an extraordinary emergency or dangerous circumstance. His bhakti is not covered by jnana, karma, yoga, severe austerities or any other activities. He is always praying and realizing parama-brahma (the Supreme Absolute Truth). He considers that Lord Krsna's incarnation Lord Nrsimhadeva is parama-brahma, and that is why He is unlimitedly powerful. No one can kill Him. He is transcendental and therefore He has no appetite and requires no service. Rather, He will

serve us as a father and mother serves their dependent and loving children. He never tires, so there is no need to massage his feet. Prahlada always thinks about the opulence of his Supreme Lord.

There is something lacking, therefore, in the bhakti of Sri Prahlada Maharaja, and, with reference to the aforementioned verse on the definition of pure bhakti, that is "krsna-anusilanam". This fact is concealed. By reading or hearing the definition of uttama-bhakti under the guidance of one such uttama devotee, a person can understand that not all the symptoms are fulfilled by Prahlada Maharaja's activities. He cannot use all his senses in the service of Lord Krsna, because, according to him, his Lord never becomes hungry, thirsty, tired, or in need of anything. Therefore, he can only pray and meditate on Him. Even in his association, Prahlada Maharaja is always absorbed in Lord Nrsimhadeva's opulence, and thus he cannot use all his senses in the service of his Lord.

Editorial advisors: Pujoyapad Madhava Maharaja and Sripad Brajanatha dasa

Transcribers: Bhadra dasi, Caru-candrika dasi

Typist: Anita dasi

Editor: Syamarani dasi