

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

MAHAT-SANGA CHANGES YOUR BODY

[A Continuation of the Lecture Series on the Glories of Mahat-sanga.]

Badger, California: May 21, 2004 Part 2

Sri Vidura said,

yat-sevaya bhagavatah
kuta-sthasya madhu-dvisah
rati-raso bhavet tivrah
padayor vyasanardanah

["By serving the feet of the spiritual master, one is enabled to develop transcendental ecstasy in the service of the Personality of Godhead, who is the unchangeable enemy of the Madhu demon and whose service vanquishes one's material distresses." (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.7.19)]

This is a very good verse. Vidura was the prime minister of King Dhrtarastra. He was an extremely religious person, a very high class of devotee who was fully surrendered to Sri Krsna. He knew past, present and future.

He saved the five Pandavas from burning in the house of lac and he protected them on several other occasions. When Duryodhana insulted him, he gave up his bow and crown and at once left home to go on pilgrimage. When he returned after five or six months, he saw that his entire dynasty had been destroyed. The Great War had been finished and Duryodhana and all his brothers and friends had died. Vidura went to the palace of Dhrtarastra and delivered him from maya.*[See endnote 1] Krsna later ordered him to go and approach Maitreya Muni, so he traveled to Badrikasrama to meet with him.

In Brhad-bhagavatamrta Srila Sanatana Gosvami has quoted Vidura's words in the verse above, and he has explained some of its very deep meanings.

You may or may not remember – yesterday I told you something very important. Gopa Kumara, known as Svarupa in Goloka Vrndavana, was a transcendental associate of Lord Krsna. He was not subject to birth or death. He was like Nanda Baba and Srimati Yasoda devi, in that they also had never been mortal conditioned souls at any time. He never had to practice the regulations of sadhana-bhakti.

The Mathura brahmana, on the other hand, was a conditioned soul. Still, without having performed any sadhana, he became just like his Guru, Svarupa. He became the bosom friend of Sri Krsna in Goloka Vrndavana. How did this miracle occur? This is the result of mahat-sanga.

Quoting the above-mentioned verse of Sri Vidura, Srila Sanatana Gosvami tells us that even those who are involved in buddhism or mayavada – if they associate with any mahat-purusa – will be changed from mrta (death), to amrta (immortality). Their bodies

will be changed in quality – as the body of Sri Narada Rsi was changed from a material body to a transcendental one. They will thus be qualified to serve Sri Krsna and Srimati Radhika in rasa. Srila Sanatana Gosvami is giving this hope to those who will always remain in mahat-sanga. In that sanga, all possibilities will arise.

Bhagavata sevaya upayogi. One who is fully engaged in favorable service to a mahat will be able to see Lord Krsna massaging the lotus feet of Srimati Radhika. Krsna will be saying "Oh, now You are so tired, and You are perspiring." What Krsna is not able to perform during the Rasa dance, Srimati Radhika can quickly perform. Krsna may sing the notes (saptam svara) sa re ga ma pa da ni sa, but Srimati Radhika begins from there and goes further and further up. What did Krsna say then? "Thank You, thank You, thank You. Sadhu, sadhu, sadhu!" I cannot do as You can."

The fully surrendered soul, engaged exclusively in the service of the mahat-purusa, will have a chance to see these pastimes, and all the other pastimes of Sri Radha-Krsna, and to serve in those pastimes. In the form of a sakhi he (she) will see that Radhika comes and takes the flute of Krsna. She gives it to Lalita and Visakha, and Krsna then goes to each and every gopi – begging, begging, begging, begging.

Those who are fully surrendered to mahat-sanga will have a chance to see all these pastimes. Their sufferings will be transferred into bhakti-sampat, the wealth of bhakti. If their fathers, mothers, wives, husbands and children kick them out of the house, they will realize, "This is the mercy of Krsna. I was always very attached to them, but now they have kicked me out. Now I will go to Vrndavana and chant, Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare. My friends will be monkeys, birds and all other animals of Vraja – no harm." If such devotees are insulted, they will think like the brahmana mendicant at Avanti Nagara: "Oh, today my life is successful."

Try to follow these principles. Don't worry whether anyone is insulting you or kicking you out of their homes. There is no harm in that. Come to Vrndavana. Sri Krsna, Srimati Radhika and Their special messengers are there to look after you all. Do not fear. If you sit on the parikrama path, so many devotees will give you bread and butter and garments, and everything else you require for maintenance. So, why worry?

I have personally experienced this care. Once I went, empty-handed, to Giriraja Govardhana, and there was a big flood at that time. I was thinking, "Where to go? What to do?" In the meantime, Sri Govardhana sent my pandaji (pilgrimage priest and guide). He saw me and said, "Oh, you are here? Come with me to my house. My house is separate from the village. It is in a remote place, so you can stay there. While I was there he sent me chapattis, ghee, puris, rotis, sabji and dhal.

Now, in that very place, our Giridhari Govardhana Gaudiya Math is being constructed.

So do not worry. Come. You can give up all the worries of householders – give up your husbands, children, wives, wealth and all material considerations. Come to me, empty-

handed (empty-hearted, that is, free from all material desires and false philosophies), and I will take care of you. If you cannot come now, then come at the time of Vraja Mandala parikrama. Make a vow that, "I will not return from there." Follow the example of Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami – purchase a one-way ticket.

We have explained the above-mentioned verse of Sri Vidura in a very easy way; and now we will explain something which is hidden in it. If you serve a mahat-purusa, regularly hear his hari-katha and follow the process given in the Bhagavad-gita, you will realize the truths hidden therein.

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 souls can impart knowledge unto you because they have seen the truth. (Bhagavad-gita 4.34)]

The words tattva-vida and tattva-darsi have the same meaning. The tattva-darsis, the great souls who have seen the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna, will explain all spiritual truths very easily. In fact, even if they do not speak at all, atoms of hari-katha will emanate from their body and enter into your heart, and this will help you to understand and realize Krsna – if you are serving.

Sri Krsna is kutastha. Kutastha means incomprehensible. Krsna is sarva kal vyapi (past, present and future are within Him; He is present within the three time phases; He is omniscient), avyaya (without deterioration), anadi (without any beginning), ananta (unlimited), and nirguna (free from all tinges of material qualities). But He is also Madhusudana. If one will serve a maha-purusa, this anadi ananta Krsna will come to you and reveal Himself as Vrajendra-nandana Syamasundara.

isvarah paramah krsnah
sac-cid-ananda-vigraha
anadir adir govindah
sarva-karana-karanam

["Krsna who is known as Govinda is the Supreme Godhead. He has an eternal blissful spiritual body. He is the origin of all. He has no other origin and He is the prime cause of all causes. (Brahma-samhita 5.1)]

If you are experiencing a strain in your following of the principles of bhakti-yoga, this will disappear and everything will become very easy. When Srila Haridasa Thakura was beaten in 22 market-places, he did not feel any pain in his body – because Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu had taken it all away. If you are experiencing any suffering in krsna-bhajana, while following nirjala-ekadasi, while doing parikrama of Govardhana – 14

miles at one time – or during Vraja Mandala parikrama, mahat-sanga will take away all those sufferings. The endless pain of repeated birth and death will disappear very easily. Otherwise, without mahat-sanga there is no way to be free.

Another meaning of kuta is mountain – the mountain of Vraja. The name of that mountain is Giriraja Govardhana, and there, Krsna grazes cows. Moreover He plays there with the gopas, and moreover He engages in dancing and singing and playing in the caves of Govardhana with the gopis. There are so many gopis, like Candravali, Radhika, Lalita and Visakha, Padma and Saibhya; and with them He is sometimes relishing viraha-rasa (feelings of separation), sometimes relishing sambhoga-rasa (feelings of meeting), and sometimes creating confusion here and there.

Kuta also refers to annakuta, the festival held by Nanda Baba and the Vrajavasis on the kuta, the peak, of Giriraja Govardhana. Lord Madhusudana is there, tasting the honey of the love and affection of gopas, gopis, cows and all Vrajavasis; their rati-rasa is there. Those who serve the lotus feet of the maha-purusa will have a chance to dance with all the gopis and Lord Krsna in rati-rasa.

yat te sujata-caranamburuham stanesu
bhitah sanaih priya dadhimahi karkasesu
tenatavim atasi tad vyathate na kim svit
kurpadibhir bhramati dhir bhavad-ayusam nah

["O dearly beloved! Your lotus feet are so soft that we place them gently on our breasts, fearing that Your feet will be hurt. Our life rests only in You. Our minds, therefore, are filled with anxiety that Your tender feet might be wounded by pebbles as You roam about on the forest path."(Srimad-bhagavatam, 10.31.19)]

Ultimately, in connection with this verse, kuta does not mean annakuta, nor does it mean Giriraja kuta. It means something else. When Krsna feels tired, He wants to keep His lotus feet on the lotus-like breasts of the gopis. This is the highest meaning of the word kuta; it ultimately refers to Radhika. That person serving a maha-purusa can feel all the elevated moods of the gopis, and especially those of Srimati Radhika. These are some of the hidden meanings of the verse by Sri Vidura.

Lord Kapiladeva told his mother:

satam prasangan mama virya-samvido
bhavanti hrt-karna-rasayanah kathah
taj-josanad asv apavarga-vartmani
sraddha ratir bhaktir anukramisyati

["In the association of pure devotees, discussion of the pastimes and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very pleasing and satisfying to the ear and the heart. By cultivating such knowledge one gradually becomes advanced on the path of

liberation, and thereafter he is freed, and his attraction becomes fixed. Then real devotion and devotional service begin." (Srimad-bhagavatam 3.25.25)]

Lord Kapiladeva is an incarnation of Sri Krsna – a saktyavesa-avatara. Here he is speaking to his mother, Devahuti, who is an exalted devotee. She questioned him, "How can my life be successful?" By his mercy he spoke this verse. Later, after he left home, she became oblivious to the external world. She had no bodily consciousness. She would take off her garments and forget to use them. She would be quite naked and, apparently like an animal, she was not conscious of when she would pass stool or urine. She forgot her surroundings.

bhaktistu bhagavat bhakti sangena parijayate
sat-sanga prapyate pumbhah skurtaih purva sanditah

["Bhakti becomes manifested by the association of the Lord's devotees. The association of devotees is obtained by previous accumulated piety."]

If one is fortunate, if he has served sadhus – those who are krsna-tadiya (belonging to the Supreme Personality of Godhead) – sadhu-samagama (the place where one meets a sadhu) will come to him. There are two kinds of sadhu-samagama – madhyama and uttama. First, without your awareness of what is transpiring, a sadhu will come and create your sukriti by engaging you in some kind of service. Then, more advanced sadhus will come, and you will begin to be qualified to hear from them.

You cannot easily understand what the most elevated class of sadhu is telling or not telling. However, you can render some service to him. You can give him a small sweet, some garments to wear, or a drink of water. You can present them gifts of this world, but you cannot understand the transcendental subjects spoken by them and the depth of their association. Gradually, by such service, you will have an urge to inquire from him, and then you will develop so much taste in hearing him.

You should pray to Krsna's associate, the high class Vaisnava, maha-purusa, "Prabhu, I want mahat-sanga."

So, first a madhyama-adhikari will come, then a more advanced devotee, a kanistha-mahabhagavata, then a madhyama mahabhagavata and after that an uttama-mahabhagavata like Sri Narada Rsi and others will come to you.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu will send you to Sri Svarupa Damodara, who is Srimati Lalita devi in Krsna-lila, and to Sri Raya Ramananda who is Srimati Visakha devi. We cannot imagine the extent of Lord Krsna's mercy. It may be that a sadhu-sanga that is higher than Uddhava will come, and that sadhu will tell you hari-katha. He will tell you the nectar topics of rasa-lila from Gopi-gita, Brahmara-gita and Venu-gita, and by the result of hearing these subject matters you will be overjoyed. Karuna-rasayana. These kathas are not like quinine. When a person is sick with malaria, quinine is given with a sugar coating. This hari-katha is not like that.

Karuna rasyana; hrdaya rasayana. This hari-katha is very tasteful. It is nectar for the heart. Parama sukya daya. It gives the highest happiness.

In Brahmara-gita Srimati Radhika is saying, "Oh bumblebee, go away from here." She has become mad in love and affection in separation. "Oh bumblebee, you are impure. You are a liar, and you are the messenger of the greatest liar in the entire world. He has taught you how to try to pacify Me. For Him we have left our homes and became street-beggars. For Him. From now on we will not make any compromise. Go away at once! I don't want you here!"

The bumblebee replies, "Oh, Svaminiji, my Prabhu, Krsna, is totally innocent. He wants to serve You. If You think He is not qualified for this, then why do You continually speak about Him? Give it up. Forget Him." Srimati Radhika replies, "That's the problem. We can be separated from Him, but we cannot be separated from His hari-katha."

She instructs us, "Oh, audience, don't hear krsna-katha, otherwise you will become mad. You will become like birds without a nest, always weeping, "Krsna, Krsna, Krsna", and making your family members weep. Krsna is cruel, and hari-katha is cruel like Him. So never hear His hari-katha. If anyone comes to you carrying Srimad-bhagavatam under his arm, boycott him. Do not go to listen to his katha."

This hari-katha, the words spoken by the pure servants of Srimati Radhika and the gopis, is so powerful that it can cause the endless chain of birth and death to disappear in a moment. A desire to serve Krsna will develop and that desire will gradually increase. First sraddha will manifest, gradually bhava-bhakti (rati) will appear, and then, step by step, prema-bhakti will appear.

First sraddha will come, and then anarthas will go away by performing bhajana and engaging in guru-padasraya (taking shelter of the lotus feet of a bona fide self-realized Guru) and all the other limbs of bhakti. Then, anisthitha-bhakti (unsteady devotion), then nisthitha (steady) bhakti, then ruci (taste) and asakti (attachment), and then rati will come, and gradually prema-bhakti will come.

Here, prema-bhakti means seva-nisthitah (fixed in continuous service). An example is Hanuman, who is always serving Rama. Higher than Hanuman are the Pandavas, higher than the Pandavas is Uddhava, still higher are the Vrajavasis, and among them Madhumangala, Sridama, and Subala are so high. Higher still is Nanda Baba, than Yasoda-maiya, and higher than them are the gopis. Among them Candravali and others are very high. Still higher are Lalita and Visakha, and the highest is Srimati Radhika.

If you continually hear hari-katha under the guidance of any pure Vaisnava, then sraddha, rati, and pure bhakti will automatically come.

Among the sixty-four limbs of bhakti; these nine are the most important:

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

["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. (Srimad-bhagavatam 7.5.23)]

Among the nine, these five are the most important.

sadhu-sanga, nama-kirtana, bhagavata-sravana
mathura-vasa, sri-murtira sraddhaya sevana

"One should associate with devotees, chant the holy name of the Lord, hear Srimad-Bhagavatam, reside at Mathura and worship the Deity with faith and veneration. (Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila 22.128)

Among the five, sravanam, kirtanam and smaranam are the most important, and among these harinama sankirtana is the most important.

ceto-darpana-marjanam bhava-maha-davagni-nirvapanam
sreyah-kairava-candrika-vitaranam vidya-vadhu-jivanam
anandambudhi-wardhanam prati-padam purnamrtasvadanam
sarvatma-snapanam param vijayate sri-krsna-sankirtanam

["Let there be all victory for the chanting of the holy name of Lord Krsna, which can cleanse the mirror of the heart and stop the miseries of the blazing fire of material existence. That chanting is the waxing moon that spreads the white lotus of good fortune for all living entities. It is the life and soul of all education. The chanting of the holy name of Krsna expands the blissful ocean of transcendental life. It gives a cooling effect to everyone and enables one to taste full nectar at every step. (Sri Siksastakam, verse 1)

All your desires, including the desires you don't know you should have, will be fulfilled.

Gaura Premanandi!

[Endnote 1: "Thus Maharaja Dhrtarastra, the scion of the family of Ajamidha, firmly convinced by introspective knowledge (prajna), broke at once the strong network of familial affection by his resolute determination. Thus he immediately left home to set out

on the path of liberation, as directed by his younger brother Vidura." (Srimad-bhagvatam, 1.13.29)

Editorial Advisors: Pujyapada Madhava Maharaja and Sripad Brajanatha dasa

Transcriber: Janaki dasi and Vasanti dasi

Editor: Syamarani dasi

Typist: Anita dasi