

[Respected Readers, Obeisances to you all.

Srila Narayana Maharaja has just completed a successful two-week preaching tour of California, giving classes in Los Angeles, San Diego, Badger and San Francisco. We recently sent one of the lectures from Los Angeles, as well as two tour-photo reports, and you will be receiving the rest of the California classes soon. Right now though, while we are in the process of preparing those classes, today and tomorrow we are sending Part 1 and 2 of Srila Narayana Maharaja's recent class in Australia.]

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

DON'T WORRY ABOUT OTHERS

Murwillumbuh, Australia: April 29, 2005 (PART 1)

We are now discussing Raya Ramananda Samvad. It was for this reason – so that Sri Krsna as Krsna Caitanya could relish the topics of Sri Radha's divine love – that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu told Raya Ramananda to come to Puri. Raya Ramananda then resigned from his post as a government officer and came to Puri.

Sri Caitanya-caritamrta is based on Svarupa-kadaca. Kadaca is a diary composed of verses. Srila Svarupa Damodara used to express in his diary what he realized while being with Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami also has a diary, in which he expressed his development under the guidance of Svarupa Damodara. Svarupa Damodara used to tell Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami what he had heard from Mahaprabhu, and Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami would include that also in his diary. Both diaries combined and became the basis of Sri Caitanya-caritamrta. Thus, in Sri Caitanya-caritamrta we find Srila Svarupa Damodara's verse as follows:

sri-radhayah pranaya-mahima kidrso vanayaiva-
svadyo yenadbhuta-madhurima kidrso va madiyah
saukhyam casya mad-anubhavatah kidrsam veti lobhat
tad-bhavadhyah samajani saci-garbha-sindhau harinduh

["Desiring to understand the glory of Radharani's love, the wonderful qualities in Him that She alone relishes through Her love, and the happiness She feels when She realizes the sweetness of His love, the Supreme Lord Hari, richly endowed with Her emotions, appeared from the womb of Srimati Saci-devi, as the moon appeared from the ocean." (Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 1.6)]

Why has this verse been quoted here? What is the need? It has been quoted especially to show the three topics that were realized by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Mahaprabhu had inspired this in the heart of Raya Ramananda, and that is why Raya Ramananda was able to repeat it to Him. Without mercy, no one can know these topics. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu had sprinkled His mercy on Raya Ramananda – not outwardly but inwardly – unseen by others.

In the scripture Brhad-Bhagavatamrta, we find another example of this. (*See endnote 1) The brahmana Jana Sarma intellectually understood all the philosophical truths he had heard from his guru, but he could not realize them. Then, at one point his guru, Gopa Kumara – who was sent by Srimati Radhika – placed his hands on Jana Sarma's head and said: "You will now realize everything I have taught you." Jana Sarma at once realized everything and saw, "I am going to Goloka Vrndavana!" He immediately reached Vrndavana and saw Sri Krsna.

This history illustrates the effect of sadhu-sanga. Sadhu-sanga is very, very powerful – but the standard of sadhu-sanga should be there. The sadhu must be real. In other words, he must be a perfect, self-realized soul. In addition, the student or disciple must be surrendered to that sadhu.

I have told you how Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu crossed the river Godavari and took His bath on its other bank. After bathing, He walked a little distance from the bathing place and did his ahnika (utterance of the diksa-mantras). Always try to follow the instructions given by sri guru regarding the chanting of the diksa-mantras. Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami has written in his prayer, Sri Manah-siksa (verse 1): "O my dear brother, my foolish mind! Taking hold of your feet, I humbly pray to you with sweet words. Please give up all pride and quickly develop sublime and incessant attachment for Sri Gurudeva, Sri Vraja-dhama, the residents of Vraja, the Vaisnavas, the brahmanas, my diksa-mantras, the holy names of the Supreme Lord, and the shelter of Sri Sri Radha-Krsna, the eternally youthful divine couple of Vraja."

So don't fail to meditate on your mantras three times a day. If you are a married person you may have so many things to do. Therefore, if you cannot do your meditation at noon, you may do it twice in the morning and the third time in the evening. As for sannyasis and brahmacaris (renunciates and celibate students) – those who have left home – they should do it at three separate times – morning, noon and evening. You must utter the mantras given by your guru. Chant your mantras daily, very respectfully and with one-pointed attention. At that time, your mind must not be upset. Don't be in a hurry; be calm and quiet, and chant. Even Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was doing this, so why should you not do so?

At the beginning of His conversation with Ramananda Raya, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, "I am a mayavadi (impersonalist) sannyasi." Someone once quoted this statement, saying that it is certain that Mahaprabhu was a mayavadi sannyasi because He had taken sannyasa from the mayavadi sannyasi named Kesava Bharati. But this is not true. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu took harinama initiation and diksa (brahminical initiation) from Sri Isvara Puripada. Isvara Puripada is His gurudeva and Kesava Bharati is His sannyasa-guru. Moreover, before receiving the sannyasa-mantra from Kesava Bharati, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu told him: "Oh, you are going to give me THIS mantra?" At that moment Mahaprabhu uttered the sannyasa mantra in his ear and thus cleverly gave it to him first. What mantra was that? "Tat tvam asi." What is the meaning? "I am an eternal servant of Sri Krsna." Kesava Bharati had taken sannyasa in the line of the leader of the mayavada

philosophy, Sripad Sankaracarya. Madhvacarya (*See endnote 2) also took sannyasa in the line of Sankaracarya, but neither he nor Kesava Bharati were mayavadis. Mayavadi means nirviesa-vadi, one who thinks that the Absolute Truth is without qualities and personality. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu defeated all the arguments of the mayavada scholar Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya, whereas he used to pay great respect to his gurudeva, Isvara Puripada. After Isvara Puripada's physical disappearance from this world, He went to his birthplace and took some earth from there. He put this earth very carefully in a bag tied to His outer garment, wept, and uttered no word other than "Isvara Puri". He used to eat a small portion of this earth daily, saying, "This earth is from the birthplace of Isvara Puri. It is My wealth. It is My life-breath."

If Caitanya Mahaprabhu is not a mayavadi, why did He tell Ramananda Raya, "I am a mayavadi sannyasi"? It is because He was humble, more so than a blade of grass. He followed the principles of the following verse, and all Vaisnava devotees should be like Him in this regard.

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)]

Especially sannyasis should be like this. All Vaisnavas should give honor to others. Don't worry about what others are doing. Don't see whether others are doing nonsense or whatever else. Don't criticize. Ask yourself: "How well am I developing in Krsna Consciousness? Am I following 'trnad api sunicena taror api sahisnuna amanina manadena'?" We should also be aware of Lord Sri Krsna's statement in the Bhagavad-gita: "Api cet su duracaro bhajate mam ananya bhak". ["Even if one commits the most abominable action, if he is engaged in devotional service he is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated in his determination." (Bhagavad-gita 9.30)] Don't worry about a sincere devotee's temporary material contamination – otherwise your own life will be spoiled.

Our constitutional religion is bhakti. If someone is beginning to develop one-pointed bhakti, but there is still some impurity in his being, do not criticize him. Do not quarrel with him. You should know that kala (the Time factor) is very powerful, but those who have taken shelter at the lotus feet of Sri Krsna can walk on the head of personified Time and all other obstacles. (Time is one of the biggest obstacles.) So we should try to be surrendered, always one-pointed, and also helping others.

Now, Ray Ramananda is telling Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, "I am a sudra. I belong to the sudra community." Why did he say this? He was also humble – trnad api sunicena. Actually he was not a sudra. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura Prabhupada has said that those who think he was a sudra are offenders and they will not attain bhakti.

Srila Haridasa Thakura was not a Muslim, although by social consideration he appeared to be. In the consideration of constitutional religion he is a pure maha-bhagavata. He was nama-acarya, the great teacher and great example of pure chanting of the holy names of Sri Krsna, and he gives shelter to fallen souls. Srila Rupa Gosvami and Srila Sanatana Gosvami said about themselves, "We are Muslims." Vaisnavas are not Mohammedans or Muslims. They are not in any materially designated religion. They are jagad-guru, gurus for the entire universe. When they say, "We are Muslims," we should consider they are simply being humble – trnad api sunicena.

As the dialogue continued between Raya Ramananda and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Raya Ramananda told the Lord, "If you have come to reform me, please do so. You are patita pavana, the deliverer of the fallen. You are parama-dayalu, most merciful. You, a sanniyasi, have touched me, although I am untouchable. He then quoted a verse:

mahanta-svabhava ei tarite pamara
nija karya nahi tabu yana tara ghara

["It is the general practice of all saintly people to deliver the fallen. Therefore they go to people's houses, although they have no personal business there." (Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, Madhya 8.39)]

He also quoted:

mahad-vicalanam nṛṇa m
grhiṇām dina-cetasam
niḥsreyasaya bhagavan
nanyatha kalpate kvacit

["My dear Lord, sometimes great saintly persons go to the homes of householders, although these householders are generally low-minded. When a saintly person visits their homes, one can understand that it is for no other purpose than to benefit the householders." (Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, Madhya 8.40 / Srimad Bhagavatam 10.8.4)]

The background behind the utterance of this verse is as follows: when Sri Krsna and Balarama Prabhu were about six months old, Vasudeva Maharaja (who was imprisoned in King Kamsa's jail in Mathura) requested the sage Gargacarya, "Please go to Vrndavana. There, my two sons Krsna and Balarama are living with Nanda Maharaja. The appropriate time to do their nama-samskara (sacred name-giving ceremony) has come now, so please go there and perform that ritual." Gargacarya went there in disguise; in other words no one knew he would be going there. If anybody would have known that Vasudeva Maharaja had sent him, King Kamsa, Sri Krsna's sworn enemy, would have at once taken serious steps. He would have come to know Krsna's whereabouts and would have tried to kill Him. Therefore, Gargacarya went there in a stealthy way.

When he arrived at Nanda Baba's palace, Nanda Baba uttered the above-mentioned verse in great humility. Mahad-vicalanam refers to the movement of great personalities. Who is mahad? Who is the great soul? Srila Sanatana Gosvami explains: those who have a desire to serve Krsna, and are actually serving Him – they are truly great. Others are not. So Nanda Maharaja told Gargacarya, "You are a great transcendentalist. You have no personal business here. You have come here for two reasons. The first reason is that I am always engaged in household life, absorbed in a relationship with my wife and children. I am absorbed in looking after my home and properties." Who is telling this? Nanda Baba – the direct father of Lord Sri Krsna. His son is Sri Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself – and HE is saying, "I am a fallen soul, solely engaged in lowly household affairs."

Actually Nanda Baba is not telling this for himself. He is telling it for us; because it is we who are always engaged in mundane household life. We forget Sri Krsna, we forget sri guru and the Vaisnavas, and instead of serving them we always engage in mundane affairs.

Still, somehow you are somewhat fortunate, for you are in good association. You are now realizing something about spiritual and material matters, but there are some weaknesses also. Try to drive out all these weaknesses.

As Nanda Baba addressed Gargacarya as a great soul, so Ramananda Raya addressed Mahaprabhu as maha-purusa, a great, self-realized soul. Mahaprabhu is not only a maha-purusa. He is maha-maha-maha purusa. He is the source of all incarnations, the original Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is Krsna Himself. In fact, He is even greater than Krsna. He is Radha and Krsna combined. He is Sri Krsna Himself. Yet, we can also see Him as a maha-bhagavata – because He has played that role.

A parallel verse was told by Maharaja Yudhisthira to his uncle, the self-realized soul Vidura, "My Lord, devotees like your good self are verily holy places personified. Because you carry the Personality of Godhead within your heart, you turn all places into places of pilgrimage." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.13.10)

Some time before the Mahabharata battle was fought, Vidura had left his position, his prime ministry, his home, relatives and property. Vidura's brother King Dhritarastra was blind, both internally and externally. He was actually the fallen materialistic householder. Vidura tried hard to convince him to reject his son Duryodhana who, due to envy, had been trying in various ways to kill his cousins, the Pandavas. Vidura advised him to call the Pandavas and give them proper respect. At that moment Duryodhana came and said, "You are ungrateful. On one hand you are maintained by us, and on the other hand you sabotage us." Srimad Bhagavatam quotes Duryodhana: "Who asked him to come here, this son of a kept mistress? He is so crooked that he spies in the interest of the enemy against those on whose support he has grown up. Toss him out of the palace immediately and leave him with only his breath." (Srimad Bhagavatam 3.1.15) Hearing this, Vidura at once gave up his crown, his ministry and home, and left that place.

After that the battle of Kuruksetra was fought, almost all were dead, including Duryodhana and all his brothers. Of the few warriors who survived, on one side were the five Pandavas and Krsna, and on the other side Asvathama, Kṛpacarya and Kṛtavarma. Actually, though, no one on the opposite side remained – because they were defeated.

After the war Vidura returned to the palace. He knew that Krsna had left this world, and that the entire Yadu dynasty had gone, but he did not reveal all these facts. During his visit, Yudhisthira Maharaja spoke this verse: "Oh, a Vaisnava like you is a personified holy place (tirtha), because you keep Lord Gadadhara in your heart." There, Lord Krsna holds a club (a translation of the word gada, and in Vraja He holds a flute (another meaning of gada). Gadadhara ultimately means He who holds a flute to his lips – that very Gadadhara. "Now the tirthas are worried. All kinds of sinful persons are taking bath there, and the devotees desire that their waters be pure again. Sri Krsna therefore sends persons like you, O Vidura. Wherever you go to take bath, that place becomes a tirtha."

At the end of the initial meeting of Ramananda Raya and Mahaprabhu, Raya Ramananda returned to his palace. Before he left, however, Mahaprabhu told him, "I will wait for you in the evening, so please come. We will speak about the philosophy and pastimes of Lord Sri Krsna (hari-katha)."

In the evening Mahaprabhu waited there. Mahaprabhu Himself eagerly waited there. And Raya Ramananda was also waiting for that moment when they would again meet. He came there, with only one servant and wearing very simple garments. He had come in a hidden way – in a secret way. Upon his arrival, he saw that Mahaprabhu had been waiting, and he offered his obeisances. He wanted to fall at the Lord's lotus feet, but Mahaprabhu at once embraced him. Both experienced asta-sattvika-bhavas, the eight transcendental symptoms of ecstasy (inertness, perspiration, standing of hairs on end, faltering of the voice, trembling, paleness of the body, tears in the eyes and finally trance). Then they sat down and began to discuss hari-katha. Mahaprabhu began asking questions and Ramananda Raya was answering.

When Vaisnavas meet, there is no question of asking, "How are you?" They know all this. Rather they will ask, "How is your bhajana (devotional practice) going on?" You should try to ask questions like this: "How is your bhajana? How are you developing in your hearing, chanting and remembering Krsna?"

* [Endnote 1 – In Brhad-Bhagavatamṛta, 2.7.14, Srila Sanatana Gosvami has written:

mahat-sangama-mahatmyam
evaitat paramadbhutam
krtartho yena vipro 'sau
sadyo 'bhut tat-svarupavat

“The glory of mahat-sanga is super-astounding. By the influence of that glory, Jana Sarma’s life immediately became successful, like that of his Guru, Svarupa. He became a

personal friend of Sri Krsna by the association of Svarupa, who was known as Gopa Kumara in this world. That he immediately attained bhagavat-prema demonstrated the immense value of association with a great personality. Just like Svarupa, within an instance that brahmana felt fully gratified.”

*[Endnote 2 – "Srila Madhvacarya is the original acarya for those who belong to the Madhva-Gaudiya-sampradaya." (Srimad Bhagavatam, 6.1.40.purport) "This Madhva-Gaudiya-sampradaya is also known as the Brahma-sampradaya because the disciplic succession originally began from Brahma. Brahma instructed the sage Narada, Narada instructed Vyasadeva, and Vyasadeva instructed Madhva Muni, or Madhvacarya." (*Krsna*, Introduction).

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