

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

# YOU, THE LIVING ENTITY

Badger, California: June 15, 2005 (part 2)

[Throughout his visit in Badger this year, Srila Narayana Maharaja based his evening lecture course on Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura's book, Sri Srimad Bhagavata Arka Maricimala. In that book, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura explains different principles of existence in different chapters, each of which are like the sun's illuminating rays. The particular chapter, or ray, of this class is called "The Traits of the bound Souls." In each chapter the Thakura quotes many verses of the Bhagavatam to clarify the matter, and Srila Narayana Maharaja clarified the subject still further for his international audience of 600 devotees:]

There are various types of svamsa (plenary) incarnations, such as the purusa-avatars, and lila-avatars like Lord Rama. There are three purusa-avatars; the first, second and third Visnu incarnations: Karanadakasayi Visnu, Garbhodakasayi Visnu, and Ksirodakasayi Visnu. [Each of these incarnations controls various aspects of creation, maintenance and destruction of material existence.]

Regarding the Lord's incarnation as the infinitesimal living entity (vibhinamsa jiva), to understand this more clearly, we may take the example of cintamani. Cintamani is a transcendental, wish-fulfilling stone. It can create all opulences to fulfill anyone's desires, such as for gold coins, etc. Cintamani remains the same, no matter how much gold emanates from it. Although the gold emanates from cintamani, it is not cintamani itself. Similarly, something is there of the Lord's qualities in the living entity, in very minute quantity. When the gold is in the cintamani, there is no distorted transformation. However, when it will come out of the cintamani, it will be transformed. Similarly, when the jiva is Krsna conscious, he has spiritual qualities like Sri Krsna, but when he is entangled in maya, those qualities appear lost and perverted; material qualities abound.

ekah suddha svayam-jyotir  
nirguno 'sau gunasrayah  
sarva-go 'navrtah saksi  
niratmatmamanah parah

["The Supreme Soul is one. He is pure, nonmaterial and self-effulgent. He is the reservoir of all good qualities, and He is all-pervading. He is without material covering and He is the witness of all activities. He is completely distinguished from other living entities, and He is transcendental to all embodied souls."(Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.20.7)]

The above-mentioned verse describes the qualities of Parabrahma, the Supreme Soul. There is some difference between that Supreme Soul and the individual soul. Some persons say that we are all God. These persons utter such phrases as "tat tvam asi," "sarvam kalvidam brahma [brahma here means the impersonal absolute spirit]," "prajnanam brahma"\*[See endnote1] and "aham brahmasmi."

Why have these statements been uttered in the Srutis (Vedas)?\*[See endnote 2] You should know that Sankaracarya is very “tricky”. Although he appeared as the leader of the impersonalists, he has actually come to fulfill the desire of Lord Krsna. Krsna had told him, “Go and hide Me from all the demons who are serving Me, worshipping Me (by arcana and puja) with a desire to be very strong like Hiranyakasipu and Ravana.” Go and tell them, “Why are you worshipping Krsna? You yourself are brahma. Sarvam kalvidam brahma. We are all brahma.”

You should know that we are not brahma, meaning we are not an impersonal God. We are part and parcel of Sri Krsna who is the Supreme Brahma, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. We are eternal servants of Lord Krsna. Krsna is one without a second, whereas the jiva is unlimited in number. In one drop of blood there are millions of jivas. The jivas are unlimited in number – here, in Vaikuntha and in Goloka Vrndavana – and in all cases and all places they are different from the Lord. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura has quoted the above-mentioned verse, wherein the Lord is personally telling the differences between Himself and the unlimited, infinitesimal living entities.

Is the jiva here in this microphone? Can you say, or not? No, he is not here. Is Paramatma (Supersoul) here or not? Yes. Nothing in this world exists without Paramatma’s presence.

In this body, on the other hand, there is both jiva and Paramatma. There are two souls within each body – the infinitesimal jiva and the Lord’s manifestation as Paramatma. One is entangled in fruitive karma and the other is a witness. The Supreme Lord does not enjoy anything material. He is not conditioned, but the jivas are so. They are sense enjoyers, engaged in trying to enjoy the fruits of their activities.

As stated in the above-mentioned verse, the Supreme Lord is eternally pure. Maya is far away from Him and His abode. Yogamaya is there, however, and she is visuddha (completely pure and transcendental). Maya cannot attract the Lord, but the jiva is very minute, and he can be attracted by maya at any time. Sri Krsna is always pure and self-illuminating, whereas the jiva, influenced by illusion, can be contaminated by mistaken identity. Sri Krsna is nirguna. Nirguna can be taken to mean without qualities. At the same time all transcendental qualities are present in Him. Nirguna and saguna (with all qualities) are therefore the same. Krsna is both nirguna and saguna, and the jivas can also come to this stage.

All transcendental qualities are in Krsna. He is very beautiful. He is here in this world, but in the form of four-handed Paramatma (in the individual heart and in each atom). To those who perform bhajana of Krsna like Sri Bilvamangala Thakura and others, Krsna Himself appears, as Vrajendra-nandana. To those who serve Vaikuntha Narayana in His four-handed form, He appears as Lord Narayana. To others He appears as the very small Paramatma – the witness of all our activities. Jiva is not like that. Sri Krsna is the eternal Absolute Truth.

The jiva is the infinitesimal spirit soul, and He is supreme (param) among all jivas. “Nityo nityanam cetanas cetananam.” Of all eternal, He is the supreme, and of all living beings, He is supreme. As stated in the above-mentioned verse, there are nine qualities of the Lord that are different from the qualities of the conditioned jivas:

ekah—one without a second; suddhah—eternally pure; svayam—self; jyotih—effulgent; nirgunah—without material qualifications; asau—that; guna-asrayah—the reservoir of good qualities; sarva-gah—able to go everywhere (The liberated living entities can also be everywhere, as they desire to serve; Sri Krsna fulfills their wish); anavrtah—without being covered by matter; saksi—witness; niratma—without another self; atma-atmanah—to the body and mind; parah—transcendental.

The jiva is a separated part and parcel of Krsna, but don't think he is separate. He has no separate existence. He will always be subordinate to Krsna, in Goloka Vrndavana and here also.

[Question:] Is the jiva conscious of what he is doing when he chooses to turn away from Krsna and look towards maya?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] No; he is thinking, “I am doing the best thing. I will enjoy.” He is like a baby boy who is trying to catch fire. He does not realize what he is doing. He thinks the fire is something to eat.

[Question:] You explained that Sripad Sankaracarya's duty was to keep the demons away from bhakti. But if the demons practice bhakti, why wouldn't they become purified?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] They want to be like demons; they want only material power. Ravana performed bhakti of Brahma and Sankara, for power and control of the world – to give trouble to the world. Druva Maharaja performed bhakti for power. He worshipped Lord Narayana for a kingdom. So bhakti must be there. Without bhakti you cannot do anything, and with bhakti you can attain Svarga (heaven), or whatever you want.

Once, Vidura went to Badrikasrama in the Himalaya Mountains. Maitreya Rsi was there, and he was very learned and an object of Lord Krsna's mercy. Krsna had previously told Vidura, “Later on you should go to Maitreya. I have told everything to Uddhava and Maitreya. Maitreya will give you all knowledge.” Vidura now approached Maitreya Rsi and asked him, “It is very amazing that although the jiva is a conscious being and always connected with Lord Krsna, Parabrahma, he becomes entangled in maya. How is this?” (Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.7.6)

Maitreya replied, “I can tell you, in brief, the only reason. Lord Krsna's power is agatan-gatan patiyasi sakti – that power can make the impossible possible. This is the only reason. She (that power), hides the mercy of Krsna (Paramatma), and the jiva becomes a conditioned soul.”

She is the power of Krsna. She cannot do anything against Krsna's will. Why, then, is Krsna doing such a thing that so many jivas are intensely suffering? The answer is that there are so many pastimes of Krsna. Why not this one? This is srsti-lila, the pastime of creating the material world. There should be no lacking in Sri Krsna's variety of pastimes. There will be no question: "Why?" Krsna is quite independent. You cannot ask Him the question: "Why have You done so?" You cannot understand Him by argument or logic.

Acinta khalu ye bhava na tams tarkena yojayet

[“We should not try to understand things beyond our material conception by argument and counter-argument.”(Skanda Purana)]

Don't try to understand transcendental things by your limited mind. We should rely on what the Vedas have told, and especially what the essence of the Vedas, Srimad-Bhagavatam, has told. We should rely on what the Gosvamis – who have given us the essence of Srimad-bhagavatam – have told. We should rely on them.

Only by Sri Krsna's inconceivable energy does the jiva come under the sway of the misconceptions of "I", "me" and "mine." By that, he becomes bewildered by maya. By constitutional form, the jiva is pure. Although minute, he has come from cit-sakti (Krsna's transcendental power); there is nothing material in his constitution.

We see that we are now bound by a material body of five elements. After the glancing of the Lord over the un-manifest material nature, first mahat-tattva comes, then false ego, after that mind and intelligence, and then this gross body. This is called bondage – but this bondage is not reality; it does not touch the soul. Do not think it is true. This misunderstanding is called svarupa-brahma, misconception of the self, and especially the misconception of bodily identification.

Maitreya Rsi was telling all this to Vidura, and he continued to reply in the following ways:

If there is no sun, there is darkness. What is darkness? There is actually no existence of darkness; it is simply an absence of the sun. Similarly, if there is no service to Krsna, there is maya. As you sleep at night, you may see in a dream that your head is being cut off. However, when you awaken, you will see that nothing like that has happened. Similarly, when you awaken to Krsna consciousness by the mercy of guru, you will think, "What was I seeing? It was like a dream." If suffering is coming, don't be upset or nervous. Think only that this apparent suffering is due to your being asleep.

yad arthena vinamusya  
pumsa atma-viparyayah  
pratiyata upadrastuh  
sva-siras chedanadikah

["The living entity is in distress regarding his self-identity. His misconception has no factual background. He is like a man who dreams that he sees his head cut off."]

Here is another example: The moon is in the sky. There is water in a pond, and the moon is reflected in it. There is also a tree there on the bank of that pond, and when the wind blows and there are ripples in the pond, it seems as though the moon and the tree are moving back and forth. Actually, the tree is where it was and so is the moon – they are not trembling. Similarly the jiva is serving Krsna, but it seems like he is not serving.

yatha jale candramasah  
kampadis tat-krto gunah  
drsyate 'sann api drastur  
atmano 'natmano gunah

["As the moon reflected on water appears to the seer to tremble due to being associated with the quality of the water, so the self associated with matter appears to be qualified as matter."]

If you place a cloth over a watch, you do not see any movement – but there is movement. Similarly you are the cit-sakti jiva (spirit soul, the transcendental energy of the Lord). You are somehow serving Lord Krsna even in this stage of bondage, but you don't realize it. The demon Kamsa was serving in an indirect way. If there was no Kamsa, there would be no sweet pastimes of Sri Krsna in Vraja. If there was no Ravana, there would be no sweet pastimes of Lord Rama. Don't think you are not serving; you are simply in a dream.

Sri Narada had a momentary vision of Sri Krsna in His form of Lord Narayana, and then the Lord disappeared. Narada wept bitterly, and then an aerial voice came and said, "Don't be upset. By my mercy I have given you a momentary vision to increase your transcendental greed. Now you cannot see me because there is a slight scent of maya in your heart. Now you should go everywhere with your vina instrument and glorify me." You will thus become fully purified, and qualified to see me perpetually.

Narada muni bhajaya vina radhika-ramana name  
Nama amani, udita haya, bhakata-gita-same

["The supremely rasika Narada Muni plays his vina, singing the names of Sri Radhika-ramana. Hearing this kirtana, Sri Radha and Sri Radhika-ramana Themselves immediately descend, dancing and tasting the bhava of Their own devotees." (Narada Muni, verse 1)]

Lord Narayana told him, "Wait for some time, and in the end you will attain my association." This took place in Narada's former life. In that life, having followed the Lord's instructions, Narada achieved perfection. Now, in this life, he told Srila Vyasadeva:

prayujyamane mayi tam

suddham bhagavatim tanum  
arabdha-karma-nirvano  
nyapatat païca-bhautikah

[“Having been awarded a transcendental body befitting an associate of the Personality of Godhead, I quit the body made of five material elements, and thus all acquired fruitive results of work [karma] stopped.]

Thus, Narada explained his own life’s experience.

We all have a siddha-deha, a beautiful transcendental form, and by that form we can serve Krsna. Now that form is covered. However, by the mercy of Krsna and guru, all anarthas (unwanted habits and mentalities) gradually go away and we reach the stage of bhava. At that time suddha-sattva (devotion that is transcendental to the modes of material nature) descends, and we can realize our siddha-deha. This stage is called svarupa-siddhi.

Here Narada Muni is in vastu-siddhi (the spiritual body, with no encumbrance of the material covering), not only svarupa-siddhi. He had realized the svarupa-siddhi stage before. We each have a very beautiful, marvelous body called siddha-deha, which is hidden here in the heart. By receiving the mercy of Sri Krsna, as Narada received it, this gross body, mind, intelligence, false ego and contaminated consciousness go away. This is a general rule. This was also true of Druva Maharaja. He left his gross body, but no one else could see this.

Regarding Lord Krsna, on the other hand, do not think that He left His material body when He disappeared from the world’s vision. Materialists say that a dead body was there, and that smarta brahmanas performed samskaras (the last rites) of that body. This is cheating and nothing else.

Try to attain the mercy of Gurudeva, and through him, try to perform bhajana as Narada Rsi did.

srnvan su-bhadrani rathanga-paner  
janmani karmani ca yani loke  
gitani namani tad-arthakani  
gayan vilajjo vicared asangah

[An intelligent person who has controlled his mind and conquered fear should give up all attachment to material objects such as wife, family and nation. He should wander freely without embarrassment, hearing and chanting the holy names of the Lord, the bearer of the chariot wheel. The holy names of Krsna are all-auspicious because they describe His transcendental birth and activities, which He performs within this world for the salvation of the conditioned souls. Thus the holy names of the Lord are sung throughout the world. (Srimad-bhagavatam 11.2.39)]

evam- vratah sva-priya-nama-kirtya  
jatanurago druta-citta uccaih  
hasaty atho roditi rauti gayaty  
unmada-van nrtyati loka-bahyah

[By chanting the holy name of the Supreme Lord, one comes to the stage of love of Godhead. Then the devotee is fixed in his vow as an eternal servant of the Lord, and he gradually becomes very much attached to a particular name and form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As his heart melts with ecstatic love, he laughs very loudly or cries or shouts. Sometimes he sings and dances like a madman, for he is indifferent to public opinion.” (Srimad-bhagavatam 11.2.40)]

Such a pure devotee has no shyness at all. He chants loudly. Whether he is naked or dressed, he does not know. He always remembers the pastimes of Krsna, sometimes weeping, “Krsna where are You?” Sometimes he rolls on the ground, laughing “ho, ho.” All ordinary people think that he is mad, but he is not mad.

This status is the aim and object of our life, so you should try for it. Always try to engage your mind in sravanam (hearing), arcanam (worshipping), and especially nama-sankirtana (chanting the holy names of the Lord). If you are always engaged in these ways, maya will not be able to attract you; otherwise she can attract you.

Gaura-premanande hari hari bol

\*[Endnote 1 – The general meaning of “prajnanam brahma” is “transcendental knowledge is non-different from brahma (the impersonal, spiritual absolute truth.” The real meaning is “Sri Krsna’s identity is realized by love and devotion (bhakti)” (Editorial Advisors)]

[Endnote 2 – Similarly, the Chandogya Upanisad (6.8.7) teaches, tat tvam asi: “You are non-different from that Supreme Truth.” In this prayer, the personified Vedas refer to the finite enjoyer of material bodies (the jiva soul) as an expansion of the transcendental reservoir of all potencies, the Supreme Lord. (Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.87.20 Purport)

The Mayavadi philosopher teaches the philosophy of tat tvam asi, saying, “You are the same as God.” He forgets that tat tvam asi applies in terms of the marginal position of the living entity, who is like sunshine. There is heat and light in the Sun, and there is heat and light in the sunshine, and thus they are qualitatively one. But one should not forget that the sunshine rests on the Sun. (Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.16.57 Purport)

Tat tvam asi is but a side word in the Vedic literatures, and therefore this word cannot be the primeval hymn of the Vedas. Sripada Sankaracarya has given more stress on the side word tat tvam asi than on the primeval principle omkara.” (Srimad-Bhagavatam Introduction)

The Vedic injunctions say, tat tvam asi, “You are the same,” and so’ham, “I am the same.” The impersonalist conception of these mantras is that the Supreme Lord, or the Absolute Truth, and the living entity are one, but from the devotee’s point of view these mantras assert that both the Supreme Lord and our selves are of the same quality. Tat tvam asi, ayam atma brahma. Both the Supreme Lord and the living entity are spirit. (Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.22.37 Purport)

From the statement tat tvam asi, found in the Chandogya Upanisad, it is to be understood that spiritual knowledge is not impersonal but entails gradually perceiving the pure spiritual soul within the material body. Just as in Bhagavad-gita Krsna repeatedly says aham, or “I,” this Vedic aphorism uses the word tvam, or “you,” to indicate that just as the Absolute Truth is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the individual spark of Brahman (tat) is also an eternal personality (tvam). Therefore, according to Srila Jiva Gosvami it is to be understood that the individual spark of Brahman is eternally conscious. Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura has further pointed out that instead of wasting time trying to understand the truth in its impersonal aspect, which is merely the negation of temporary material variety, one should try to understand oneself to be an eternally conscious entity in the jiva category. (Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.3.38 Purport)]

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