

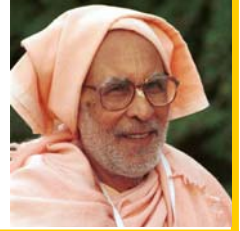


Bhakti Patrika

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Guided and Inspired by
Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja

Gundica Mandira Marjana (Part 2)

Excerpts from classes given by Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

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Chant

Hare Krishna
Hare Krishna
Krishna Krishna
Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama
Rama, Rama Hare Hare

And Be Happy.

(Continued from last Issue)

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and all His associates swept and cleaned everywhere. Mahaprabhu personally took His *uttariya-vesa* (sannyasa upper cloth), and He cleaned the spots that were very stubborn.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu washed and cleansed the Gundica Temple with His devotees and associates. In this way He made it as cool and bright as His own heart, and thus He made the temple a befitting place for Sri Krishna to sit.

Then Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu began to wash the sitting place of Lord Jagannatha with His own hands, and all the devotees began to bring water to the Lord.

The Lord mopped the rooms with His own clothes, and He polished the throne with them also.

We should give up all our worldly positions and ego that dictates, "I am so intelligent; I have so much power; I am the superintendent; I am the Lord of all."

All the devotees were sweeping, as was Caitanya Mahaprabhu Himself. First they swept away very big stones, stone chips, and pieces of grass. If you want to make a seat in your heart for Radha and Krishna, your heart must be like Vrndavana, and if you do not make your heart very pure and transcendental like Vrndavana, Krishna cannot come. If you have any worldly desires, they will be like thorns pricking Krishna's body. These thorns are lust, anger, greed, envy, attachment for worldly things, quarrelling, and criticizing. If you want *bhakti*, don't criticize anyone. Be tolerant and follow this

verse:

*trnad api sunicena
taror api sahisuna
amanina manadena
kirtaniyaù sada harih*

Siksastaka (3)

One who thinks himself lower than the grass, who is more tolerant than a tree, and who does not expect personal honour, yet is always prepared to give all respect to others, can very easily always chant the holy name of the Lord.

We should be very humble, even more so than a blade of grass, and we should also be more tolerant than



a tree. Even if a tree is dry, it will never request, "Water! Water! Water!" If someone cuts the branches of a tree, it will not protest, "Oh, spare me! Don't cut me!" It will never speak like that. Mango trees give very sweet mangoes, even if one throws stones at the tree in an attempt to make the mangoes fall.

The bark, seeds, fruits, leaves, and sap of trees are always for others, not for themselves.

Krishna tells us that we should be like the trees. In other words, our lives should be for others, not for ourselves, and our lives should be especially for Krishna. If one lives only for himself, he is lower in consciousness than the trees.

If you do not have these four qualities, you will never be able to chant, because the holy name is transcendental. You cannot chant with your tongue, and you cannot see Krishna with your eyes.

*atah sri-krsna-namadi
na bhaved grahyam indriyaih*

Gundica Mandir Marjana

*sevonmukhe hi jihvadau
svayam eva sphuraty adah
Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu (1.2.234)*

Material senses cannot appreciate Krishna's holy name, form, qualities, and pastimes. When a conditioned soul is awakened to Krishna consciousness and renders service by using his tongue to chant the Lord's holy name and taste the remnants of the Lord's food, the tongue is purified, and one gradually comes to understand who Krishna really is.

You should think, "I am serving Krishna by chanting – this is my service. O Krishna, please purify me." If you surrender and offer yourself unto the lotus feet of Krishna, He will mercifully come and dance on your tongue.

There are three stages of chanting: *nama-aparadha*, *nama-abhasa*, and *suddha-nama*. When you practice by your tongue and by your endeavour, this is *nama-aparadha*. When you chant with some *sraddha* (faith), then it will be *nama-abhasa*, and if your chanting is pure, then Krishna Himself will dance on your tongue. We should try to pray to Krishna, "I offer myself unto Your lotus feet, giving up all worldly desires. I have no beloved except You. You are mine." Be like the gopis, and then Krishna may come.

When the stones were cleared away, the devotees then swept again to collect all the dust. The devotees swept three times, and there is a deep meaning behind this. We have committed so many offences, we are in so much ignorance, and we have so many unwanted habits. We should very boldly and strongly give up activities that are not favourable for Krishna-*bhakti*, and we should very boldly reject things and people that are not favourable to *bhakti*. We should totally reject any wish, any desire, or any result that is not favourable for pleasing Krishna.

Always try to accept only the things, the society, and the association that are favourable for *bhakti*. Do not desire or expect praise for yourself. Never have any wish to be honoured by others, but always give honour to all devotees according to their standard of *bhakti*. The heart of a devotee who is chanting and remembering Krishna should be pure.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is therefore telling us, "You must purify your hearts, if you want to be devotees and realize Krishna, and if you want Krishna to be seated in your hearts." But you have no power to do it. You cannot purify your hearts, so who will purify them? You can do it if you are under the guidance of Sri Caitanya Ma-

haprabhu, His associates and His devotees. Otherwise, your doubts will never go away, you will commit offences, and you will remain attached to unwanted habits. So many desires to taste worldly enjoyment will come to you, and you will not be able to check them.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu is therefore instructing us. He Himself was sweeping, along with His devotees, in order to teach us. That is why His devotees swept a first time, then a second time, and then a third time. The first time they swept, they removed big stones, chips, and grasses; the second time, they removed very fine dust; and the third time still finer dust.

When all the dust was taken out, there still remained spots of black tar, which cannot be removed simply by sweeping. For this you will have to try much harder. You will have to use a very sharp instrument, and then you will have to wash off the spots with a cleaner like kerosene or alcohol. These spots are our offences, and they will not disappear by sweeping alone. These spots are deceit (*kutinati*) and desires for profit (*labha*), adoration (*puja*), and fame (*pratistha*).

Sri Caitanya-caritamrta (*Madhya-lila* 19.159) has explained this: "Some unnecessary creepers growing with the *bhakti* creeper are the creepers of behaviour unacceptable for those trying to attain perfection: diplomatic behaviour, animal killing, mundane profiteering, mundane adoration, and mundane importance. All these are unwanted creepers."



Do not associate with those who do not believe in the personal form of Krishna or Godhead. To such persons, everything is God, which means that everything is zero. Also, do not associate with those who are lusty – one should remain very far away from such people. Do not tell lies, do not be duplicitous, do not be politicians, and do not be hypocrites. These are basic principles.

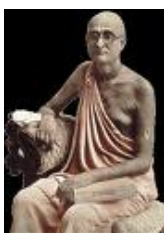
First be pure by body, mind, and soul, by chanting and remembering, and by always serving *vaisnavas* and giving them proper respect. Don't commit violence to anyone. Violence does not only mean killing by the hands or by a weapon. It also means killing by the tongue, mind, or heart. Do not be envious. If you want to be pure devotees, remove envy from your hearts and don't criticize anyone.

The aspiring devotee must remove all these spots quickly, and Caitanya Mahaprabhu therefore took His own outer garment and washed everything – up, down, here, there, and everywhere. He did not leave even one corner unclean. This is the meaning of "sweeping the heart". At this stage you will honour even a creeper and a tree, what to speak of devotees. You will see Krishna everywhere, and then you will be able to honour everyone properly. We should try to sweep in our hearts today, on this sacred day of *gundica-mandira-marjana*.

(To be continued in the next Issue)

Who is the True Guru?

Srila Bhaktisiddanta Saraswati Thakura Prabhupada



Who is the true Guru? It is he who is constantly engaged in the service of Sri Hari. And who is the truly learned man? It is he who, in the words of Sri Krishna, is well conversant with actual knowledge of the *jiva's* (living entity) bondage and his deliverance from it (cf. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 11.19.41).

We should only accept as our *guru* he who employs all of his time, cent per cent, in God's service. Otherwise we will fail miserably by following him. *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta* has instructed us: "A true *guru* teaches his disciple through his own behaviour and practice. He cannot teach *dharma* (religious principles) who does not abide by it himself."

The *srutis* instruct us, "one who seeks true knowledge of *tat* – that Supreme Being – should gather the necessary articles for initiation and approach a *guru* who is conversant in the *Vedas* and steeped in realization of Brahman – the Supreme Spirit" (*Mundaka Upanisad* 1.2.12). This instruction has also been given in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (11.3.21): "One who seeks his highest well-being should surrender himself to a *guru* who is well-versed in the imports of the *Vedas*, who has full realization of Parabrahma and who has thereby become the shelter of true peace." Neither platform-speakers, who are but skilled in giving speeches, yet who conduct themselves improperly, nor professional priests can be *gurus*.

One who does not stay constantly engaged in *hari-bhajana* (devotional service to Sri Hari) will be anxious to take up other engagements on the strength of *sri-nama* (Holy Name) and will thus risk committing the severe *aparadha*, or offence, of utilizing *sri-nama* in sinful affairs. Moreover, one who acts in the capacity of *guru* for a salary or according to a contract cannot be a *guru*, nor can one who reads the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* blindly. First of all, refrain from approaching such professional priests and platform-speakers. Observe whether or not they fully devote their time to *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. For one who is steeped or accomplished in realization of Parabrahma, one's full time is occupied with service to God.

From whom should we hear the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*? We should hear and learn the *Bhagavatam* from a true vaisnava, for it cannot emanate from the mouth of one who is not a *bhagavata*, or true devotee. Pretending to ably recite it just leads others astray. He who does so is himself deceived and as such, deceives others. How can the *Bhagavatam*, which is not different from the Supreme Lord, really play on the tongues of the professional readers who pose as conversant scholars when reading it before others, but who have no true devotion to the Supreme Lord due to being engaged in worldly enjoyment? On the plea of discussing the *Bhagavatam*, they simply gratify their own senses instead of the senses of Sri Krishna.

He who is anxious for his true well-being should never come in contact with such professional readers and thereby court his own downfall, while falsely believing that he will truly be benefited by accepting them as his *gurus* and hearing from them as though he were their disciple. How can someone who is busy with the maintenance of his wife and children; who is fully devoted to his desire for worldly enjoyments, which arise out of illusion; and who tries to employ God, the highest Entity worthy of adoration and service, in supplying him fuel for the fire of those enjoyments; act as *jagad-guru*, or the true instructor of all people?

What do we observe in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and in the conduct and preaching of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His devotees? Those who foster within their hearts fear, affliction, illusion, sensual desires, greed, and feelings of frustration in relation to their bodies, wealth, friends and so on due to their attachment to some object other than God, have not surrendered themselves to God. Such undedicated individuals cannot advise others to surrender to God. Even if they give verbal instructions, their preaching, which is bereft of any practical examples from their own conduct, is ineffective.

Only a *mahabhagavata* (exalted devotee of God) who has no worldly possession or attachment, and who has sincerely surrendered himself to Krishna and exclusively serves Him twenty-four hours a day can legitimately occupy the *acarya's* (*spiritual preceptor*) seat.

Question: Who will be delivered?

Answer: It is only when we do not engage ourselves in service to Bhagavan (Supreme Lord) that other thoughts, characteristic of the enjoying mentality, grasp us. The embodiment of compassion, Sri Krishna, is always ready to protect us from this danger, but how will we be protected if we do not entirely depend upon Him? As the *guru*, Krishna protects the living entity. Sri Guru is the embodiment of Krishna's mercy. Sri Gurudeva, the representative of Sri Krishna, descends to this world to deliver the living entity from material existence and bring him back to Krishna. Only those fortunate seekers of the Truth who whole-heartedly accept the mercy of Sri Gurudeva can be delivered from this material existence and enter into the abode of transcendental peace and happiness.

Srila Bhaktisiddanta Saraswati Thakura Prabhupada

The Way to Return Home

*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 Krishna 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]



Becoming Krishna conscious brings about *anartha-apagamah*, the disappearance of all unwanted things, the miserable conditions we have unnecessarily accepted. The material body is the basic principle of these unwanted miserable conditions. The

entire Vedic civilization is meant to relieve one from these unwanted miseries, but persons bound by the laws of nature do not know the destination of life. As described in the previous verse, *isa-tantryam uru-damni baddhah*: they are conditioned by the three strong modes of material nature. The education that keeps the conditioned soul bound life after life is called materialistic education. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura has explained that materialistic education expands the influence of *maya*. Such an education induces the conditioned soul to be increasingly attracted to materialistic life and to stray further and further away from liberation from unwanted miseries.

One may ask why highly educated persons do not take to Krishna consciousness. The reason is explained in this verse. Unless one takes shelter of a bona fide, fully Krishna conscious spiritual master, there is no chance of understanding Krishna. The educators, scholars and big political leaders worshiped by millions of people cannot understand the goal of life and take to Krishna consciousness, for they have not accepted a bona fide spiritual master and the Vedas. Therefore in the *Mundaka Upanisad* (3.2.3) it is said, *nayam atma pravacanena labhyo na medhaya na bahuna srutena*: one cannot become self-realized simply by having an academic education, by presenting lectures in an erudite

way (*pravacanena labhyah*), or by being an intelligent scientist who discovers many wonderful things. One cannot understand Krishna unless one is graced by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Only one who has surrendered to a pure devotee of Krishna and taken the dust of his lotus feet can understand Krishna. First one must understand how to get out of the clutches of *maya*. The only means is to become Krishna conscious. **And to become Krishna conscious very easily, one must take shelter of a realized soul--a mahat, or mahatma--whose only interest is to engage in the service of the Supreme Lord.** As the Lord says in *Bhagavad-gita* (9.13): "O son of Prtha, those who are not deluded, the great souls, are under the protection of the divine nature. They are fully engaged in devotional service because they know Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, original and inexhaustible."

Therefore, to end the unwanted miseries of life, one must become a devotee. "One who has unflinching devotional faith in Krishna consistently manifests all the good qualities of Krishna and the demigods." (*Bhag.* 5.18.12)

*yasya deva para bhaktir
yatha deve tatha gurau
tasyaite kathita hy arthah
prakasante mahatmanah*

"Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed." (*Svetasvatara Upanisad* 6.23)

"The Lord is obtained only by one whom He Himself chooses. To such a person He manifests His own form." (*Mundaka Upanisad* 3.2.3)

These are Vedic injunctions. One must take shelter of a self-realized spiritual master, not a materially educated scholar or politician. One must take shelter of a *niskincana*, a person engaged in devotional service and free from material contamination. That is the way to return home, back to Godhead.

Translation and commentary by Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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BHAKTI - International Society for Bhakti-yoga

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