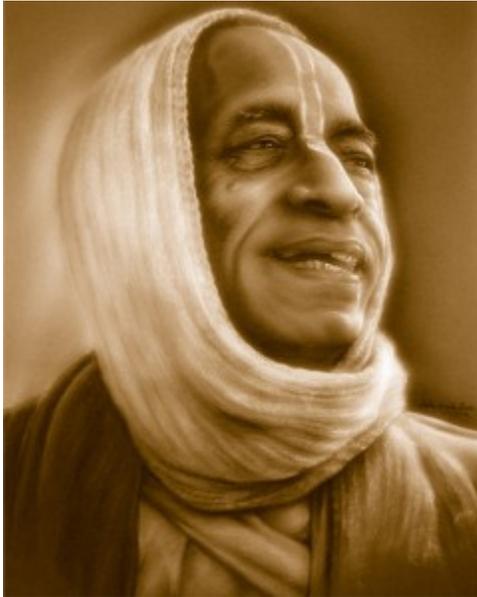


The Spiritual Reality Is Perceived Through The Ears

THE FOLLOWING LECTURE ON SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM, CANTO 3, CHAPTER 9, QUESTIONS BY VIDURA, TEXT 11, WAS GIVEN BY HIS HOLINESS BHAKTI CHARU SWAMI ON 5 MAY 2009 IN ISKCON MANHATTAN, US.



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Audio reference: [click here](#)



Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya
Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya
Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya

Hare Krishna! Nice to be here in the middle of so many wonderful devotees, especially to be with Radhanatha Maharaja, Lakshmi Narsimha prabhu, Rameshvara prabhu, Badarayani prabhu and all of you. Yogeshvara prabhu, so nice to see you

[Devotee:] His Holiness Bhakti Charu Maharaja ki jaya!
[BCS:] Srila Prabhupada ki jaya!

So the verse hasn't been written on the board so I'll just read through the verse. Reading from Srimad Bhagavatam, third Canto, chapter nine 'Brahma's Prayers For Creative Energy', text eleven.

tvam bhakti-yoga-paribhavita-hrit-saroja
asse srutekshita-patho nanu natha pumsam
yad-yad-dhiya ta urugaya vibhavayanti
tat-tad-vapuh pranayase sad-anugrahaya

Reading the translation straight away:

O my Lord, Your devotees can see You through the ears by the process of bona fide hearing, and thus their hearts become cleansed, and You take Your seat there. You are so merciful to Your devotees that You manifest Yourself in the particular eternal form of transcendence in which they always think of You.

Purport:

The statement here that the Lord manifests Himself before the devotee in the form in which the devotee likes to worship Him indicates that the Lord becomes subordinate to the desire of the devotee — so much so that He manifests His particular form as the devotee demands. This demand of the devotee is satisfied by the Lord because He is pliable in terms of the transcendental loving service of the devotee. This is also confirmed in Bhagavad-gita (4.11): ye yatha mam prapadyante tams tathaiva bhajamy aham. We should note, however, that the Lord is never the order supplier of the devotee. Here in this verse it is particularly mentioned: tvam bhakti-yoga-paribhavita. This indicates the efficiency achieved through execution of matured devotional service, or prema, love of Godhead. This state of prema is achieved by the gradual process of development from faith to love. On faith one associates with bona fide devotees, and by such association one can become engaged in bona fide devotional service, which includes proper initiation and the execution of the primary devotional duties prescribed in the revealed scriptures. This is clearly indicated herein by the word srutekshita. The srutekshita path is to hear from bona fide devotees who are conversant with Vedic wisdom, free from mundane sentiment. By this bona fide hearing process, the neophyte devotee becomes cleansed of all material rubbish, and thus he becomes attached to one of the many transcendental forms of the Lord, as described in the Vedas.

This attachment of the devotee to a particular form of the Lord is due to natural inclination. Each and every living entity is originally attached to a particular type of transcendental service because he is eternally the servitor of the Lord. Lord Chaitanya says that the living entity is eternally a servitor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna. Therefore, every living entity has a particular type of service relationship with the Lord, eternally. This particular attachment is invoked by practice of regulative devotional service to the Lord, and thus the devotee becomes attached to the eternal form of the Lord, exactly like one who is already eternally attached. This attachment for a particular form of the Lord is called svarupa-siddhi. The Lord sits on the lotus heart of the devotee in the eternal form the pure devotee desires, and thus the Lord does not part from the devotee, as confirmed in the previous verse. The Lord, however, does not disclose Himself to a casual or unauthentic worshiper to be exploited. This is confirmed in Bhagavad-gita (7.25): naham prakasah sarvasya yoga-maya-samavritah. Rather, by yoga-maya, the Lord remains concealed to the non-devotees or casual devotees who are serving their sense gratification. The Lord is never visible to the pseudo devotees who worship the demigods in charge of universal affairs. The conclusion is that the Lord cannot become the order supplier of a pseudo devotee, but He is always prepared to respond to the desires of a pure, unconditional devotee, who is free from all tinges of material infection.

[End of Purport]
(invocatory prayers)

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So, Maitreya Rishi is narrating Srimad Bhagavatam to Vidura. Vidura was instructed through Uddhava by Krishna that he should go to Maitreya Rishi and receive instructions from Maitreya Rishi, just before Krishna left the planet. So Vidura went to Maitreya Rishi and found Maitreya Rishi in the holy place on the bank of the Ganges, Haridwara. And there he sincerely inquired from him with some very relevant, spiritual questions. Maitreya Rishi started to respond, to reply to his questions. And then he told him that now he is going to answer these questions through narrating Srimad Bhagavatam.

This Bhagavatam has another parampara. This is a parampara that came from the four Kumaras, headed by Sanat Kumara, that he received from Sankarshana. Then Sanat Kumara narrated it to Sankhyayana Rishi. Sankhyayana Rishi narrated it to Parashara Muni and Parashara Muni gave it, imparted it to Maitreya Rishi. So at the beginning Maitreya Rishi told him that this is how the knowledge has come down to him. And we can see that both the Bhagavatam, what Maitreya Rishi told Vidura and the way Sukadeva Gosvami presented it to Parikshit Maharaja, there is no difference.

Maha Purana Bhagavatam has ten symptoms which begins from creation: sarga, then visarga, sthana, poshana, uthaya, manvantara, isanukatha, nirodha, mukti and then ultimately ashraya, which is even beyond mukti, even beyond liberation. That is the narration of Srimad Bhagavatam. That is the supremacy of Srimad Bhagavatam. This is a topic which is meant for liberated souls. The qualification to receive Srimad Bhagavatam has been described in the beginning of the Srimad Bhagavatam: when one becomes completely free from envy and his heart becomes completely purified, paramo nirmatsaranam satam. [SB 1.1.2] Satam, when one becomes completely purified from all material contamination, his heart becomes free from envy, nirmatsaranam, then only he becomes qualified to hear Srimad Bhagavatam and understand Srimad-Bhagavatam.

So that same point has been narrated by Maitreya Rishi: the Supreme Personality of Godhead in Vrindavana. Prabhupada described that that point, ashraya, the summum bonum, the ultimate conclusion, the ultimate achievement is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is beyond liberation. Liberation is not desired by the devotees in the line of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Even other Vaishnava sampradayas may desire for liberation, mainly the four kinds of positive liberation: sarupya, samipya, salokya and sarsthi. But Chaitanya Mahaprabhu pointed that out to the tattva-vadis when He met them in South India. Tattva-vadis in the line of Madhva sampradaya, they proposed that the ultimate goal of life is to attain liberation in Vaikuntha. So Mahaprabhu actually made a point to them, then if that is the case then why diyamanam na grihnanti vina mat-sevanam janah [CC Antya 3.189], that if liberation is offered to My devotees, not the negative liberation of sayujya but even the positive liberation (sarupya, samipya, salokya and sarsthi), diyamanam, even if it is offered, na grihnanti, they do not accept it. A pure devotee of Mine does not accept that.

Mahaprabhu made another point: muktir hitva anyatha rupam svarupena vyavasthitih. [SB 2.10.6] Like mukti actually means to become situated in one's svarupa. So when one becomes situated in his svarupa then he doesn't have to desire for liberation. And liberation, muktih mukulitanjalih sevate'sman [Bilvamangala Thakura]: with folded hands Mukti Devi is begging the devotees to be engaged in their service. Mukti Devi is begging for the service to the devotees of the Lord. Therefore, why should a devotee desire for liberation separately? So in this way Chaitanya Mahaprabhu pointed out that pure devotional service is beyond mukti and mukti or liberation is just a side effect. Just as, it has been pointed out, Haridasa Thakura when he was speaking in the house of Raghunatha Dasa

Gosvami's parents, he just made that point, that
koti-janma brahma-jnane yei mukti naya,
ei kahe,- namabhase sei mukti haya.

[CC Antya 3.194]

The liberation that one cannot achieve even after millions of lifetimes of Brahman realization, that liberation is achieved just by namabhase, not even by pure names, just by namabhase. Just the shadow or the reflection of the Holy Name gives mukti. So what Holy Name or pure devotional service offers is something that is way beyond liberation. What is that? That is prema. Mukti may take us to a situation of peace, but joy, anandam, is not achieved by mukti. Anandam is derived from the loving exchange between the lover and the beloved. So that is why that is the ultimate goal of life, and Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura summarized this gift of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in this way: prema pumartha mahan [Chaitanya-matta-majusa]. The ultimate goal of life, pumartha, purushartha is prema.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's gift, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's teachings have been summarized in a very simple way, a very systematic way. What is Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's teachings? Aradhyo Bhagavan, the Supreme worshipable Personality of Godhead is the son of Nanda Maharaja. Not the son of Devaki and Vasudeva, not Vaasudeva Krishna, but Nandanandana Krishna specifically. And He is confirming that point, tad dhama Vrindavana, His abode is Vrindavana, not Mathura or Dwaraka. Krishna of Vrindavana is the Supreme worshipable Personality of Godhead. Aradhyo Bhagavan vrajesha-tanayas, the son of Nanda Maharaja. [Caitanya-matta-manjusa, by Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura] And tad dhama Vrindavana, His abode, His dhama is Vrindavana Dhama. And ramya kacid upasana vraja-vadhu-vargena va kalpita, the way the vraja vadhus, the cowherd damsels worshipped Him that is the highest form of worship. Ramya kacid upasana vraja-vadhu-vargena va kalpita, and Srimad Bhagavatam pramanam amalam. The question may arise what's the proof? How do you substantiate this statement of yours? The answer is: Srimad Bhagavatam, the amala purana, the spotless purana. Srimad Bhagavatam is the proof. Srimad Bhagavatam puranam amalam and prema pumartha mahan, to receive Krishna prema is the ultimate goal of life. Sri-caitanya mahaprabhor matam idam tatradaarah na parah, this is the conclusion, these are the teachings of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Sri-caitanya mahaprabhor matam idam and tatradaarah, just accept it, and na parah, there is no need to accept anything else. Everything can be rejected, just accept this. So this is the ultimate culmination of Srimad Bhagavatam which has been presented here by Maitreya Rishi, which has been presented by Srila Sukadeva Gosvami, which has been presented by Srila Suta Gosvami and then finally the sum total, the crux and the essential understanding of Srimad Bhagavatam has been given by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

So here it is very interesting to note that Brahma is telling Narada Muni, Brahma is instructing Narada, Brahma is narrating his realization, how he appeared, how the creation began. At the end of the millennium, the devastation, the water of devastation put everyone to sleep so to speak. Death is kind of sleeping. The difference between death and sleep is, in sleep we wake up in the same body and in death we wake up in another body. So death is actually a prolonged, uninterrupted sleep. So at the time of annihilation everything is withdrawn actually. The Lord withdraws every living entity. Now, what's the difference? The difference is that one can go back to the Lord in his spiritual form, receiving his spiritual identity, then when he goes back then he is situated with the Lord. But another kind of going back to the Lord, just as it happens after the annihilation that they go back but they remain in their subtle body. They remain in their subtle body and the total subtle substance then at the beginning of creation penetrates through the navel of the Lord. And the total subtle substance assumes the form of the lotus. That has been explained by Maitreya Rishi. And then Brahma finds himself, the first created being, finds himself in that lotus. Brahma's situation is like, someone just wakes up and doesn't have any recollection, doesn't have any memory of his past. He completely forgot who he was, the past is completely blank and he just woke up and finds himself sitting on a lotus in a vast pool of water.

So Brahma began to wonder, "Who am I? And where did I come from? And what I am supposed to do here?" So Brahma thought that if he climbed down the stem of the lotus and reach the bottom of the lotus then he would find it. He thought that because he was situated on the top of the lotus, maybe the bottom of the lotus will provide him the answer. So Brahma climbed down through the stem of the lotus and it has been described that he came very close to the origin. He came very close to the navel of the Lord. That means he came very close to the Lord but he couldn't see Him. Why? Because aprakrita vastu nahe prakrita-gocara [CC Madhya 9.194], the transcendental reality cannot be perceived with mundane senses. So Brahma's senses were not purified at that time. Therefore although he came so close to the Lord, still he couldn't perceive the Lord. Although he came directly from the Lord,

in one sense it can be said that he is the son of the Lord, but still he could not see the Lord, couldn't see Garbhodakasayi Vishnu.

So then Brahma came up and sat on top of the lotus and he began to wonder, "Now what am I going to do?" And the water of the Garbha ocean splashed against each other creating the sound 'tapah, tapah', and that sound vibration actually inspired Brahma from within that now you withdraw your senses from external projection and project them internally through austerity. That is the austerity, to withdraw the senses, tapah, or austerity is to withdraw the senses from the external projection and project it internally. And then Brahma received the mercy of the Lord. By playing the flute the Lord gave him Gayatri and meditating on the Gayatri the transcendental reality became manifest to Brahma. This aspect has been described in Brahma Samhita. And when Brahma saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead he began to offer his prayers. Just like this also, it's actually Brahma's prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead after he perceived Him, and Brahma Samhita is another version of Brahma's prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead after he perceived Him.

And we can see, Brahma was actually seeing the Lord in the spiritual sky face to face. He saw the spiritual sky, what it is like. Cintamani-prakara-sadmasu kalpa-vriksha. [Brahma Samhita, 5.29] It's a beautiful piece of land. That land is actually made of touchstones. All the buildings there, all the structures there are made of touchstones. Cintamani-prakara-sadmasu kalpa-vriksha. It's a forest but in that forest all the trees are desire trees. Surabhir abhipalayantam, and there the Supreme Personality of Godhead is tending His cows and all these cows are Surabhi cows. Now what is touchstone, cintamani? By coming in contact with a touchstone a base metal becomes gold, but that is the material aspect. That's not a touchstone actually, that's not cintamani. That is the reflection of touchstone in the material nature, parasmani, but touchstone, the characteristic is that it turns other substances into touchstone. And Surabhi, Surabhi has a daughter, called Nandini owned by Vashistha, and that can supply anything. So that is the quality of Surabhi cow. Like, that cow can even generate an army which defeated Vishvamitra's army. Vishvamitra was a king and he wanted to forcefully take away Surabhi from Vashistha and when his soldiers were dragging Surabhi away, with tears in her eyes Surabhi appealed to Vashistha that, "Look, I am like your daughter. You are like my father, and see in front of your eyes these people are molesting me. So won't you do anything?" Vashistha said, "Look, I am a brahmana. I can't take to violence but if you want you can defend yourself." Surabhi was just waiting for that command. She immediately generated an army and that army fought with Vishvamitra's army and defeated his army and drove them away. And that is how Vishvamitra decided that, he realized that the brahminical power is superior to kshatriya power, so he wanted to become a brahmana from his kshatriya situation. So in this way we can see the potency of a Surabhi cow. The Surabhi cow can offer anything that one wants.

So that place Vrindavana is filled with Surabhi cows and the cows that Krishna is tending, they all are Surabhi cows. The forest of Vrindavana is made of desire trees, the forest of desire trees. And these desire trees also can fulfill any desire. So this is what is Vrindavana. And Lakshmi-sahasra-shata-sambhrama-sevyamanam, there Krishna is sporting with these cowherd damsels. But who are these cowherd damsels? There are hundreds and thousands of cowherd damsels. They all are Lakshmis. So this is how Brahma saw Vrindavana, and there he saw Krishna face to face.

alola-chandraka-lasad-vanamalya-vamshi-
ratnangadam pranaya-keli-kala-vilasam
shyamam tribhanga-lalitam niyata-prakasham
govindam adi-purusham tam aham bhajami
[Brahma Samhita, 3.31]

So Krishna's beautiful form is bent in three places, tribhanga-lalitam. And His form has the complexion of a beautiful monsoon cloud, the color of a beautiful monsoon cloud, shyamam. Ghana Shyama. And there is a necklace hanging on His chest along with a flower garland, vanamalya, and vamshi, He is playing the flute. And He is very wonderfully playing, having his loving exchange, pranaya-keli-kala-vilasam. He is having a wonderful loving exchange with the damsels of Vrindavana and the residents of Vrindavana. So that is Brahma's perception of Krishna in the spiritual sky.

This is how the spiritual perception actually takes place and that is the point that Brahma is making here. In this particular verse Brahma is saying that when one receives the transcendental sound vibration through his ears then he

sees the transcendental reality. This is a different type of perception. This perception is not taking place through our eyes. This perception is taking place through our ears. The transcendental sound vibration is actually a mantra. Mantra is the sound that is coming from the spiritual sky. The sound coming from the spiritual sky means the sound that is actually describing the spiritual sky. The description or the sound form of spiritual substance is coming down in the form of mantra. And when that mantra is properly received and properly meditated upon then the mantra becomes manifest in the form of the transcendental reality.

So that is why it has been described here that sruta panthah, or the expression that has been used here is srutekshita-patho. Sruta-ikshita, sruta means heard through ears and ikshita means seen. So it is a different kind of seeing: a seeing through the ears. That's why this process is known as sruta panthah and this process has been described elaborately, or rather explained by Srila Prabhupada. Prabhupada is explaining that none of our senses can perceive the spiritual reality. Spiritual reality is beyond our sense perception, therefore the spiritual reality is adhokshaja. Aksha means senses, akshaja means sense perception and adho-akshaja means beyond our sense perception. The spiritual reality is beyond our sense perception, so we cannot see the spiritual reality through our senses. We cannot perceive the spiritual reality through our mundane senses. With our senses we can only perceive the material objects, material nature, but the spiritual reality is beyond our sense perception. So the word adhokshaja literally means beyond sense perception.

Srila Prabhupada is pointing out that there is only one sense that can actually reach that reality. What is that? Our ears. How? The sound vibration that comes down from the spiritual reality, when it is received properly through our hearing then we become eligible to perceive the spiritual reality. So that is the process, sruta panthah. Sravanam kirtanam, first thing is sravanam, hearing. And how that hearing takes place? Satam prasangan mama virya samvido [SB 3.25.25], in the association of satam, in the association of devotees. Then mama virya samvido bhavanti hrit-karna rasayanah kathah. In the association of devotees we get to receive the very powerful narration of the activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And when that enters through the path way of our ears into the region of our hearts, hrit-karna and rasayanah kathah, it creates an inconceivable emotion, churning all the mellows and taj-josanad asv apavarga-vartmani, and as a result of that we become free from apavarga, we become free from pavarga: the path of, or varga of the suffering condition in this material nature. Pavarga consists of five letters: pa, pfa, ba, bha, ma. Parishrama,[unclear],endeavor, struggle, hardship, parishrama. And as a result of that our mouth begins to foam, phena. Then we realize that all our endeavors have been futile, vyartha, and then as a result of that we become very fearful, bhaya, and then finally (ma) mrityu.

So this is the state of our existence in this material nature: a total waste of endeavor which will ultimately lead to death. But what Krishna consciousness does? Our hearing about the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His extremely wonderful qualities and activities immediately frees us from this material existence which is centered around birth and death or samsara, samsara chakra, which is starting with birth and ending with death, a cycle of birth and death. We are rotating in that cycle constantly. But when we become fortunate enough to hear the wonderful activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead from the mouth of a self realized pure devotee of the Lord, then immediately we become free from the cycle of birth and death. And then what happens? Shraddha rati bhaktir anukramishati. And as a result of that we develop shraddha, faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the words of the devotees, the instructions of the devotees. And when we act according to that instruction, with the understanding that our constitutional position is that of the servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, when we become engaged in that loving service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead then shraddha gradually develops into rati and bhakti. Gradually of course it develops. There are other stages in between. From shraddha comes to bhajana kriya, bhajana kriya to anartha nivritti, anartha nivritti to nistha, then nistha it comes to rati. But here it has been pointed out gradually from shraddha it will take us to rati, and rati gradually to bhakti. And this bhakti is prema.

So that love is the ultimate goal of life. That has been pointed out time and time again in the Vedic scriptures, that love prema pumartha puman. We all want love. We all want to love somebody and we all want to be loved by somebody. In the material world everyone is actually endeavoring, whatever one does practically is for the sake of this to love of to be loved. But unfortunately we do not know whom to love. Love is there in our heart, which is actually a means, a power, an energy to unite us with Krishna. Love is actually an energy that is meant to unite a jiva with the Supreme Personality of Godhead but when we are forgetful of the Supreme Personality of Godhead then we repose that love, we offer that love to different other objects hoping to get that result and outcome of that love, that

is joy. But no matter wherever we offer it, we do not become satisfied because we are offering it at a wrong place. Therefore the heart always remains discontent in all the love affairs in this material nature. But when that love is offered to the supreme object of our love, then that love becomes successful and then the heart automatically becomes satisfied. Not only it becomes satisfied, it becomes filled with joy.

So that is the prema leading to ananda. Ananda is synonymous to prema, or interlinked with prema. Prema will lead to ananda and ananda is the ultimate desirable object that every living entity is hankering for. And this love affair also is so wonderful, that here is somebody who already loves us, the problem is that we do not love Him. And that's why the love is not complete. A loves B but B doesn't respond, what happens? A is frustrated. A is so disappointed. But then one fine morning A receives a letter from B saying "I love you." How does A feel? So that is the situation with Krishna. Krishna loves us. Prabhupada made that point that if He doesn't love us then why is He following us wherever we are going? If He doesn't love us, then why He is accepting all kinds of dirty situations that we are subjecting ourselves to? And then we consider Krishna's mercy upon us. We can immediately see how much He must be loving us. All these wonderful arrangements that He made for us, why would He have done that, why would He have made those arrangements if He didn't love us? So He loves us but we do not love Him. That's the problem. But then if someday we just say, "Krishna, I love You," then Krishna begins to dance in ecstasy. That is how wonderful the relationship is. And how do we say, "Krishna, I love You?" Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare / Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare.

Srila Prabhupada ki jaya! Gaura Premanande Hari Haribol!

Maharaja, do you have any comment?

Rameshvara prabhu? No, at first comment. You have to comment, meaning you have to further enlighten us.

Rameshvara prabhu: I can tell a Prabhupada story.

BCS: Yeah, sure.

Rameshvara prabhu: There was once a group of devotees who

BCS: Do you have a mike?

Rameshvara prabhu: No, it's okay, they aspired for the highest type of devotional service. So they stopped all their activities, and they just wanted to talk about and hear about and read about madhurya lila. This was in Hawaii, some years ago. They didn't want to read Isopanishad. They didn't want to hear about any other form of Krishna at all. So Prabhupada came there and brought some, the devotees observed how he is going to handle that, they watched this. And Prabhupada was very angry, that you cannot force yourself to enter into this madhurya lila. You can't force yourself to become a gopi or an assistant of the gopis in this way. That doesn't mean that your constitutional position, just because that is all you want to read about, and want, you retire from any other type of devotional service and just spend all your time hearing and chanting about madhurya lila. So today actually I thought about it in terms of the verse you read that, that's the way you are attracted to Krishna, that's what will appear in your heart. That they misunderstood. We can't come to our constitutional position if we just gave up. Prabhupada smashed them. Later they became known as the 'gopi bhava group.'

BCS: Yeah. [laughs] Right, yeah.

Rameshvara prabhu: That's not the way.

BCS: Thank you, Rameshvara prabhu. Hare Krishna. Yeah, yogeshvara prabhu?

Yogeshvara prabhu: Well, I got about thirty seven questions. So first of all thank you. That was absolutely a brilliant class.

BCS: Thank you.

Yogeshvara prabhu: Absolutely marvelous. It reminds me how far I got to go in terms of my own [inaudible]. The problem with A getting the letter from B is, by the time the letter comes it is already picked up by C and D and E. [laughter] It is confusing.

BCS: Okay, wonderful! [laughter] Now here A is a personality who has the inconceivable potency of expanding himself to unlimited forms. So as many A,B, C to the end [inaudible], A can expand himself and he can respond by

saying, "I love you and you only." And that's how Krishna actually responds. Krishna says, "Just all I care is your love and I am prepared to offer Myself completely to you in response to your love."

Yogeshvara prabhu: This is the mystery, isn't it, of consciousness, that while God is all pervasive and loves all souls, still there is a specificity of our love with Krishna.

BCS: Exactly, yeah. And another point that came to my mind, in this respect Prabhupada said, that if Krishna can expand Himself as the Supersoul in everyone's heart, why cannot He expand Himself as Krishna and reciprocating their love, reciprocate their love?

Yogeshvara prabhu: May I ask one other question? I am sorry to take up all this time.

BCS: No, that's wonderful.

Yogeshvara prabhu: you brought so much thought and [inaudible]. In your beautiful presentation there was what one might characterize as what one may not know better as a traditional condemnation of all relationships in the material world that is devoid of love for Krishna. There is a sort of despair that comes from hearing the idea that actually the only love that counts is our love for Krishna. That is the only relationship that matters. Everything else is pretty much a waste of time and it is never going to work. I wonder if there whether there is some way that that could get tempered so that there is some hope for people that actually our relationships in this world

BCS: Okay, my first response to that will be that mentality is a neophyte mentality, that my love is only for Krishna and I hate everybody else. The second class devotee's attitude is my love for Krishna, my friendship for Krishna's devotees, my compassion for the innocent and disregard for the offenders.

isvare tad-adhineshu

balishesu dvishatsu ca

prema-maitri-kripopeksha

yah karoti sa madhyamah

[SB 11.02.46]

That's a second class devotee, the preacher. The preacher has to discriminate. Then the first class devotee is he, sarva bhuteshu yah pasyed bhagavad-bhavam atmanah [SB 11.02.45], so he is seeing everyone as the pure devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, completely in love with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, only he could not develop that love for Him. So in that light we can see that at an advanced stage we will see that how everyone is actually related to Krishna, parts and parcels of Krishna, and we develop our relationship to them in relation to Krishna. We love Krishna and that love is reflected on different objects as Krishna's parts and parcels. Rather, as we make advancement in our spiritual life the domain of our love actually increases, the area of our love increases. The more we make advancement, the more that area of love increases.

But of course, here we have to understand that this love is totally different from what goes on in the name of love in the material nature. In the material nature there is no love. In the material nature what goes on is simply exploitation in the name of love, which is called lust. In simple words, when they say I love you, they actually mean I want to exploit you, to a lesser or greater extent. But only when we develop our love for Krishna and then that love is reflected unto others, like unto the devotees in the form of friendship, unto the innocent in the form of compassion and unto the offenders in the form of neglect or disregard. So love will bring love. As we develop our love for Krishna it will bring more and more love for those who are around us. Thank you, Yogeshvara prabhu.

Devotee: Maharaja?

BCS: Yes?

Devotee: I just read in the fourth Canto, it's specifically an answer to Yogeshvara prabhu's question, that Prabhupada wrote that you have love for family, for society, for country or humanity, but if love of God is missing that will lead to, and this is the exact word Prabhupada wrote, eternal transmigration. Eternal transmigration, I had never heard of that before, eternal transmigration, if you have all these other types of love, but the love of God is not there.

BCS: On the other hand, if the love of Godhead is there then all these relationships become perfectly harmonized.

Devotee: Yes, that's exactly what Prabhupada wrote.

BCS: Yeah, thank you! Yes, Lakshmi Narsimha prabhu?

Lakshmi Narsimha prabhu: One of my favorite quotes is, this is also in pursuance of Yogeshvara's question, from Bhaktivinode Thakura's Tattva Sutra where he describes that, and I am paraphrasing, he describes that if kindness is missing from devotional culture then it is actually a sham. And he mentioned that all kinds of beneficence, forgiveness, affection etcetera are present within the context of devotional culture. And he even goes on to say, this is also a story of Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura, he even goes on to say that academic education, spiritual education, getting our food, getting our clothes, these are all indicators of devotional culture. And I think the point that you are making is that devotional culture means Krishna, and service to guru and Krishna, and when that's there then quite naturally, like in the twenty six qualities of the Vaishnava, what is the first quality that is there? Kripa, kripalu, mercy, kindness. So it's not that it is just mundane mercy, kindness, compassion, forgiveness etcetera but it is in relationship to the ultimate reality which you were talking of. But these things will be manifest, it's not that kindness is not manifest. It's not that beneficence is not manifest. It's all symptomatic of your relationship with Krishna.

BCS: Yeah, thank you. Let's recall the prayer to the Vaishnavas:

vancha-kalpa-tarubhyash cha

kripa-sindhubyha eva cha

He is an ocean of mercy. The Vaishnava is not a miser. He is very magnanimous and the more we develop our Vaishnava qualities, that mercy aspect and all the qualities of a Vaishnava will become more and more manifest. Thank you very much, Lakshmi Narsimha prabhu! Hare Krishna.

Devotee: Maharaja, shall we have a few questions from the internet?

Until what time the class goes on?

Devotee: We can have another question or two.

BCS: Okay.

Devotee: Because of what you were saying and reading from the verse that was read, in order for us to be able to see Krishna and love Krishna, through His mercy, He manifests to the spiritual master. That's actually our most wonderful experience that we actually have a pure devotee, it is stated in Caitanya Caritamrta text forty four, it says very clearly that I am seeing Krishna or I am worshipping Krishna but actually by Krishna's mercy I am seeing Krishna in the form of the spiritual master. Not that the spiritual master is Krishna but He is actually manifest for us to learn how to able to serve Him and love Him. Therefore we must first learn how to serve the spiritual master, otherwise loving Krishna is impossible.

BCS: Yes, that gratitude must be there. The person who is giving us Krishna, how can we forget him? Thank you. Yes, [unclear] prabhu?

Devotee: I had a question that I was thinking of through your wonderful class. In the purport Prabhupada is writing that for a person whose consciousness ye yatha mam prapadyante that Krishna will not fulfill that person's desires, however a pure devotee, Krishna fulfills that person's desires. So the question is what are the desires that manifest to the pure devotee that the Lord will respond to? And how to cultivate those desires?

BCS: Well, the first and foremost desire actually is how to please Krishna. So that is his most important consideration. How am I going to please Krishna? How am I going to serve Krishna? And as I pointed out that, like first he sees Krishna through the spiritual master, so the consideration is we don't jump to Krishna but go through the spiritual master. And how can we please Srila Prabhupada? And we know that if Prabhupada is pleased, Krishna will be pleased. In this respect Prabhupada gives a very simple example, that it is very difficult to please a very wealthy person. What can you offer him? No matter, you may spend million dollars, it is insignificant to him. He is not impressed. But to his little son who can be very pleased with just a little candy or a gulab jamun, when the father sees that his son is pleased then he is pleased automatically. So that is the simple way of pleasing Krishna. Guru is very easily pleased and by pleasing the spiritual master we can please Krishna. So that is the first and foremost consideration in the heart of a devotee: how can I please my spiritual master? How can I please Krishna? And then it broadens: how can I please other Vaishnavas? So that actually expands the service attitude to the Vaishnavas, and this is how the community becomes so joyful through these loving exchanges. Thank you, prabhu.

Hare Krishna. So I'll stop now. Thank you all very much! I know there are many other programs so I don't want to take up too much time in this class, and those who have questions take the names and [inaudible]

Thank you! All glories to Srila Prabhupada! Gaura Premanande Hari Haribol!
Srila Prabhupada ki jaya!

Devotee: His Holiness Bhakti Charu Maharaja ki jaya!