

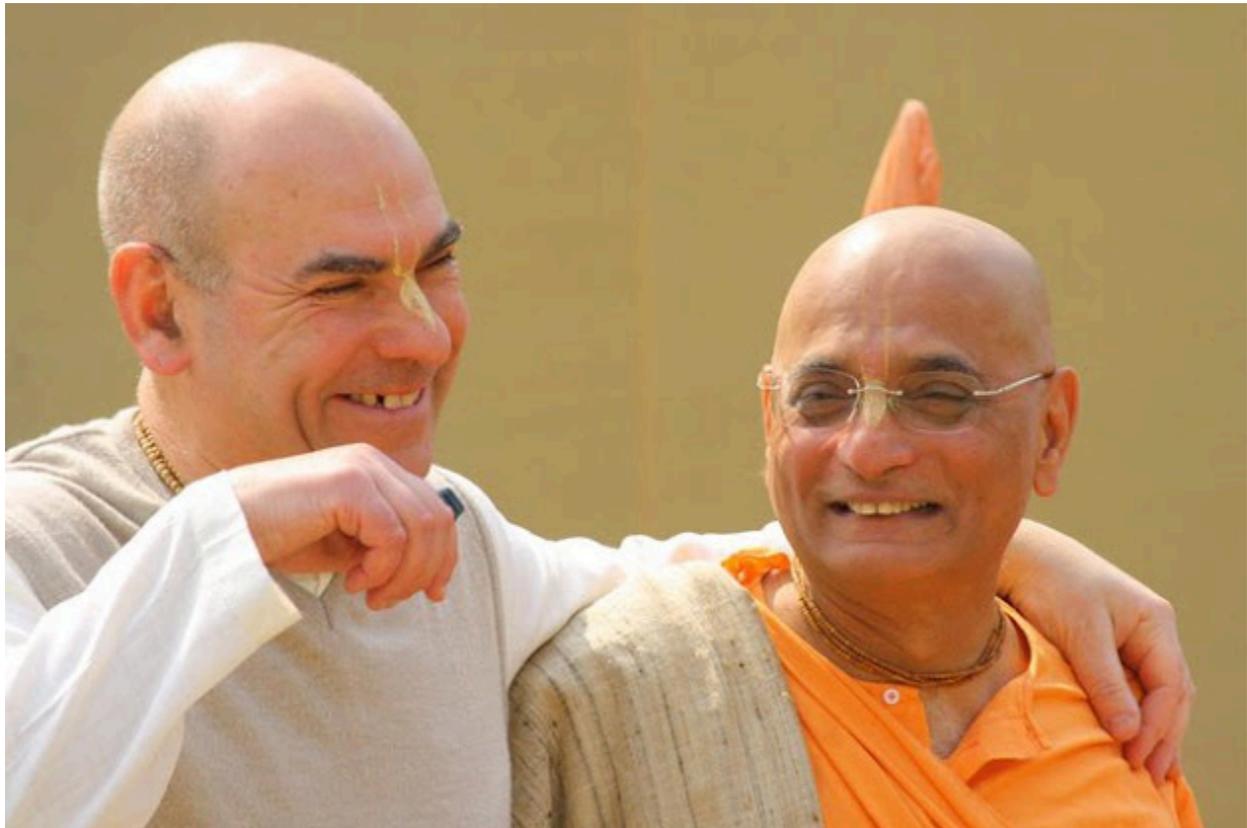
Live From Sri Mayapur Candrodaya Mandir!

Date: February 14th, 2012

Topic: Prayers of King Prthu by the Professional Reciters - Behaviour of a Leader

Verse: SB 4.16.17

Speaker: HH Bhakti Charu Swami



[Recording begins.] That is the glory of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Srila Prabhupada has brought all these wonderful devotees, the most exalted personalities of the planet together in this International Society for Krishna Consciousness. We are very fortunate that we have found this community and somehow we have become connected to this community, this society. The devotees are the most exalted people on this planet especially the followers of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

It is so wonderful that so many of you have come from different parts of the world - the leaders of Iskcon, to give each other this wonderful opportunity of sadhu sanga, association of devotees. Srila Prabhupada wanted this on the occasion of Gaura Purnima festival and Navadvip Mandal Parikrama - Srila Prabhupada wanted the devotees to come from all over the world and enrich

themselves with the association. Thank you all very much for coming here. I first of all like to thank Gopal Bhatta Prabhu for organising this wonderful festival. It was due to his initiative and the hard work of his team - The Strategic Planning Team - that this festival has become a reality.

The other day we were discussing about it and one devotee commented that two and a half years ago this was inconceivable - to get all the devotees, all the leaders of Iskcon to come and get together. So he commented that two and a half years ago this concept was inconceivable. It was an impossibility. And another devotee commented what to speak of two and a half years even two and a half months back it was an inconceivable concept, but it happened. In on hand the sincere effort of the Strategic Planning Team under the leadership of Gopal Bhatta Prabhu and at the same time the sincere devotees of Mayapur who made it happen. They made all the wonderful arrangements here. I hope all of you are comfortably situated here. [Haribol] Thank you.

All glories to Srila Prabhupada.

As you have been hearing before like yesterday HH Romapada Maharaj also mentioned that Mother Laxmimoni actually left it up to us to select the verses. Only for HH Radhanath Maharaj she selected the verses because HH Radhanath Maharaj left it up to her. So I selected this verse. I will explain to you later on why.

matr-bhaktih para-strisu
patnyam ardha ivatmanah
prajasu pitrvat snigdham
kinkaro brahma-vadinam

TRANSLATION: The King will respect all women as if they were his own mother, and he will treat his own wife as the other half of his body. He will be just like an affectionate father to his citizens, and he will treat himself as the most obedient servant of the devotees, who always preach the glories of the Lord.

PURPORT: A learned man treats all women except his wife as his mother, looks on others' property as garbage in the street, and treats others as he would treat his own self. These are the symptoms of a learned person as described by Canakya Pandita. This should be the standard for education. Education does not mean having academic degrees only. One should execute what he has learned in his personal life. These learned characteristics were verily manifest in the life of King Prthu. Although he was the king, he treated himself as a servant of the Lord's devotees. According to Vedic etiquette, if a devotee came to a king's palace, the king would immediately offer his

own seat to him. The word brahma-vadinam is very significant. Brahma-vadi refers to the devotees of the Lord. Brahman, Paramatma and Bhagavan are different terms for the Supreme Brahman, and the Supreme Brahman is Lord Krsna. This is accepted in Bhagavad-gita (10.12) by Arjuna (param brahma param dhama). Thus the word brahma-vadinam refers to the devotees of the Lord. The state should always serve the devotees of the Lord, and the ideal state should conduct itself according to the instructions of the devotee. Because King Prthu followed this principle, he is highly praised. [End of Srila Prabhupada's purport to SB 4.16.17]

HH Bhakti Charu Swami: So the sutas, the professional reciters are singing the glory of Prthu Maharaj. The last chapter ended when Prthu Maharaja told them that, "All that you are saying that I have been endowed with, all the qualities, all the attributes, I haven't manifested them. Why are you saying things like that because people will think it is just flattery?" Then this chapter begins with the Sutas who are actually exalted brahmanas although their business is to recite the glory of different exalted personalities especially the kings. But they are individuals who are actually situated in the Absolute Truth. They are situated in the transcendental platform. They declared, "You are the incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. You have come down here to bless all of us and set the standard of ideal leadership."

While describing the glory of Prthu Maharaja in this way they came to this point. These four points: respect for women, for householder, treating his wife as the other half, treating the citizens as his own children and respect for the brahmanas and Vaisnavas - devotees of the Lord - these are the very foundation of Vedic culture.

Vedic culture has been established, has been given by Krishna Himself. It is not any culture of any particular place as such. It is the spiritual culture to uplift the spirit soul to the spiritual platform freeing himself from the bondage of matter. In the material nature everyone is bound. Material nature is a prison house and the shackles with which the living entities are bound in this material nature is sex desire. Therefore this material nature is described as maithunya-agara or prison house of sex desire. The Vedic culture actually teaches on how to transcend, how to free oneself from that entanglement, how to free oneself from this shackles that is binding him into this material nature.

As I was explaining earlier why I selected this verse. It is because I felt this verse is giving a very, very clear understanding of how the leaders

should conduct themselves and how the leaders must train their followers. The first principle is respect for women. It is the respect for women that builds one's character. The Bengali expression for a debauchee is characterless, caritahi. Carita means character and hina means devoid of. So one who is a debauchee doesn't have any character.

In order to develop one's noble character - in order to develop nobility in one's self one must learn, one must be trained to respect women. How? Like a mother. Actually all of us are most indebted to our mother. It is because of her we are here. She underwent so many difficulties, so many trials and tribulations, so much suffering just to bring us into this planet. And it is due to her care that we actually grew up, we developed this body and the body grew. That is why the respect for mother naturally grows and she is the ideal woman.

So matr-bhaktih para-strisu. This kind of respect one should have towards all the women. Then when he gets married he should treat his wife not as an object of sense gratification. What to speak of other women - he doesn't even treat his dually married wife also as an object of sense gratification. He treats his wife as his other half of his self, part of his self. That is another consideration that is another concept.

A man, what to speak of considering other women as objects of sense gratification, he doesn't even treat his wife as an object of sense gratification. He has some responsibilities in this nature. A householder therefore gets married - putrarthe kriyate bharya. Why does one get married? In order to produce or procreate children - putrarthe kriyate bharya. Then he is saha dharmin - he conducts the same religion. He cannot perform religious activities himself alone. Therefore he needs his wife to be with him. When Lord Ramacandra banished Sita to the asrama of Valmiki whenever Lord Ramacandra would perform a yajna he had to have His wife with Him so a golden Sita was built and He conducted the sacrifice with ...Sita next to Him. This is the Vedic culture - saha dharmin. In the one hand she is ardhagini and saha dharmini - half of his self and he conducts religious activities especially the activities that one conducts in the household life along with her.

Then the third consideration is how should he treat his followers? Here they are talking about King Prthu. But King Prthu is actually an ideal leader. He is a king. Not that the king has the responsibility to treat his citizens as his own children but that is the responsibility of an ideal personality, an ideal leader. He must take care of them, guide them in their lives, take

care of them.

The word praja literally means someone who is specially born - that means he is his son but not born of him and his wife - children that are not born of him but still they are his children. prakṛsta-rupena jayate. So that is how a king must treat his citizens. That is how a leader must treat his followers.

Then kinkaro brahma-vadinam - although he is a king, although he is such an exalted personality he is an incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead but he treats the devotees as his master and he places himself as their servant, kinkaro brahma-vadinam. The kings are so humble that they treat the devotees as their honourable master. "Please tell me what can I do for you?" Prabhupada mentioned this is a very common Vedic practice. Those days when an exalted personality came, when a sage or a devotee came to the palace of the king the king stood up from his throne and offered the throne to that person. We have seen that Krishna did that to Sudama. A brahmana came to Him. Krishna the Supreme Personality of Godhead is setting the standard. He made Sudama sit on His seat, on His throne and washed his feet. Washed his feet! So this is Vedic culture.

Srila Prabhupada came to establish or rather re-establish the Vedic culture in this planet when it is practically lost. We are seeing that the opposite things are happening now. Nobody looks up to women as mother. All over there is a massive propaganda to look at women as an object of sense gratification. Everywhere all they are showing is just women half exposed. There is no family life. Even when they get married then the marriage doesn't last for very long. They break off. Very few marriages are lasting nowadays. To begin with they don't get married. Those who get married get divorced soon afterwards. What to speak of treating the subordinates as their own children, they don't even take care of their own children. And what to speak of having any respect for the exalted devotees of the Lord. They don't have any respect for anybody - a culture of disrespect.

The Vedic culture is established on sraddha, on respect and materialistic culture in the age of Kali is founded on disrespect. So this is the responsibility that we have as followers of Srila Prabhupada. We have to establish the Vedic culture - re-establish the Vedic culture. Why? Because this is the most important thing that is happening in this world. This is the most wonderful thing that is happening in this world today - revival of Krishna consciousness, revival of Vedic culture. Not only the Vedic culture! Vedic culture also has various aspects. What Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu gave is

the most glorious, exalted essence of the Vedic culture. Krsna-bhakti, vraja-preme.

atyanta durlabha prema koribare dana
sikhaya saranagati bhakatera prana [SNG: Introductory Song]

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu came in order to teach the process of devotion in order to give this krsna-prema to the living entities in this age of Kali. And Caitanya Mahaprabhu with his discussion with Ramananda Raya made it clear that this is the essence of the spiritual gifts. The most exalted spiritual position is Krishna bhakti.

In Bhagavad-gita Arjuna asked Krishna and Krishna instructed Arjuna. Mahaprabhu's order is in a reverse order. Now Krishna came and He is asking Arjuna, just like the teacher sometimes asks the student to find out whether he understood the subject, "So Ramananda, what is the ultimate goal of life?" And Ramananda Raya speaks about varnasrama dhama.

varnasramacara-vata
purusena parah puman
visnur aradhyate pantha
nanyat tat-tosa-karanam [Cc Madhya 8.58]

Performance of varnasrama is the ultimate goal of life and that is the best way to please Visnu and worship Visnu. Mahaprabhu rejected that. "No. That is external." That is not the highest. That is mundane." Then Ramananda Raya spoke about karma-yoga and he is substantiating his statement by scriptural evidence.

yat karosi yad asnasi
yaj juhosi dadasi yat
yat tapasyasi kaunteya
taturusva mad-arpanam [CC Madhya 8.60]

Mahaprabhu rejected that. "eho bahya," [Cc Madhya 8.61] " This is also external. Tell Me what is beyond that." Age kaha ara. Then Ramananda Raya speaks about karma sannyasa - renunciation of karma.

sarva-dharman parityajya
mam ekam saranam vraja
aham tvam sarva-papebhyo
moksaisyami ma sucah [Cc Madhya 8.63]

The final instruction of Krishna in Bhagavad-gita. But Mahaprabhu rejected that also. "This is also external. Tell Me what is beyond that." Then he speaks about nana-misra bhakti.

brahma-bhutat prasannatma
na socati na kanksati
samah sarvesu bhutesu
mad-bhaktim labhate param [Cc Madhya 8.65]

But Mahaprabhu rejected that also. "No. It is external. Tell Me what is beyond that." Although it says param - mad-bhaktim labhate param, in this platform one receives My transcendental devotion. But He rejects that. Then Ramananda Raya speaks about suddha bhakti.

anyabhilasita-sunyam jnana-karmady-anavrtam
anukulyena krsnanu-silanam bhaktir uttama [[Cc. Madhya 19.167]

Uttama bhakti, pure devotion. Mahaprabhu accepted that. "Yes. That is right. Now tell Me what is beyond that." Gradually Ramananda Raya speaks about bhakti in santa rasa, bhakti in dasya rasa, bhakti in sakhya rasa, bhakti in vatsalya rasa, bhakti in madhurya rasa. Mahaprabhu accepted them one after another and then He says, "Tell Me what is beyond that." Then Ramananda Raya says, "I did not know if anyone could ask what is beyond that." [Laughter] But You are asking me the questions and at the same time You are empowering me also to answer. So please if You empower me then I will be able to answer Your question."

Then in this way from madhurya rasa he goes to the very special aspect of madhurya rasa. That is Krishna is dancing with thousands of gopis but in the center Krishna is dancing alone with one gopi. So that gopi must be very special. Then this gopi became upset with Krishna and She left the rasa mandali. And Krishna left all the gopis - thousand of gopis, sixty-four thousand gopis and He followed Her. So She must be very special. So who is this particular gopi? One who is very special in Her aradhana. In this way Radharani's identity was revealed.

Then he pointed out that this Radha and Krishna now became in Their intense loving exchange, They became one. Mahaprabhu covered His face. "Okay. You don't have to tell anymore." Because now His identity is going to become exposed. So this is what Srila Prabhupada came to give to this world. That is why he created this Iskcon. With so much effort Srila Prabhupada created

this most wonderful International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

What a vision Srila Prabhupada had! Prabhupada knew his mission is to spread Krishna consciousness all over the world fulfilling the prediction of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. That is why he considered the importance of an institution. Because this is a mission that couldn't be possible, that wouldn't be possible in one person's lifetime. What to speak of when Prabhupada was starting this mission at the age of seventy - how many years he had? Prabhupada knew he did not have much time. So Prabhupada knew there must be an institution to continue the mission and that is how right from the beginning Srila Prabhupada's emphasis was in this institution of Iskcon.

The other day Gopal Bhatta Prabhu just mentioned how when Prabhupada set up Iskcon in 26 2nd Avenue, Prabhupada printed a visiting card and that visiting card said, A.C Bhaktivedanta Swami, founder acarya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness with centres all over the world. [Laughter] Just a small little storefront he is starting and to begin with, he names it as the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. As you all know there was consideration and doubts about calling it a society for Krishna consciousness. They suggested, "No.No. Call it International society for God consciousness because people would not understand who Krishna is."

Prabhupada was so emphatic, "I have come here to teach everybody that Krishna is God. You speak of God but you don't have any understanding of who God is I have come to teach you who God is. And that is Krishna. That is why that must be the name for the institution."

As you also know when Prabhupada was walking in the park in New York less than a week after his arrival in New York City. Prabhupada was sitting on a bench in the park and one Jewish gentleman came and sat next to Prabhupada and out of curiosity he started to ask who he was, where he came from. And what did Prabhupada tell him? He came from India and he has temples all over the world. And he said, "You just said you came just the other day. How can I believe that you have temples all over the world?" He said, "Yes they are there. Only time is separating us."

Prabhupada knew what is going to happen. He is a trikala darsana. He knew what would happen. That is why with such conviction he could admit, he could say that this is what is going to happen. In order to continue that mission Prabhupada saw the need for a spiritual organisation. In order to secure

that organisation Prabhupada established two concepts very, very clearly: His position as the founder acarya and the concept of the collective management through the governing body.

Sometimes some of our devotees who left Iskcon they say things like, Iskcon is dead and they are actually creating the real Iskcon. Once I had an encounter with one such person who was claiming that they are really creating the real Iskcon. I asked them, "What do you mean by real Iskcon?" And then we got into a discussion about Iskcon and my point was that Iskcon is the institution where Prabhupada is the founder acarya and the GBC is the ultimate managing authority. That is the identity of Iskcon. If you can create an institution where Prabhupada is the founder acarya and a body of collective management of GBC maintaining that institution yes you can claim, but you haven't. This Iskcon is going on with that concept and that is why with time you will see how this Iskcon will flourish and fulfil the prediction of Caitanya Mahaprabhu. [Haribol. Applause]

Sometimes another question also comes. This question comes from people from India, especially the babajis and some individuals of Radha-kund and the Vrindavan area. They say that our sampradaya is not bona fide. They say that the way Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura drew the line is not a line according to diksa parampara. It is a line according to siksa parampara, bhagavat parampara. But these people do not understand that. They just say that Iskcon doesn't have bona fide disciplic succession. Once I was having an encounter with such person and I just asked him, "Did Caitanya Mahaprabhu predict that the Krishna consciousness movement will spread all over the world in every town and village?" They can't deny that. He said, "Yes. Mahaprabhu said that." Then I said that, "That prediction which is practically impossible, the one who fulfils that prediction of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu spread Krishna consciousness all over the world is he in the line of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu or not?" [Laughter. Applause.] You all are rejoicing but he became quiet. [Laughter]

So that is the most wonderful gift of Srila Prabhupada. He gave the highest spiritual wealth and organised it in such a way that it will continue to expand and eventually spread all over the world in every town and village. And we can see Prabhupada's expertise. Prabhupada's expertise was in forming this concept of collective management through the GBC. Prabhupada actually inherited that concept from his spiritual master, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura. It was his consideration to manage the society collectively through the governing body. Unfortunately his followers failed to do that and as a result of that his institution, Gaudiya Math

disintegrated.

Prabhupada told us emphatically, "Don't make the same mistake that my god brothers made after Guru Maharaj's disappearance. Guru Maharaj told them to come and manage the society through a governing body. They did not. They rather appointed an acarya. When the acarya fell down, the whole structure collapsed." Then he said, "Don't make the same mistake." And we can see about thirty-five years after Srila Prabhupada's disappearance Iskcon is not only there but Iskcon is growing, Iskcon is expanding, Iskcon is becoming more and more wonderfully established in this planet. Iskcon is growing. It is all because of that, because in Iskcon the devotees have held Srila Prabhupada in his position as THE founder acarya and the society is being collectively managed through a governing body concept - GBC concept. Difficulties have been there. Crises have been there but in spite of all those difficulties Iskcon is still going strong just because of following these two principles. In our society at least I can say with firm conviction that it is in good hands. [Applause. Haribol.] I have been seeing all the leaders of Iskcon from a very close proximity and I can see how sincere, how dedicated and how expert they are in fulfilling this mission that Srila Prabhupada gave them.

Once I was with Radhanath Maharaj in New Vrindavan. After lunch we were lying down facing each other and Radhanath Maharaj was telling me, "You know I never wanted to be a leader. I was just happy. Kirtananda Swami was the leader and I was just there practicing my Krishna consciousness with reading and chanting, preaching. But now by some arrangement I have become a leader although I never wanted to become a leader." I told Maharaj, "That is the kind of leaders we need in Iskcon today." [Applause] One who doesn't want to become a leader but who leads by his own example that is a real leader. I feel very happy to see how Radhanath Maharaj is being appreciated and recognised all over the world. The places where he didn't even go I get to hear that they are just waiting for Radhanath Maharaj to come. [Applause]

I must also admit another wonderful leader of Iskcon is Gopal Bhatta Prabhu who does not have any position, doesn't have any title but he has gone out of his way to create a better Iskcon. He is a successful business man who didn't really have anything to do with Iskcon for many years but he noticed that Iskcon needs help so he came forward and started to give the help. And he did it in such a wonderful way. We needed a leader like him who is not a leader but is leading the movement, leading the leaders. I was mentioning that yesterday that generally the leader leads from the front. Gopal Bhatta Prabhu is leading from the back. He is pushing everyone, reminding everyone

what they need to do.

In this way we have so many wonderful leaders in our movement. It is unfortunate that HH Jaypataka Maharaj became so sick now but still he is carrying on preaching. His spirit did not diminish. He is carrying on in spite of his physical difficulties he is pushing on the movement. That is a remarkable example. [Applause]

Another leader I will say is Gopal Krishna Maharaj. What a wonderful example. In his own way he is just following Srila Prabhupada's instructions. That is his mission. He simply, wholeheartedly, loyally follows Srila Prabhupada. Prabhupada wanted us to distribute books. He is just carrying on and look at the result. Not only are books going out in his zone but temples are coming up. In the city of Dehli there are six or seven temples now. [Applause] I made some miscalculation. Ten temples have come up in one city of Dehli.

So these are the devotees who are pushing on this movement so loyally. Bhakti Caitanya Maharaja is leading so wonderfully in South Africa, Russia and many other places. Romapada Maharaj, Bhakti Vaibhava Maharaj, Bhakti Vijnana Maharaj. Badri Narayan Prabhu's such a brilliant leader - so expert, so intelligent Svasa Prabhu in Los Angeles, such a wonderful leader.

We also have new leaders coming up. At least in Iskcon India I can see so many brilliant personalities are coming up like Bhakti Rasamrta Maharaj, Radhe Syam Prabhu, Bhaktivinode Maharaj, Gaura Narayan Maharaj. I am confident that Iskcon is going to carry on without any difficulty for years to come [Applause] because the movement is in good hands, in expert hands. Mind you - Prabhupada created Iskcon to create leaders. So all of you have the responsibility to become leaders, lead the world and show the way back to Goloka Vrindavan. Thank you very much. All glories to Srila Prabhupada. [Applause] it is already nine o'clock and the session will start at ten o'clock sharp so I won't invite any question today. Thank you all very much. All glories to Srila Prabhupada. Gaura-premanande Hari-haribol. [End]