

Srimad Bhagavatam Canto 3 Chaper 25 Text 15

LECTURE BY HIS HOLINESS BHAKTI CARU SWAMI ON SRIMAD BHAGAVATAM 04-25-15 ON 08 OCTOBER 2010.



Transcription: Ranga Radhika Dasi

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Om namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya

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Srimad Bhagavatam. Third Canto, Chapter twenty five: The Glories of Devotional Service. Text fifteen.

Cetah khalv asya
bandhaya

Muktaye catmano

matam

Gunesu saktam

bandhaya

Ratam va pumsi muktaye

Cetah- consciousness; khalu – indeed; asya – of him; bandhaya – for bondage; muktaye – for liberation; ca – and; atmanah – of the living entity; matam – is considered; gunesu – in the three modes of nature; saktam – attracted; bandhaya – for conditional life; ratam – attached; va – or; pumsi – in the Supreme Personality of Godhead; muktaye – for liberation.

Translation by His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada:

The stage in which the consciousness of the living entity is attracted by the three modes of material nature is called conditional life. But when that same consciousness is attached to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one is situated in the consciousness of liberation.

Purport by Srila Prabhupada:

There is a distinction here between Krishna consciousness and maya consciousness. Gunesu, or maya consciousness, involves attachment to the three modes of material nature, under which one works sometimes in goodness and knowledge, sometimes in passion and sometimes in ignorance. These different qualitative activities, with the central attachment for material enjoyment, are the cause of one's conditional life. When the same cetah, or consciousness, is transferred to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna, or when one becomes Krishna conscious, he is on the path of liberation. [End of purport]

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Cetah khalv asya bandhaya

The stage in which the consciousness of the living entity is attracted to the three modes of material nature is called conditional life. But when the same consciousness is attached to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one is situated in the consciousness of liberation.

So, just in one verse the conditional life and liberated stage have been described. Cetah khalv asya bandhaya. When is the consciousness attached or bound, bandhaya? Bandhaya is bound. Gunesu saktam bandhaya, when it is attached to the modes of material nature. Then it is bound. There are two stages, bound, the living entities can be only in two stages. There is another stage. I'll come to that afterwards, but generally it is two stages. Stage of bondage or conditioned stage, or liberated stage. A living entity can be either conditioned or bound. Either in prison or free. And there is a third stage, which I was mentioning, it is the stage of unconsciousness. A living entity also can be in an unconscious state. Like we see, when we are asleep, then we are unconsciousness. Then we are existing, but at time we are neither bound nor liberated, especially in the state of deep sleep. When there is no dream. State of dream also is a state of bondage. When the consciousness is in the gross body, that is the wakeful state of consciousness. When the consciousness is in the subtle body then it is in the dream state of consciousness. Svapna avastha and nidra. State of dream is the state of activity of the subtle body. The body when one is in the subtle body then he is dreaming. When one's consciousness is in the gross body then he is awake. And when one is not either in the gross body or subtle body then he is in his deep sleep. And beyond that deep sleep is the state of spiritual consciousness. The spiritual consciousness is when the consciousness is in the spirit soul. When the consciousness is active in its spiritual identity, then it is in the liberated stage or it is in Krishna consciousness.

So this is our state of existence. Actually our existence is synonymous to consciousness. When we are conscious we are existing. When we're unconscious we do not know whether we are existing or not. We are not existing. So it is only a matter of consciousness.

Now the question is where our consciousness will be. In simple words we can say that there is a reflection and there is a reality. The material nature, what is the definition of the material nature? The material nature is the reflection. Yathabhaso yatha tamah [SB 2.9.34]. Abhasa. Abhasa means the impression of the reality. It is not the reality. It is the impression of the reality. The impression of the reality also can be in different stages. One is the reflection and one is a shadow. Shadow is also an abhasa, but the shadow is the state of darkness, yatha tamah. But the reflection is like in the mirror there is a reflection. We see the thing in the mirror. When we see the reflection the reflection looks like the real thing. Like, for example, in a pool of water we see the reflection. In a still pool of water we see the reflection of a tree. What do we see in the reflection? In this reflection we see the branches of the tree. We see the trunk of the tree. We see the leaves of the tree. We see the flowers of the tree. We see the fruits of the tree. All are there, but it is not there. It APPEARS to be there.

So, material nature is a reflection of the spiritual reality. Everything seems to be there, but it's a reflection. The reality is when it is real, not only an impression. It is there. Like, for example, leaves have a purpose. Flowers have a purpose. Fruits have a purpose. Like, we are hungry and we want to eat the fruit. Can we eat the fruit from the reflection? We like the beauty of the flower and want to pick it and make a garland. Can we pick the flowers from the reflection of the tree, although it appears to be there? That is the difference between the reality and the reflection.

Now when we are looking at the reflection, then our consciousness is stuck there. But when we look at the reality, in order to look at the reality we have to withdraw our consciousness from the reflection and then only will we be able to project it into the reality. Like, we are very hungry, so another reflection, impression of a reflection, can be seen in this way that in this world is a mirror. And, say we are standing there, and there is a table, full of beautiful, delicious food. And I am very hungry. Now when I look at the reflection, extremely hungry, for seven days I didn't have any food [laughs], and I come into the room and I see the reflection. Then what will happen? Mind you, did anybody ever fast for seven days? [laughs] Well, you know how it is like to fast even for one day. And Nirjala Ekadasi you fast and you are very hungry. The next day, not the same day. And you see all kinds of beautiful prasad, delicious prasad. So what will be the natural reaction for you? You came in from the door and there you see a beautiful table full of hundreds of delicious preparations. The whole world is full of preparations, foodstuff. Now what will you naturally do? Won't you just run to the food, thinking that the food is there? But you try to grab the food, what do you get? You get the food? Or you get the solid mirror? And you are so hungry and you are so you became so obsessed with the prospect of having the food, then what do you do? You are trying to get the food, but you don't get the food. But then what you think? You think there is something wrong in your trying, that's why you are getting no food. Maybe if you try harder, then you'll get it. Your food is there, but you can't just get it. So what do you do? You take a few steps back and then pounce up, thinking that now you get it. What do you get? You get hurt. The more you endeavor the more you get hurt. The more you endeavor the more you get hurt.

Then somebody comes into the room and sees you struggling like that to get the food. And then he tells you, "Prabhu, this is only the reflection. You'll never get the food you found in the reflection." But since the reflection is there the food since the food is there in the reflection, in reality also the food must be there! So the food is not there, the real food is there. But then, if you're wise enough, then you believe in his words and you turn your face and you see, yes, the real food is there, the table is there, all the preparations are there. You simply just have to just approach in that direction, not in this direction.

So that is the difference between Krishna consciousness and maya. The only thing is that our endeavor for food in the reflection is dominated by the three modes. Three modes are mode of goodness, mode of passion and mode of ignorance. The mode of goodness tells you that we have seen that there is no food there, so don't endeavor. Don't waste your time. Don't get hurt. But mode of passion says, no! Get into it! Get into it! Get into it! You will get it. You didn't try hard enough. So mode of passion in this way motivates one to just go into this endeavor to enjoy in this material nature, trying to get the substance through the reflection. There is no substance in the reflection, but the mode of passion is saying, no, no, no, go in there. And then, after endeavoring very, very hard with the mode of passion, you become tired and you fall asleep, ignorance. And then you wake up again and then you make that effort again to get the food, to satisfy your hunger from the reflection. So this is how the three modes are motivating us. Mode of goodness is telling us that there is no food, but mode of goodness is not giving us the real information. Mode of goodness is giving some information: you'll never be able to get it there. But where you'll get it, that is not there. That information comes with the pure mode of goodness. There are two types of goodness. One is mixed goodness and pure goodness. Material goodness, satva guna, is tinged with passion and ignorance. It is goodness, but at the same time it is tinged with passion and ignorance. But when somebody comes and tells you there is no food here, but the real food is there, and you follow his instruction, then you are situated in the mode of pure goodness. Mode of goodness means knowledge, but the mode of goodness in the material nature is the knowledge about the material nature, not the real knowledge. The real knowledge is the spiritual knowledge.

So that is the difference between materialistic way of life and spiritual life. Materialistic way of life is motivated by three modes. You can't help it. You may be in the mode of goodness, but still that is not enough. Mode of goodness means don't try to get the food from there, because it's not there. But the information how am I going to satisfy my hunger is not there. That 'how am I going to satisfy my hunger?' comes with the information. Now, who can give us the information? A devotee only can give us the information, because he has the knowledge. A devotee has the knowledge, because he received the knowledge from somebody who has the knowledge. And he makes us turn our face around. But then there is another situation. When we are too much involved with the material nature, then it becomes difficult to turn our face away from the material nature and towards Krishna. That's the situation with most of us. We are in the material nature. We are caught up in this material nature, therefore, to completely free ourselves from the material nature is very difficult. Therefore, the process that is given in this age is, okay, you are looking at this food, there is a beautiful piece of pakora, there is a beautiful piece of paneer mattar massala, there is a beautiful plate of rice, fried rice, so offer it to Krishna. They are not meant for you. You offer it to Krishna and accept it as Krishna's prasada. So through this, what we are actually learning, although the need is ours and the effort that we are making is for

our sake, but we are being trained to offer it to Krishna. Although it is material, although it is reflection, although it is not apparently real, but we are trained, we are taught to offer it to Krishna. Now by offering it to Krishna we are actually transferring our consciousness from there to there.

In other ages people used to do that. Through the process of yoga they used to turn their face around, but in this age, that effort, that endeavor is very difficult. We are not strong enough to do that. Therefore, they used to leave this material nature. They used to leave the material nature, because why live in the material nature which is illusory? Don't stay in the illusion! Now in order to get out of the illusion they used to go away from the illusion. They used to go to the forest. They used to go the mountain caves. They used to go to all kinds of places. And they used to make an endeavor to turn their consciousness away from matter towards the spirit. But that used to take a lot of spiritual strength. In this age we don't have that. We are in the middle of this material nature so much, we are so much in the middle of illusion, that it is impossible for us to sever ourselves, in one hand the illusion so strong and we are so weak.

Therefore, the process is, offer it to Krishna. That is the meaning of devotional service. *Idam Krishnaya na mamah*: this is for Krishna, not for me. It is impossible for me to completely give it up, but we are actually turning our consciousness away. For Krishna, this is for Krishna. The plate of food is there. I cannot give it up. I am so attached to it. Okay, first offer it to Krishna and then take it as prasada. We are so attached to so many things. Okay, turn your consciousness, consider that this is Krishna's, use it for Krishna's purpose. That is the meaning of devotional service. So in this way this process is training us how to change your consciousness. And then eventually, the time comes at the time of death when you have to give up everything. We don't have to sever our relationship artificially through the process of austerities and penances, but we can do that very easily through the process of devotional service.

Therefore, at the beginning the devotional service is in a practicing stage. And then from the practicing stage it comes to the perfected stage. And nature helps us. We don't have to sever our relationship with the material nature artificially. Nature will force us. We see that. Like, when the body gets old our influence of passion begins to reduce. Influence of passion meaning the influence that indulges us in the material activities. When we are young we think that we can conquer the world, but when you get old then you begin to see, what to speak of conquer the world, I can't even lift my own hand! I can't lift my own leg. I can't take one step. Bedridden, completely. The body is completely useless. Although we thought that with this body we are going to conquer the whole world and now we see the reality. I am not able to even lift my own fingers. So this is how nature helps us to become free from the bondage of matter.

And then the time comes. A time comes, at the time of death, now you're free! We are free from the bondage of matter. And that's the time we have to take advantage of our Krishna consciousness. At that time we have to depend on Krishna. At that time we have to remember Krishna. *Yam yam vapi smaram bhavam tyajaty ante kalevaram tam tam evaiti kaunteya sada tad bhava bhavitah* [Bg. 8.6]. When will it happen? It won't happen accidentally. Sometimes people say, well, at the time of death I'll remember Krishna. No, it won't work like that. Your thoughts will be what you have been thinking all the time. If one is thinking about his dog all the time, at the time of death he will think of his dog. And I see the danger. Like, people are

becoming so attached to dogs! [laughs] Sometimes it is so disgusting. In America, European countries, it is a law now that when your dog evacuates then you have to pick up that they have to pick it up. [audience member: and put it in a bin] Not that! They have to carry a plastic bag! They have to carry a plastic bag [laughs]. It is so disgusting actually. And they have to carry it and then put it in a bin, in a [indistinct]. And they are doing it! They won't do it for their own son, but they are doing it for their dogs. So the option is there: whether you will think of dog or whether you will think of God. We can remember Krishna only when we are sada tad bhava bhavitah. When one is simply thinking of Krishna all the time, sada. Then only he'll be able to remember Krishna at the time of death. If one is thinking of anything else, people, we know the story of Ajamila. He was attached to his son, so much so that he remembered his son at the time of death. Our last thought will be where our deepest attachment is. Wherever your deepest attachment, that will be your last thought. So we have to be very, very careful that our consciousness is in the right place. And if we practice properly throughout our lifetime at the time of death we will. And we are seeing it's happening.

Just the day before yesterday one devotee in South Africa all of a sudden left her body. They went shopping from six, she was quite elderly, she and her husband. Many of you know probably, Harichandan and his wife, Rukmavati. Harichandan comes here quite often. Harichandan and his wife. She had some heart problem. They did shopping from six to nine, then, no I am sorry, three to six. Three o'clock to six o'clock. They did their shopping, then they came home. At seven o'clock they did their arotika and then they took some prasada. Now, when they were shopping she was actually telling him that she had a dream that Bhakti Devi came and told her to come with Her. And then at ten o'clock at night she was telling that she was feeling suffocation. She was finding it difficult to breathe. And she just told him, see, my time has come to go, I am going to go. And she just left. I mean, such a glorious way of.. and apparently she is just an ordinary housewife. She is not a big sannyasi or big devotee. She was just a simple.. but we are seeing how Krishna Consciousness Movement is benefitting people. How can one leave his body or her body in this way? She is having some difficulty and she is saying, well, my time has come for me to leave the body. Gone! This is how Krishna consciousness helps. The real help will come at the time of death. And it's a beautiful experience. To tell you frankly, like, when Prabhupada was in his final days, Prabhupada was totally bedridden as I told you many times. Prabhupada couldn't even turn to his side. We had to help him to make him turn to his side when he wanted to. And sometimes Prabhupada used to say that, "Don't think that this won't happen to you." What Prabhupada was going through, and Prabhupada was saying that it will happen to all of us. In this way Prabhupada actually taught us how to die, how to leave our body. And at that time, I mean, I heard the expression, Prabhupada saying that, but couldn't understand it.

But now I am seeing it, what happens when the body gets old. It doesn't function the way it used to function before. And it will happen. Gradually it will become bedridden. Bedridden means the soul and the body will become separated gradually. And then finally the soul will leave the body and go. So that is the arrangement of nature and we have to go along with that. But unfortunately what is happening nowadays, people do not want to accept death, do not want to accept old age, do not want to accept disease. They are trying to make all kinds of artificial arrangement. They are trying to find medicine so that they won't get the disease. They are trying to make arrangements that they won't become old. But it never happens. They become old, only, one

doctor actually made a very wise statement the other day. He was telling, it was during the convention in South Africa. One doctor made that statement. He was invited to speak and he was telling, he frankly admitted, what modern medicine has been able to do is to prolong the suffering condition of the people. They have been able to simply prolong the suffering condition. The man was meant to suffer for five days and leave his body, but they are making the body to prolong for five years. And in these five years what is happening? The man is just suffering, prolong the suffering condition. Okay, so that is the reality and we are very fortunate that Prabhupada gave us Krishna consciousness. So let's take full advantage of it. There will be many hurdles. There will be many difficulties. There will be many obstacles. Don't worry about that. Just recognize you got the most precious thing and go ahead with it. So I'll stop now.