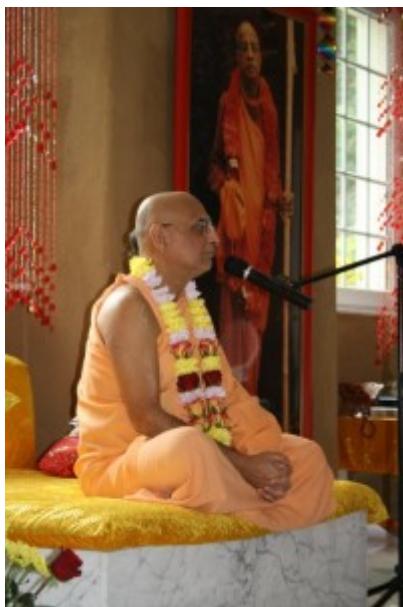


The History Of Vaishnava Heritage Part 2

THE FOLLOWING LECTURE GIVEN BY HIS HOLINESS BHAKTI CHARU SWAMI IS THE SECOND OUT OF NINE IN A WONDERFUL SERIES ON THE HISTORY OF VAISHNAVA HERITAGE.



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In the last session we discussed that Vaishnavism or Vaishnava religion is the eternal characteristic of a living entity. And in this way we came to the understanding that a pure devotee is a person or a pure Vaishnava is he who does not have any other desire than serving the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Today we will discuss about the appearance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as a devotee, as Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead descends in order to establish sanatana-dharma, the eternal religion of the living entity. This sanatana-dharma or Vaishnavism is the means by which the living entity can be freed from the material contamination and become qualified to go back to the spiritual sky.

A Vaishnava is actually a pure spirit soul. And what is the meaning of a pure spirit soul? The pure spirit soul is the soul that is completely free from this material contamination. Although he may be in the material nature but he is not affected by the material nature. That is actually a pure devotee. The Supreme God comes from time to time to establish this eternal religion. But in this age of Kali, particularly in this age... This age of Kali is a very special age. The time cycle just before this one that we are in, the Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared in His original identity in his svayam rupa. And in the following Kali-yuga He appeared as a devotee. And by appearing as a pure devotee He preaches how to become a pure devotee. Now is this point clear to everybody that in this age Krishna appeared as Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. If it is not clear then I will try to

elaborate on this a little more. So it's clear to everybody. To how many it's clear ? Raise your hands. Okay, so it's clear and no need to explain.

Actually the time cycle in a larger concept is the chatur-viyuga, the cycle that consists of Satya-yuga, Treta-yuga, Dwapara-yuga and Kali-yuga. So that makes one cycle. And thousands of such cycles make a day of Brahma. And once in a day of Brahma the Supreme Personality of Godhead Krishna appears. Which cycle out of this one thousand it is ? How many of you know, raise your hands. Okay, only Nrishingananda knows.

Every day of Brahma has thousand of cycles. And in the 28th cycle of chatur-viyuga, in Dwapara-yuga Krishna appears in His svayam rupa, in His original identity as Krishna. And in the following Kali-yuga the Lord appears as Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. So this is that Kali-yuga. And appearing in this age Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu gives a very strong fortune for the living entity. And what is that good fortune? Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu opens the door of Vrindavana for anyone and everyone. Now let us discuss about the geography of the spiritual sky.

Beyond the material nature there is the causal ocean. This material nature consists on innumerable universes. And those universes are like bubbles created by Mahavishnu's breathing. Maha-Vishnu is lying in which ocean? In the causal ocean. Causal ocean means He lies in the ocean of cause. Just like there is an ocean of water, there is an ocean of a substance called cause. And as He breathes the bubbles that are created due to his breath is a universe. And in this way there are innumerable universes caused by the breathing of Maha-Vishnu. Now if you consider the universe we are situated in one such universe. So if you go out of the universe what will you find? If we get out of this universe we will find cause, the causal ocean.

Now beyond that causal ocean is brahma-jyoti. The spiritual light that emanates from the body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And beyond that brahma-jyoti there are innumerable Vaikuntha planets. In the spiritual sky also there are many spiritual planets. Those spiritual planets are known as Vaikuntha. And in Vaikuntha the presiding personality is the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His Narayana form or in His different forms like Sankarshana, Vamana, Varaha, Kurma etc. The Lord is present in each planet along with His devotee.

And in those planets the Lord is worshipped by His devotees with awe and reverence. There the Lord is present as the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the Lord is worshipped by all the exalted personalities as the eternal servant. And in this way if you go even higher in the region of Vaikuntha, then we will come across the Vaikuntha planet called Ayodhya. And there Lord Ramachandra is residing along with His devotees. Even higher than Ayodhya is Dwaraka where Krishna stays with [unclear] and His devotees. And even beyond Dwaraka is Mathura mandala. And beyond Mathura is Vrindavana. And in Vrindavana the original Supreme Personality of Godhead Krishna resides along with His devotees.

Now there is a difference between Vaikuntha and Vrindavana. In Vaikuntha God resides with His devotees who worship Him with great awe and reverence as the Supreme Personality of Godhead and all the devotees serve the Lord as the servant. So the predominating mood in Vaikuntha is servitorship.

Everyone serves the Lord and the Lord is the Supreme Master. But in Vrindavana the Supreme Personality of Godhead allows His devotees to

develop some very special relationships and these are friendship, parental and conjugal. These relationships are deeper and more intense and progressively become even more intense and intimate. Now for example, say in your house you have a servant so you have some relationship with your servant. But your relationship with your friend is different than the relationship with your servant. Isn't it?

Then your relationship with your parents is even more intimate than with your friend. And your relationship with your wife is even more intimate than with your parents. So in this way we see that the conjugal relationship or the relationship between the lover and the loved is the highest or the most intimate relationship. Now in Vrindavana the Supreme Personality of Godhead allows His devotees to develop these very keen intimate relationships, friendship, parental and conjugal.

Whereas in Vaikuntha these relationships are not available. In Vaikuntha no one is the Lord's friend, everyone is the servant. Now in Ayodhya which is higher than the Vaikuntha planets, because in Ayodhya we see that Hanuman although he is serving the Lord as the servant is developing a relationship akin to friendship. There the Lord asks Hanuman, "Hanuman ask anything you want from me". And Hanuman says "My Lord if you so desire, give me Your embrace." And Lord Ramachandra embraced Hanuman.

So here servitorship is merging into friendship. The friendship is not ever lasting. Hanuman's real or basic relationship with the Lord is that of a servant. But when we go to Dwaraka we find that Uddhava has a more established friendship with Krishna. That's why Dwaraka is even higher than Ayodhya. But when we go to Vrindavana we find that Krishna serves His friends. They treat Krishna just like their friend. And they don't care that Krishna is God. That is due to the influence of Yogamaya.

Now Maya means illusion and Yogamaya is the spiritual illusion or the illusion caused by love. There are two types of illusions. Illusion due to ignorance that is in the material nature, but what is that illusion ? We do not know who Krishna is. But in Vrindavana they do not treat Krishna as God. Due to some sort of illusion. Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and therefore worshippable. But in Vrindavana Krishna's friends don't treat him as God. Why ? Due to illusion. It is not due to ignorance but due to illusion. Their love is so intense and deep that they don't care if Krishna is God or not.

Just like if a person becomes the state president, does his mother treat him like the state president? No. Why? Because of love for him, because of the intense love. Similarly in Vrindavan the devotees don't treat Krishna as God, because they treat Him as a friend. And some other individuals in Vrindavana they treat Krishna as their son, like mother Yasoda and Nanda Maharaja. And in Vrindavana some individuals treat Krishna as their lover. Just like a young girl falls in love with a young boy, these gopis have fallen in love with Krishna. And that's what all they care. All they care is that Krishna is the object of their love. And they want to dance with Krishna, have loving exchanges with Krishna. And that's about all they want. And whether Krishna is God or not they don't bother. And as a matter of fact even when God comes in front of them, they neglect God and go after Krishna.

For example, when the gopis were dancing with Krishna in Vrindavana, the rasa dance, at one point Krishna left them, at the dead of night. Krishna playing his flute invited all these young damsels of Vrindavan and then He was dancing with them and all of a sudden he left them. And all these young girls in the dead of the forest in the middle of the night they were searching for Krishna. And they kept searching and crying. And the song that we just sung displays there intense feeling of separation from Krishna.

And when the gopis were searching in this way, Krishna just to have fun achieved his four-armed Narayana form and stood there in their way. So the gopis saw Narayana and offered their respectful obeisances to Him and prayed to Him that please bless us that we can find Krishna. So the gopis know that Narayana is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but then they are not interested in the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They are simply in love, all that they care is simply Krishna.

It is not that they don't know that Krishna is God. But out of love they barely care about the fact that Krishna is God. So in this song of separation that we just sang, "jayati te 'dhikam janmana vrajah". Ever since you took birth in Vrindavana, Vrindavan has become glorious. "Srayata indira sasvad atra hi". And Lakshmi devi has taken permanent residence here. Because she is the eternal consort of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. So they knew that Krishna is Narayana. And Krishna took birth in Vrindavana, Lakshmidevi is also residing there because she is the eternal consort of Narayana.

The next paragraph will actually reveal that point. So they know that Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They are saying 'na khalu gopika-nandano bhavan, akhila-dehinam antaratma-drik'. They are saying that you are not the son of the gopi yasoda 'na khalu gopika-nandano bhavan', you are the Supreme soul residing in every living entity, 'akhila-dehinam antaratma-drik'. So they know that Krishna is God. But their attitude is even if you are God so what?

It doesn't really matter to us. So that is the meaning of Yogamaya. So this is due to the arrangement of Yogamaya. Yogamaya affects the relationship with Krishna. Now you can understand that this type of relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very, very rare. Actually everyone is actually a servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Brahma is a servant of Narayana. Shiva is a servant of Narayana. Lakshmidevi is a maid servant of Narayana. So you can see that all the great personalities are serving the Lord in the mood of servitorship.

But the residents of Vrindavana treat Krishna as a friend. So whose position is higher ? Lord Brahma and Shiva are serving Narayana as servants. Whose position is higher, the residents of Vrindavana. And in Vaikuntha everyone is serving the Supreme Personality of Godhead as Lord. But the residents of Vrindavana have the facility or the opportunity to serve Krishna as a friend. So whose position is higher, the residents of Vrindavana. So in this way we can feel that the residents of Vrindavana have a very, very special relationship with Krishna that even the residents of Vaikuntha do not have. Now is this point clear to everyone ?

Does anybody have any questions up to this point that we discussed? It is not just a lecture, but a seminar; it is a class to have a proper understanding. So that's why at this point I would stop and ask if anybody has any questions?

Let's deal with the point which we have discussed so far. Lord Shiva is not just an ordinary demigod. The demigods are called devas, but lord Shiva is known as Mahadeva, the greatest of all the demigods. And also the speciality of Lord Shiva is that he is an incarnation of Vishnu, he is a Gunavatara. Lord Shiva is a transformation of Vishnu. Vishnu doesn't deal with the material nature directly, the material nature is his external energy. Because if He does that, then the material energy will become his internal potency not an external potency.

Therefore in order to deal with the material energy Vishnu transformed himself in to Lord Shiva. So lord Shiva is actually a direct transformation of Vishnu to deal with the material nature. And it is through Lord Shiva that all the living entities are projected into the material nature. So that's why Lord Shiva is the greatest of all the demigods. Since he is dealing with the entire material nature he can be classified as a demigod, but the supreme demigod. That's why Lord Shiva is the husband of Mahamaya. And he is the greatest devotee, because it is through Lord Shiva that the living entities came into the material nature. And it is through Lord Shiva that the living entities will go back to the spiritual sky.

So he is actually performing some function for the sake of Vishnu, therefore he is the greatest Vaishnava. Okay I think I should just continue because many of the questions will be answered in the next part that we will be discussing and then I will come back and answer these questions. Can you bear with me a little longer?

So the point actually was, whether you all understood the difference between Vaikuntha and Vrindavana. Very good, you all are very intelligent and attentive audience. So Krishna in Vrindavana, he resides in the spiritual Vrindavana. But that Krishna comes down to the material nature once in the day of Brahma. Now let me see how attentively you are listening. How many chatur-yugas make a day of Brahma?

1000, Okay. So out of these 1000 chatur-yugas. Satya-yuga, treta-yuga, dwapara yuga and Kali-yuga make 1 chatur-yuga. And the duration of this 1 chatur-yuga is 4.32 million years. So multiply it by 1000. So 4.32 billion years is a day of Brahma. And the same is the duration of Brahma's night.

And in this way Brahma lives up to 100 years, according to that calculation. The day of Brahma is of 8,64 billion years. So 30 such days make a month, 12 such months make a year. And 100 such years make a life of Brahma. Now once in a day of Brahma the Supreme Personality of Godhead comes to perform his Vrindavana pastimes. And by enacting or revealing his Vrindavan pastimes, God informs the living entity what His Vrindavana pastimes are like. And in those pastimes some very fortunate souls get a chance to participate.

Actually when Krishna enacts His Vrindavana pastimes, Krishna's associates come along with Him to take part in this pastime. Like Nanda Maharaja, mother Yasoda, Radharani, Lalita, Vishakha, Shubal, Shridam, Vasuda, these are all the associates of Krishna in Goloka Vrindavana. They came along with Krishna in Vrindavana and perform their pastimes. And those living entities who have developed some very very special relationship with Krishna due to their inconceivable good fortune and the mercy of the Lord. They get a chance to participate in Krishna's pastimes in Vrindavana.

For example, when Lord Ramachandra was performing his pastimes in the Treta Yuga, some sages in Dandakaranya... When Lord Ramchandra was in exile from his kingdom for 14 years, residing in Dandakaranya for a while. And in Dandakaranya some sages actually

developed some intense love for Lord Ramchandra. They actually felt some kind of conjugal relationship with Lord Ramchandra. And Lord Ramchandra told them that look in this pastime I have only one wife and I can't allow you this relationship, because I can't be unfaithful to my wife. But when I will come in the Dwapara-yuga as Krishna, then I will fulfill your desire and develop a loving relationship.

So these sages of Dandakaranya, some took birth in Vrindavana during Krishna's pastimes as the gopis. The 108 exponents of the Upanishads they also got a chance to be elevated to Krishna's Vrindavana pastimes. In this way some very, very few fortunate souls got the opportunity to get into Krishna's Vrindavana pastimes. When Krishna enacted those pastimes on this planet.

Now performing these pastimes on this planet, Krishna considered that I perform my renowned pastimes to the living entities of this world. But not many will have access to this pastime. Why ? Krishna considered a devotee serves the Supreme Personality of Godhead in awe and reverence. A devotee serves the Lord as the Supreme Personality of Godhead and his mood is that of a servant. And by serving the Lord in this mood which is known as Vaidhi bhakti.

Following all the rules and regulations when they attain their perfection for devotion, they will attain Vaikuntha. One serves the Lord following Vaidhi bhakti, following the rules and regulations, one attains the Vaikuntha. Now every devotee will serve the Lord in awe and reverence in Vaidhi bhakti, so everyone will enter Vaikuntha, where he attains his perfection. Then how will anybody get a chance to enter Vrindavan ? So Krishna considered that point. Now is this point clear ? Okay, very smart audience I have here today.

So then Krishna considered how my devotees will have the opportunity to enter my Vrindavan pastimes. Therefore Krishna made a very special arrangement. What is that special arrangement ? Krishna appeared as a devotee and by serving the Lord as a devotee. And by following the scriptures the rules and regulations of the Vaidhi bhakti one will get an opportunity to enter Vrindavana. That is the reason why Krishna came as Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. This is a very very important point. And every Gaudiya Vaishnava must understand this point

Why we need to follow the rules and regulations of the Vaidhi bhakti when we can enter the pastimes of Vrindavana ? Following the rules and regulations and applying those rules and regulations of devotion to Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Everyone serves Krishna as the Supreme Personality of Godhead according to the rules and regulations of the scriptures. We cannot serve whimsically. We can just walk along and put our hands along His shoulders and ask "Hi Krishna! How are you doing?" We can't do that. Or to be more precise I will give an example how impossible it is to develop this relationship of friendship with Krishna.

Now in friendship the friends of Krishna in Vrindavana play with Him. And sometimes in the play they wrestle, and the condition is that the loser will have to carry the winner on his back. And when wrestling with his friends Krishna is defeated and according to the condition of the referee the loser will have to carry the winner on his back. And when the winner says Krishna now you will have to carry me on your back, Krishna says not I will not carry you, I didn't lose actually. I just slipped over a banana peel. And when I just slipped then you jumped on me and not you are claiming that you won. So I won't carry you. Then the friend says

Krishna you are defeated, you have to carry me. Krishna says nothing doing, I am not going to carry you.

Then the friend forces his way on to Krishna's back, and for that he puts his foot on Krishna's back. Now which devotee will dare to walk up to the alter and get on Krishna's body. Will any devotee ever dare to do that? So that is why direct Vrindavana relationship is not possible. This relationship can only develop when we are under the influence of Yogamaya. Therefore we have to come under the influence of Yogamaya in order to come under the influence of Yogamaya. Now how does one come under the influence of Yogamaya in this way ? By Krishna's mercy. But Krishna cannot be partial to anybody. Krishna's doesn't say I am into My [unclear] so I will bestow My mercy unto them and let them enter Vrindavana. Krishna doesn't act like that he is completely neutral. Now Krishna is afraid of one thing that people may say that He is partial. So Krishna always remains impartial.