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RAGANUGA-BHAKTI AND LOBHA

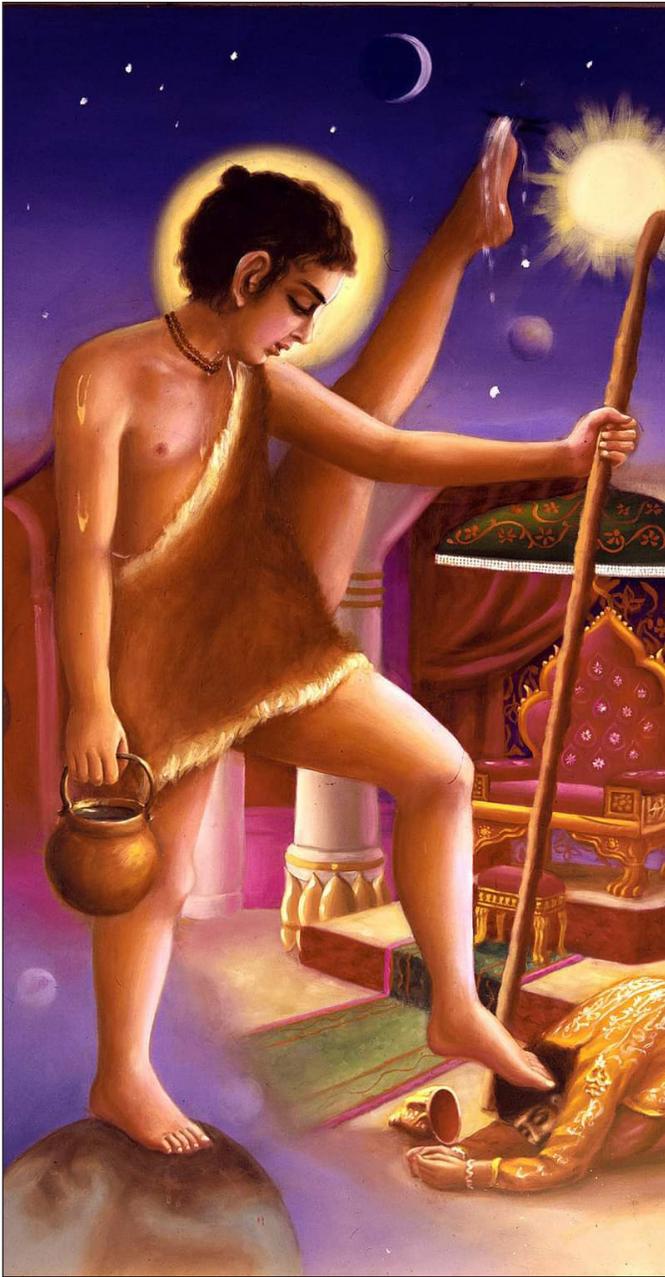
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BALI MAHARAJA SURRENDERS THE UNIVERSE

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Sri Sukadeva Goswami said: O King Pariksit, when Bali Maharaja was thus advised by his spiritual master, Sukracarya, his family priest, he remained silent for some time, and then, after full deliberation, he replied to his spiritual master as follows.

Bali Maharaja said: As you have already stated, the principle of religion that does not hinder one's economic development, sense gratification, fame and means of livelihood is the real occupational duty of the householder. I also think that this religious principle is correct. I am the grandson

of Maharaja Prahlada. How can I withdraw my promise because of greed for money when I have already said that I shall give this land? How can I behave like an ordinary cheater, especially toward a *brāhmaṇa*? There is nothing more sinful than untruthfulness. Because of this, mother earth once said, "I can bear any heavy thing except a person who is a liar." I do not fear hell, poverty, an ocean of distress, fall down from my position or even death itself as much as I fear cheating a *brāhmaṇa*. My lord, you can also see that all the material opulences of this world are certainly separated from their possessor at death. Therefore, if the *brāhmaṇa* Vamanadeva is not satisfied by whatever gifts one has given, why not please Him with the riches one is destined to lose at death? Dadhici, Sibi and many other great personalities were willing to sacrifice even their lives for the benefit of the people in general. This is the evidence of history. So why not give up this insignificant land? What is the serious consideration against it? O best of the *brāhmaṇas*, certainly the great demoniac kings who were never reluctant to fight enjoyed this world, but in due course of time everything they had was taken away, except their reputation, by which they continue to exist. In other words, one should try to achieve a good reputation instead of anything else. O best of the *brāhmaṇas*, many men have laid down their lives on the battlefield, being unafraid of fighting, but rarely has one gotten the chance to give his accumulated wealth faithfully to a saintly person who creates holy places. By giving charity, a benevolent and merciful person undoubtedly becomes even more auspicious, especially when he gives charity to a person like your good self. Under the circumstances, I must give this little *brahmacārī* whatever charity He wants from me. O great sage, great saintly persons like you, being completely aware of the Vedic principles for performing ritualistic ceremonies and *yajñas*, worship Lord Visnu in all circumstances. Therefore, whether that same Lord Visnu has come here to give me all benedictions or to punish me as an enemy, I must carry out His order and give Him the requested tract of land without hesitation. Although He is Visnu Himself, out of fear He has covered Himself in the form of a *brāhmaṇa* to come to me begging. Under the circumstances, because He has assumed the

form of a *brāhmaṇa*, even if He irreligiously arrests me or even kills me, I shall not retaliate, although He is my enemy. If this *brāhmaṇa* really is Lord Viṣṇu, who is worshiped by Vedic hymns, He would never give up His widespread reputation; either He would lie down having been killed by me, or He would kill me in a fight.

Thereafter, the spiritual master, Sukracarya, being inspired by the Supreme Lord, cursed his exalted disciple Bali Maharaja, who was so magnanimous and fixed in truthfulness that instead of respecting his spiritual master's instructions, he wanted to disobey his order. Although you have no knowledge, you have become a so-called learned person, and therefore you dare be so impudent as to disobey my order. Because of disobeying me, you shall very soon be bereft of all your opulence.

Sukadeva Goswami continued: Even after being cursed in this way by his own spiritual master, Bali Maharaja, being a great personality, never deviated from his determination. Therefore, according to custom, he first offered water to Vamanadeva and then offered Him the gift of land he had promised. Bali Maharaja's wife, known as Vindhyaṅgalī, who was decorated with a necklace of pearls, immediately came and had a large golden waterpot brought there, full of water with which to worship the Lord by washing His feet. Bali Maharaja, the worshiper of Lord Vamanadeva, jubilantly washed the Lord's lotus feet and then took the water on his head, for that water delivers the entire universe. At that time, the residents of the higher planetary system, namely the demigods, the *Gandharvas*, the *Vidyādhara*s, the *Siddhas* and the *Cāraṇas*, all being very pleased by Bali Maharaja's simple, nonduplicious act, praised his qualities and showered upon him millions of flowers. The *Gandharvas*, the *Kimpuruṣas* and the *Kinnaras* sounded thousands and thousands of kettledrums and trumpets again and again, and they sang in great jubilation, declaring, "How exalted a person is Bali Maharaja, and what a difficult task he has performed! Even though he knew that Lord Viṣṇu was on the side of his enemies, he nonetheless gave the Lord the entire three worlds in charity."

The unlimited Supreme Personality of Godhead, who had assumed the form of *Vāmana*, then began increasing in size, acting in terms of the material energy, until everything in the universe was within His body, including the earth, the planetary sys-

tems, the sky, the directions, the various holes in the universe, the seas, the oceans, the birds, beasts, human beings, the demigods and the great saintly persons. Bali Maharaja, along with all the priests, *ācāryas* and members of the assembly, observed the Supreme Personality of Godhead's universal body, which was full of six opulences. That body contained everything within the universe, including all the gross material elements, the senses, the sense objects, the mind, intelligence and false ego, the various kinds of living entities, and the actions and reactions of the three modes of material nature. Thereafter, Bali Maharaja, who was occupying the seat of King Indra, could see the lower planetary systems, such as *Rasātala*, on the soles of the feet of the Lord's universal form. He saw on the Lord's feet the surface of the globe, on the surface of His calves all the mountains, on His knees the various birds, and on His thighs the varieties of air. Bali Maharaja saw beneath the garments of the Lord, who acts wonderfully, the evening twilight. In the Lord's private parts he saw the *Prajāpatis*, and in the round portion of the waist he saw himself with his confidential associates. In the Lord's navel he saw the sky, on the Lord's waist he saw the seven oceans, and on the Lord's bosom he saw all the clusters of stars. My dear King, on the heart of Lord Murari he saw religion; on the chest, both pleasing words and truthfulness; in the mind, the moon; on the bosom, the goddess of fortune, with a lotus flower in her hand; on the neck, all the *Vedas* and all sound vibrations; on the arms, all the demigods, headed by King Indra; in both ears, all the directions; on the head, the upper planetary systems; on the hair, the clouds; in the nostrils, the wind; on the eyes, the sun; and in the mouth, fire. From His words came all the Vedic mantras, on His tongue was the demigod of water, Varunadeva, on His eyebrows were the regulative principles, and on His eyelids were day and night. [When His eyes were open it was daytime, and when they were closed it was night.] On His forehead was anger, and on His lips was greed. O King, in His touch were lusty desires, in His semen were all the waters, on His back was irreligion, and in His wonderful activities or steps was the fire of sacrifice. On His shadow was death, in His smile was the illusory energy, and on the hairs of His body were all the drugs and herbs. In His veins were all the rivers,



on His nails were all the stones, in His intelligence were Lord Brahma, the demigods and the great saintly persons, and throughout His entire body and senses were all living entities, moving and stationary. Bali Maharaja thus saw everything in the gigantic body of the Lord.

O King, when all the demons, the followers of Maharaja Bali, saw the universal form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who held everything within His body, when they saw in the Lord's hand His disc, known as the *Sudarśana cakṛa*, which generates intolerable heat, and when they heard the tumultuous sound of His bow, all of these caused lamentation within their hearts. The Lord's conchshell, named *Pāñcajanya*, which made sounds like that of a cloud; the very forceful club named *Kaumodakī*; the sword named *Vidyādhara*, with a shield decorated with hundreds of moon-like spots; and also *Akṣayasāyaka*, the best of quivers all of these appeared together to offer prayers to the Lord. These associates,

headed by Sunanda and other chief associates and accompanied by all the predominating deities of the various planets, offered prayers to the Lord, who wore a brilliant helmet, bracelets, and glittering earrings that resembled fish. On the Lord's bosom were the lock of hair called *Śrīvatsa* and the transcendental jewel named *Kaustubha*. He wore a yellow garment, covered by a belt, and He was decorated by a flower garland, surrounded by bees. Manifesting Himself in this way, O King, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose activities are wonderful, covered the entire surface of the earth with one footstep, the sky with His body, and all directions with His arms. As the Lord took His second step, He covered the heavenly planets. And not even a spot remained for the third step, for the Lord's foot extended higher and higher, beyond Maharloka, Janaloka, Tapoloka and even Satyaloka.

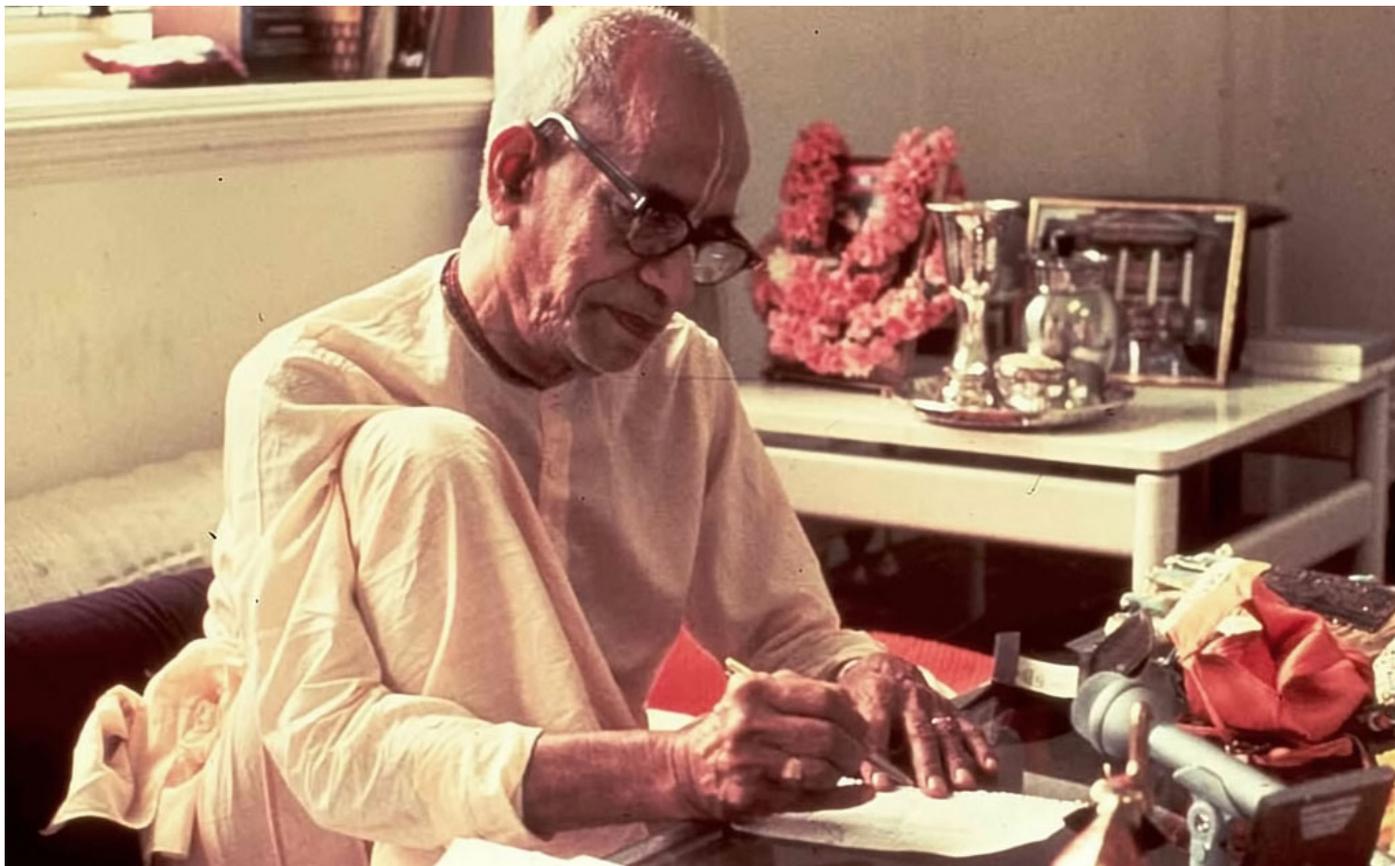
- *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) > Canto 8: Withdrawal of the Cosmic Creation > Chapter 20: Bali Maharaja surrenders the Universe, Verses: 1-34

TWO KINDS OF HIGHLY ELEVATED DEVOTEES

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Bali Maharaja had already been blessed by his grandfather Prahlada Maharaja. Therefore, he was a pure devotee, although born in a family of demons. There are two kinds of highly elevated devotees, called *sādhana-siddha* and *kṛpā-siddha*. *Sādhana-siddha* refers to one who has become a devotee by regular execution of the regulative principles mentioned in the *śāstras*, as ordered and directed by the spiritual master. If one regularly executes such devotional service, he will certainly attain perfection in due course of time. But there are other devotees, who may not have undergone all the required details of devotional service but who, by the special mercy of *guru* and Krishna—the spiritual master and the Supreme Personality of Godhead—have immediately attained the perfection of pure devotional service. Examples of such devotees are the *yajña-patnīs*, Maharaja Bali and Sukadeva Goswami. The *yajña-patnīs* were the wives of ordinary *brāhmaṇas* engaged in fruitive activities. Although the *brāhmaṇas* were very learned and advanced in Vedic knowledge, they could not achieve the mercy of Krishna-Balarama, whereas their wives achieved



complete perfection in devotional service, despite their being women. Similarly, Vairocana, Bali Maharaja, received the mercy of Prahlada Maharaja, and by Prahlada Maharaja's mercy he also received the mercy of Lord Visnu, who appeared before him as a *brahmacārī* beggar. Thus Bali Maharaja became a *kṛpā-siddha* because of the special mercy of both *guru* and Krishna. Caitanya Mahāprabhu confirms this favor: *guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bija* (Cc. *Madhya* 19.151). Bali Maharaja, by the grace of Prahlada Maharaja, got the seed of devotional service, and when that seed developed, he achieved the ultimate fruit of that service, namely love of Godhead (*premā pum-artha mahān*), immediately upon the appearance of Lord Vamanadeva. Bali Maharaja regularly maintained devotion for the Lord, and because he was purified, the Lord appeared before him. Because of unalloyed love for the Lord, he then immediately decided, "I shall give this little dwarf *brāhmaṇa* whatever He asks from me." This is a sign of love. Thus Bali Maharaja is understood to be one who received the highest perfection of devotional service by special mercy.

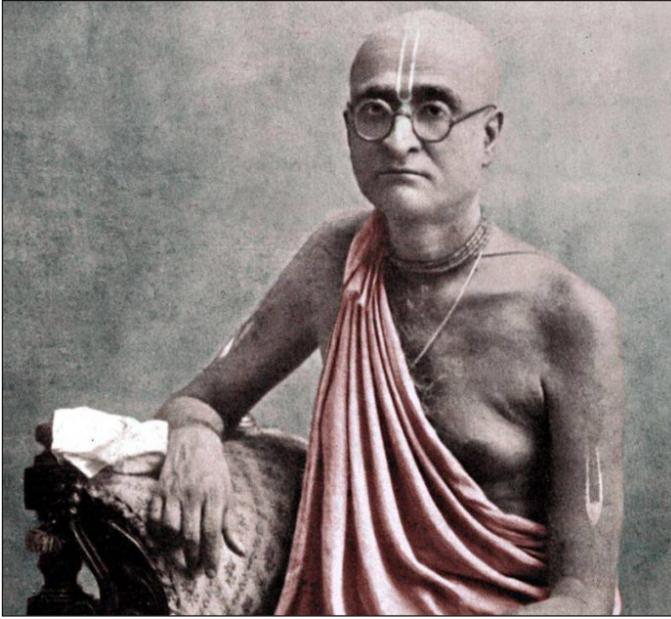
- Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) > Canto 8: Withdrawal of the Cosmic Creation > Chapter 20: Bali Maharaja surrenders the Universe, Verses 3, Purport

THE MERCY OF THE INTERNAL SPIRITUAL MASTER *Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura*

The Supreme Lord regulates the living entity's good and bad propensities by residing in their hearts as the Supersoul. The Supersoul or internal spiritual master directs all living entities. The Supersoul also guides us to a spiritual master. Aside from this, the spiritual master's servants act as instructing spiritual masters.

Persons who glorify the *sāstras*, who explain *sāstra* to others, and who act according to *sāstric* injunctions regulate the restless, *anartha*-filled minds of ignorant people. Such instructing spiritual masters help people before they receive initiation from a spiritual master.

Without the mercy of the internal spiritual master (*caitya-guru*), no one can become qualified to serve the lotus feet of the initiating and instructing spiritual masters. Until we accumulate piety in the form of Krishna's mercy, we cannot achieve the true mercy of the *caitya-guru*. As long as our hearts are filled with the desire for religiosity, economic development, sense gratification, and liberation, we cannot aspire for devotional service. If due to good fortune we desire to take shelter at the Lord's lotus



feet, then the internal spiritual master will mercifully guide us to initiating and instructing *gurus*.

The devotee spiritual master is attained by the *caitya-guru's* mercy. The *caitya-guru* bestows mercy in two ways, and it is because of these two forms of mercy that some people become materialists and others become devotees. Materialists are people who have accepted sense gratification as their ultimate goal. Instead of searching for devotional service, which is the ultimate goal of life, such people seek temporary happiness. This is the *caitya-guru's* tricky mercy. Only a cheater is fit to receive such tricky mercy. Pious, sincere devotees, however, become glorious by receiving the *caitya-guru's* true mercy. If someone who despite becoming the Supreme Lord's servant wants something other than his Lord's service, what can he be but a cheater?

An instructing spiritual master teaches a surrendered disciple to accept an initiating spiritual master. Therefore even though there may be many instructing spiritual masters, there is no difference in opinion between such *gurus* and the initiating spiritual master, who awards the disciple transcendental knowledge. Rather, an instructing spiritual master is the real friend of the initiating spiritual master.

A living entity's awareness of his constitutional position is revived when he receives transcendental knowledge. At that time those who give instructions regarding the process of Hari's devotional service are called instructing spiritual masters. The initiating spiritual master is situated between the commander-in-chief and the ordinary soldiers who are in the form of instructing spiritual masters.

Bhāgavata Mahāvīdyālaya

Only a person who is favored by the Lord in the form of the *caitya-guru* receives the good fortune to understand the devotee of the Lord as his bona fide spiritual master. Only by the Lord's mercy can a living entity see the beauty of a bona fide spiritual master's toenails and thus make his life successful.

- *Amṛta Vāṇī: Nectar of Instructions of Immortality of His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura Prabhupada; Compiled by Sripada Bhakti Mayukha Bhagavat Maharaja; Adapted and Published by Isvara dasa; Translated from Bengali by Bhumipati dasa*

RAGANUGA-BHAKTI AND LOBHA

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura

Vaidhi-bhakti is devotion inspired by following scriptural rules, whereas *raganuga-bhakti* is devotion inspired by *Lobha*, or greed. To be inspired towards *bhakti* means to be single-minded in executing all the different processes of *bhakti*. Therefore the two ways to foster *bhakti* are first by strictly following scriptural rules, and, second through developing intense greed (*Lobha*) to serve the Lord. Of these two methods, Srila Rupa Goswami gives more importance to *Lobha*, as he expresses in his book the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*:

*tat tat-bhava-ādi-mādhurye
śrute dhīr-yad-apeksate
nātra śāstram na yuktim-ca
tallobhotpatti-lakṣaṇam*

This verse means that after the devotee has heard the detailed descriptions of the sweetness of Lord Krishna's loving spiritual sentiments (*bhava-mādhurya*) with His associates, he is spontaneously drawn towards those sentiments of Krishna's beloved associates. Such a devotee, desiring to possess those feelings, shakes free the shackles of logical and scriptural bindings. Liberating himself from these bonds is the devotee's first symptom of *Lobha*.

When a devotee becomes greedy for Krishna while hearing about the different ecstatic emotions displayed by a *parikara* (confidante) participating in Krishna's Vraja pastimes, the devotee thinks, let this spiritual emotion also bloom in my heart. Such meditations are never interrupted by a need to seek consent from either the scriptures or logic. If by chance a devotee feels any uncertainty, then, his desire to possess the spiritual emotions of a *Parika-*

ra cannot be called *Lobha*. No one can ever develop *Lobha* from following scriptural injunctions, nor, can one obtain the desired spiritual object if the mind is endlessly analyzing whether or not one is eligible. Real *Lobha* appears immediately when one sees or hears about Krishna.

Lobha has two divisions according to the two sources from which it may develop: (i) the pure devotee's mercy and (ii) the Supreme Lord's mercy. The first division of *Lobha*, that which is owing to the devotee's mercy, is of two kinds: ancient and modern. Ancient *Lobha* appears by the mercy of pure devotees steeped in the same sweet, eternal devotional mellows the constant associates of Lord Krishna relish. When *Lobha* originates from the grace of pure devotees in the present time it is known as contemporary, or modern. When *Lobha* starts from the previous birth and begins to bloom in the present life then the devotee must take shelter of a *guru* who is a *raganuga* pure devotee. The second kind of *Lobha*, or modern *Lobha*, is developed only after the devotee Likes shelter of his spiritual master.

The *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* confirms:

*kr̥ṣṇa tat-bhakta kārūṇya-
mātra Lobhaika hetukā
puṣṭi-mārga-tayā kaiścīd
iyam rāgānugocyate*

Lobha is produced solely by the mercy of Krishna and His pure devotees. Devotion initiated by such *Lobha* is defined as *raganuga bhakti*; sometimes it is termed *puṣṭi-mārga-bhakti*.

When both kinds of devotees, the one yearning for ancient *Lobha*, the other for modern *Lobha*, hear how to acquire the devotional mellows possessed by Krishna's eternal associates, or *nitya parikara*, they seek guidance from the proper scriptures. This is because the authorized method for attaining *bhava* is delineated in scriptural injunctions and purports; no other sources for receiving this information are indicated anywhere.

The following analogy illustrates this point: A person becomes greedy for milk and its products, but first he must want to know how to procure milk. He then has to seek advice from a trustworthy person conversant with the subject who will tell him how to purchase a cow and how to

take care of her properly. In other words, knowledge on a subject cannot be simply invented—proper guidance is necessary. As Lord Brahma explains in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (8.6.12):

*yathāgnim edhasy amṛtaṁ ca goṣu
bhuvy annam ambūdyamane ca vṛttim
yogair manusyā adhiyanti hi tvām
guṇeṣu buddhyā kavayo vadanti*

As one can derive fire from wood, milk from the milk-bag of the cow, food grains, and water from the land, and prosperity in one's livelihood from industrial enterprises, so, by practise of *bhakti-yoga*, even within this material world, one can achieve Your favor or intelligently approach You. Those who are pious all affirm this.

For a *raga-bhakta* (the devotee who is following the path of *raga-bhakti*) this intense eagerness for hearing and chanting about the all-purifying qualities and activities of Krishna, begins with the *raga-bhakta's* surrender to the lotus feet of his *guru* and continues to flourish until he attains his spiritual goals. The more a devotee is purified by hearing and chanting, the more spiritual realizations he will have; just as medicine applied correctly to diseased eyes cures, so hearing and chanting cures of material ignorance.

- *Ragavartma-Candrika* - Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura; Translated by Sarvabhavana dasa.

!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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