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Highlights

• DEVOTION IN IGNORANCE

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

• A HUNDRED WARNINGS AGAINST MUNDANE MELLOWS

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur

• HOW TO FIND A SADHU

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

• KRISHNA RETURNS FROM THE FOREST

Srila Viswanath Chakravarti Thakur's Śrī Kṛṣṇa-bhāvanāmṛta

DEVOTION IN IGNORANCE

Translation and purport to Bhāg. 3.29.8 by

*His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta
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*abhisandhāya yo hiṁsām
dambhaṁ mātsaryam eva vā
sairambhī bhinna-dṛḡ bhāvaṁ
mayi kuryāt sa tāmasaḥ*

**Devotional service executed
by a person who is envious,
proud, violent and angry, and
who is a separatist, is considered to be in
the mode of darkness.**

PURPORT

It has already been stated in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, first canto, second chapter, that the highest, most glorious religion is the attainment of causeless, unmotivated devotional service. In pure devotional service, the only motive should be to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That is not actually a motive; that is the pure condition of the living entity. In the conditioned stage, when one engages in devotional service, he should follow the instruction of the bona fide spiritual master in full surrender. The spiritual master is the manifested representation of the Supreme Lord because he receives and presents the instructions of the Lord, as they are, by disciplic succession. It is described in

Bhagavad-gītā that the teachings therein should be received by disciplic succession, otherwise there is adulteration. To act under the direction of a bona fide spiritual master with a motive to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead is pure devotional service. But if one has a motive for personal sense gratification, his devotional service is manifested differently. Such a man may be violent, proud, envious and angry, and his interests are separate from the Lord's.

One who approaches the Supreme Lord to render devotional service, but who is proud of his personality, envious of others or vengeful, is in the mode of anger. He thinks that he is the best devotee. Devotional service executed in this way is not pure; it is mixed and is of the lowest grade, *tāmasaḥ*. Srila Viswanath Chakravarti Thakur advises that a *vaiṣṇava* who is not of good character should be avoided. A *vaiṣṇava* is one who has taken the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the ultimate goal of life, but if one is not pure and still has motives, then he is not a *vaiṣṇava* of the first order of good character. One may offer his respects to such a *vaiṣṇava* because he has accepted the Supreme Lord as the ultimate goal of life, but one should not keep company with a *vaiṣṇava* who is in the mode of ignorance. ❀

A HUNDRED WARNINGS AGAINST MUNDANE MELLOWS

Prākṛta Rasa Śata Dūṣaṇī

Sri Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
Thakur Prabhupada

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Introduction

Amongst higher classes of people in society, there are three main paths for traveling through the kingdom of various beliefs regarding transcendence. These are known as the paths of *karma* (performance of materially fruitive activity), *jñāna* (cultivation of transcendental knowledge), and *bhakti* (purely surrendered devotional service). The path of *karma* involves arrangements for obtaining temporary worldly benefits, which are enjoyed by souls trapped in the bondage of the materially conditioned platform of life. The path of *jñāna* involves renouncing impermanent material things as well as the impermanent distractions related to patriotic interests and the like; one then searches after the undifferentiated spiritual reality of impersonal Brahman. And the third path involves positive activity that is transcendental to *karma*, *jñāna*, and matter altogether—it is the way of cultivating actions favorable for serving the object most worthy of service, Sri Krishna. This is called *bhakti-mārga*, the path of pure devotion.

Along the path of *bhakti* there are three distinct developmental stages. The first is *sādhana*, devotional practice, followed by the awakening of *bhāva*, ecstatic emotion, and finally culminating in *prema-bhakti*, eternal devotional service performed in pure love. During the stage of devotional practice there are many impediments, and the process by which these impediments are removed is called *anartha-nivṛtti*. In this work, Sri Siddhanta Saraswati (Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur) describes this process, based upon the wonderful and supremely astonishing pastimes of Sri Gaurāṅgā-sundara as well as in the opinions established by the Goswamis, who are the Lord's eternal associates in those pastimes.

(1) *prākṛta ceṣṭate bhāi kabhu rasa haya nā
jaḍīya prākṛta-rasa śuddha-bhakta gāya nā*

O brothers! No material effort can ever produce the awakening of *rasa*, transcendental mellow. A pure devotee of the Lord never glorifies any *rasa* born of the dull material world.

(2) *prākṛta-rasera śikṣā-bhikṣā śiṣye cāya nā
rati binā jei rasa tāhā guru deya nā*

True disciples do not desire to ask their spiritual master for instructions regarding material *rasa*. A genuine spiritual master does not teach any *rasa* that is devoid of *rati*, transcendental loving attachment to the Lord.

(3) *nāma rasa dui vastu bhakta kabhu jāne nā
nāma rase bheda āche, bhakta kabhu bole nā*

A devotee never distinguishes between the holy name of Krishna and *rasa*. Therefore, a devotee never says there is a difference between the holy name and the mellows of devotion.

(4) *'aham-mama' bhāva-sattve nāma kabhu haya nā
bhoga-buddhi nā chāḍile aprākṛta haya nā*

The holy name is never revealed to one who is situated in the bodily concept of life and thinks in terms of "I" and "mine." If one does not reject the enjoying mentality the transcendental platform will never be attained.

(5) *prākṛta jaḍera bhoge kṛṣṇa-sevā haya nā
jaḍa-vastu kona-o kāle aprākṛta haya nā*

Devotional service unto Lord Krishna can never be performed through the enjoyment of material sense objects. Material objects cannot at any time acquire the attributes of transcendence.

(6) *jaḍa-sattā vartamāne cit kabhu haya nā
jaḍa-vastu cit haya bhakte kabhu bole nā*

Dull material objects are never conscious. Thus, the devotee of the Lord never ascribes consciousness to the objects of this mundane world.

(7) *jaḍīya viṣaya-bhoga bhakta kabhu kare nā
jaḍa-bhoga, kṛṣṇa-sevā kabhu sama haya nā*

A true devotee never engages in the enjoyment of material objects. Material enjoyment and devotional service to Krishna are never the same under any circumstances.

(8) *nija-bhogya kāme bhakta 'prema' kabhu bole nā
'rase ḍagamaga aho' śiṣye guru bole nā*

A genuine devotee never states that selfish enjoyment of one's own senses out of mundane lust is equivalent to *prema* (love of Godhead). A bona fide spiritual master does not tell his disciple, "You are absorbed in the mellows of divine *rasa*."

(9) 'rase ḍagamaga āmi' kabhu guru bole nā
jaḍīya rasera kathā śiṣye guru bole nā

A genuine spiritual master never claims, "I am absorbed in the mellows of divine *rasa*." A guru never instructs his disciples on subjects of gross worldly mellows.

(10) jaḍa-rasa-gāne kabhu śreyaḥ keha labhe nā
kṛṣṇake prākṛta boli' bhakta kabhu gāya nā

No one has ever attained their ultimate benefit by glorifying mundane mellows. A genuine devotee never proclaims that Lord Krishna is mundane.

(11) nāmake prākṛta boli' kṛṣṇe jaḍa jāne nā
kṛṣṇa-nāma-rase bheda śuddha-bhakta māne nā

A devotee never says that the holy name of Krishna is material, for Krishna cannot be known through matter. A pure devotee never makes a distinction between the holy name of Krishna and *rasa*. ❀ (To be continued)

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HOW TO FIND A SADHU

Questions and Answers with Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Devotee: How does one recognize a *sadhu*?

Gour Govinda Swami: Cry before Krishna. Only He can help you to find a *sadhu*. You can't recognize a *sadhu*. You have no vision to see the *sadhu*. If you try by yourself to recognize *sadhu*, then you will be cheated. If you are serious, then cry before Him. "O Krishna! I am your servant!"

ayi nanda-tanuja kiṅkaraṁ
patitaṁ mām viṣame bhavāmbudhau
kṛpayā tava pāda-paṅkaja-
sthita-dhūli-saḍṛṣaṁ vicintaya

Mahaprabhu has taught us this. This is crying before Krishna. "O *nanda-tanuja*, son of Nanda Maharaja, I am your *kiṅkara*, your servant. Somehow or other I am fallen here in this dreadful ocean of material existence and I have been drowning from time immemorial. But I want to serve you. How can I serve you? How can I become a speck of dust at Your lotus feet? Please help me." Just cry. Without the help of *sadhu* you cannot approach Krishna. You can't utter Krishna's name. When you cry like that, Krishna is there in your heart as *paramātmā*.

He will say, "Oh, now he is crying for Me." Then he makes an arrangement.

This is the proper way. If by your own effort you try to recognize a *sadhu* you will be cheated. You can't see a *sadhu*. You have no vision at all. You see only all outward, external things. You can't see the real thing. There are many persons who are only outwardly *sadhus*. You will be enchanted by their external activities: "Oh he is a great *sadhu*! Yes, he is producing gold!" You will be cheated.

You can't get a real *sadhu* [in this way]. A real *sadhu* is one who is completely absorbed in Krishna, day and night, twenty-four hours. He has gotten Krishna. He is with Krishna. He can give you Krishna. You can't see him. You have no vision. Only you can cry for Krishna from the core of your heart. This is not an external cry. It is internal. Then Krishna, who is in your heart, will see that you are crying and he will help you. He will make arrangement for you to meet such a *sadhu*. That is the arrangement of Krishna. When you meet such a person you will feel some spontaneous attraction from the core of your heart. That attraction is the proof.

Devotee: To meet a *sadhu* is so rare. How can one get the opportunity?

Gour Govinda Swami: It's a fact that it is rare, but if you are really crying for it then Krishna can make an arrangement. It is impossible for you, but nothing is impossible for Krishna. ❀

— Home program in Vancouver, Canada, May 1993.

KRISHNA RETURNS FROM THE FOREST

Srila Viswanath Chakravarti Thakur's Śrī Kṛṣṇa-bhāvanāmṛta

When Krishna came to the town gate and Nanda Maharaja saw Him, Nanda extended his arms and embraced Him. Nanda Baba's body was stunned and studded with goose bumps of ecstasy as he took Krishna on his lap. Together They shone like a beautiful blue lotus flower in a lake on Mount Kailasa. Nanda Baba pulled back Krishna's turban to smell His head, and showered Him with his tears of love. He covered Krishna's face with his face so that they looked like a spotless

autumn cloud covering the moon, which removes the affliction of the day's heat with its cool rays.

Meanwhile, Yashoda Rani spent the evening in great distress, walking out of her house onto the palace courtyard and back again, her face dried up from different worries about her son's delay in returning home. Suddenly, she saw her beloved boy and her eyes emitted a Yamuna-stream of tears and her breasts a Ganga-stream of milk. Stunned with ecstasy, she embraced her boy and asked Him about His welfare. She was not able to see Him properly because her eyes were filled with loving tears. Then, Rohini, Balarama's mother, performed a charming *ārati* ceremony for Krishna by waving small golden lamps, which held burning wicks, and then placed Him on His mother's lap. Is Krishna like the moon, sitting on the lap of His birthplace, which is like a nectar ocean of parental affection? Is He the king of love-jewels, sitting in its own mine, or is He a sapphire-ornamented doll, tinted blue from the sapphires' effulgence and smeared with the musk of nectarean affection, placed nicely on her lap by fate?

Although Krishna already sat on His mother's lap, Yashoda was still stunned with ecstasy, so Krishna affectionately told her, "O mother, I'm already sitting on your lap! Why don't you look at Me instead of showering Me with your tears?" Saying this, He wiped the tears from her face with His own hand, making her happy like a female swan on a lake. With her breast milk, mother Yashoda washed the cow-dust from Krishna's body, and lovingly fondled Him. Seeing that there was no end to Yashoda's ecstasy, which flowed from her like incomparable waves, Vatsalya Lakshmi, the goddess of parental affection, brought her back to her senses and engaged her in caressing Krishna's body with her hands and engaging her maid servants in anointing and bathing Him.

Yashoda melted with affection as she told Krishna, "O Vatsa, O abode of pure love, I was very worried when You were in the forest tending Your cows! O moon-faced one, you're not even slightly kind to me! O child, lotus of Your family, You don't take Your mother with You into the forest even once. O merciful one, although a very long day has passed, and although Your father repeatedly tried to bring You home, and even though Your friends could no longer tolerate their fatigue, hunger and thirst, You still did not come home. Why should this mother continue to maintain her hard and useless life?"

Madhumangala then said, "O Mother, my very whimsical friend Krishna was merged in an ocean of playfulness with His *bālali* [can mean either "boyfriends" or "girlfriends"] and forgot even Himself, what to speak of you! I'm His only superior there, O mother. If I didn't control Him then Krishna wouldn't be home even now!"

Mother Yashoda said, "Well spoken, Batu! Every day I see nail marks on Krishna's body, but these boys just don't listen to my prohibition! Every day while arm-wrestling they again forcibly scratch His body, which is more tender than a blue lotus flower! Alas! What should I do to stop these naughty boys?" ❀

— Chapter 17 texts 10-20. Translated by Adwaita Das.

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