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BHAKTAS, NOT MUSICIANS

*His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*



My opinion is that it is not necessary for us to utilize these different musical talents for spreading Krishna consciousness. I would rather see people follow strictly the path of Lord Chaitanya and his *saṅkīrtana* devotees. We are using *mṛdaṅga* and *karatāla*, that is enough. We are not musicians. We are *kṛṣṇa-bhaktas*. Therefore we do not stress so much importance on these different musical talents. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is God himself. Had he thought it would have been better to spread Krishna consciousness by another way he would have done so. But no, simply with *mṛdaṅga* and *karatāla*, traveling and chanting Hare Krishna, asking everyone to chant Hare Krishna, preaching simply *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* philosophy, this is the process. There is no need for us to try and add anything to this simple method. It will only be a distraction. Therefore I request you to follow the simple path of Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and help me spread this wonderful mission all over the world. Keep yourself pure and fixed up in Krishna consciousness by following the basic principles that I have given; chanting 16 rounds daily, following the

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four regulative principles, rising early, attending *maṅgala-ārati* and classes, etc. This is of the utmost importance. 

— Letter to Jagadisa Pandita. 28 December 1974.

THE WASHERMAN'S FORMER BIRTH

Adapted from Padma Purāṇa

In canto five, chapter fifty-seven, Lord Ananta Sesha speaks the following pastime to Vatsyayana Muni:

In the great city of Mithila lived the king named Janak Maharaja. Pleasing his subjects, he ruled righteously. Once when Janak was ploughing the field, an extremely beautiful baby girl came out from the first furrow. Seeing her, Janak Maharaja became extremely happy. He named that fascinating girl "Sita".

One day when Sita was playing as a child in a garden grove, she saw a male and female parrot that delighted her mind. The parrots were affectionately talking to each other in pleasant words, "On the earth, charming Rama will be the king. His wife will be Sita. That intelligent, powerful king, will vanquish his enemies and rule over the earth with her for eleven thousand years. Blessed is that queen Sita, and blessed is Rama."

Hearing the charming tales told by the parrots about her, Maithili, Sita, decided to capture them and ask them the meaning of their conversation. She told her friends,



“Quickly catch this charming pair of birds.” Her friends caught the parrots and brought them to princess Maithili.

Sita comforted them, and said, “Don’t be frightened, dear charming ones. Who are you? Where have you come from? Who is this Rama and Sita that you are speaking about? Where did you hear about them?”

The birds replied, “We have come from the ashram of the great sage Valmiki, who is the best of those who know dharma. He instructed his disciples to daily sing about the future adventures of Lord Ramachandra. All those imminent pastimes were repeatedly heard and memorized by us. Listen to them. At the end we shall tell who that Rama is, who that Janaki (Sita) is, and what will happen to the two of them.

“Glorious Vishnu will divide himself into four and appear at the sacrifice performed by the sage Rishyasringa. Later, he and his brothers accompanied by Vishwamitra will come to Mithila. Then he will break a bow that many kings were unable to wield, and thereby obtain the charming daughter of Janak. O excellent one, we have heard that with her, he will rule over a large kingdom. O beautiful lady, we who had flown to Valmiki’s ashram, heard this and other things told by those who lived there. Now please release us, we desire our freedom.”

Hearing those words, which were very pleasant to the ears, Sita replied to that pair of birds, “Where will that Rama be? Whose son will he be? In what way will he marry his consort? What form will that excellent man have? Tell me all this, and later I will do that which will please you.”

Seeing Janaki and realizing that her heart was oppressed by love, the female parrot told her, “There will be an intelligent mighty king with thousands of chariots. He will be the ruler of the solar dynasty, and the demigods will become victorious by taking shelter of him. He will have three wives, who will be so beautiful that their forms will fascinate even Lord Indra. Four powerful and exalted sons will be born to them. Rama will be the eldest. Bharata will be born after him, then Lakshman will be born, and after him Shatrughna will be born. The magnanimous Rama will also be known as Raghunath. These brothers will have countless names.

“O friend, the face of the powerful Rama will be charming like the whorl of a lotus. His very large eyes will also have the beauty of lotuses. His nose will be raised, large, and charming. His eyebrows will be lovely and beguiling. His beautiful hands will reach to his knees. His small neck will be marked like a conch. His chest will be expansive and captivating, and will have a mark on it. His lotus feet will always be worshipped by his devotees. Raghupati’s form will be like this.

“How can I express his beauty? Even with a hundred mouths one cannot describe him. Then what about birds like me? Seeing his form, even the charming and beautiful Lakshmi was enticed. What lady on the earth will not be enticed? He has great power, great valour, and a very enticing form. Lucky is Sita, who will enjoy with him for myriad years. O beautiful lady, who are you? What is your name and why do you cleverly and respectfully ask me to narrate the account of Rama?”

Hearing the birds tell the story of her birth and life, Sita said to them, “I am that

Nāma-tattva

NOTHING EQUALS THE HOLY NAME

Ādi Purāṇa

*śraddhayā helayā nāma raṅanti mama jantavaḥ
teṣāṃ nāma sadā pārtha vartate ḥṛdaye mama*

I always remember those who chant my holy names, whether they chant with faith or negligently.

*na nāma sadṛśaṃ jñānaṃ na nāma sadṛśaṃ vratam
na nāma sadṛśaṃ dhyānaṃ na nāma sadṛśaṃ phalam*

There is no knowledge equal to the name, there is no vow equal to the name, there is no meditation equal to the name, and there is no benefit equal to the name.

*na nāma sadṛśas tyāgo na nāma sadṛśaḥ śamaḥ
na nāma sadṛśaṃ puṇyam na nāma sadṛśī gatih*

There is no renunciation equal to the name, there is no discipline equal to the name, there is no virtue equal to the name, and there is no destination equal to the name. ❀

— Quoted in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 11.464-466.

Janaki, the daughter of Janak, whom you mentioned. Being allured by your nectarean words, I shall release you when that charming Rama comes to me and not otherwise. Don't fear, I shall caress you and you will stay happily with me."

Hearing these words, the female parrot trembled and was frightened. She said to Janaki, "O good lady, we are birds. We live in trees in the forest. We wander everywhere. We will not be happy being bound up in one place. Moreover, I am pregnant. I promise that if you let me go, after returning to my place and giving birth to young ones I shall come back." Although the female parrot pleaded in this way with Sita, still she did not release her.

Then the male parrot, with his face hung down, spoke. "Sita, release her. Why do you want to keep my beautiful wife? We shall go to the forest together and happily move about. My charming wife is pregnant. After she delivers her young, I shall also come to you."

Sita replied to the male parrot, "O intelligent one, you can go. I shall keep this lady parrot, who is so dear to me, by my side."

The male parrot said, "The words of the saints are true. They have advised that wise persons should remain silent. If we had not spoken to each other while on this tree, we would not be bound up. O beautiful lady, O Sita, I cannot live without my wife. Therefore, O charming one, please release her."

Still, out of attachment to hearing the glories of Lord Ramachandra, Sita refused to release his mate. The parrot's wife then became angry and miserable and cursed the daughter of Maharaja Janak, "Just as you are separating me from my husband, in the same way when you become pregnant you will be separated from Rama." Having spoken, that female parrot, who was miserable due to separation from her husband, uttered the name of Rama and left her body. A divine chariot descended and took her away.

Seeing this, her husband, extremely angry and distressed, fell into the Ganga and drowned himself. His last words were, "I will take birth in Rama's city as a *śudra*. And due to my words, Sita will become dejected and extremely unhappy due to separation from her husband." That bird was then born as the washerman named Krodhan.

Due to his harsh words, Sita was censured and separated from Rama. On account of that washerman, Sita was exiled to the forest.

According to Garga-samhitā 5.10.3-8, Krodhan took birth again in Mathura where he was engaged in washing the clothes of King Kamsa. He received liberation when Krishna killed him to stop his blasphemy. ❀

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VIBHISHAN'S ADVICE

Reverend A. G. Atkins

Part one of a six-part series. For more about Reverend Atkins, see Bindu 116. Giving his final advice to his brother Ravan, Vibhishan spoke as follows:

"Brother! Rama's no mere human ruler of earth,

"But the God of all worlds, lord of death and of birth;

"Undying, unborn, Supreme, all things be-friending,

"In all, over all, unbeginning, unending;

"T'ward all good the twice-born, cows, gods and earth bearing;

"The ocean of kindness, a human form wearing;

"The joy of the good, foe of evil behaviour;

"Of righteousness, scripture and gods the true saviour.

"Be no more his foeman, but bow and adore him;

"The ills of his trusting ones all flee before him.

"Give Sita back to him, nor rouse him unduly;

"The lord Rama worship, who loves all men truly;

"He never forsakes one who seeks his protection,

"E'en tho' it might seem a world-rending defection;

"Know, Ravan, this lord revealed to us is a giver

"Of all good; his name from all sins can deliver.

“O ten-headed ruler, once more I beseech you,
“Again at your feet humbly bowing;
“Give Kosala’s king your true worship, all folly,
“All passion and pride disavowing
“The saintly Pulastya this very same word
“By a faithful disciple sent to me;
“Now deeming the time fitting, I have thus spoken
“That you might receive his words thro’ me.”

—Pages 1009-1010. *The Ramayana of Tulsidas*. Published by Shri Krishna Janmasthan Seva-sansthan. Mathura, India. 1987.

FALSE RELIGIONISTS *Manu-saṁhitā* 4.192-200

*na vāry api prayacchet tu baidāla-vratike dvije
na baka-vratike vipre nāveda-vidi dharmavit*

One who knows dharma should not offer even water to a *brāhmaṇa* who acts like a cat, nor to a *brāhmaṇa* who acts like a heron, nor to one who is unacquainted with the Veda. (Text 192)

*triṣv apy eteṣu dattaṁ hi vidhināpy arjitam dhanam
dātur bhavaty anarthāya paratrādātur eva ca*

For, property that is given to these three types of persons, even though earned in accordance with prescribed rules, gives benefit neither to the giver nor to the recipient. (Text 193)

*yathā plavenopalena nimajjaty udake taran
tathā nimajjato ’dhasād ajñau dātṛ-pratiçhakau*



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As he who attempts to cross water in a boat of stone sinks to the bottom, in the same way an ignorant donor and an ignorant recipient sink low. (Text 194)

*dharmadhvajī sadā lubdhas chādmiko loka-dambhakaḥ
baidāla-vratiko jñeyo himsraḥ sarvābhisandhakaḥ*

One who is always greedy, who waves the flag of virtue (advertises oneself as a virtuous person), who is a hypocrite, a deceiver of others, and is intent on injuring others, is one who acts like a cat. (Text 195)

*adhodṛṣṭir naiṣṭhikaḥ svārtha-sādhana-tat-paraḥ
śaṭho mithyā vinītaś ca baka-vrata-caro dvijaḥ*

That *brāhmaṇa* of a cruel disposition, who, with downcast look, is solely intent on attaining his own ends, dishonest and falsely humble, is one who acts like a crane. (Text 196)

*ye baka-vratino viprā ye ca mārjāra-liṅgināḥ
te patanty andha-tāmisre tena pāpena karmaṇā*

Those *brāhmaṇas* who act like cranes, and those who display the characteristics of cats, due to their wicked behavior fall into the hell called Andha-tamishra. (Text 197)

*na dharmasyāpadeṣena pāpaṁ kṛtvā vratam caret
vratena pāpaṁ pracchādya kurvan strī-śūdra-dambhanam*

While committing a sin, one should not perform a penance in the name of dharma. By covering one’s sin with a vow, such a person deceives women and *śūdras* only. (Text 198)

*pratyeha cedṛśā viprā garhyante brahma-vādibhiḥ
chadmanā caritam yac ca vratam rakṣāṁsi gacchati*

The above-mentioned *brāhmaṇas* are censured by those who know the Vedas. Those who perform vows under false pretenses become *rakṣasas*. (Text 199)

*aliṅgī liṅgi-veṣeṇa yo vṛttim upajīvati
sa liṅginām haratyenas tiryag-yonau ca jāyate*

He who gains his livelihood by putting on the dress of a *brāhmaṇa* without actually being one, takes upon himself the sins of all *brāhmaṇas* and is born again in the womb of an animal. (Text 200) ❀

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