



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

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tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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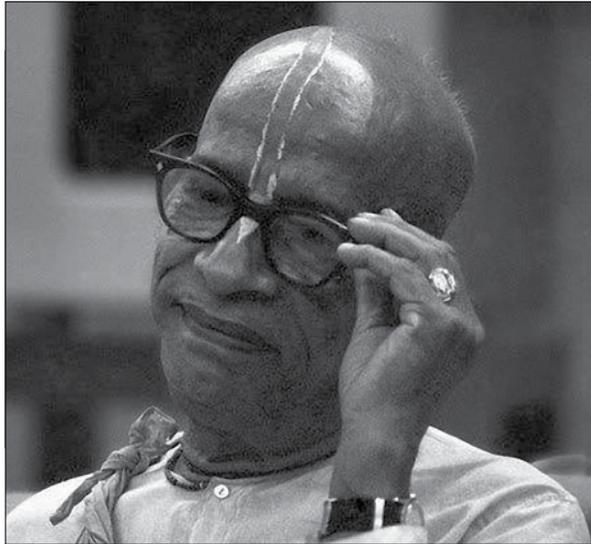
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MORE IMPORTANT THAN WORSHIPING KRISHNA

His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

There are three kinds of devotional stages: *kaniṣṭha adhikāra*, lower stage; the *madhyama adhikāra*, middle stage; and the *uttama adhikāra*, higher stage. So the *kaniṣṭha adhikāra* means:

*arcāyām eva haraye pūjārī yaḥ śraddhayehate
na tad-bhakteṣu cānyeṣu sa bhaktaḥ prākṛtaḥ smṛtaḥ*

A devotee who faithfully engages in the worship of the deity in the temple but does not behave properly toward other devotees or people in general is called a *prākṛta-bhakta*, a materialistic devotee, and is considered to be in the lowest position. (*Bhāg.* 11.2.47)

In the lower stage, the devotee is engaged in deity worship. It is not that deity worship is lower than meditation. We don't mean that. Deity worship is the beginning of devotional service, as it will be mentioned in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* how to approach the deity, how to cleanse the floor, how to change the dress, flowers, how to make *ārātrika*. Everything is described in detail there.

In the beginning, one who is not advanced cannot see Krishna properly. When we speak of Krishna, Krishna is not alone. Just like if we speak of the king, "The king is coming," it does not mean the king is coming alone. The king is coming — his ministers, his secretaries, his military commanders, his queens, his servants, so many other servitors of the king, they are also coming. Similarly, when we speak of Krishna, Krishna does not mean Krishna alone.

Krishna says in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *ahaṁ sarvasya prabhavaḥ* [Bg. 10.8]. Krishna is the root of all emanations. Krishna's expansions, Krishna's different types of energies, *parāsyā śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate* (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.8) — he has got multi-energies, out of which the *ācāryas* have taken three principal energies: the external energy, the internal energy, and the marginal energy. Krishna's incarnation, expansion, all together means Krishna.

The *kaniṣṭha adhikārī*, in the lower stage, thinks that he is worshipping the deity very nicely, that he has realized Krishna. No. We have to make

further advancement. Krishna does not mean alone. Especially Krishna's devotees, they are always with Krishna. Therefore, when we can recognize a devotee of Krishna and offer him the respect as devotee of Krishna — that is further advancement.

In the *madhyama adbhikāri*, in further advancement of devotional service, one can see four categories.

*īśvare tad-adhīneṣu bālīṣeṣu dviṣatsu ca
prema-maitrī-kṛpopekṣā yaḥ karoti sa madhyamaḥ*

An intermediate or second-class devotee, called *madhyama-adbhikāri*, offers his love to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is a sincere friend to all the devotees of the Lord, shows mercy to ignorant people who are innocent, and disregards those who are envious of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. (*Bhāg.* 11.2.46)

When we are further advanced we do not only see Krishna but we see his devotees also. We can recognize, "Here is a pure devotee of Krishna." In the lower stage, the devotee is concerned with deity worship, but he does not take much care of the devotees. But when one is advanced further, he can see Krishna and his devotee also. *īśvare tad-adhīna*. *Tad-adhīna* means devotees. Devotees are always under the service of Krishna.

So anyone who is giving service to Krishna, we should take care of them also. We should offer our respect. You'll find in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*; it is stated somewhere that if a devotee is coming then another devotee who is engaged in worship of the deity may stop the deity worship for the time being and should go immediately to receive the devotee.

So Krishna also says, *mad-bhakta-pūjā abhyadhika* — Krishna is satisfied more when a devotee worships his devotee. (*Bhāg.* 11.9.21) Krishna says, "If one is worshipping me and one is worshipping my devotee, then the person who is worshipping the devotee, he's more important than the person who is worshipping Krishna." ❁

— From a lecture on *Nectar of Devotion*. 23 October 1972, Vrindavan.

SPIRITUAL AND MANAGERIAL AUTHORITIES

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Devotee: Should we accept someone as an authority if they have material attachments and are not situated on the spiritual platform?

Gour Govinda Swami: We accept because we are in a society. Someone may be GBC of some region of the world, so according to the management system, he is authority.

But by the spiritual system, unless I am convinced I cannot accept him as authority. That is up to me. I have independence. It is my choice. As far as the management system goes, I accept him because he is GBC. But as far as spiritual things go, unless I am convinced I cannot accept. "Please excuse me." Acceptance of someone as a spiritual



Nāma-tattva

THE CHANTING OF THE MADHYAMA ADHIKARI

Srīla Thakur Bhaktivinode
Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta, Chapter 6, Part 4

The *madhyama-adbhikāri* increases his chanting day and night till he chants three lakhs names (192 rounds) a day. The chanting gives him such bliss that he cannot exist without it. Though he cannot count his rounds while sleeping and performing other bodily functions, he chants at those times without counting. He meditates on the meaning of the names as described by Gopala Guru Goswami, and gradually all his sinful tendencies become subdued. Then he experiences the name's true nature, filled with supreme bliss. When the name's nature becomes clear, Krishna's spiritual form appears along with the name. With the presence of the pure name in his chanting, along with Krishna's presence, the material modes are vanquished and pure *sattva*, that is, all Krishna's non-material qualities, appear. According to the purity of the chanting, Krishna's form and qualities together with the Lord's pastimes will appear by the Lord's mercy in the pure heart of the devotee who has awakened his natural spiritual vision. When the tongue glorifies the Lord with counted or uncounted names, the mind sees Krishna's form, the heart perceives Krishna's qualities, and the soul in trance sees Krishna's pastimes.

— English translation by Bhanu Swami. Unpublished manuscript.



authority should not be forced or compulsory. That is a principle. For me to accept someone as a spiritual authority my heart must be convinced, because it is based on the desire of the heart. It is not an external thing. It is internal. Acting in that way is not offensive. I am not disregarding him. He is a *vaiṣṇava* so I offer him obeisances. We pay obeisances to all *vaiṣṇavas*, regardless if they are *kaniṣṭha*, *madhyama*, or whatever. That

is etiquette. But accepting someone as spiritual master is something else. ☪

— *Sri Krishna Kathamrita*, issue 10, p. 14. Evening darshan, Bhubaneswar, 1990.

WITHOUT FAITH ONE CANNOT HAVE DARSHAN

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

“I see the statue.” — This kind of thinking is in the spirit of enjoyment, whereas “The deity sees me, my uncovered pure self,” is deity *darśana*. If in the same way that I see a movie, drama, or gymnastic display or hear a song, I think “I can see the deity with my eyes and fathom him by my intelligence,” such an



Cheeky Krishna

attempt will be on the material platform. One will derive no benefit from such inclinations not meant for satisfying the Lord’s senses. Faith in the Lord entails not having faith in mundane enjoyment or renunciation. If one has faith in this world then that is *bhoga*, enjoyment: “The objects of the world are for my enjoyment.” Such a mentality is due to not having initiation and spiritual knowledge.

Worldly people are completely different from devotees. Difficulties occur when one thinks that he who is to be served should serve oneself: “O Lord, take notice of me. I am coming to collect dues from you in the form of *dharma-artha-kāma-mokṣa* for sense gratification.” Hiding this inner intention, a person says, *jagannātha svāmī*

nayana-pathagāmi bhavatu me — “O Lord of the universe, be visible to me”, and other such delirious *karma-kāṇḍīya* words. This is not *bhakti*. “I went and saw the holy place. I went and saw the tree. I went and saw Jagannath. I went and saw the *sādhu*.” All of this is a matter of enjoyment and cannot at all be called service. If the consideration of “Who am I?” has not entered the heart, and if *sambandha-jñāna* concerning my eternal object of worship never arises, then how will *śraddhā* and *śaraṇāgati* develop?

Without faith one cannot have *darśana* of the Lord or his devotee. Instead, malice and envy will appear. Why envy? One will become envious when another person rises higher than himself. In the opening of *Bhāgavatam*, *bhāgavata-dharma* is called the dharma of those *sādhus* who are without envy. All humanity is careening around only with the concept of *dharma-ārtha-kāma-mokṣa*. But the means for attaining such goals are not given in the *Bhāgavatam*. Therein one finds only discussion of devotion to the Lord, meant for His dedicated devotees. If I become slack in this understanding I will waste my time in material knowledge derived from the senses. If the consciousness of serving wakens, rather than considering oneself the object of service one can slash all the wickedness imbibed from father, mother, and mundane relatives.



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Forgetting that the Lord is the enjoyer, one enters *saṁsāra*. She is called Durga Devi who, as the shadow energy of the Lord, disturbs us, makes us fools, and entrances us with *dharma-ārtha-kāma-mokṣa*. By the Lord’s will she thus dazes us. By accepting the shelter of this shadow energy, there can be no good fortune. One must take shelter of the possessor of that energy:

*daivī hy eṣā guṇa-mayī mama māyā duratyayā
mām eva ye prapadyante māyām etaṁ taranti te*

This divine energy of mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome. But those who have surrendered unto me can easily cross beyond it. (Bg. 7.14)

*sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvāṁ sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear. (Bg. 18.66)

Persons absorbed in service to the Lord destroy their *saṁsāra*, whereas those disinclined to serve the Lord increase their *saṁsāra*. Those who drift in this world have no time for hearing about service to the Lord. Even if they make a pretense of hearing, they do so according to their own viewpoint. If they do not like what they hear, they reject it outright. They do not give priority to the topic of the Lord’s service. They think that their present day needs are more pressing. They consider it better for an intelligent person to spend his time hearing mundane poetry.

What right do we have to accept service from others? But in spite of that, we think, “Let the whole universe serve me,” and “I use the river water and fruit from the tree but have no connection with the Lord.” If one wants to know about the Lord he must approach a devotee of the Lord. One cannot bypass the proper channel.

Ordinary persons and *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs* cannot comprehend who is serving the Lord and who is not. Rather, they have the inclination to oppose those who serve the Lord because the service attitude and behavior of a devotee does not mix well with worldly so-called moral or immoral conduct. Materialists disparage devotees of the Lord, understanding that they are not instruments for the materialists’ satisfaction and pleasure. 🙏

— From a lecture on 10 November 1936 in Jagannath Puri, quoted in *Bhaktisiddhanta Vaibhava*. Volume 1, by Bhakti Vikasa Swami. Bhakti Vikas Trust. Surat, India. 2009. Pages 178-180.