



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

Issue No. 508

Śrī Indirā Ekādaśī

2 October 2021

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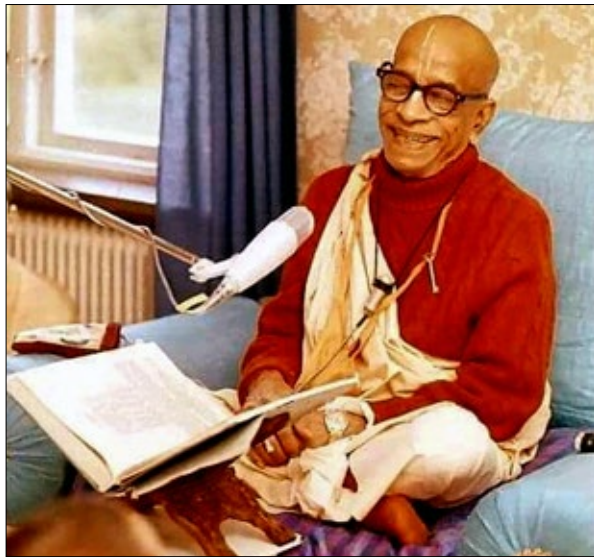
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WHAT A DEVOTEE SHOULD KNOW IN LIFE

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

Krame krame pāya loka bhava sindhu kula — “A person gradually reaches the shore of the material ocean.”
(Cc. madhya 16.237)

Nurturing hope, eagerness, service to Lord Krishna, service to Krishna's devotees, and chanting the holy name are all extremely beneficial. By remaining committed to constantly serving Lord Krishna, the temptations of *māyā* will not allure us. Always engage in hearing and chanting. Regularly read literature composed by the *mahājanas* and *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas*. In this way there will be no reticence regarding the acceptance of *siddhānta*, scriptural conclusions.

Regularly discuss topics of Hari with the devotees who reside with you, and as you make advancement in your spiritual life, you will realize your own humble position and fallen condition. You know very well, *sarvottama āpanāke hīna kari mane* — that a topmost devotee thinks himself to be a fallen soul. If you pray for the well-being of your subordinates then your own spiritual progress will take place.

Even though service to Lord Krishna, service to His devotees, and chanting the holy name of the Lord are three independent functions, they possess the same significance. By congregationally chanting the holy name, service to Lord Krishna and service to his

KIRTAN IS NOT FOR ENTERTAINMENT

His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

I understand also that there was a *kīrtana* performance given by XYZ. You have rightly remarked, asking whether they are devotees. You are right. These people are professional singers. *Kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* is not for earning livelihood. *Kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* is not meant for entertaining the public with a demonstration of art. It is dynamic service to the Lord. We do not therefore mind so much about the artistic presentation of *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*. Rather we want to see how much a devotee is satisfying the Supreme Will.” 🍌

— Letter to Jadurani, 12 December 1967, Calcutta.

devotees are accomplished. By serving the devotees, chanting of Krishna’s names and service to Lord Krishna are accomplished. By serving Lord Krishna, congregationally chanting the holy name and service to the devotees are accomplished. The evidence of this is *sattvaṁ viśuddhaṁ vasudeva sabditam* — that the state of pure goodness is known as Vasudev.

By studying *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, service to Lord Krishna and chanting of the holy name are accomplished. The same benefit can be achieved by reciting *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* in the association of devotees. Also, by worshiping the deity these three purposes are served. Serving the holy name also awards the same result.

Previous history should be understood in such a way that it appears favorable for devotional service. In other words, you should know for certain that unfavorable historical conditions inevitably give rise to future favorable conditions. The danger experienced during an unfavorable condition produces a favorable condition for the worship of the Lord the very next moment. All objects of the visible world are ingredients for Krishna’s service. The mentality of aversion to the service of Lord Krishna bewilders our mind regarding the objects of this world and engages us in material enjoyment. When we see a relationship between Lord Krishna and the entire world through the awakening of transcendental knowledge, the poisonous fruit of fame cannot swallow us.

Cañcala jīvana srota pravāhiyā kālera sāgare dhāya — “The moving waves of life forcefully flow towards the ocean of time, or death.” (Sri La Thakur Bhaktivinode’s *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru* 3.3.4.6)

Keep this in mind and you will engage in the service of Hari at every step. Therefore, we should happily agree to execute whatever pleases Lord Krishna. If Krishna feels happy by keeping me averse to him, then I must accept it even if it hurts me.

*tomāra sevāya duḥkha haya yata
seo ta parama sukha*

“Whatever difficulty I face in the course of your service is actually a source of happiness for me.”

(*Śaraṇagati*, *Atma Nivedana* 8.4)

This is the feeling of a *vaiṣṇava*. Try to follow this example. If all our *anarthas* are dovetailed in the service of Lord Krishna then those same *anarthas* transform into *arthas* and become the cause of eternal benefit leading toward the goal of life. The previous character of Bilvamangal Thakur, the history of Sarvabhauma, and the *anarthas* in the form of Prakasananda’s dry arguments

ultimately transformed into devotional service to Lord Krishna. Therefore, do not worry about previous *anarthas*. As far as the present *anarthas* are concerned, if your hearing and chanting is very strong, they cannot display their prominence. Our life span is short, so we should sincerely serve Hari until our very end. To follow the path of the *mahājanas* is the only means to achieve auspiciousness.

Discuss the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* verse (11.23.57) beginning with *aham tarisyāmī durantapāraṁ*.

When I think that I am well, I become averse to Krishna, and as a result I consider senior devotees to be junior to me. That is why, considering this, Lord Krishna keeps me in various distressful conditions, such as in ill health and other inconveniences. At such times I try to understand the meaning of the verse beginning with *tat te ’nukampāṁ*. When we remain absorbed in material subjects, which are not related to Krishna, we are inclined to quarrel with the different people of the world. When we remain busy in the service of Lord Krishna, we can expect to be attacked by the people of this material world. 🍌

— Excerpted from *Patrāmṛta, Nectar from the Letters*, pp. 23-25. Touchstone Media. Kolkata. 2012. Written from the Sri Chaitanya Math. Sridham Mayapur. 5 August 1926.

PRABHUPADA'S GREATNESS

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

There is no doubt that Srila Prabhupada received the full mercy of Krishna, Mahaprabhu, and the previous *ācāryas* — Bhaktivinode Thakur, Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati, all *sādhu-mahājanas*. Therefore, he could do it. Who else could go to the Western world at such an advanced age? Others would have been afraid, thinking, “How can I go? It is a completely foreign land. Who will take care of me? I will be a stranger there.” But he went to carry out the order of his guru and to fulfill the desire of Mahaprabhu:

*ṛthivīte āche yata nagarādi-grām
sarvatra pracāra haibe mora nāma*

Mahaprabhu prophesized, “My name and teachings will be spread to all corners of the world.” [*Caitanya-bhāgavata antya* 4.126] Who did it? My dear *guru-pāda-padma*, revered spiritual master, Sri Srimad A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada Maharaja. He did it fearlessly. In such a short time, within ten years, he traveled to all corners of the world twelve times and preached the science of Krishna consciousness. As a result, you see Westerners, previously gross materialists, who have developed Krishna consciousness. They have



Rama and Lakshman fighting Ravana

Unknown artist. Pahari painting from Bilaspur. c. 1750

realized they are *kṛṣṇa-dāsa*; now they are preaching and engaging in the loving service of Krishna. This is clear proof of Prabhupada's greatness. 🍌

— My Revered Spiritual Master, p. 22-23. Lecture on the occasion of Srila Prabhupada's appearance festival, Bhubaneswar, 19 August 1995.

RAMA KILLS RAVAN

Reverend A. G. Atkins

A. G. Atkins was a Britisher and a Christian missionary who first came to India sometime before 1916. In order to meet the language study requirements of a missionary, he began to read the Hindi version of Rāmāyaṇa composed by the poet Tulsidas. He quickly became attracted to the devotional spirit of the story of Lord Rama and began a careful study of the book that continued for over twenty years. In 1941, on the suggestion of a friend, he began to translate it into English verse. He spent 12 years working on his poetic translation and finally saw the book published by the Hindustan Times in June of 1953. Here is an excerpt from book VI, chapter 21.

The Lord draws his bow to his ear, shooting thirty-One shafts; his attack thus he makes;
And his arrows fly straight to the mark from his bow,
Swift and certain as Death's deadly snakes.
Ravan's navel-fount dried as one shaft hit that spot:
To his ten heads and twenty arms were the rest shot;

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SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

A free bi-monthly service provided by:

Gopal Jiu Publications
c/o Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5
IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India 751015



Email: katha@gopaljiu.org
Website: www.gopaljiu.org
Subscriptions: minimag@gopaljiu.org

Gopal Jiu Publications is a section of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, Founder-Acharya: His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

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Head or arm each shaft took off, its mark having found;
Still the trunk, headless, armless, danced wildly around:
'Neath those awful foot-steps trembling earth
well-nigh

With one shaft Rama then cut in two that great trunk;
Ravan cried in a thund'rous voice with his last breath,
"Where is Rama? I'll call him and fight him to death!"
Then King Ten-heads fell down giving earth
swinging motions

Which shook its supporters, hills, rivers and oceans;
To earth the two parts of his body came crashing,
Beneath their great weight bear and monkey
groups smashing.

Before Ravan's queen all his heads and arms placing,
The arrows to Rama returned, flight re-tracing,
Then entered his quiver again; in elation
The gods beat drums wildly in loud gratulation.

To Rama by mouth-gate came Ravan's great force,
Gladd'ning Siva and Brahma as they watched its course;
Blossom show'rs fell around from divine saintly
throngs,

While the heavens resounded with glad vict'ry songs:
"Hail Lord Raghubir! Mighty of arm! Rama, hail!

"Lord Vishnu All-gracious! E'er may he prevail! 🍌

— Pages 1188-1189. *The Ramayana of Tulsidas*. Published by Shri Krishna Janmasthan Seva-sansthan. Mathura, India. 1987



Unknown artist