



तव कथामृतं तसजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

Sri Krishna Kathamṛta Bindu

Fortnightly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

Issue No. 11 29 August 2001

Śrī Pārśva Ekādaśī, 25 Hrṣikeśa, 515 Gaurābda

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MONEY AND PREACHING

Money that can help in spreading the Krishna consciousness movement is not a part of the material world, and we should not give it up, thinking that it is material. Srila Rupa Goswami advises:

*anāsaktasya viṣayān yathārham upayun̄jataḥ
nirbandhaḥ kṛṣṇa-sambandhe yuktaṁ vairāgyam ucyate*

“When one is not attached to anything, but at the same time accepts everything in relation to Krishna, one is rightly situated above possessiveness.” (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.255) Money is undoubtedly coming in great quantities, but we should not be attached to this money for sense gratification; every cent should be spent for spreading the Krishna consciousness movement, not for sense gratification. There is danger for a preacher when he receives great quantities of money, for as soon as he spends even a single cent of the collection for his personal sense gratification, he becomes a fallen victim. The preachers of the Krishna consciousness movement should be extremely careful not to misuse the immense quantities of money needed to spread this movement. Let us not make this money the cause of our distress; it should be used for Krishna, and that will cause our eternal happiness. Money is Lakshmi, or the goddess of fortune, the companion of Narayan. Lakshmi must always remain with Narayan, and then there need be no fear of degradation. ❀

— From the purport to *Bhag.* 7.13.32

INTERNAL WORMS

FROM THE LIFE OF SRILA
BHAKTISIDDHANTA SARASWATI
THAKUR PRABHUPADA



Once, the editor of Ananda Bazaar Patrika, a daily newspaper of Calcutta, said to Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, “I see that there are many hypocrites in your mission, people who are not very sincere. What they say and what they do are not the same. Why don’t you put them out? Let them go home and get married or something. Why keep them in your *maṭha*?”

Srila Saraswati Thakur replied, “What is a better place than this *maṭha*? Is there any better place to save them? Here they may be good or bad, but if their fortune will allow, they will become good. If not, what can I do? Is there any better place? No, there isn’t.”

On another occasion the headmaster of the Thakur Bhaktivinod Institute asked Srila Saraswati Thakur, “So many devotees have given up everything, are staying in the *maṭha*, and are engaged in devotional service. Why don’t they improve to the advanced stage?” Saraswati Thakur answered, “They have internal worms. They are being eaten up by worms inside. They are taking food but are not getting nourishment because of worms. They are not engaging in devotional service, but the advancement is eaten by material desires and secret bad behaviour. So they become weak.”

— Remembrance by Sripad Jatisekhar Das, disciple of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati; from the upcoming biography of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta by Sri Srimad Bhaktivikash Swami.

THE BRAHMACHARI AND THE CHASTE WIFE

ADAPTED FROM THE NṚSĪMHA PURĀṆA

As there are eighteen mahā-purāṇas, major purāṇas, similarly there are also eighteen minor purāṇas, also known as upa-purāṇas. The NṚsīmha or Narasīmha Purāṇa is an upa-purāṇa, but since it focuses on devotion to Vishnu, NṚsīmha Purāṇa is considered to be in the mode of goodness.

NṚsīmha Purāṇa is a standard reference that has been cited by many of our previous ācāryas. The famous prayer from the NṚsīmha Purāṇa that begins with the words, “namas te nara-sīmhāya prahlādāhlāda-dāyine” is quoted by Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami in his Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta [antya 16.52-53].

The following story from NṚsīmha Purāṇa, chapter thirteen, illustrates the negative effects of pride and the power of a chaste lady.

Special Power

There was once a righteous brāhmaṇa named Kasyapa. He had mastered all of the scriptures and was expert in explaining them. Disinclined to performing another's duty, he was daily absorbed in the worship of Lord Narasimha and was always engaged in performing *yajña*. Every morning and evening he would offer oblations into the sacred fire and he would always show proper hospitality to the brāhmaṇas and guests at his residence.

His wife was named Savitri. She was a high-minded lady, was honored for her virtue, and she led a spotless life in service to her husband. Due to her chastity and devotion she was endowed with the power of knowing things beyond the range of the senses.

Great Brahmachari

There was also a wise brāhmaṇa named Yajnarsharma living in the land of Koshala. He had a devoted and religious wife named Rohini who was endowed with all auspicious features and an unblemished character. After some time Rohini gave birth to a son. Yajnarsharma performed all of the recommended purificatory ceremonies for his son as described in the Vedas. The boy was named Devasharma. When he was eight years old his father performed his sacred thread ceremony and engaged him in study of the Vedas. After Devasharma had mastered the Vedas his father died.

At the death of Yajnarsharma, both the son and the mother were grief-stricken. Devasharma performed the funeral ceremonies for his father according to the instructions of saintly persons, and then he decided to travel to different places of pilgrimage. Devasharma's fame as a great *brahmacārī* gradually spread far and wide. He had no residence and was always wandering from one place to another. Maintaining himself by begging alms, he was always chanting Vedic mantras and performing sacrifices. Meanwhile, with her husband dead and her only son living as an ascetic, Devasharma's mother Rohini had no means of support and was suffering terribly.

Burnt to Ashes

In the course of his wanderings, one day Devasharma came to the bank of a river, where he took bath. Spreading his cloth on the ground to dry, he sat in meditation. Just then, a crow and a crane came and suddenly flew away with his cloth. Seeing this, Devasharma became angry and shouted abuses at them. The birds then dropped the cloth on the ground, passed stool on it, and flew away. Devasharma looked at them with wrath, and immediately the birds burned to ashes. Surprised to see this, Devasharma concluded that there was no one in the world equal to him in penance.

Proud of the strength of his austerity, Devasharma left the river to seek alms at a nearby village. He came to the house where the devoted wife Savitri and her husband Kasyapa lived. Devasharma came to their door and requested Savitri to give him alms. However, Savitri was just then serving her husband his mid-day meal. Although she saw Devasharma at the door, she remained silent and attentive to her husband. After her husband had eaten, she washed his feet with warm water. Only then did she come forward to offer alms to the *brahmacārī*.

Having been made to wait for so long, Devasharma was very angry. He glared at the devoted housewife again and again with red-hot eyes. Seeing his conduct, Savitri laughed and said, “O furious sage! I am not the crow or the crane that fell down dead on the bank of the river by the strength of your anger. If you want to accept alms from me you will have to behave properly.”

Collecting the alms given by Savitri, Devasharma quietly left that place. Walking back to the river, he again and again thought in his mind, “How it was that she had come to know of the death of the crow and the crane?” Leaving his begging bowl by the river,

Devasharman returned to the village. After the devoted Savitri had finished her meal and her husband had gone out, the *brahmacārī* came to her residence and said, “O blessed woman, please tell me how you acquired this mystic power of knowing things beyond the senses?”

Sagacious Advice

That virtuous and devoted woman Savitri replied, “O *brāhmaṇa*, please listen attentively to the answer to this question. The mystic power that I possess is the result of careful and consistent observance of the prescribed duties of a chaste wife. Service to one’s husband is the established duty of women. O high-minded one, I have always followed that duty. Indeed, I know nothing else. I have acquired this power because day and night, without questioning, I have given complete satisfaction to my husband, waiting upon him with love and devotion.

“If you are interested to listen, I will tell you something else. Your father was a *brāhmaṇa* who lived on alms. You took lessons from him on the Vedas. When he died you performed his funeral ceremonies. Then, ignoring your aged and widowed mother, you came here. That poor wretched woman is now without any support while your sole interest is only to feed yourself! Your mother bore you in her womb. After you were born she nurtured you and brought you up with all love and affection. She did everything for you including cleaning your stool. You have deserted her and have been practicing austerities in the forest. O *brāhmaṇa*, aren’t you ashamed? What do you hope to gain by wandering about in the forest?”

“Because of the suffering of your mother a bad odor is coming from your mouth. Whatever strength and power you have is only due to your father, who performed various *saṁskāras* in your life.

“O evil-minded sinner! Just recently, for no reason, you have burnt to death two innocent birds. As a result of this all of your sacred baths, your visits to different holy places, and all your meditation and sacrifices have been in vain. O *brāhmaṇa*, that person who sees their mother in a poor and wretched condition lives in vain, whereas he who is full of regard for his mother and who always protects her with devotion gets all rewards in this world and hereafter.

“You should immediately go to your mother and save her life. Her protection is your highest penance. Give up your anger, for it destroys all merits accumulated in this world and in the next. You should atone for the sin of killing the birds. O *brahmacārī*, what I have spoken to you is correct. If you are interested in ultimate happiness you should follow my advice.”

Having thus advised the son of the *brāhmaṇa*, the devoted wife fell silent.

Devasharman then said to Savitri, “O blessed lady, please forgive me for the harm I have done to you by looking at you in anger. You have told me what is good for me. O righteous lady, after returning to take care of my mother, what duties shall I perform to attain the supreme goal?”

Tridandi Sannyasa

The devoted wife Savitri replied, “Listen carefully. I shall now tell you the duties that you have to perform. You should maintain your mother by begging, and you should also perform the prescribed atonement for the sin of killing the two birds.

“In the land of Kosala there is a girl born in a *brāhmaṇa* family who is destined to be your wife. When you return home her father will offer her to you. You should accept her at that time. She will give birth to a baby boy who will perpetuate your family.

*punar-mṛtāyām bhāryāyām bhavitā tvam tridaṇḍakāḥ
sa yaty āśrama dharmeṇa yathoktyānuṣṭhitena ca
narasimha-prasādena vaiṣṇavaṁ padapāpsyasi*

“With the passing away of your wife you should take up the order of *tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa*. Provided you sincerely follow the disciplines of the *sannyāsa āśrama*, then by the grace of Lord Narasimhadeva you will certainly attain the abode of Lord Vishnu.

“Because you have inquired from me I have prophesized all of these things. If you do not have faith in my words then you may do as you like.”

The *brāhmaṇa* Devasharman said, “O devoted wife, I will immediately return to take care of my mother. O auspicious one, when I reach there I will do everything according to your advice.”

Having said this, Devasharman at once started for his home. There, free from anger and delusion, he maintained his mother with all

care. He got married and was blessed with a son. When his wife passed away he took up the life of a wandering mendicant. He treated pebbles, stones, and gold on an equal level and by the grace of Lord Narasimhadeva he attained the spiritual abode of the Lord.

• • •

One may ask how it was that the *brahmacārī* was obliged to maintain his aged mother? Since he had devoted himself to religious pursuits and was strictly following the vows of *brahmacarya*, would he not be free from this obligation as per the following injunction of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 11.5.41?

*devarṣi-bhūtāpta-nṛṇām pitṛṇām
na kiṅkaro nāyam ṛṇī ca rājan
sarvātmanā yaḥ śaraṇam śaraṇyam
gato mukundaṁ parihṛtya kartam*

Anyone who has completely given up all worldly relationships and has taken absolute shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord, who gives us salvation and who alone is fit to be taken shelter of, is no longer a debtor or servant of anyone, including the demigods, forefathers, sages, other living entities, relatives, and members of human society.

It should be noted, however, that this injunction of the *Bhāgavatam* applies only to those persons who have taken full shelter of the Lord. Although the *brahmacārī* Devasharman appeared to be living a highly pious life, his activities were still on the mate-

rial platform. His objective was material piety through performing religious activities and visiting places of pilgrimage. He had not left home in pursuit of the Supreme Lord, nor had he sought out the association of transcendentalists, nor had he taken shelter of a bonafide spiritual master. Although he considered himself to be free from obligations to this world, because his pursuits were only external it was improper for him to abandon his religious mother.

Since his activities were still on the material platform, the only fruit he received from them was an increase in his false prestige. This pride developed into anger, which then impelled him to kill the two birds.

Devasharman had some faith in pious religious activities, thus he had *karma-adhikāra*, or qualification for acting according to the Vedic system of religiosity. But he did not have faith in surrendering to the Lord, thus he was devoid of *bhakti-adhikāra*, or qualification for performing *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. If those possessing *karma-adhikāra* do not follow the principles of *varṇāśrama-dharma* then they become implicated in sin. For this reason the chaste and omniscient housewife advised him to return home.

Krishna has instructed Uddhava (11.20.9):

*tāvat karmāṇi kurovīta na nirvidyeta yāvata
mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā śraddhā yāvan na jāyate*

As long as one is not detached from fruitive activity and material enjoyment, and as long as one has no faith in devotion to Krishna, beginning with the process of hearing and chanting His glories, one has to act according to the religious principles of karma or *varṇāśrama*.

In the next chapter of the eleventh canto Krishna again says (11.21.2):

*sve sve 'dhikāre yā niṣṭhā sa guṇaḥ parikīrtitaḥ
viparyayas tu doṣaḥ syād ubhayaor eṣa niścayaḥ*

Being fixed in the position for which one is qualified is virtuous. The opposite, accepting a position for which one is unqualified, is irresponsible and is considered impious. This is the definite conclusion.

By acting according to his position in the Vedic system of *varṇāśrama dharma*, Devasharman gradually developed genuine detachment. He then took to the order of *sannyāsa* and in the end achieved the spiritual abode of the Lord.

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