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Highlights

• DEVOTION IN MUNDANE GOODNESS

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

• A HUNDRED WARNINGS AGAINST MUNDANE MELLOWS

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur

• WHY THE FEET OF SRI GURU ARE COMPARED TO A LOTUS

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

DEVOTION IN MUNDANE GOODNESS

Translation and purport to *Bhāg.* 3.29.10 by
His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

*karma-nirhāram uddiśya parasmin vā tad-arpaṇam
yajed yaśṭavayam iti vā pṛthag-bhāvah sa sāttvikah*

When a devotee worships the Supreme Personality of Godhead and offers the results of his activities in order to free himself from the inebrieties of fruitive activities, his devotion is in the mode of goodness.

PURPORT



The *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas* and *śūdras*, along with the *brahmacārīs*, *gṛhasthas*, *vānaprasthas* and *sannyāsīs*, are the members of the eight divisions of *varṇas* and *āśramas*, and they have their

respective duties to perform for the satisfaction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When such activities are performed and the results are offered to the Supreme Lord, they are called *karmārpaṇam*, duties performed for the satisfaction of the Lord. If there is any inebriety or fault, it is atoned for by this offering process. But if this offering process is in the mode of goodness rather than in pure devotion, then the interest is different. The four *āśramas* and the four *varṇas* act for some benefit in accordance with their personal interests. Therefore such activities are in the mode of goodness; they cannot be counted in the category of pure devotion. Pure devotional service as described by Rupa Goswami is free from all material

desires. *anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyam* [Cc. *madhya* 19.167]. There can be no excuse for personal or material interest. Devotional activities should be transcendental to fruitive activities and empiric philosophical speculation. Pure devotional service is transcendental to all material qualities.

Devotional service in the modes of ignorance, passion and goodness can be divided into eighty-one categories. There are different devotional activities, such as hearing, chanting, remembering, worshiping, offering prayer, rendering service and surrendering everything, and each of them can be divided into three qualitative categories. There is hearing in the mode of passion, in the mode of ignorance and in the mode of goodness. Similarly, there is chanting in the mode of ignorance, passion and goodness, etc. Three multiplied by nine equals twenty-seven, and when again multiplied by three it becomes eighty-one. One has to transcend all such mixed materialistic devotional service in order to reach the standard of pure devotional service, as explained in the next verses. ❀

A HUNDRED WARNINGS AGAINST MUNDANE MELLOWS

Prākṛta Rasa Śata Dūṣiṇī
Sri Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
Thakur Prabhupada

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(Continued from the previous issue)

*bhāva-kāle je avasthā sādhanāgre bole nā
vaidhī śraddhā sādhanete rāgānugā haya nā*

The awakening of transcendental emotional ecstasies (*bhāva-bhakti*) is never said to occur before devotional service in practice (*sādhana-bhakti*). However, faith in the rules and regulations alone (*vaidhī-śraddhā*) cannot give rise to devotional service on the spontaneous path (*rāgānugā-bhakti*). (16)

*bhāvera aṅkura ho'le vidhi āra thāke nā
rāgānugā śraddhā māt্রে jāta-rati haya nā*

When *bhāva*, the ecstatic mood of divine love, actually sprouts, then the need for following scriptural rules (*vidhi*) does not remain. Mere faith in spontaneous devotional service, however, does not produce transcendental loving attachment (*rati*). (17)

*ajāta-ratite kabhu bhāva-labdha bole nā
rāgānugā sādhakere jāta-bhāva bole nā*

If transcendental attachment has not yet developed within the heart, a devotee is never said to have attained the stage of *bhāva*. Practitioners on the path of spontaneous devotion (*rāgānugās*) never say that they have experienced the awakening of *bhāva*. (18)

*rāgānugā sādhakere labdha-rasa bole nā
rāgānugā sādhya-bhāva rati chāḍā haya nā*

Practitioners on the path of spontaneous devotion (*rāgānugās*) never say that they have attained *rasa*. Without achieving the goal of spontaneous devotional practice one cannot develop spiritual attachment (*rati*). (19)

*bhāvāṅkura-samāgame vaidhī bhakti thāke nā
rucike ratira saha kabhu eka jāne nā*

When the seed of intense divine emotion sprouts forth as pure *bhāva* there is no longer any need to adhere to scriptural rules and regulations (*vaidhī bhakti*). One should never consider *ruce* (taste for devotional service) to be the same as *rati* (transcendental loving attachment in devotional service). (20) ❀ (To be continued)

WHY THE FEET OF SRI GURU ARE COMPARED TO A LOTUS

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

One should understand what is *śrī-guru-caraṇa-padma*. The words “*śrī-guru*” are very significant. “*Śrī*” means *śobhā*, beauty; *sampadā*, transcendental wealth, or asset; and *śreṣṭha*, the topmost. “*śrī-guru*” means that guru who is endowed with *śrī*, with *prema-bhakti*. The word “*śrī*” is used because there is no question of Sri Guru disappearing or not being manifest. It is only applicable to a guru

who is eternally manifest. Otherwise such a word would not be used.

The Only Wealth

In this world, Sri Guru is the only beauty or asset, wealth. There is nothing else. *Caraṇa* means feet. *Śrī-guru-caraṇa-padma*—the feet of Sri Guru are compared to the lotus. This is also very significant. Why are his feet compared to the lotus and not to anything else? The lotus flower looks very nice and beautiful, and it also provides very sweet honey, *madhu*. The bumblebee collects honey from different flowers, but especially from the lotus flower. So what sort of special quality is there in the honey collected from the lotus flower that is not present in the honey collected from other flowers? It is a special type of honey known as *padma-madhu*. The disciple who is like a bumblebee, who is very hungry and greedy for that honey, relishes it.

Mellow of Bhakti

Although the lotus flower grows out of the water, it is not touched by it. One of the synonyms for water is *rasa*, mellow. The feet of Sri Guru are compared to a lotus, but this lotus grows in the transcendental water of *bhakti-rasa*, the mellow of *bhakti*. Such are the lotus feet of Sri Guru. His lotus feet are *aprākṛta*, not material, but transcendental. They are *bhakti-rasa*, the abode of transcendental *bhakti-rasa* as well as all *mādhurī*, beauty. The lotus looks beautiful to the eye and is very attractive to the heart. Similarly, the shining lotus feet of Sri Guru are very beautiful in the eyes of the disciple and very attractive to his heart. All of the activities, form, qualities, and pastimes of Sri Guru are very beautiful in the eyes of the *sādhaka-bhakta*. Through the eye of meditation the *sādhaka-bhakta* sees the beautiful lotus feet of Sri Guru. Upon seeing those lotus feet he feels a soothing effect in his afflicted heart. His heart is afflicted with the three *tāpas*, sufferings: *ādhyātmika*, sufferings arising from one's own mind and body; *ādhyatmika*, sufferings arising from nature; and *ādhibhautika*, sufferings arising from other living entities. When the disciple meditates on the beautiful lotus feet of Sri Guru he feels a soothing effect and his affliction is cooled down. At the same time he also smells the nice scent that is coming from the lotus feet of Sri Guru, like the scent that comes from the lotus.

Cooling Shade

The bumblebee wanders everywhere, going to various types of flowers. One type of flower is the *ketakī* flower. That flower is found in India but not in the West. The tree on which the *ketakī* flower grows, like the rose plant, has thousands of thorns. The *ketakī* flower has a nice scent, and a bumblebee that becomes attracted by the scent from the *ketakī* flower goes there. But because of the many thorns on the tree his wings become torn and he feels so much pain and affliction. The bumblebee thinks, “Where to go now? Can I get shelter in a place where there is no pain and affliction? Where can I get peace?” After wandering hither and thither, at last he comes to the lotus flower and experiences the cooling, soothing effect there. He takes shelter inside the lotus flower, sucks the sweet honey there, and thus gets nourishment.

Similarly, the *jīva* who is wandering and wandering through the innumerable universes and through the innumerable species of life of this material world — *brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva* — gets only more and more suffering, misery, and torture. There is no cooling effect in the material world, which is like a blazing forest fire — *samsāra-dāvānala*. Nobody starts the forest fire, but automatically by the rubbing of two pieces of wood the whole forest is burned and the animals that live in the forest are burned to ashes. They feel the burning heat, which is very painful. Similarly, the conditioned souls in this material world feel the burning sensation coming from the three *tāpas*: *ādhyātmika*, *ādhibhautika*, and *ādhidaiivika*. After wandering through innumerable universes and innumerable species of life, at last the fortunate soul, *bhāgyavān jīva*, comes to the lotus feet of Sri Guru and takes shelter in the cooling shade there. As the bumblebee sucks honey from the lotus flower, similarly, the *guru-pāda-padma*, the lotus feet of Sri Guru, allow that *jīva*, who is compared to the bumblebee, to suck the nice honey whereby he gets real nourishment and also *premānanda*, loving happiness.

Special Type of Honey

Padma-madhu, the honey collected from the lotus flower, is a special type of honey. The *Āyurveda-śāstra* says that it is a good medicine for the eye. If someone has some eye disease due

to impurities in the eye the *kaviraj*, ayurvedic doctor, will advise him to rub some *padma-madhu* in his eyes. Because of these impurities one cannot see clearly and feels pain. Applying some *padma-madhu* on the eyes will clean out all the impurities and then one will be able to see clearly. Similarly, the *guru-pāda-padma-madhu*, the honey emanating from the lotus feet of Sri Guru, is so sweet and nectarean that if a fortunate disciple gets it and relishes it then the disciple’s eyes will be cleansed of the material conception.

Eyes of Knowledge

om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā cakṣur unmlītaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ

I was born in the dense darkness of ignorance, blind, without real vision. Sri Guru, by his causeless mercy, has opened my eyes with the torchlight of knowledge.

For a person who has some painful eye disease, who cannot see well, the *kaviraj* will advise him to apply some *padma-madhu* by which the *dr̥ṣṭi-śakti*, the power to see clearly, will develop. Then not only will he get nice eyesight but also he will be able to see even very subtle things that he would otherwise never have been able to see. Similarly, when one takes shelter at the lotus feet of Sri Guru and gets the guru’s mercy, the guru allows the surrendered disciple to taste that sweet honey emanating from the guru’s lotus feet. That is the medicine whereby his material eyes will be cleansed of all material contamination. He develops transcendental vision. He may have been blinded by the dense darkness of ignorance, *ajñāna-andhakāra*, but that will all be gone now. The darkness is dispelled and he receives the eyes of knowledge—*divya-jñāna-cakṣu*. Sri Guru imparts *tattva-jñāna*, and by his mercy the disciple develops transcendental vision. With that vision he will be able to see the beautiful form of the Supreme Lord, Syamasundar. This is the honey, or *madhu*, emanating from the lotus feet of Sri Guru; it acts in such a wonderful way. Therefore the phrase, ‘*śrī-guru-carāṇa-padma*’ is very significant — the lotus feet of Sri Guru are compared to a lotus. Why is this comparison made and how to explain it?

Wonderful Characteristic

Padma-madhu cures eye disease and clears out all the impurities from the eye, but it cannot clear the impurities from the heart. However, the honey emanating from the lotus

feet of Sri Guru, *guru-pāda-padma-madhu*, has such a special and wonderful characteristic that it cures both the eye and the heart. *Sri-guru-caraṇa-padma-madhu* cleanses and purifies the heart so that it will become a suitable place for Govinda, Krishna, to reside.

*tomāra hṛdoye sadā govinda-viśrām
govinda kohena — mora vaiṣṇava parāṇ*

Narottam Das Thakur sings, “O *vaiṣṇava-ṭhākura!* Govinda, Krishna, resides in your heart, which is like Vrindavan, the eternal abode of Govinda. He stays there very blissfully and peacefully. He never leaves your heart.” The guru makes the heart of his surrendered disciple a suitable place for Krishna to reside. By giving the disciple shelter at his lotus feet and allowing him to suck that special type of honey that has that wonderful characteristic, the heart of the surrendered disciple is cleansed.

Wandering Hopelessly

The conditioned souls are like a diseased person suffering from various kinds of material ills—*bhava-rogi*. Their disease is very chronic. They have already taken many medicines — allopathic, homeopathic, and ayurvedic — but the disease is still not cured. The disease is incurable and has become chronic. They have already lost their vitality, *jīvana-śakti*, and cannot digest any food. They have taken so many

medicines and that has also produced a bad effect. These days you will find so many strong drugs, but what is their effect? They simply result in chronic incurable disease. People lose their vitality and they cannot even eat anything because their digestive fire is very low. How can they survive? They are dying. They cannot eat or digest anything. The kaviraj will advise, “You should only eat one thing — *madhu*. And especially *padma-madhu*, the special type of honey from the lotus flower.” He prescribes *padma-madhu* whereby they will regain their vitality. This honey will give them life. Any other type of food cannot be given, only *padma-madhu* is advised. Then they can regain their vitality. Such *jīvas*, wandering through innumerable universes and experiencing the miseries of innumerable species of life, have become completely hopeless. They are only getting suffering, so many material ills—*bhava-roga*. If such persons are fortunate, they will come to the lotus feet of Sri Guru. That guru is like a physician, *sādhu-vaidya*. He knows the perfect and unfailing medicine to cure the material disease, *bhava-roga*. He knows the cause of the *jīva*'s suffering. There is only one medicine, the honey emanating from the lotus feet of Sri Guru — *guru-pāda-padma-madhu*. So, as the lotus allows the bumblebee whose wings are torn by the thorns of the *ketakī* flower to take shelter inside the flower, similarly, the guru allows the disciple to take shelter at his lotus feet. The *guru-pāda-padma*, the lotus feet of Sri Guru, gives such hopeless wandering souls shelter and allows them to suck honey, whereby they regain their vitality. The suffering *jīva* gets nourishment and life there. That is why we say, ‘*śrī-guru-caraṇa-padma*.’ The lotus feet of Sri Guru are compared to a lotus, and not to anything else. This phrase has great significance. ❀ (To be continued)

— From “The Worship of Sri Guru”. Gopal Jiu Publications.
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THE IRREPRESSIBLE ENEMY

*tam durjayam śatrum asahya-vegam
arun-tudam tan na vijitya kecit
kuroanty asad-vigraham atra martyair
mitrāny udāsīna-ripūn vimūḍhāḥ*

Failing to conquer this irrepressible enemy, the mind, whose urges are intolerable and who torments the heart, many people are completely bewildered and create useless quarrel with others. Thus they conclude that other people are either their friends, their enemies or parties indifferent to them. ❀ — *Bhāg.* 11.23.48.

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