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A DEVOTEE'S GREATEST ENEMY

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada



Devotee: Prabhupada, what is a devotee's greatest enemy?

Prabhupada: He himself. Because he is a rascal, he is his own greatest enemy. Give up this rascaldom, and you will become your friend. Nobody is

your enemy. You are your own enemy. ❀

— Morning walk conversation in Paris on 12 June 1974.

THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SRIVAS PANDIT

Srila Vrindavan Das Thakur's

Śrī Chaitanya Bhāgavata antya 5.38-64

One day, in private, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu asked Srivas about his livelihood. "I see that you never go anywhere. How do you maintain your family? How will you maintain them in the future?"

Srivas replied, "Lord, in my heart there is no desire to go anywhere."

Mahaprabhu said, "You have a big family. If you don't do anything, what will happen to them?"

Srivas said, "Whatever is destined will happen. That will come."

The Lord said, "You should accept *sannyāsa*." "I have no power to do that."

"If you won't accept *sannyāsa*, why do you not go out to beg alms? How will you feed your family? I don't understand your words. If you never go anywhere, you will not get anything. If nothing comes to your door, what will you do then? Please tell Me."

Srivas then clapped his hands three times and said, "One. Two. Three. That is my explanation."

"What does, 'One. Two. Three.' mean? Why did you clap your hands? Please explain."

"This is my solemn vow: If three times food does not come to me, and I must fast, then I will tie a waterpot around my neck and drown myself in the Ganga."

Hearing Srivas' words, Mahaprabhu at once stood up and roared. "Srivas Pandit! What are you saying? Why should you fast three times? Even if some day Goddess Lakshmi becomes poverty-stricken and has to beg alms, poverty still will not enter your house. Srivas, have you forgotten what I said in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.22):

*ananyās cintayanto mām ye janāḥ paryupāsate
teṣāṃ nityābhiyuktānām yoga-kṣemaṃ vahāmy aham*

To those who always worship me with exclusive devotion, meditating on my transcendental form, to them I carry what they lack and preserve what they have.

To further explain, Mahaprabhu spoke as follows:

*ye-ye-jana cinte more ananya ha-iyā
tāre bhikṣā deṇa muṇa mātḥāya bahiyā*

To anyone who always meditates on me with exclusive devotion, I carry alms for them on my head. (57)

*yei more cinte, nāhi yāya kāro dvāre
āpane āsiyā sarva-siddhi mile tāre*

Anyone who meditates on me need never leave his door. All perfections will come to him automatically. (58)

*dharma-artha-kāma-mokṣa — āpane āise
tathāpiha nā cāya na laya mora dāse*

Piety, wealth, happiness, and liberation will come to him. My servant need not ask for them. They will never leave my servant. (59)

*mora sudarśana-cakre rākhe mora dāsa
mahāpralaye yāra nāhika vināśa*

My Sudarsana-chakra will always protect My servant. Even when all the universes are destroyed, he will not perish. (60)

*ye mohāra dāsereō karaye smarāṇa
tāhāreō karoṇ muṇi poṣaṇa-pālana*

Whoever remembers my devotee, I will feed and protect. (61)

*sevakera dāsa se mohāra priya baḍa
anāyāse se-i se mohāre pāya daḍha*

The servant of my servant is very dear to me. Without even trying, he easily attains me. (62)

*kon cintā mora sevakera bhakṣya kari
muṇi yāra poṣṭā āchoṇ sabāra upari*

Why should he worry about food. I personally feed my servant. (63)

*sukhe śrīnivāsa, tumi vasi' thāka ghare
āpani āsibe saba tomāra duyāre*

Srivas, you happily stay where you are. I will bring everything to your door. (64) ❀

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THE MERCY OF GURU

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

How can we get mercy of Bhagavan? It is said, *guru-kṛpā hi kevalam* — guru's mercy is everything. The bona fide guru, spiritual master, *sad-guru*, is a *gaura-priya-jana* — a very dear devotee of Gauranga. He is *mukunda-preṣṭhā*, an intimate, confidential associate of Bhagavan Mukunda. This is *guru-tattva*. If such a guru is pleased with a disciple, then Krishna is pleased. This is the only way to please Krishna. ❀

Spiritual Power

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi*

If the guru is displeased, then everything is finished. No one can protect you. You have no place to go. Even Lord Hari or Krishna cannot protect you. So, guru should be pleased. That is *guru-kṛpā hi kevalam*. The mercy of guru is so powerful.

*mūkaṁ karoti vācālaṁ paṅguṁ laṅghayate girim
yat-kṛpā tam ahaṁ vande śrī-guruṁ dīna-tāraṇam*

By the mercy of the guru, even a dumb man can become the greatest orator, and even a lame man can cross mountains.

If someone is fortunate and pleases guru through service — *guru-śuśrūṣayā* — he receives such spiritual power. This is spiritual power, spiritual strength, the strength of Balaram. “Bala” means “strong”. Balabhadra Balaram is very strong. He has great spiritual strength. That strength comes to us by the mercy of guru. Guru is the manifestation of Balaram, Nityananda Rama. That is *guru-tattva*. Without the mercy of guru, no one can get such strength, and no one can make any advancement on the spiritual path, *bhakti-patha*.

Even when the Supreme Personality of Godhead comes, he also accepts a guru. Why does he do so? There is no need of him to accept guru. He does so to teach us. In *Gītā* (4.11), Krishna says, *mama vartmānuvartante manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ* † “O Partha, O son of Kunti, Arjuna, everyone follows my path in all respects. Therefore when the Supreme Personality of Godhead comes, he accepts guru. Otherwise the common people will never accept guru. When Mahaprabhu came, he accepted guru. Krishna and Balaram accepted Sandipani Muni as guru. They were students, *brahmacārīs* in Sandipani Muni's ashram. Sudama Vipra was also a student at the same time when Krishna and Balaram were students, so they were friends from boyhood. When Sudama Vipra came to Dwarka, Krishna remembered those days in the guru's ashram, and said (*Bhāg.* 10.80.32):

*sa vai sat-karmaṇām sāksād dvijāter iha sambhavaḥ
ādyo 'ṅga yatṛāśramaṇām yathāham jñāna-do guruḥ*

“My dear friend, he who gives a person his physical birth is his first spiritual master, and he who initiates him as a twice-born *brāhmaṇa* and engages him in religious duties is indeed ❀

more directly his spiritual master. But the person who bestows transcendental knowledge upon the members of all the spiritual orders of society is one's ultimate spiritual master. Indeed, he is as good as my own self."

Kill your Mother

In this material world, the father is one of the gurus because by the mercy of father we have gotten this human body. So, the father is the first guru. One should accept the guru's order as it is. Don't add any deliberation to it, *nirvicāra-graha*. Accept it as it is and execute it immediately. Then you will get mercy. The example is Parasuram. Parasuram's father Jamadagni said, "Chop off the head of your mother Renuka." So immediately Parasuram chopped off her head with his axe. He didn't think, he didn't add any deliberation, "Oh, I'll kill my mother? I will commit such a great offence, *mātra-hatyā*?" Immediately he chopped off her head. And he is an incarnation of the Lord.

Devotee: At what stage in our devotional life can we follow such an order? An ordinary devotee cannot do so.

Gour Govinda Swami: You should follow guru's instruction at any stage. Then you will get his mercy.

Devotee: But when the devotee is full of doubts and his heart is not clean, then how can he follow?

Gour Govinda Swami: Who will clarify those doubts? Only guru can clarify doubts — *sarva-saiṁśaya-saṁcchettānalaso gurur āhṛtaḥ* [*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 1.46].

Devotee: But can the devotee see guru?

Gour Govinda Swami: He cannot see guru. How can he see guru with defective vision?

Devotee: Then how can he follow guru's orders?

Cry to Krishna

Gour Govinda Swami: Therefore, we say *kṛṣṇa kṛpā ei guru mile*. Pray to Krishna. Krishna is there in the heart as *caitya-guru*, *paramātmā*. When one cries in ones heart, "How can I accept the lotus feet of my guru, I don't know who is my guru. O Krishna, please help me. I want to serve you. I am your servant. But without guru I can't serve you." If someone cries before Krishna in this way, then Krishna makes arrangement. By the arrangement of *paramātmā*, Krishna, Dhruva met guru. That is the only process. Therefore,

we say that by the arrangement of Krishna one will get a bona fide guru. Otherwise, by your own arrangement you cannot get.

When you accept such a bona fide guru, *sad-guru*, then everything is finished. Whatever the guru says, do it blindly. Don't add any deliberation. That is for your spiritual benefit. If you add some deliberation, then you cannot get the mercy of guru. You cannot get the mercy of Krishna.

Lord Ramachandra

An example is Lord Rama. Dasaratha ordered Lord Rama to go to the forest for 14 years. Immediately he executed that order. He didn't ask, "What is my fault? I would have been king, why should I go?" He didn't ask anything. Immediately, without adding any deliberation to it, one should execute the order of guru. He went to the forest. When Bharat came and heard about everything, he could understand that it was the politics of his mother Kaikeyi. So Bharat went to meet Rama and requested Him, "Please come back. I cannot sit on the throne. The throne belongs to you. I am your servant. I am not king. I won't be king. This is all politics of my mother Kaikeyi."

Lord Rama wouldn't return. He said, "Bharat, you should understand that whatever is *gurujana's* order, one should follow it, execute it as it is, without adding any deliberation to it. That is beneficial to you and to Me." Lord Rama said like that.

Krishna told Sudama Vipra (*Bhāg.* 10.80.32):

*sa vai sat-karmaṇām sāksād dviḥjāter iha sambhavaḥ
ādyo 'ṅga yatrāśramaṇām yathāham jñāna-do guruḥ*

"In the material world, he from whom the *jīva* gets a human body, that father is the first guru. He is *gurujana*. Later, one goes to *gurukula* and accepts a spiritual master who imparts Vedic knowledge to him, *jñāna-do*. That is the second guru. And that guru is as good as myself."

*ācāryam mām vijānīyān navamanyeta karhicit
na martya-buddhyāsūyeta sarva-deva-maya guruḥ*

Krishna says to Uddhava in the 11th canto of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.17.27), "That *ācārya* is as good as myself. One should not think him as an ordinary human being. *sarva-deva-mayaḥ* — all the demigods are there in his body. He should be worshiped as Krishna is worshiped. Krishna says, *ādyo 'ṅga yatrāśramaṇām yathāham jñāna-do guruḥ* — "Whoever imparts

this transcendental knowledge to the inmates of the ashram, he is my representative. He is as worshipable as I am." Krishna then told Uddhava (*Bhāg.* 10.80.33-34):

*nanv artha-kovidā brahman varṇāśrama-vatām iha
ye mayā guruṇā vācā taranty añjo bhavārṇavam*

"O my dear friend Sudama Vipra, in this human society, one who is an intelligent human being should follow the orders of the spiritual master without any deliberation. Then he will very easily cross over this dreadful ocean of materialistic existence.

*nāham iḥyā-prajātibhyāṁ tapasopaśamena vā
tuṣyeyaṁ sarva-bhūtātmā guru-śūśrūṣayā yathā*

"I am very pleased with that person who serves the guru at any cost. Who serves guru with *kāyena*, *manasā*, *vācā* ↓ body, mind, and speech. With whatever merit, intelligence, wisdom, and wealth — whatever he has, he only uses it to serve and please guru. I am very much pleased with one who serves guru — *guru-śūśrūṣayā*."

Krishna told Sudama, "I am not so pleased with a person who very strictly follows the principles of *brahmacarya*, *gṛhastha*, *vānaprastha*, or *sannyāsa-dharma*, as I am pleased with a person who serves guru and pleases him. Therefore we say, *yasya prasādād*

*bhagavat-prasādo yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto
'pi [Śrī Guro-aṣṭaka text 8].*

Krishna and Balaram

So Krishna and Balaram were disciples of Sandipani Muni. And they were serving their guru. They are teaching us. One day there was no fuel in the ashram. How could the food be cooked? Gurumata said, "Oh boys, there is no fuel in the ashram. The food cannot be cooked. Go to the forest and fetch some dry wood for fuel." So Krishna and Balaram went to the forest with an axe to get some dry wood. Why did they go there? By their mere willing, thousands and thousands of truckloads of firewood could have appeared there. Why did they go? They thought, "Because we are students, disciples, we must carry out the order of guru."

So they went to forest with an axe to fetch wood. Then a mysterious, wonderful *līlā* took place. There was a heavy storm, cyclone, torrential rain. The whole earth was inundated with water. It was a very dark night. Continuous rain, thunder, and lightening. Very horrible. The two boys, Krishna and Balaram, couldn't return to the ashram. Sandipani Muni could not sleep the whole night. "Oh, what has happened? These two boys went out and they have not returned. What has happened to them?" He could not sleep. As soon it was dawn and the rain ceased, immediately Sandipani Muni went to the forest and found Krishna and Balaram trembling and standing beneath a tree, like ordinary boys. This is *nara-līlā*, the Lord's human-like pastimes. Sandipani Muni was so pleased. He embraced them and said (*Bhāg.* 10.80.40-41):

*aho he putrakā yūyam asmad-arthe 'ti-duḥkhitāḥ
ātmā vai prāṇinām preṣṭhas tam anādr̥tya mat-parāḥ*

"O my dear boys, the body is very dear to everyone, yet you have sustained so much bodily pain for me. You are real disciples, *sat-śiṣya*."

*etad eva hi sac-chiṣyaiḥ kartavyaṁ guru-niṣkṛtam
yad vai viśuddha-bhāvena sarvārthātmarpaṇam gurau*

"A *sat-śiṣya* serves guru at any cost, even at the cost of their life. You are *sat-śiṣya* because for my sake, for my service, you have sustained so much bodily pain."

[Concluded in the next issue.] ❧

— Śrīmad Bhāgavatam lecture, Bhubaneswar, 21 April 1992.

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