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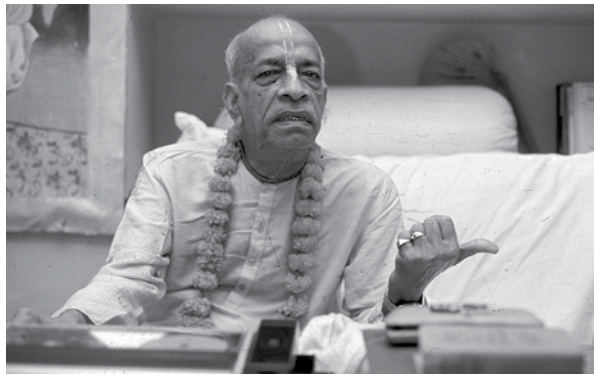
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CHILDREN AND DISCIPLINE

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

The basic idea of raising children as they are described in the Vedic literature is that from birth till the age of five years the parents may be very lenient with the child. From the ages six to ten they should tighten the discipline of their child, and from the ages of ten till the sixteenth year the parents should be as strict as a tiger with their child so that he will be afraid to be disobedient at all. Then after the sixteenth year the parents shall treat their child as a friend, and the child is allowed to gradually develop his adult responsibility and independence. (Letter to Vibhavati. 15 July 1969.)

Encourage them to chant as much japa as possible, but there is no question of force or punishment. If there is need you may shake your finger at them but

never physical punishment is allowed. Try as far as possible to discipline them with love and affection, so that they develop a taste for austerity of life and think it great fun to serve Krishna in many ways. Rising early and mangala-āratī, this is enough austerity. Besides that, let them learn something, chant, dance, eat as much prasādam as they like, and do not mind if they have a playful nature — let them also play and run, that is natural. It is nice if they eat often — if children overeat it doesn't matter, that is no mistake. (Letter to Aniruddha. 10 January 1972.)

Now the thing is, children should not be beaten at all, that I have told. They should simply be shown the stick strongly. So if one cannot manage in that way then he is not fit as teacher. If a child is trained properly in Krishna Consciousness, he will never go away. That means he must have two things, love and education. So if there is beating of child, that will be difficult for him to accept in loving spirit, and when he is old enough he may want to go away — that is the danger. So why these things are going on — marching and chanting japa, insufficient milk, too strict enforcement of time schedules, hitting the small children? Why are these things being imposed? Why are they inventing these such new things like marching and japa like army? What can I do from such a distant place? They should run and play when they are small children, not be forced to chant japa, that is not the way. (Letter to Bhanutanaya. 18 November 1972.)

PURPOSE OF OUR TEMPLES

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada
From *Āmrta Vāṇī* 18.6, 17

The *Maṭhas* [temples of the Gauḍiya Maṭha] were not established to favor ordinary people but to help pure devotees advance in spiritual life. We serve Lord Gaurāṅga simply by performing *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*. The *Bhāgavatam* verse, *yajnaiḥ saṅkīrtana prāyair yajanti hi sumedhasaḥ* supports this idea. The example set by Sri Krishna's Gaura pastimes is the only auspicious way to perfection for the *jīvas*.

The *Maṭhas* have not been established to please *bhogīs* or *tyāgīs* [enjoyers or renunciates]. They have been established to preach pure devotional service. We receive blessings as we serve Hari by establishing *Maṭhas*.

Our intention is not to collect one or two rupees to benefit the *Maṭha*. We should not be eager to take help from unscrupulous people. Rather, if we can benefit anyone by speaking the bold truth, then the *Maṭha's* purpose is served.

People will often play tricks on us. We should consider such tricks as the Lord's test. It is difficult to cross beyond insurmountable Maya unless we are greatly fortunate. *Māyāvādīs* and *bhogīs* are both conditioned souls. By the mercy of Krishna's devotees, persons who surrender to Hari can discriminate between good and bad, right and wrong. Know for certain that being drawn by the enjoying spirit, many people cannot realize the Absolute Truth.

Not for our Comfort

It is more intelligent to create a living *Maṭha* rather than to build a *Maṭha* for comfortable living. Creating a living *Maṭha* means to attract faithful persons to surrender at the lotus feet of the spiritual master. The highest welfare activity is to attract living entities to serve the spiritual master's lotus feet by describing to them the spiritual master's glories and service. For this we spend gallons of blood. Such preaching will please both guru and Krishna. Therefore, to dedicate body, mind, and speech to such philanthropic activities is the perfection of life.

A *Maṭha* surcharged with talk of Krishna's glories and service is non-different from Vaikuntha. Thus living in a *Maṭha* is just like living in a *dhāma*. *Hari-kathā* must be prominent in the *Maṭha*. There is no use in building a *Maṭha* simply to facilitate eating and sleeping. *Maṭhas* should be built only to spread *hari-kathā*. This will benefit us and others.

Devotees who are fully dedicated to their spiritual master are the living source, and we are to hear from such living sources so that we too can become dedicated devotees. People devoid and bereft of service to the spiritual master are dead even as they breathe. Do not associate with such non-devotees if you do not want to harm your spiritual progress. ❀

— From *Amrta Vani*, collected teachings of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. Compiled in Bengali by Sri Bhakti Bhagavat Mayukha Maharaja. Adapted and translated into English by Bhumipati Das and Isvara Das. Touchstone Media. Mumbai. 2004. Pages 309, 317-318.

WHERE IS BHAKTI TO BE FOUND – PART 3

Srila Jiva Goswami's Bhakti-sandarbha (115)

Srila Jiva Goswami continues explaining the universality of bhakti.

(6) **In all activities** — That bhakti can be performed in all of one's activities is specified in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.2.12) as follows:

śruto 'nupaṭhito dhyāta ādrto vānumoditaḥ
sadyaḥ punāti sad-dharmo deva-viśva-druho 'pi hi

By hearing, reading, meditating, respecting, or praising the religion known as *bhāgavata-dharma* (bhakti), even those who are antagonistic to the demigods or to the entire world are purified immediately.

[**Translator's Note:** Srila Jiva Goswami has quoted a verse which mentions only religious activities. What then about ordinary activities? Srila Jiva Goswami now quotes another verse which covers those activities.]

The *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.27) also says:

yat karoṣi yad aśnāsi yaj juhoṣi dadāsi yat
yat tapasyasi kaunteya tat kuruṣva mad-arpaṇam

Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer or give away, and whatever austerities you perform — do that, O son of Kunti, as an offering to me.

[**Translator's Note:** A question may arise here — What about those individuals whose quality of bhakti is not fully pure and they are unable to offer everything in a pure state of mind. Will they be purified too? Srila Jiva Goswami replies by saying the following:]

Even in cases where a semblance of bhakti or bhakti with *aparādhas* is present, purification occurs. This can be seen in the case of Ajamila or in other cases such as the mouse that got burnt, etc.

[**Translator's Note:** Ajamila's case is well documented in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. The history of the mouse that

got burnt is given elaborately in the *Viṣṇudharmottara* and *Padma Purāṇas*, as seen in issue 187 of Bindu. It is briefly summarized in the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (16.129) as follows:

*ekādaśyāṁ parair dattaṁ dīpaṁ prajvalya mūṣikā
mānuṣyāṁ durlabhaṁ prāpya parāṁ gatim avāpa sā*

A female mouse had once caught fire in a ghee lamp which was offered by someone on Ekadashi. [By doing so, she contributed in the burning of the lamp.] Thus, she achieved a rarely achievable human form and at last attained the topmost destination.]

(7) **In all prescribed duties** — This is specified in the *Skanda-purāṇa* as follows:

*yasya smṛtyā ca nāmoktyā tapo-yajña-kriyādiṣu
nyūnaṁ sampūrṇatāṁ yāti sadyo vande tam acyutam*

By remembering him and chanting his names, all austerities, sacrifices and prescribed duties immediately attain success and due completion. I offer my respects to that Lord Achyuta.

(8) **In the results of all actions** — Bhakti can be performed while aspiring for all types of results. This is specified in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (2.3.10) as follows:

*akāmaḥ sarva-kāmo vā mokṣa-kāma udāra-dhīḥ
tīvrena bhakti-yogena yajeta puruṣaṁ param*

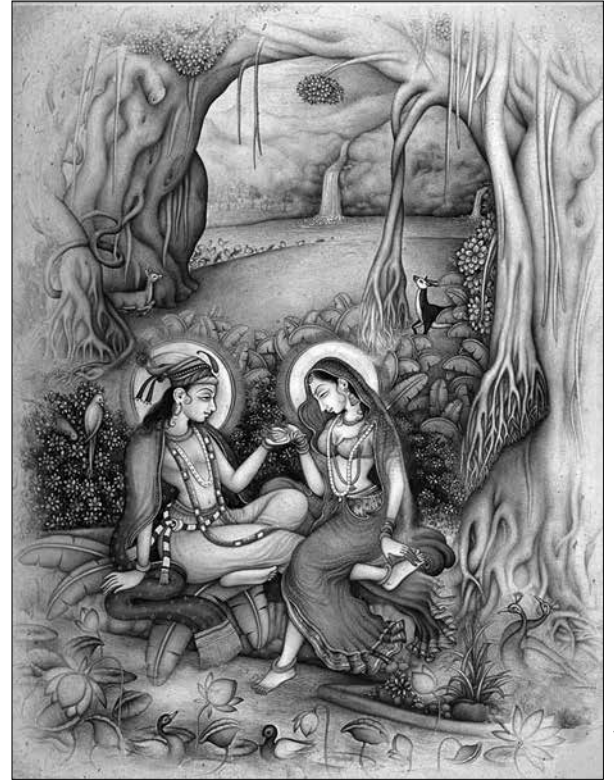
Whether one is without desire, or is desirous of all fruitive results, or is after liberation, one should with all efforts try to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Even the results of worship of all different types of gods, etc., are automatically perfected by performing the service of Hari. This is specified in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (4.31.14) as follows:

*yathā taror mūla-niṣecanena
tṛpyanti tat-skandha-bhujopasākhāḥ
prāṇopahārāc ca yathendriyāṇāṁ
tathaiva sarvārhaṇam acyutejyā*

By giving water to the root of a tree one satisfies its branches, twigs and leaves, and by supplying food to the stomach one satisfies all the senses of the body. Similarly, by engaging in the transcendental service of the Supreme Lord one automatically satisfies all the demigods and all other living entities.

Thus the universality of bhakti has been shown through these statements. The *Skanda Purāṇa* has a similar statement spoken in a conversation between Lord Brahma and Sri Narada:



Unknown artist

*Radha and Krishna in the groves of Vrindavan
arcite deva-deveṣe śaṅkha-cakra-gadādhare
arcitā sarva-devāḥ syur yataḥ sarva-gato hariḥ*

When the Lord of all Lords — the wielder of the conch, discus and club named Hari — has been worshiped, then all the demigods are automatically worshiped. This is because Hari is omnipresent.

[**Translator's Note:** Since all activities and their results are being discussed, Srila Jiva Goswami sees this as an opportune moment to bring up a discussion regarding grammar. Srila Jiva Goswami wants to look at the entire concept of activities and results in relation to bhakti from the grammatical point of view.

According to *ācāryas* of Sanskrit Grammar, whenever an action is performed there are various agents that may be involved in effecting that action viz. *kartā*, the subject of an action; *karma*, the object of an action; *karāṇa*, the instrument of an action; *sampradāna* — the receiver of an act of charity/donation; *apādāna*, the source of separation in an action and *adhikarāṇa* — the location of an action.

Material activities are such that each of the abovementioned agents of action may receive a positive or negative reaction in effecting the action. Srila Jiva Goswami however now specifies how all these agents always receive immense auspiciousness if they become involved in the action named bhakti.]

Unknown artist



Radha draws water from the Yamuna

The universality of bhakti can also be seen by observing the auspiciousness that all agents of the activity of bhakti receive. This is seen in the histories given in the various *purāṇas*. For example:

(a) The subject of the activity of bhakti: In the sentence “Prahlada performed bhakti,” Prahlad is the subject of the action and he received immense auspiciousness.

(b) The object of the activity of bhakti: In the sentence “Indra offered the Surabhi cow to the Lord,” the Surabhi cow is the object being offered and it received immense auspiciousness.

(c) The instrument of the activity of bhakti: In the sentence “Rukmini sent a letter to Krishna through a Brahmin,” the Brahmin is the instrument and he received immense auspiciousness.

(d) The receiver of anything in the activity of bhakti: In the sentence “For the pleasure of Krishna, Govardhan offered various things to the residents of Vraja,” the residents of Vraja are the receivers and they received immense auspiciousness.

(e) The source of separation in the activity of bhakti: In the sentence “Milk taken from the Surabhi cow was offered to the Lord,” the Surabhi cow is the source of separation and it received immense auspiciousness.

(f) The location of an activity of bhakti: Various *purāṇas* have statements such as “Bhakti Devi resides in this country.” In such cases, the country is the location and such countries receive immense auspiciousness. (To be continued.) ❧

— Translated by Hari Parshad Das from the Sanskrit available at Gaudiya Grantha Mandira (www.granthamandira.net)

DEVOTION TO VRAJA

Srila Prabodhananda Saraswati's Vṛndāvana-mahimāmṛtam (1.94)

rādhā-kṛṣṇa-rahasya-dāsyā-rasa eveṣṭaḥ pumartho mama
tyaktvā sarvam ahaṁ kadāpi niyatam vatsyāmi vṛndāvane
itthaṁ syād api vāci yasya paramāsaktasya gehādike
nāsaktāv api saktatā-parihṛtau taṁ pāti vṛndātavī

“Service to the most confidential *rasa* of Radha-Krishna is my only desired object of life. Giving up everything, when will I permanently reside in Vrindavan?” If such words exist on the tongue of a most attached householder who is unable to give up his attachment and take to a life of detachment, still the forest of Vrindavan protects such a soul. ❧

— Translated by Hari Parshad Das from the Gaudiya Grantha Mandira (www.granthamandira.net)



The lotus feet and hand of Srila Prabhupada

Drawing by Anuradha Dasi

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