

From Sri MayapurChandrodayaMandir

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Speaker: HH Bhaktimarga Swami

Subject: S.B.6.4.27-28

TEXTS 27–28

manīṣiṇo'ntar-hṛdisanniveśitaṁ
sva-śaktibhīrnavabhiśca trivṛdbhiḥ
vahnimṛyathādāruṇi pāñcadaśyaṁ
manīṣayāniṣkarṣanti gūḍham

savaimamāśeṣa-viśeṣa-māyā-
niṣedha-nirvāṇa-sukhānubhūtiḥ
sasarva-nāmāsa ca viśva-rūpaḥ
prasīdatāmaniruktātma-śaktiḥ

TRANSLATION

Just as great learned brāhmaṇas who are expert in performing ritualistic ceremonies and sacrifices can extract the fire dormant within wooden fuel by chanting the fifteen Sāmidhenīmantras, thus proving the efficacy of the Vedic mantras, so those who are actually advanced in consciousness—in other words, those who are Kṛṣṇa conscious—can find the Supersoul, who by His own spiritual potency is situated within the heart. The heart is covered by the three modes of material nature and the nine material elements [material nature, the total material energy, the ego, the mind and the five objects of sense gratification], and also by the five material elements and the ten senses. These twenty-seven elements constitute the external energy of the Lord. Great yogīs meditate upon the Lord, who is situated as the Supersoul, Paramātmā, within the core of the heart. May that Supersoul be pleased with me. The Supersoul is realized when one is eager for liberation from the unlimited varieties of material life. One actually attains such liberation when he engages in the transcendental loving service of the Lord and realizes the Lord because of his attitude of service. The Lord may be addressed by various spiritual names, which are inconceivable to the material senses. When will that Supreme Personality of Godhead be pleased with me?

PURPORT

In his commentary to this verse, ŚrīlaViśvanāthaCakravartīṬhākura uses the word durvijñeyam, which means “very difficult to realize.” The pure stage of existence is described in Bhagavad-gītā (7.28), wherein Kṛṣṇa says:

yeṣāṁtvanta-gataṁpāpam
janānāmpunya-karmanām
tedvandva-moha-nirmuktā
bhajantemāṁdrdha-vratāḥ

“Persons who have acted piously in previous lives and in this life, whose sinful actions are completely eradicated and who are freed from the duality of delusion, engage themselves in My service with determination.”

Elsewhere in Bhagavad-gītā (9.14) the Lord says:

satataṁkīrtayantomām
yatantaścadr̥dha-vratāḥ
namasyantaścāmāmbhaktyā
nitya-yuktāupāsate

“Always chanting My glories, endeavoring with great determination, bowing down before Me, these great souls perpetually worship Me with devotion.”

One can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead after transcending all material impediments. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa also says in the Gītā(7.3):

manusyānāmsahasreṣu
kaścidyatatisiddhaye
yatatāmapisiddhānām
kaścinnāmvetitattvataḥ

“Out of many thousands among men, one may endeavor for perfection, and of those who have achieved perfection, hardly one knows Me in truth.”

To understand Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one must undergo severe penances and austerities, but since the path of devotional service is perfect, by following this process one can very easily come to the spiritual platform and understand the Lord. This, too, is confirmed in Bhagavad-gītā (18.55), wherein Kṛṣṇa says:

bhaktyāmābhijānāti
yāvānyaścāsmittattvataḥ
tato mām tattvato jñātvā
viśatetad-anantaram

“One can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead as He is only by devotional service. And when one is in full consciousness of the Supreme Lord by such devotion, he can enter into the kingdom of God.”

Thus although the subject matter is durvijñeyam, extremely difficult to understand, it becomes easy if one follows the prescribed method. Coming in touch with the Supreme Personality of Godhead is possible through pure devotional service, which begins with śravanamkīrtanamvisnoḥ [SB 7.5.23]. In this regard, ŚrīlaViśvanāthaCakravartīṬhākura quotes a verse from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.8.5): pravistahkarna-randhrenasvānāmbhāva-saroruham. The process of hearing and chanting enters the core of the heart, and in this way one becomes a pure devotee. By continuing this process, one comes to the stage of transcendental love, and then he appreciates the transcendental name, form, qualities and pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In other words, a pure devotee, by devotional service, is able to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead despite many material impediments, which are all various energies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Easily making his way through these impediments, a devotee comes directly in contact with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. After all, the material impediments described in these verses are but various energies of the Lord. When a devotee is eager to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he prays to the Lord:

ayinanda-tanujakiṅkaram
patitaṁmāmviṣamebhavāmbudhau
krpayātavapāda-paṅkaja-
sthita-dhūlī-sadrśaṁvicintaya

“O son of MahārājaNanda [Kṛṣṇa], I am Your eternal servitor, yet somehow or other I have fallen into the ocean of birth and death. Please pick me up from this ocean of death and place me as one of the atoms at Your lotus feet.” Being pleased with the devotee, the Lord turns all his material impediments into spiritual service. In this connection ŚrīlaViśvanāthaCakravartīṬhākura quotes a verse from the ViṣṇuPurāna:

hlādinīsandhinīsamvit
tvayyekāsarva-saṁsthitau
hlāda-tāpa-karīmiśrā
tvayi no guna-varjite

In the material world, the spiritual energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is manifested as tāpa-karī, which means “causing miseries.” Everyone hankers for happiness, but although happiness originally comes from the pleasure potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in the material world, because of material activities, the pleasure potency of the Lord becomes a source of miseries (hlāda-tāpa-karī). False happiness in the material world is the source of distress, but when one’s endeavors for happiness are redirected toward the satisfaction of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, this tāpa-karī element of misery is vanquished. An example given in this connection is that extracting fire from wood is certainly difficult, but when the fire comes out it burns the wood to ashes. In other words,

experiencing the Supreme Personality of Godhead is extremely difficult for those devoid of devotional service, but everything becomes easier for a devotee, and thus he can very easily meet the Supreme Lord.

Here the prayers say that the form of the Lord is beyond the jurisdiction of material form and is therefore inconceivable. A devotee prays, however, "My dear Lord, be pleased with me so that I may very easily see Your transcendental form and potency." Nondevotees try to understand the Supreme Brahman by discussions of netineti. Nisedha-nirvāna-sukhānubhūtiḥ: a devotee, however, simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord, avoids such laborious speculations and realizes the existence of the Lord very easily.

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HH Bhaktimarga Swami

These two verses together reveal much about Krishna Consciousness. One thing in particular that resonates with me is that Krishna Consciousness is natural. It's in there. The example is given that where you see wood, there is fire. What that means then, if we take it a step further, where there is a living entity, there is Krishna. Where there is a human being, Krishna can be realized.

In Canada, we have this very nice farm community in British Columbia. There the devotees try and sustain themselves as nature as possible. It's a nice community with lakes and it is nestled in between two mountain ranges. There are forests of Pine, Spruce, and Fir. It's an old forest grove. That means that at any moment in time, it could all go up in flames. Experts have come there and said, "You are due for a forest fire." Of course, when you have something like forests coming down, everything turns into ashes. It's very depressing to look at. When the forests and the trees have been devastated, it's really heart gripping. But then, if you stick around for a while, or you go back to where the forest fire was, twenty years later you see a whole new fresh growth of trees come up.

In our community at Saranagati, there was a major forest fire about ten years ago. All around, the trees just went up in flames. It was due to carelessness on the part of somebody with a cigarette. They threw it out, and that started the forest fire. Of course, that was not one of our devotees.

The devotees had to evacuate their homes because huge flames were coming. Somehow or the other, by Krishna's grace, the winds started to turn in the other direction. The flames just missed our community. The devotees came out unscathed.

What we can understand from wood, when we see trees, we can understand that there is fire there. When we are as a human being, the potential for realizing the super soul, in particular, as it is mentioned here, is very strong. As Krishna states in the Bhagavad Gita, when the senses are under control, then the super soul can be reached.

Lord Krishna speaks about caitya-jna [caitya guru], the knower of the field of activities. There are two caitya-jna's, the individual soul and the super soul. I think that most of us would really love to be able to connect with the super soul. Someone had asked Srila Prabhupada about that. "How do we know when we are connecting with the super soul? If it's the super soul or the mind?" Srila Prabhupada said something to the effect that it's usually the mind.

Here it is said that by these very powerful mantras it is possible to ignite the fire of Krishna within. This becomes very interesting for those of us who have been working at the process for many years now. How many of you have been chanting for one year? Or how about five years? Twenty years? Thirty years? Forty years? And after forty years of chanting Hare Krishna we may wonder, "Am I making a connection? Is something happening? Where is the fire? Where is the super soul? Haribol?" And we may wonder, "JivaJago. Am I waking up at all? Am I still sleeping after forty years?"

We should have some consolation and in the words of Srila Prabhupada, "If the taste for sense enjoyment is diminishing, then this is a good measure that you are making some progress." When it comes to the rucci, the taste that all of the acharyas are talking about, we may wonder when it's going to happen.

I'm reminded of when Krishna is speaking to Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna says that his mind is always disturbing him, and he asks, "How can I get beyond this?" Krishna says, "Don't worry. Carry on, and do so in the spirit of detachment."

There is a very popular mantra out there these days that is not the Hare Krishna mantra. I think it came out during Churchill's time in Britain during the war. You've heard it. It goes, "Keep calm and carry on."

That mantra can very much apply in our Krishna Consciousness. A devotee can be very eager for making spiritual progress. "Yes. I really want to be, really, purely, one hundred percent, cent per cent Krishna Conscious. Right now!" We can be very demanding of that. But again, keep calm and carry on. Carry on with what? Carry on with the simple processes of devotional service, beginning with hearing and chanting.

It all beings with those two in particular, of the nine processes of devotional service, śravaṇamāṇḍa kīrtanaṁ. If we hear enough and we absorb enough and repeat that which is worth repeating, surely it will have an effect.

Let's take an example of Sri CaitanyaMahāprabhu, Himself. In the Siksastakam He says, "I have no taste for the holy name." Nevertheless, he continued on chanting. Anyways, as far as that's concerned, I don't believe Him. I do not believe that CaitanyaMahāprabhu had no taste for the holy name. He was lying. Let's say it's a transcendental lie, something bigger than a white lie.

I think that when we see around us, so many shining examples of success in devotional life, that that encourages and inspires us to continue. When we see the fire of enthusiasm in another devotee, then surely we get excited. I always think of this one thing that CaitanyaMahāprabhu said in terms of defining what is a great devotee. Here is how He put it. "A devotee is one who, upon seeing someone else doing service, that excites you."

That is something to always bear in mind. The greatest treasure that we have in our devotional life is the devotees. In other words we can say that more important than the holy name is the devotee. Why? Because when you are in the company of a good devotee, in particular, then you will be encouraged to be connected with the holy name.

We have some examples of this where devotees made attempts, even during Prabhupada's time to be chanting solo, to not have good company around them. Do you know what happened to them in the end? They stopped Haribol-ing.

So this is the greatest thing that is there in our presence, the association with the devotees. That is where you begin your devotional service and that is where your devotional service ends. Of course, we understand that there is no end to devotional service.

Let's say that you had a wish, especially when you are going to die. You're lying there, most people die lying down, what would you like to have for that particular time? Would you like to have a pizza? Of if you're a bengali, karelasabji? Rasa gula? What is your wish that you would want to fulfill at the time of death? What do you really want? Think about it. I think that the most sober answer is to want devotees around us, loving devotees. I want devotees around me eating rasa gulas. No, I want devotees to chant.

What I always found very interesting about all spiritual movements around the world, whether it's a big time, well organized religion, or a small group, they all have one thing in common. That is sacred sound. Whether you go to mass at a Catholic church, a protestant service, a buddhist temple, the mosque, or a synagog, there is something there that is emphasized in these different traditions. That is the sacred sound vibration. There is a common ground, a common interest, in all spiritual groups, and that is sound vibration.

Our job in Krishna Consciousness is to share this sound vibration. We have a great opportunity this year, on the fiftieth anniversary of Srila Prabhupada having gone to the West, to celebrate the holy name. We can increase the output of the holy name, more kirtanmelas, moremelas outside. Kirtanmela is now just an inside job. More outreach, get outside, out the door. Put your shoes on, sari or dhoti, and get out the door. Be organized. We forget, people love it!

One of the nicest places for Kirtan, that I've been in, is Tel Aviv, Israel. In Israel, Tel Aviv in particular, people really respond nicely to chanting. Practically anywhere that we go. We have forgotten how people love it. I would say that, although we haven't really been as influential in the world as we could be, we have put some dents into maya. We have made some influence. But we could do a lot better.

In reflecting on fifty years since Srila Prabhupada came, what did he do for the world? We can certainly look and see what he said in the seven purposes of ISKCON. There is an observation that people's lives are imbalanced. As Mother Teresa once said, the world is spiritually sick. There is an imbalance. Krishna Consciousness can create that balance.

There was an article in a news paper last year where someone had reported on how Krishna Consciousness had an effect on the world. It was a milestone. In between my scripts for the dramas this year, I just happened to carry a hard copy of this article with me. This is one of the best articles ever written about Krishna Consciousness since it's inception. Do you mind if I just read a little excerpt?

By Brendan O'Connor. It's from a newspaper in Ireland. It is titled, "We are all Hare Krishna's now, meditation goes mainstream." I will just read part of it:

"I was reading somewhere recently that while we might think of Hare Krishnas as a marginal cult, their influence on the world we live in now is enormous. The view seems to be that while the religion has not succeeded in the mainstream as such, the ideas have. Everywhere you look there is watered down Hare Krishna-ism, from the kinds of foods we eat, to the notion of sustainable, community-based living, to the whole mindfulness thing.

It seems we are all a little bit Hare Krishna now. Do you practice yoga? Are you a vegetarian? Do you believe in karma? Do you believe in positive vibes? Then, my friend, you might just be a little bit Krishna-conscious.

Even the Hare Krishnas themselves are living regular lives these days. After the usual sex scandals and so on that plague most cults and religions, many modern Hare Krishnas live what they call "householder lives", meaning they don't chant in airports anymore, instead leading lives of devotion and spirituality while holding down jobs, wearing regular clothes and raising children.

I am toying with the whole meditation idea as a way of dealing with stress and getting a bit of a guaranteed sit-down, but it kind of bothers me that it would be the equivalent of someone who doesn't believe in God praying to him just for a bit of quiet time. Or going to Mass to get a break from all the noise.

Is it really right? Is it OK that we take the trappings of spiritual techniques, just to use them as accoutrements of the modern world? Or is it actually no harm to use these ancient techniques purely as technology, without actually buying into the whole thing?

Or worse, do the Hare Krishnas and the rest of them know something we don't? Do they know that the more people they can get to chant or meditate or not eat meat or do the yoga, even if those people just do it for well-being and buns of steel, the more people they bring a little closer to Krishna.

Will we all end up in saffron robes some day?"

<http://www.independent.ie/opinion/columnists/brendan-oconnor/we-are-all-hare-krishnas-now-meditation-goes-mainstream-30618281.html>

Best article in fifty years.

We have an opportunity to be influential in the world. A lot of that comes about not just by being a great teacher, but also being a good example. Srila Prabhupada wanted us to be ideal ladies and gentlemen. The way we behave, dress, and eat, people are looking at us. They wonder, are we caring kind of people? Are we caring about the environment, ecological concerns? In as much as we like to try and make more devotees, we have to be a bit relevant in the lives of people and share some of the concerns that they have.

I would like to thank you very much for listening and for watching the theatrics. We would like to invite you this evening to our second drama for this festival time. It's at the Samadhi Auditorium. Doors open at 7pm.

I would like to express my thanks to our spiritual master, Srila Prabhupada, without whom, I would not have a life. And I would not have such nice company around me. Srila Prabhupada kijaya! Hare Krishna.