Sri Sri Radha Gopinath Temple Bhagavatam Class

2.8.17

Questions by King Parīkṣit

- 1. Radha Madhava
- 2. Om namo bhagavata, narayanam namaskrtya
- 3. Verse, purport
- 4. Om ajnana
- 5. Sri caitanya
- 6. Vande 'ham
- 7. He krsna
- 8. Tapta kancana
- 9. Vanca kalpa
- 10. Sri Krsna.... Hare Krsna

Verse, Translation and Purport

|| 2.8.17 ||

yugāni yuga-mānam ca dharmo yaś ca yuge yuge avatārānucaritam yad āścaryatamam hareḥ

Please explain all the different ages in the duration of the creation, and also the duration of such ages. Also tell me about the different activities of the different incarnations of the Lord in different ages.

Srila Prabhupada's Purport

Lord Kṛṣṇa is the original Personality of Godhead, and all the incarnations of the Supreme Lord, although nondifferent from Him, are emanations from the Supreme.

Mahārāja Parīkṣit inquired from the great and learned sage Śukadeva Gosvāmī about the different activities of such incarnations so that the incarnation of the Lord might be confirmed by His activities in the authoritative scriptures.

Mahārāja Parīkṣit was not to be carried away by the sentiments of the common man to accept an incarnation of the Lord very cheaply.

Instead he wished to accept the incarnation of the Lord by symptoms mentioned in the Vedic literatures and confirmed by an ācārya like Śukadeva Gosvāmī.

The Lord descends by His internal energy without any obligation to the laws of material nature, and thus His activities are also uncommon.

The specific activities of the Lord are mentioned, and one should know that the activities of the Lord and the Lord Himself are identical due to being on the absolute plane. Thus to hear the activities of the Lord means to associate with the Lord directly, and association with the Lord directly means purification from material contamination.

We have already discussed this point in the previous volume.

Developing deeper appreciation for Srimad Bhagavatam

Theme-I

Chapter Recap

Pariksit Maharaj inspires Sukadeva Goswami to speak more Hari-Katha (1-6)

|| 2.8.1-2 ||

rājovāca—

brahmaṇā codito brahman guṇākhyāne 'guṇasya ca | yasmai yasmai yathā prāha nārado deva-darśanaḥ ||

etad veditum icchāmi tattvam tattva-vidām vara | harer adbhuta-vīryasya kathā loka-sumangalāḥ ||

The King said: O brāhmaṇa (brahman)! O best of knowers of truth (tattva-vidām vara)! I desire to know (veditum icchāmi) exactly the truth (etad tattvam) that Nārada -- seer of Kṛṣṇa (nārado deva-darśanaḥ) and taught by Brahmā (brahmaṇā coditah) -- spoke to others (yasmai yasmai yathā prāha) while explaining the qualities of the Lord (guṇākhyāne) who is without material qualities (aguṇasya). Topics (kathā) of the Lord who has astonishing powers (harer adbhuta-vīryasya) are all-auspicious for the world (loka-sumangalāḥ).

Please describe about Narada muni's preaching exploits.

|| 2.8.3 ||

kathayasva mahābhāga yathāham akhilātmani | kṛṣṇe niveśya niḥsaṅgaṁ manas tyakṣye kalevaram ||

O great soul (mahābhāga)! Please speak (kathayasva) so that I can give up the body (yathā aham tyakṣye kalevaram) absorbing my mind (manah niveśya), devoid of material desires (niḥsaṅgaṁ), in Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇe) who is the soul of all beings (akhilātmani).

Please speak in such a way that I can give up my body while absorbing my detached mind in Krsna.

Here Parīkṣit indicates that his objects of attachment such as kingdom have been given up.

Whatever attachment is left for the body, he wishes to give up by concentrating his mind on Kṛṣṇa.

This shows his efforts to remember Kṛṣṇa.

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The Lord (bhagavān) quickly (na at) dīrgheṇa) enters the heart of the devotee (viśate hṛdi) who with faith (śraddhayā) continually hears (śṛṇvataḥ nityaṃ) and chants about the Lord's activities (gṛṇatah ca sva-ceṣṭitam).

Effort in remembering Kṛṣṇa is not necessary for the devotee who hears and chants.

Even without great effort, the Lord spontaneously enters into the heart.

Hearing and chanting here indicates remembering.

|| 2.8.5 ||
praviṣṭaḥ karṇa-randhreṇa
svānām bhāva-saroruham |
dhunoti śamalam kṛṣṇaḥ
salilasya yathā śarat ||

Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇaḥ), entering (praviṣṭaḥ) the lotus of the heart (bhāva-saroruham) through the ears (karṇa-randhreṇa) of the devotees (svānām), washes away all contamination (dhunoti śamalam) until it is completely pure like the pools of water in the autumn seasons (salilasya yathā śarat).

Kṛṣṇa in the form of topics enters the lotus of the heart (bhāva-saroruham) through the ears.

Though Paramātmā is always situated in the heart, he is neutral.

This implies that Kṛṣṇa, entering though the ears, attaches the jīva to himself.

Bhāva indicates relationships like dāsya and sakhya.

Thus bhāva-saroruham can also mean the lotus of various sentiments for the Lord.

Kṛṣṇa washes way the faults (śamalam) such as lust and anger.

|| 2.8.6 ||
| dhautātmā puruṣaḥ kṛṣṇapāda-mūlam na muncati |
| mukta-sarva-parikleśaḥ
pānthaḥ sva-śaraṇam yathā ||

The person with a pure heart (dhautātmā puruṣaḥ) does not give up the root of the feet of Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇa-pāda-mūlaṁ na muñcati). He is like a traveler (vathā pānthaḥ), who, giving up all sufferings after earning wealth (mukta-sarva-parikleśaḥ), does not leave his house (sva-śaraṇaṁ).

Foot note explaining Samsargabhava

Of these, jiva's non-existence of knowledge of the Lord is not atyantābhāva, since the jiva can obtain knowledge at some point in time.

It is not pradhvamśābhāva since if the jīva had knowledge of the Lord it could not be destroyed.

A nitya-siddha cannot have his knowledge of the Lord destroyed.

Even a sādhana-siddha cannot have his knowledge destroyed.

Foot note explaining Samsargabhava

It is stated in Prīti Sandarbha that knowledge of the Lord, if established in the jīva, should be eternal.

"The destruction of ignorance concerning ātmā is eternal because that knowledge which destroys the ignorance is a manifestation of the supreme entity's nature of self-revelation. The absolute destruction of suffering is eternal because that ignorance existed but was destroyed (is it pradhvamsābhāva--the ignorance)" Prīti Sandarbha 1

Questions by Pariksit Maharaja (7-23)

|| 2.8.7 ||
yad adhātu-mato brahman
dehārambho 'sya dhātubhiḥ |
yadṛcchayā hetunā vā
bhavanto jānate yathā

O brāhmaṇa (brahman)! Please explain (implied) whether the body of the jīva (asya adhātu-matah dehah) made of elements (dhātubhih) takes place (ārambhah) by chance (yadrcchayā) or by any specific cause (hetunā vā) as you understand it (bhavanto jānate yathā).

Having expressed his enthusiasm for hearing about Kṛṣṇa, the first anga of pure bhakti that he cherishes, Parīkṣit inquires about subjects to the extent that they may contribute to the accomplishment of the goals of pure or mixed bhakti.

These questions continue till the end of the chapter.

Wherever even a trace of bhakti appears, it should be established without aparādha, otherwise Bhakti-devī will not show mercy.

Apriseña deva munayo

|| 2.8.8||
āsīd yad-udarāt padmam
loka-samsthāna-lakṣaṇam |
yāvān ayam vai puruṣa
iyattāvayavaiḥ pṛthak |
tāvān asāv iti proktaḥ
samsthāvayavavān iva ||

The puruṣa (puruṣah) from whose belly (yad-udarāt) a lotus appears (padmam āsīd) has been described (iti proktaḥ) as having planets as his limbs (loka-samsthāna-lakṣaṇam). Though different from the material human form (pṛthak) which is endowed with limited limbs (iyattā avayavaiḥ), he seems similar since he also has limbs (samsthā avayavavān). What is the difference between these two (implied)?

Is the Lord and the Jiva distinguished simply by the difference in the magnitude of the body?

|| 2.8.9 ||
ajaḥ sṛjati bhūtāni
bhūtātmā yad-anugrahāt |
dadṛśe yena tad-rūpaṁ
nābhi-padma-samudbhavaḥ ||

By the mercy of the Lord (yad-anugrahāt), Brahmā (ajaḥ), the controller of the bodies within this universe (bhūtātmā), arising from the lotus in the Lord's navel (nābhi-padma-samudbhavaḥ), created those bodies (sṛjati bhūtāni) and saw that form (dadṛśe tad-rūpaṁ).

Since Brahma appeared from the navel of the Lord, does he also possess a body similar to the Lord?

|| 2.8.10 ||

sa cāpi yatra puruṣo viśva-sthity-udbhavāpyayaḥ | muktvātma-māyām māyeśaḥ śete sarva-guhāśayaḥ ||

Please describe (implied) where (yatra) this puruṣa (sah puruṣah), the creator, maintainer and destroyer of the universe (viśva-sthity-udbhava-āpyayaḥ), the Lord of māyā (māyeśaḥ), dwelling within all beings (sarva-guhāśayaḥ), but untouched by his māyā (muktvā ātma-māyām), lies down (śete).

Where does this Karanodakasayi Visnu lie?

|| 2.8.11 ||
puruṣāvayavair lokāḥ
sapālāḥ pūrva-kalpitāḥ |
lokair amuṣyāvayavāḥ
sa-pālair iti śuśruma ||

The planets (lokāḥ) and their protectors (sa pālāḥ) were previously identified (pūrva-kalpitāḥ) with limbs of the puruṣa (puruṣa avayavaih) and the limbs of the puruṣa (amuṣya avayavāḥ) were identified with the planets (lokaih sa-pālaih). This I have heard (iti śuśruma). If there are more details please explain them (implied).

Are there any more details about the description of the universal form?

|| 2.8.12 ||
yāvān kalpo vikalpo vā
yathā kālo 'numīyate |
bhūta-bhavya-bhavac-chabda
āyur-mānaṁ ca yat sataḥ ||

Speak of the kalpas and their subdivisions (yāvān kalpo vikalpo vā), how time is perceived (yathā kālo anumīyate) in the past present and future (bhūta-bhavya-bhavac-śabda) and about the life spans (āyur-mānam) of the humans, devatās and Pitṛs (yat sataḥ).

Speak about the divisions of time and about the life spans of the humans, devatās and Pitṛs.

|| 2.8.13||

kālasyānugatir yā tu lakṣyate 'ṇvī bṛhaty api | yāvatyaḥ karma-gatayo yādṛśīr dvija-sattama ||

O brāhmaṇa (dvija-sattama)! Speak about the progress of time (kālasya anugatih) with large and small divisions (yā tu lakṣyate aṇvī bṛhaty api) and the number (yāvatyaḥ) and types (yādṛśīh) of destinations achieved by karma (karma-gatayah).

Speak about the dimensions of time and about destinations achieved by Karma.

These two questions are suitable for pure bhakti in order to become indifferent to all karma.

The Lord says jāta-śraddho mat-kathāsu nirviṇṇaḥ sarva-karmasu: he who has developed faith in my topics and is indifferent to all karmas. (SB 11.20.27)

|| 2.8.14||
yasmin karma-samāvāyo
yathā yenopagṛhyate |
guṇānāṁ guṇināṁ caiva
pariṇāmam abhīpsatām ||

Speak about the bodies (guṇānām pariṇāmam) desired (abhīpsatām) by the jīvas (guṇinām), in which topic you should explain (yathā) which jīva, by which actions (yasmin karma-samāvāyo), receives various results (yena upagṛhyate).

Speak about the various bodies received by the jivas according to it's karma.

This question is suitable for karma-miśra, jñāna-miśra, yoga-miśra and pure bhakti.

|| 2.8.15|| bhū-pātāla-kakub-vyomagraha-nakṣatra-bhūbhṛtām | sarit-samudra-dvīpānām sambhavaś caitad-okasām ||

Speak also about the creation (sambhavah) of the earth, Pātala-loka (bhū-pātāla), the directions, the sky (kakub-vyoma), the planets, constellations (graha-nakṣatra), mountains (bhūbhṛtām), rivers, oceans and islands (sarit-samudra-dvīpānām), the creation of the various inhabitants and what jīvas attain those places (sambhavah ca etad-okasām).

Please speak about vedic cosmology.

This question is suitable for all devotees, since all planets are the shelter of various types of devotees and devotees are in charge of those planets.

|| 2.8.16|| pramāṇam aṇḍa-kośasya

bāhyābhyantara-bhedataḥ | mahatām cānucaritam varṇāśrama-viniścayaḥ ||

Speak about the dimensions of universe (pramāṇam aṇḍa-kośasya) outside and inside (bāhya abhyantara-bhedataḥ), the activities of great souls (mahatām ca anucaritam) and the definition of varṇāśrama (varṇāśrama-viniścayaḥ).

Speak about the dimensions of the universe, about the activities of great souls and about the definition of varnasrama.

The question about dimensions of the universe is for bhakti with predominance of aiśvarya.

Varṇāśrama rules are applicable to mixed devotees.

This question is suitable for karma-miśra and jñāna-miśra-bhakti.

|| 2.8.17 ||
yugāni yuga-mānam ca
dharmo yaś ca yuge yuge |
avatārānucaritam
yad āścaryatamam hareḥ ||

Please describe the various yugas (yugāni), their durations (yugamānam ca), their dharmas (dharmo yah ca yuge yuge), and the astonishing activities of the yugāvatāras of the Lord (hareḥāścarya tamam avatāra anucaritam).

This question includes not only the yugāvatāras but also the type of bhakti that they institute.

Theme-II

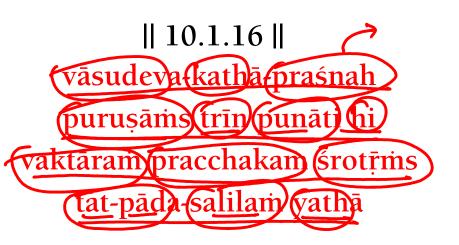
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Role of Inquiry and going deep in our taking Shelter of Srimad Bhagavatam Softenavier Brancis



Just as the Ganges, emanating from the toe of Lord Viṣṇu, purifies the three worlds—the upper, middle and lower planetary systems (tat-pāda-salilam yathā), when one asks questions about the pastimes and characteristics of Lord Vāsudeva, Kṛṣṇa (vāsudeva-kathā-praśnaḥ), three varieties of men are purified (puruṣāms trīn punāti hi): the speaker or preacher, he who inquires, and the people in general who listen (vaktāram pracchakam śrotṛms).

pāda salilam yathā: Hari-katha purifies three types of persons, just like the caranamrta of salagrama or a deity, which purifies three types of persons: those who put it on their head, those who drink it and those who do both.

It also means that the topics of Hari are just like the Ganga, which purifies those in the upper, middle and lower worlds.

The topics of Hari purify the speaker, the inquirer and the listener in descending order.

Hari-katha is most purifying for the speaker, then the inquirer and then the listener.

TEXPLAIN this > & explain the
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thoughtful

- 1. guru-pādāśraya Taking shelter of a guru
- 2. kṛṣṇa-dīkṣādi-śikṣaṇam Taking Diksa and aquiring knowledge from him
- 3. viśrambhena guroh sevā Service to guru with respect
- **4. sādhu-vartma anuvartanam** Following the rules of the scriptures as approved by the acaryas

5. sad-dharma-pṛcchā – Inquiry about the real duties of life

Srila Prabhupada in the Purport

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, or, for that matter, any other scientific literature, cannot be studied at home by one's own intellectual capacity.

Medical books of anatomy or physiology are available in the market, but no one can become a qualified medical practitioner simply by reading such books a home.

One has to be admitted to the medical college and study the books under the guidance of learned professors.

Similarly, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, the postgraduate study of the science of Godhead, can only be learned by studying it at the feet of a realized soul like Śrīla Vyāsadeva.

Although Śukadeva Gosvāmī was a liberated soul from the very day of his birth, he still had to take lessons of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam from his great father, Vyāsadeva, who compiled the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam under the instruction of another great soul, Śrī Nārada Muni.

Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu instructed a learned brāhmaṇa to study Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam from a personal bhāgavata.

But, even Vyadeva accepted a Guru

| 1.5.20 ||
idam hi viśvam bhagavān ivetaro
yato jagat-sthāna-nirodha-sambhavāḥ
tad dhi svayam veda bhavāms tathāpi te
prādeśa-mātram bhavataḥ pradarśitam

This universe is the Lord (idam hi viśvam bhagavān iva) but the Lord is also different from the universe (itarah) for from him arises the maintenance, destruction and creation of the universe (yato jagat-sthāna-nirodha-sambhavāḥ). You know this naturally since you are an avatāra of the Lord (tad dhi bhavān svayam veda). Thus I have shown to you (tathāpi bhavataḥ pradarśitam) a small portion of bhakti and knowledge concerning the Lord's power (prādeśa-mātram).

You know all this spontaneously (svayam) because you are an avatāra of the Lord.

Thus I have shown only a small portion, ten fingers (prādeśa-mātram) of bhakti and knowledge of the powers of the Lord who measures more than ten million times a hundred trillion, in order to fulfill the statement ācāryavān puruṣo veda: one who has a teacher knows. (Chāndogya Upaniṣad 6.14.2)

Vyasadeva not only accepted a Guru,

but even got corrected by him

and worse still

received heavy chastisement from him

Chastisement and correction

- 1. bhavatānudita-prāyam Mistake pointed out
- 2. yathā dharmādayaś cārthā Mistake pointed out
- 3. atho mahā-bhāga bhavān amogha-dṛk Pacified and instructed

4. Jugupsitam dhrma krte - Chastised

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That challenge and correction can come from a Guru.... Or it could also come from other knowledgeable Vaisnavas

|| 4.21.21 ||

rājovāca

sabhyāḥ śṛṇuta bhadram vaḥ sādhavo ya ihāgatāḥ satsu jijñāsubhir dharmam āvedyam sva-manīṣitam

The King said: O assembly (sabhyāḥ), devotees who have gathered here (sādhavo ya iha āgatāḥ)! Good fortune to you (bhadraṁ vaḥ). Please listen (śṛṇuta)! In the presence of devotees (satsu), those who are inquisitive for truth (jijñāsubhih) should announce the principles (dharmam āvedyaṁ) which they have carefully considered (svamanīṣitam).

The King addresses the devotees.

activat Palam ashette.

My object is not the others who have gathered here.

Since there is devotee association here, the inquisitive should reveal topics of dharma, after considering them carefully, since they cannot come to a conclusion by themselves.

Components of Education – HH Purnachandra Maharaj

Now we will look at the components of education and their importance in our discussion of devotion.

Devotion is more than just education, but devotion also includes educational principles.

When one is truly educated, he cannot be a blind follower, because true education includes more than just a preliminary or superficial level of learning.

True spiritual education means deeper levels of learning, levels that include contributing to the knowledge.

This is particularly true when delving in the Absolute Truth, which holds unlimited facets.

Considering, reflecting, analyzing with the mind and intelligence comprise a major part, the second level, of the process of education.

The word "education" comes from the Latin verbal root "educare," which means "to bring out of" or "to lead forth."

This indicates a positive empowering process that continues after the official lessons are finished; the student is not meant to crawl back into ignorance but to go forth on his own.

These levels or components of education are described in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad (2.4.5), Patañjali's Yoga-śūtras (1.17) and a Sanskrit poem called the Naiṣadha-caritam (1.4).

These three śāstras list the basic components of learning in slightly different ways, but we shall see that they all agree on the first three major levels.

These literatures offer three broad categories of learning: śravaṇa, manana and nidhidhyasana.

Śravaņa means hearing from a teacher.

Manana means gaining intellectual insight or understanding by reflecting upon the subject.

Nidhidhyasana means realization and application in life.

The first level of each system describes the primary step of learning, wherein hearing, study and analysis prevail.

The second level comprises gaining intellectual understanding and insight by reflection.

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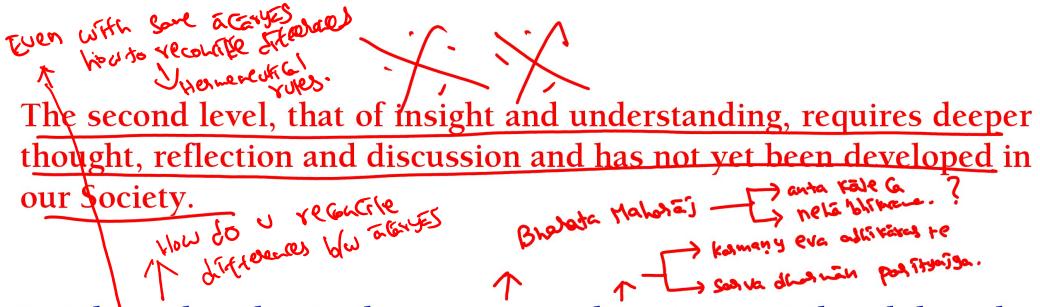
The third level brings assimilation, wherein the student internalizes the subject, and his skills become second nature; he lives and breathes his subject effortlessly.

On the instructions of Srila Prabhupada, we have finally geared ISKCON for the first level. Bhaktiśāstra courses and examinations are available and have become popular.

This has energized ISKCON with transcendental knowledge, and devotees feel a sense of accomplishment and enlightenment.

But Prabhupada wanted his followers to develop the other levels.

He often held mock debates with his disciples, forcing them to think deeply about the philosophy.



Insight and understanding mean we do not accept the philosophy blindly but question it and consider it from many angles of vision. –

"And I am very much stressing nowadays that my students shall increase their reading of my books and try to understand them from different angles of vision.

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Each śloka can be seen from many, many angles of vision, so become practiced in seeing things like this." (Letter to Tribhuvanatha 16 June 1972) "Krsna Tulya Bhagavata"

"Your first job should be to make sure that every one of the devotees in your zone of management is reading regularly our literatures and discussing the subject matter seriously from different angles of seeing, and that they are somehow or other absorbing the knowledge of Krishna Consciousness philosophy.

If they are fully educated in our philosophy and if they can get all of the knowledge and study it from every viewpoint, then very easily they will perform tapasya or renunciation and that will be their advancement in Krishna Consciousness." (Letter to Satsvarūpa 16 June 1972)

Logically, if we do not develop the second level, the third will be beyond our reach.

They are asking a Questioning You.

But again, even the second level requires a brahminical ethos, one of freedom and open inquiry without fear of reprisal, ridicule or alienation.

In my opinion, this is, by and large, not available at present in many of our communities.

This is one of many factors causing members to leave the Society.

Śrīla Prabhupāda states that the third level is essential for brāhmaṇas and for preaching: "This is a true description of a brāhmaṇa. A brāhmaṇa is one who has assimilated the Vedic conclusions by practicing mind and sense control... One who actually assimilated the essence of the Vedas can preach the truth [italics mine]." (Bhāg. 5.5.24 purport)

"One can assimilate the knowledge of the revealed scriptures only by hearing and explaining." (Bhāg. 1.1.6 purport)

One cannot preach effectively without having assimilated the philosophy.