

(Kindly transcribed by Sheela Mataji, Singapore)

Download the audio for this lecture here:

<https://docs.google.com/uc?id=0ByzaWaB085dBLW84UGE4YVdjc2s&export=download>

From Sri Mayapur Chandrodaya Mandir

Date: February 18, 2014 (Devotee Care Day)

Speaker: HH Jayapataka Swami (lecture two of two)

Verse: Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.13.14

HH Jayapatak Swami: So you were hearing HH Radhanath Swami. I put myself after him because I thought in case I get delayed, I will buffer. But I forgot he is a difficult act to follow. (chuckles) and then he embarrassed me right in front of me. [laughter]

In this verse we see that Krishna doesn't have to do anything, He has His energies who are happy to do all His bidding. So they manifest the material world, spiritual world, do all the things needed. So what does He do? So what does Lord Krishna do? It says He likes to personally take care of His devotees. That's what He does.

And we see how Srila Prabhupada was performing very intimate service in helping Lord Krishna take care of devotees. We see how Radhanath Swami is doing a very intimate service to Prabhupada [devotees applaud and Haribol!] in taking care of devotees.

I had the mercy to join with Prabhupada in 1968. Then one day I heard a class from Prabhupada in 1967, so that was before my time. So I thought, "Oh, let's listen." I was amazed that at that time Srila Prabhupada suffered a stroke and he was paralyzed from neck down. He told his secretary, "I don't want to stay in the hospital." But the doctors wouldn't release him. So the secretary had to sneak him out of the back door in a wheel chair and so they hid him in the basement of the 26 Second Avenue.

I think normally if a person is paralyzed neck down not much he can do and probably he would just lie there. But not Prabhupada. He was thinking how to care for these devotees, how to instruct them, they have come to me. So some men were bathing him, with sponge, dressing him up and then he was talking, his head was working, he was preaching non-stop. Although his body was paralyzed (Maharaja breaks down). You can imagine he is paralysed from top to bottom and still he is telling them how we can get free from this material world.

How much mercy Prabhupada had and how much we are so indebted. Sometimes he would tell people to make them humble. I went to Prabhupada and I said, "I am the most fallen." Prabhupada interrupted: "You are not the most anything." [laughter] I still remember that.

One time I saw how he was talking to my mother who had come all the way from America to India. And he was explaining the philosophy to her in very simple terms—we are the living force in the body, when that leaves the body is dead. Like this he

was explaining to my purvasrama mother so simply that even she could understand. (chuckles) And then she would come and give a bouquet of flowers to Prabhupada. Prabhupada blessed her, said she was a devotee. Then she started chanting, four rounds a day, all by the mercy of Prabhupada. So that's spiritual care.

I told this example; I had stepped on a nail. Prabhupada he wrote to me. I don't know how he found out but he did and he wrote to me: "I heard you have injured your foot. Your body is dedicated to Krishna's service so you should take care of it." And like this he wrote some encouraging words. To get such an unsolicited, unexpected letter from Prabhupada, it's something you can imagine. So wonderful.

So Prabhupada, whether it was physical or whether spiritual, he was always trying to help. One thing that Radhanath Swami brought up was all the arrangements he made for the devotees who came from around the world. One year in the very beginning he saw there were no brahmacaris in the class. So he went over to the Brahmachari Asrama to see. He saw, all lying down (Maharaj clutches his belly) Bengal belly! [laughter]. Maybe they ate too much prasadam [laughter]. But Prabhupada said if they have enough appetite they can digest a stone. So then he started kirtans, parikramas. Devotees would start dancing, going out on parikramas, then they got their appetite [laughter].

Then he would give a lecture that you get a thousand times more benefit in the holy dhama. So what is a thousand times zero? So he was stressing that the purpose of visit to dhama is to do as much seva as you get, because then you multiply that by thousand and you get a big quantity. You can take home a sack of jewels.

So somehow Krishna likes to take care of His devotees. And every devotee is dear to Krishna. We heard so many example of how every devotee is dear to Srila Prabhupada. So every devotee should be treated with utmost respect and care.

We should also follow at least the minimum etiquette. Somehow here we have some seats for Prabhupada disciples and senior devotees. But I don't see a similar set up for the ladies. There are many Prabhupada disciples ladies who are here.¹ That's our shortcoming. I saw Malati Devi and others there, who don't have proper seat. Maybe they need chairs due to their old age. But anyway we want that in ISKCON we should take inspiration from Krishna that if He likes to take care of His devotees, if He appreciates His devotees and even the devotees of His devotees.

Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura wrote to Prabhupada that if you preach this message around the world it will be very good for you and for those who help you. Who would like to help Prabhupada? [Devotees: Haribol!] That's an army! So everyone you are all actually helping through book distribution, through congregational preaching, through temple services, through various activities. So everyone is very dear.

We have in the past treated devotees without care and we want to change the way that devotees see each other. At least we can see that Supersoul is present in everyone's heart. Therefore we are supposed to respect everyone. But the devotees are special because they are serving the Lord. That's a very rare thing. Out of all the people in the world how many chant Hare Krishna, how many serve the lord? Not

¹ Note from ATD: I believe Maharaja was not able to see that actually there were some asanas for the senior ladies. In any case more attention was given to this matter after his comment.

many yet! So the devotees we get please be very, very careful and we should try to treat them with utmost care.

A few days ago in ILS HH Radhanath Swami spoke how Prabhupada had declared war with the Kali-yuga, with material illusion, and so in this war as in any war some people get wounded. And they may need some spiritual care or they may need some physical care or emotional care. So we need some caregivers. Apart from that every devotee should try to be very careful in how they treat other devotees.

Once Prabhupada said in Vrindavana, that "In the presence of my Gurudeva his disciples didn't fight; but after he left they fought. But in my presence you are fighting. What will happen after I leave?" So he was very concerned about the future. But somehow we are cooperating together and this is what Prabhupada had instructed us. But now we are concerned what will happen in the future? How will the movement stay together? So one of the threads that brings us all to stay together is devotee care. That care, the moment that is there then the devotees naturally like to stay. Where will you find that care outside? People are smiling and make you feel that you are going to get some care. But they are just exploiting you. Only devotees are actually selfless and they can give care simply to please Krishna. Simply because they see you are very dear to Krishna.

We should be very careful. It's said if you commit an offense to a senior Vaisnava that is matahati, mad elephant. But somewhere else it says that if a senior devotee offends a junior devotee then they can be stopped in their spiritual progress. It's a very, very serious thing. We all want to get love of Godhead. Here how many want to get love of Godhead? [devotees: Haribol!]. Then we have to treat each other very carefully. And one way to do that is to give care to each other.

Since you all have your seminars I should be careful [laughter]. Today is the Devotee Care Day and in the future years probably we will develop some more different ceremonies. I don't know what our Chairman has in store for us. But I would like to take this opportunity to offer our puja to the dear ones of Lord Krishna. But since Krishna's altar is open I have to offer to Him first and then prasada to the dear ones.

This is a good day to embrace each other, to exchange gifts and glorify the devotees.

Devotees: Haribol!