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From Sri Mayapur Chandrodaya Mandir

Date: February 18, 2014 (Devotee Care Day)

Speaker: HH Radhanath Swami (lecture one of two)

Verse: Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.13.14

ityuktvadri-dari-kuñja-gahvaresvatma-vatsakan
vicinvanbhagavankrsnahsapani-kavaloyayau

Translation: "Let Me go and search for the calves," Krsna said. "Don't disturb your enjoyment." Then, carrying His yogurt and rice in His hand, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna, immediately went out to search for the calves of His friends. To please His friends, He began searching in all the mountains, mountain caves, bushes and narrow passages.

Purport: The Vedas (Svetasvatara Upanisad 6.8) assert that the Supreme Personality of Godhead has nothing to do personally (natasyakaryamkaranam ca vidyate)

because He is doing everything through His energies and potencies

(parasyasaktirivividhaivasruiyate). Nonetheless, here we see that He took personal care to find the calves of His friends. This was Krsna's causeless mercy.

Mayadhyaksenaprakrtisuyatesa-caracaram: all the affairs of the entire world and the entire cosmic manifestation are working under His direction, through His different energies. Still, when there is a need to take care of His friends, He does this personally. Krsna assured His friends, "Don't be afraid. I am going personally to search for your calves." This was Krsna's causeless mercy."

HH Radhanath Swami: Today is Devotee Care Day and under HG

Revati Ramana Prabhu's direction I am supposed to speak an introduction to HH Srila Jayapataka Swami Maharaja. He will be speaking soon. I have till 8.30, he has 8.30 to 9, yes? So I have about twenty minutes. Srila Jayapataka Maharaja chose this verse so I believe he wants to speak specifically on it.

The spirit is how the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes, parama-isvara, the controller and master of everyone, takes the greatest pleasure in caring for His devotees. Lord Brahma had taken away the calves; the cowherd boys were in distress. So Krishna, not wanting them to interrupt their prasada eating, He did it Himself: "You go on eating your prasada, I will go and look for the calves." Krishna Himself in this wonderful pastime is sacrificing His own lunch so that His devotees could enjoy the lunch.

Krishna went through efforts, it describes in this verse that He went, He didn't just look around or ask somebody, He started searching the mountains, the caves, forests, everywhere for the pleasure of His calves and His friends.

So this concept of devotee care has no beginning and no end. It's the eternal pastime of Krishna Himself, the adipurusa. When Krishna came here in Mayapur Dhamas as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, He revealed in the role of a devotee how He loves and cares for His devotees.

In Jagannath Puri every year when the devotees made their long journey from Bengal to Puri, Lord Caitanya would personally greet them in His own residence. He would arrange their accommodations, He was very enthusiastic to arrange proper prasada, He would give each devotee proper assistance to make them happy and he would lovingly praise His devotees.

Sivananda Sena, a grhastha, would arrange for this incredible pilgrimage to Puri, for three-four hundred devotees he would arrange everything – the prasada the accommodations, the health requirements, paying all the tolls and taxes between one province and another. And we know the story even a dog would join his party he cared for with such attention because he considered that dog and all the other Vaisnavas to be so dear to Lord Caitanya.

And Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu appreciated that so dearly that He told Sivananda Sena that "Consider Me a part of your family. I am also. . . your family is My family."

To Haridasa Thakura, He personally arranged a special place for him just near the Jagannath temple. And because of Haridasa's humility, he would not go in the temple. He would, Srila Prabhupada would say it like this, Lord Jagannath Himself in the form of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu would everyday come out of the temple and deliver with His own hands Jagannath's prasada to Thakura Haridasa. And spend hours everyday talking with him about Krishna, appreciating him in every way.

In fact Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu explains in Caitanya Bhagavata that all the wealth in the entire creation does not equal in value, in My heart, one of My devotees. That is how Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu valued each and every one of His devotees.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura would sometimes say that he shed buckets of blood to bring each and every single devotee to the path of Krishna consciousness. Its interesting how, [aside: Jayapataka Maharaja offers pranams, Hare Krishna.] its very interesting how when we hear devotees' memories of Srila Prabhupada so many times the highlight of devotees lives were when they were chastised by Srila Prabhupada.

And some of the stories are very intense chastisements. But yet it encouraged them, it enlivened them, it awakened so much faith in them, it was one of the milestones of their spiritual progress, and the treasure that they always hold on to is that chastisement.

But I have also seen on many occasions that when disciples of Prabhupada chastise their juniors sometimes they are discouraged, sometimes they are depressed, sometimes it drives them away from the society of devotees. How is this? Because Srila Prabhupada told us 'Do as I am doing'.

"Prabhupada chastised, so I will chastise, like a lion, sadhu means to cut." But there's a difference. Because Srila Prabhupada, through his care, for our body, minds and

especially our souls, he awakened within our hearts deep trust, deep faith, that he really cares about us. He really cares about each of us personally.

Srila Prabhupada wrote these beautiful books and purports as his love and care to all of us. Srila Prabhupada in his own personal example in the way he developed this society, even if one never saw Srila Prabhupada personally and there are hundreds if not thousands of people, they feel such deep trust in Prabhupada because without any ulterior motive he really cares about giving me the highest thing, love for Krishna. And he has made so much sacrifice for me, how much I need to reciprocate.

At 26 Second Avenue, the very foundational beginning of Hare Krishna movement in the West, hippies were coming, people who weren't following the four regulative principles, didn't have any conception of God, but they were taking interest and Srila Prabhupada saw them as devotees because he saw the potential. Prabhupada was cooking for them, cleaning for them, he was taking care of their health and he was nourishing their souls with his philosophy, with his kirtans, which was like medicine administered with such compassion. Compassion means to deeply care for the welfare of another.

Here in Sri Mayapur Dham everything you see is a manifestation of Srila Prabhupada's devotee care. During the first Mayapur festival nothing was really built very well, Jayapataka Swami Maharaja was there, and devotees were having to sleep in all sorts of different places and some were getting sick and Srila Prabhupada at night would get up and walk around just to see how the accommodations were being made. He was very, very concerned about devotees' accommodations, their health, their prasada.

This Long Building, at that time it was the longest building in all of Bengal. At least that's what the movies said, that Yadubar Prabhu made. Why was the building made? It was made for us, because Srila Prabhupada understood that people are coming from the West are not accustomed to very, very austere situations, we should give them a nice place to stay. Srila Prabhupada cared.

Here in Mayapur, Malati Devi was serving prasada to Srila Prabhupada's Godbrothers, sannyasis of Gaudiya Math. And Srila Prabhupada said to all of them about Malati Devi, "Just see this devotee, how much she loves me. She is willing to cut her own throat for me and I am willing to do the same for her." Something like that. This is why we had such trust and faith in Srila Prabhupada because we really felt cared, we really felt that whatever service we did was pleasing him and that empowered us to do even better things.

People like Vaisesika Prabhu practically from sunrise to sunset are enduring the most incredible obstacles and insults and dangers to distribute Srila Prabhupada's books, because he wanted to please Srila Prabhupada, because he had such faith, such trust that Prabhupada is going to take me back home, back to Godhead.

Here in Mayapur Srila Prabhupada built all these wonderful buildings for us to be accommodated. During the guru-puja here when everyone was glorifying him, one devotee had an infection on his foot and Srila Prabhupada called that devotee to him and told him what medicine to put on the foot. Because the body is the medium by which we can exchange love with each other and care for each other.

And Srila Prabhupada would nourish our souls—our bodies, our minds and our souls—with his incredible kirtans, and his wonderful lectures from Srimad-Bhagavatam, SrimadBhagavad-gita, Caitanya-caritamrta. During his last days in Sri VrindavanaDham, although he was not eating anything, he was calling the leaders of Krishna Balarama temple to make sure all the devotees were getting nice prasada. Although his body was in such a state that he couldn't move he was so concerned discussing with his leaders that the devotees were accommodated nicely.

And at the same time Srila Prabhupada's greatest pleasure was mac-citta mad-gata-pranakathayantas ca mamnityamtusyanti ca ramanti ca, when we were sharing Krishna katha, Krishna kirtana with each other.

Very soon the book by Yamuna Devi, "Unalloyed", which is her life story will be coming out. I happened to read some of it. There is one passage, when she was living in Vrindavan. Srila Prabhupada called her to his room at Radha Damodar temple and instructed that I want you to take the responsibility of caring for the devotees. Because when they come to India they get so sick, they are not accustomed to this type of life, give them nice prasada, arrange the best possible accommodations, encourage them and inspire them. And in this book we see how she took that instruction very much as her life and soul.

To the extent that in the last year of her life for several months she was in the Bhaktivedanta Hospital Mumbai. She was according to our doctors, Madhavananda Prabhu is here, she was about 90% physically dead when she came. It was almost impossible, her situation. And yet she would call me up, she was in a critical condition, and say "I am leaving here."

I said, "Why are you leaving?"

She said, "Because too many people are serving me. I don't like people to serve me. I like to serve others."

"But you are in a helpless condition, you need that. "

She said, "No, no, no; I'd rather die than people serve me."

And she was so serious, she was practically ready to walk out the door, she couldn't even walk, but she was getting out the door somehow or another.

I said, "Please understand, Yamuna Devi, you are the closest people they have ever seen that brings them to Srila Prabhupada. And they are serving you, they are serving Srila Prabhupada. Give them a chance."

So she said, "All right I will stay."

Then after a week she called and said, "I am leaving, people are serving me."

And I gave her the same appeal—you are the closest thing that they have had to Srila Prabhupada. Let them serve Prabhupada through you.

And under that condition she would stay. But how did she stay? When anybody came to her room she had arranged prasada for them, anybody who came to the

room, even the people who were caring for her, what to speak of guests. She would have them—before they could even talk to her practically or ask her how she was—take this prasada, she would counsel them, she would make sure they are comfortable, get them chairs.

Where do these devotees get the spirit from? We were speaking the other day about Srila Prabhupada on a lecture he gave on Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura's disappearance day. There at the end of his talk after speaking so many wonderful stories of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura and his own relationship with him, he said, "I thank all of you very much." Now each and every one of us as we are listening to Srila Prabhupada's words which I am just repeating, please take it very personally because Krishna consciousness is a personal philosophy where we are personally trying to inspire each other and when Prabhupada is speaking in his books, in his lectures, through his devotees, he is speaking personally to each and every one of us.

Srila Prabhupada said, "I thank you so much because actually you are all the representatives of my Guru Maharaja."

And then you can hear on the tape Srila Prabhupada begins to cry. There is a pause when you hear him cry and with a choked voice he said, "Because you are all helping me to execute the order of my Guru Maharaja."

In this way Srila Prabhupada saw all of us as the representatives of his Guru Maharaja. And an acarya teaches by his example. This means that we should see each other as the representatives of Srila Prabhupada.

Srila Jayapataka Maharaj had a stroke some years ago and after major surgeries and everything else he was in Bhaktivedanta Hospital. And I happened to be coming from somewhere and I was picked up at airport, I was in a car driving to our temple in Mumbai, and I happened to call Srila Jayapataka Maharaja at the hospital.

And I didn't even mean it because I considered it impossible, but as we were talking I said, "In a couple of weeks we are having our Pune Yatra where about 5000 devotees are going to be coming to Pune. Would you like to come?"

He said, "Yes, I would like to come."

He couldn't even stand up, he was laying down. So then he would tell his doctors, "I am going to Pune Yatra." [laughter] and the devotees, all the doctors, "No, no, you cannot go. It's too dangerous, it's a four hour drive, it's not such a good road and everything like that, it's four hours each way, it's too much disturbance, you are in a very, very dangerous condition!"

And he said, "But Maharaja invited me!" [laughter] So this was going on I guess every day.

So the doctors called me and said, "You have to take away that invitation; [laughter] he really wants to go."

I said, "What? You mean he actually wants to go?"

And they said, "Yes, he wants to go and we are all arguing with him and he says, 'But Maharaja invited me. You are supposed to be following Maharajaso why are you saying something different?'"

So I was thinking how am I supposed to uninvite him?

Meanwhile this doctor who was the main doctor—he wasn't a devotee—came from another hospital. He came and all of our doctors they had their strategy: "We will get this main doctor, the person who actually performed the immediate original care, we will get him to say, 'You cannot go, it's too dangerous.'"

So they explained it and this main doctor who wasn't a devotee. . . would you like to hear what he told the devotee doctors?

Devotee audience: Haribol !

He said, "The best thing to do for Jayapataka Maharaja is to go to Pune Yatra. [laughter, audience claps and loudly chants Haribol] Nothing else would be so good for his health." [more laughter]

The devotee doctors said, "How is that?"

And he said, "Because I have been observing that he only lives for one thing—to give pleasure to the devotees. [applause, haribols] What brings him the most happiness is to show compassion to the devotees and his happiness will be the greatest medicine. Let him go and make the devotees happy." [Haribol!]

And he came. He actually came; he was laying in a stretcher on the back of an ambulance. They took him out and they propped him up in front of around 5000 people and he gave a two hour lecture. [laughter]. And he couldn't even talk hardly, but still he gave a two hour lecture and everyone was weeping and crying because he is seeing all as representatives of his Guru Maharaja. That's how Srila Prabhupada taught us and I am so happy that our movement is really coming together to give the highest emphasis on devotee care.

Thank you very much!

[Jayapataka Maharaja's lecture to follow shortly]