

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

A SHORT LAWN DARSANA

Verbania, Italy: June 25, 2004

[Srila Narayana Maharaja is in Hawaii now, engaged in translating and other services, and in the beginning of January he will be giving a program on the Island of Kauai. In the meantime, please accept this harikatha, the final one that we are sending from Italy.

During the Italy Harikatha Festival this year, just before his evening classes, Srila Narayana Maharaja met with devotees for afternoon darsanas. To ensure that many devotees would have a chance to ask their questions, devotees of different countries met him on different days. June 26 was the day for the Switzerland devotees.]

[Question:] How was your meeting with your istadeva (worshipable deity)?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] I was a police officer. My Gurudeva and his associates came to a place nearby my home for seven days of classes – as here there are classes. I heard them speak and became a devotee, and I left my position as a police officer. I left my father, mother, wife and children, and decided to join Gurudeva's movement. I became totally maddened for his service and teachings at that time, and from then on I have been serving him.

[Question:] I have heard so many times that Krsna resides in our heart. Is Srimati Radharani also residing in our heart?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] First Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu will come, and He will clear away all your anarthas. Srimati Radhika may come or may not come. If you are fortunate enough She may come – but this will occur only by the grace of Guru – otherwise not. At first Lord Krsna does not manifest in His original form; He manifests His Paramatma form. When you will be initiated and matured He Himself will come; and after that, finally, Srimati Radharani will come. She will come when you surrender to Srila Rupa Gosvami. This will occur only when you are under the guidance of a rasika-rupanuga Vaisnava.

[Question:] Can I offer food to Krsna without the gopala-mantra?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] We should not offer foodstuffs by the gopala-mantra. There are particular offering mantras, and they are written on the paper devotees receive when they take second initiation. We offer bhoga (unoffered foodstuffs) by the mantra "etat naivedyam sa tulasi paniya jalam, klim gauraya svaha, srim klim radha-krsnabhyam namah".

[Question:] If I do not have diksa or gopala-mantra, what should I do?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] You will have to wait. Go on practicing what I have taught you. Meditate on Sri Gurudeva, Sri Sri Radha and Krsna and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

[Question:] Why are there so many wars in the name of God?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Persons who fight in the name of God are bogus, nonsense and ignorant. In the name of Lord Krsna, or religion, we should love each other. We are in one family. We are not Italian, British, Hindu, Christian or Muslim. We are part of the family of Krsna, the Supreme Lord. He has various names in different parts of the world and in different languages, but He is One without a second. We are in the family of that one God.

[Question:] What can I do when I have doubts about my spiritual path?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Come to Gurudeva and very politely and humbly say, "I have doubts. Please remove them." And he will do so. If you cannot come directly, then send me an e-mail and I will reply at once. If I am not present before you, you can also ask Aranya Maharaja, Bhaktisar Maharaja, Vana Maharaja, Padhmanabha, and Madhava Maharaja. They will help you.

[Question:] In order for the farmers to get milk from the cows, the cows are treated badly. Should we still drink and make preparations with that milk?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Why should you not take it? If you take their milk and offer it to Lord Krsna, those cows will be liberated.

[Question:] Can we communicate with you in our hearts and expect to have your reply within our hearts

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Yes, yes.

[Question:] Without a letter?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Yes, without a letter. In all respects.

[Question:] There are so many forms of Krsna. What is the distinction between our istadeva (ones personal worshipable lord) and any other form of Krsna? In other words, how does one recognize his istadeva?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] When you will see Him come in your meditation, playing on His flute, decorated with His peacock feather, accompanied by His cows, and especially accompanied by Srimati Radhika, then you will think, "He is my istadeva."

[Question:] What if my istadeva is Lord Nrsimhadeva?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] He is not your istadeva. He will only take away your obstacles. Nrsimhadeva is Sri Krsna Himself, but in the form of Nrsimha He takes away your obstacles in bhakti.

[Question:] Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is Krsna in Srimati Radharani's mood. He feels separation from Himself, Krsna. But in an article by Srila Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja in the Harmonist magazine, it appears to say something different. There it is written that Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura accepted that Mahaprabhu is Krsna in a mood of separation from Radharani, and that this understanding is in the line of Srila Rupa Gosvami. This is confusing.

[Sripad Aranya Maharaja:] This is radha-cinta-nivesena.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] You should explain.

[Sripad Aranya Maharaja:] There is no contradiction here. We have heard that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is in the mood of Radhika though He is Krsna Himself. But it has also been said that Krsna is feeling separation from Srimati Radharani and thus becomes Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Our parama-gurudeva, Srila Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja has written:

radha-cinta-nivesena yasya kantir vilopita
sri-krsna-caranam vande radhalingita-vigraham

["I worship the lotus feet of that form of Sri Krsna when, due to being thoroughly immersed in separation from Srimati Radhika (who is displaying mana, Her mood of maan (transcendental jealous anger), His own dark complexion vanishes and He assumes Her bright, golden luster; or, I worship the lotus feet of Krsna as He is embraced by Radhika (after Her maan has broken). (Sri Radha-Vinoda-Vihari-Tattvastakam, verse 1)]

When Krsna feels separation from Srimati Radharani, He becomes absorbed in remembering Her; so much so that His dark complexion goes away and He becomes golden. This golden form becomes Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, who identifies so much with Radhika that He is weeping, "Alas Krsna, alas Krsna! Where are You?" So there is no contradiction in the article by Srila Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Maharaja in the Harmonist magazine.

[Question:] There is a famous verse that says, "yasyaham anugrhnami harisye tad-dhanam sanaih."

["The Personality of Godhead said: If I especially favor someone, I gradually deprive him of his wealth. Then the relatives and friends of such a poverty-

stricken man abandon him. In this way he suffers one distress after another." (Srimad-bhagavatam 10.88.8)]

When are we eligible to think like this? If we are in maya, is it premature to think we are getting Krsna's mercy when our lives are falling apart?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] He does not take away the material life of all. He takes it from those who are sincere, those who want to be liberated and want to serve Krsna – from them. It is not that He will take away the material life of you and other common people.

[Question:] I am not qualified to chant nama-abhasa (the stage wherein offences are clearing). Is some purification going on while chanting nama-aparadha (offensive chanting)?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Yes, purification is going on; and one day nama-abhasa will come, and after that the pure holy name. Go on chanting – while weeping and praying, "Oh Krsna, I want to chant the pure name. Please help me."

Gaura premanande.

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