

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

BEWARE OF MAYA

June 15, 2006: Badger, California

Today is our third class. By the mercy of Sri Guru and Gauranga, we have passed these few days very peacefully. Although so many devotees have assembled here – more devotees than ever before – until now there are no complaints.

In our class yesterday, we discussed the *uttama-adhikari* (the topmost, first-class devotee), *madhyama-adhikari* (the intermediate, second-class devotee) and *kanistha-adhikari* (the beginner, third-class devotee). *Uttama-adhikaris* see everywhere that everyone, all living beings, are worshipping in the same mood that they themselves possess towards the Supreme Lord. They offer obeisances to everyone, thinking, "My Supreme Lord is everywhere, even in the blades of grass, in the trees and in the creepers." They are very humble.

Regarding the *madhyama-adhikaris*, they are described in scriptures as "*prema maitri krpopeksa*." They have love and affection (up to the stage of *asakti* and the beginning of *bhava-bhakti*) for Lord Sri Krsna, they serve *uttama-adhikaris* (first class devotees) with their heart and soul, they see those who are senior to them in the intermediate stage as senior friends (to serve), they see those in their own category as friends (to share), and juniors as junior friends (to instruct). Finally, to those who are ignorant, but not arrogant and not atheistic, the *madhyama-adhikari* offers his mercy.

isvare tad-adhinesu
balisesu dvisatsu ca
prema-maitri-krpopeksa
yah karoti sa madhyamah

["An intermediate or second-class devotee, called *madhyama-adhikari*, offers his love to the Supreme Personality of Godhead [The Supreme Personality of Godhead here means the *asraya* Godhead (the pure devotee) as well], is a sincere friend to all the devotees of the Lord, shows mercy to ignorant people who are innocent and disregards those who are envious of the Supreme Personality of Godhead." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.2.46)]

Lord Sri Krsna always tastes transcendental *rasa* (mellows), and therefore He has nothing to do with our conditioned life. He is always in *Goloka Vrndavana*, and always singing, dancing and playing His flute in the *Rasa* dance. He does not know who is suffering and who is not. The *uttama-adhikari* is also absorbed in Sri Krsna's pastimes. *Srila Sukadeva Gosvami* is an *uttama-adhikari*. He is completely naked, and he travels throughout the world, sinking in the ocean of the sweet pastimes of Krsna. He does not see the sufferings of the people of this world.

Only a *madhyama-adhikari* can see this. An *uttama-adhikari* will have to come among us as a *madhyama-adhikari*, and then he will think that the souls of this world are suffering in *maya*. Only by the mercy of such *madhyama-adhikaris* can we advance towards *Krsna-bhakti*.

Kanistha-adhikaris simply perform arcana (worship of the deity) of Lord Sri Krsna. They do not respect the Lord's devotees or others.

We read in the Eleventh Canto of Srimad-Bhagavatam that Maharaja Nimi asked the sages known as the nine Yogendras, "How can we recognize an uttama-adhikari, a maha-bhagavata?"

grhitvapindriyair arthan
yo na dvesti na hrsyati
visnor mayam idam pasyan
sa vai bhagavatottamah

["Even while engaging his senses in contact with their objects, one who sees the entire world as the energy of Lord Visnu is neither repelled nor elated. He is indeed the greatest among devotees." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.2.48)]

The uttama-bhagavatas engage their senses in activities in this world, but they are not pleased by the appearance of any happiness, nor are they disturbed if great suffering comes to them. They are neither happy nor disturbed.

Such a pure devotee is not attached to any situation – birth and death, hunger and thirst, labor and fatigue, or fears such as: "Someone may take my wife," or "He may take my money," or, "Old age is coming," or "I will die." He may be thirsty or without food for many days, but he thinks, "No harm." Srila Sukadeva Gosvami is an example of such a pure devotee. He never begs for anything. He will eat whatever comes by the wish of Sri Krsna; otherwise he is satisfied to eat nothing. He is satisfied by simply eating air and water. These are symptoms of a maha-bhagavata.

na kama-karma-bijanam
yasya cetasi sambhavah
vasudevaika-nilayah
sa vai bhagavatottamah

["One who has taken exclusive shelter of the Supreme Lord, Vasudeva, becomes free from fruitive activities, which are based on material lust. In fact, one who has taken shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord is freed from even the desire to enjoy material sense gratification. Plans for enjoying sex life, social prestige and money cannot develop within his mind. Thus he is considered bhagavatottama, a pure devotee of the Lord on the highest platform. (Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.2.50)]

In the mind and heart of the maha-bhagavata there is no desire for sense gratification at all. Worldly desires never come in his heart, and he is always situated in Brahman the Supreme Spirit; that is, Vasudeva Sri Krsna. He is not attached to this body, thinking, "I am this body." He is also not attached to relatives like father, mother, friends and so on. He has no false ego. If the entire world's wealth comes to him and then leaves, he will not be affected at all. We would be affected if some money comes and then goes, but he is not. He is always situated in remembering the sweet pastimes of Sri Krsna.

visrjati hrdayam na yasya saksad

dharir avasabhihito 'py aghaughā-nasah
pranaya-rasanaya dhrtanghri-padmah
sa bhavati bhagavata-pradhana uktah

["The Supreme Personality of Godhead is so kind to the conditioned souls that if they call upon Him by speaking His holy name, even unintentionally or unwillingly, the Lord is inclined to destroy innumerable sinful reactions from their hearts. Therefore, when a devotee who has taken shelter of the Lord's lotus feet chants the holy name of Kṛṣṇa with genuine love, the Supreme Personality of Godhead can never give up the heart of such a devotee. One who has thus captured the Supreme Lord within his heart is to be known as bhagavata-pradhana, the most exalted devotee of the Lord." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.2.55)]

Those who have bound Lord Kṛṣṇa with their love, and can thus control Him, are really bhagavat pradhana, the most exalted devotee. These are the symptoms.

All misconceptions and attachments are destroyed by simply chanting one name of Kṛṣṇa. One may even be helpless, as Ajāmila was when the Yamadutas (the messengers of the god of death) came to him. He was not aware when he was chanting the name Narayana that Narayana refers to God. He was not referring to God, Lord Narayana, but to his son – and still he was liberated.

If anyone hears or chants this name, his so many varieties of sinful desires are destroyed. One name of Kṛṣṇa can destroy all these things.

Nimi Maharaja questioned the sages, the Nine Yogendras, "I want to know what maya is. To remove maya (the illusion that we are this body and we are part of this world) is very difficult. How can we conquer that maya?"

One of the nine Yogendras, named Antarikṣa, said, "You should know that the creation is manufactured by maya. What we see by these eyes and what we feel by our senses – all this is maya."

Sri Narada Muni performed a pastime in which he appeared to have become bewildered. Once Kamadeva, Cupid, tried to defeat Narada, but he could not do so. He thus offered obeisances and prayed to Narada with folded palms, and then he returned home. At that time something entered Narada's heart – false ego – something Sri Kṛṣṇa cannot tolerate. Kṛṣṇa thus decided to perform an operation, and take out that thing from Narada's heart.

Narada went to his father, Brahma, who told him, "All right, you have told me this, but don't tell Narayana." Narada then went to his Guru, Sankara (Lord Siva) and hearing this, Sankara also advised, "Don't tell this to Narayana." Having not listened to Lord Siva's warning, Narada went to Vaikuntha and told his Lord, "By your mercy, I have conquered Kamadeva – a feat which is very difficult for even Brahma and Siva and others like them. Lord Narayana told him, "Oh, you are the greatest devotee," and He decided to operate on him. Lord Narayana thought, "False ego, like a disease, has now come to him. I will remove this disease by an operation."

Later, as Narada was returning to this universe, he saw an extremely beautiful kingdom; where he saw a king and his only daughter. That girl was very lovely and, in wonder, Narada considered that he had never before seen such beauty. He approached the king and said, "I want to see her hand so that I can tell her future." He then took the hand of that princess in his. Seeing there the wonderful qualities of her future husband, he thought, "How can I marry this girl?" After seeing her hand, he went away and began to meditate on his worshipful Lord Narayana.

Narayana at once appeared in his meditation and asked, "What do you desire?" Narada prayed, "O, please help me. I have never asked You for anything before. I want to marry that girl. Please give me a face as beautiful as Yours."

Lord Narayana replied, "All auspiciousness to you. All benedictions to you. I will do what is best for you."

Now, thinking that Lord Narayana had fulfilled his desires and given him a face similar to His own, Narada was satisfied. He returned to the king. It so happened that at that time, the king was performing a svayambhara ceremony, the function in which a princess chooses her husband. The girl was holding a very beautiful garland and was preparing to place it on the neck of the man that most attracted her, after which she and that man would be married. Narada kept walking wherever that girl walked, showing his face to her and hoping she would offer him the garland. Although she looked disgusted and went to another place whenever he came into her view, he continued to follow her everywhere, to attract her attention.

One of the associates of Lord Siva told Narada, "Oh, you are so beautiful." Narada thought that person was telling the truth, but actually he was being ridiculed. In the meantime, Lord Narayana Himself came to that place on his bird carrier, Garuda, and when the girl saw Him she put the garland around His neck. Then, without a minute's delay, Narayana placed her on His lap, on Garuda, and They quickly flew away.

Narada thought, "He is a very wicked person. I have served Him without any desire. Only once did I have a desire. I wanted to marry this girl and I asked for His beautiful face. I should see what face I have received." Nārada then looked in a mirror and saw that he had the face of a black Indian monkey. He looked like a baboon.

Very angry and upset, Nārada at once flew to Vaikuntha. There he saw that very girl sitting where the Lord's consort, Laksmi, usually sits. He told Lord Narayana, "You have cheated me! I curse You that You will weep, as I am weeping for this lady. Your wife will be taken away from you, and you will have to take the help of monkeys to get her back!"

Just then Narayana removed His illusory potency, Yogamaya, and Narada saw that the girl was actually Laksmi herself. Lord Narayana said, "I performed this operation only to remove your false ego and pride." Narada then fell flat at His lotus feet and apologized. This incident became the cause of Lord Ramacandra's appearance.

This pastime was manifest by Lord Krsna, or Lord Narayana, through the agency of Yogamaya, only to give instructions to all jivas. We must not think that Narada fell in

maya. By the wish of their Lord, devotees can do anything to fulfill His desires. Narada is showing how careful one must be. He is showing the nature of maya.

Sankara (Lord Siva) once told Lord Narayana, "I want to see your Mohini form." Again and again he requested, and then the Lord took the form of Mohini – His incarnation as a beautiful young woman. Mohini was half naked, and as soon as Sankara saw Her, he ran after Her. He dropped his tiger-skin, which was covering his body, and he began to run. Parvati called out, "What are you doing?" By the request of Parvati, Mohini again assumed His form as Lord Narayana. Of course Lord Siva cannot be affected by this world's maya, but he performed this pastime with the Lord, to show maya's nature.

We are not this body. In this world we all think we are this body. Truly, our relatives – sons, daughters, etc. – are not related to this body. They are eternal servants of Krsna. We think that they are ours and we become so worried. This is maya.

At the time of the destruction of the universe, all earth becomes water, water becomes fire, fire become air, air become ether and ether enters in Brahman and goes inside Maha-Visnu – and the entire world is finished. This is maya.

Maya is very difficult to conquer. You should try to always remember and meditate on Sri Krsna's sweet pastimes, and then maya will be very far away. This is the only remedy. Sri Narada and Sankara are pure, but to teach us, they are showing us that if they can become attached to maya, what to speak of us? Don't waste time. Only in this human form of life can we attain sadhu-sanga (association of pure devotees) and love and affection for Sri Krsna. It is not possible in other forms.

To be happy and avoid all kinds of suffering, we must engage all of our senses in Krsna consciousness.

Hearing all these things, Nemi Maharaja questioned the Nine Yogendras, "To conquer maya is very difficult. How can those who think, 'I am this body' and are attached to worldly enjoyment cross over this maya? Please tell me."

To be happy and to devoid of all kinds of sufferings, we have to engage all of our senses in Krsna's service. In an attempt to remove suffering, the world's leaders sit in the United Nations building and hold discussions. But what are they doing? They cannot accomplish anything positive. Rather, more sufferings are coming.

Old age will come and we will have to give up this body. So many problems are coming, and in order to relieve that suffering we are always engaged in making money. We think, "Money will help us", but this is not so:

nityartidena vittena
durlabhenatma-mrtyuna
grhapatyapta-pasubhih
ka priti sadhitais calaih

["Wealth is a perpetual source of distress, it is most difficult to acquire, and it is virtual death for the soul. What satisfaction does one actually gain from his wealth?

Similarly, how can one gain ultimate or permanent happiness from one's so-called home, children, relatives and domestic animals, which are all maintained by one's hard-earned money?" (Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.3.19)]

tasmad gurum prapadyeta
jijnasuh sreya uttamam
sabde pare ca nisnatam
brahmany upasamasrayam

["Therefore any person who seriously desires real happiness must seek a bona fide spiritual master and take shelter of him by initiation. The qualification of the bona fide guru is that he has realized the conclusions of the scriptures by deliberation and is able to convince others of these conclusions. Such great personalities, who have taken shelter of the Supreme Godhead, leaving aside all material considerations, should be understood to be bona fide spiritual masters. (Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.3.21)]

If you want to know how to cross over maya – endless birth and death – and to attain Krsna-prema, you will certainly have to go to Gurudeva. Gurudeva must be fully qualified with the svarupa laksana (intrinsic characteristics) of the Guru's qualities. In other words he must have realization. He must also have the tatastha laksana (marginal characteristics) of Guru, like detachment and knowledge of sastra. He should know all sastra, so that he can remove the doubts of aspiring devotees – yet this alone will not do. He should have some realization of Krsna. This is the main thing. He will tell his disciple how he himself attained Krsna-prema – as Gopa Kumara told his own history to his disciple Jana Sarma. He will have the tatastha laksana also. He will not be attached to anyone in this world – not to wife, children, wealth or anyone else.

[Question:] What about his disciples?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Even if a disciple is born of an aristocratic family, he should be humble. He should wake up in the morning before his Gurudeva, and take rest after him. He should always serve and obey his Guru. He should never disobey.

[Question:] He's asking if the Guru has attachment to his disciples.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] The Guru has no attachment to anyone, but he is merciful. He is only attached to Sri Sri Radha and Krsna. He has no lust for anything in this world. He has no time at all for anything or anyone else.

tatra bhagavatan dharman
siksed gurv-atma-daivatah
amayyanuvrttya yais
tusyed atmatma-do harih

["Accepting the bona fide spiritual master as one's life and soul and worshipable deity, the disciple should learn from him the process of pure devotional service. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, the soul of all souls, is inclined to give Himself to His pure devotees. Therefore, the disciple should learn from the spiritual master to serve the Lord without duplicity and in such a faithful and favorable way

that the Supreme Lord, being satisfied, will offer Himself to the faithful disciple."
(Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.3.22)]

sarvato manaso 'sangam
adau sangam ca sadhusu
dayam maitrim prasrayam ca
bhutesv addha yathocitam

[" A sincere disciple should learn to dissociate the mind from everything material, and positively cultivate association with his spiritual master and other saintly devotees. He should be merciful to those in an inferior position to him, cultivate friendship with those on an equal level and meekly serve those in a higher spiritual position. Thus he should learn to deal properly with all living beings. (Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.3.23)]

When we meet others we should not speak about our sufferings: "My wife has divorced me. What should I do?" When Srila Rupa and Sanatana Gosvamis used to meet together, they would only speak about Krsna. A disciple should learn this from his Guru. Disciples should remind each other of the sweet pastimes of Krsna, so that maya will not be able to enter their hearts – otherwise maya will come. The disciple should learn from his Gurudeva how Krsna-prema can be achieved.

kvacid rudanty acyuta-cintaya kvacid
dhasanti nandanti vadanty alaukikah
nrtyanti gayanty anusilayanty ajam
bhavanti tusnim param etya nirvrtah

["Having achieved love of Godhead, the devotees sometimes cry out loud, absorbed in thought of the infallible Lord. Sometimes they laugh, feel great pleasure, speak out loud to the Lord, and dance or sing. Such devotees, having transcended material, conditioned life, sometimes imitate the unborn Supreme by acting out His pastimes. And sometimes, achieving His personal audience, they remain peaceful and silent".
(Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.2.33)]

Gurudeva is always sinking in the ocean of Lord Sri Krsna's sweet pastimes. That kind of sadhu or Guru has extraordinary character. Sometimes such sadhus think, "Until now I have not had darsana of Krsna and Radhika. What shall I do? Where should I go?" He cries bitterly, wandering here and there, as exemplified by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Sometimes he begins to search for Them: "Where are You?" And sometimes he becomes silent. The disciple should learn all these moods.

Regarding the above-mentioned verse (Srimad-Bhagavatam 11.2.33), the pure devotee sometimes weeps. Sometimes, he remembers, "Lord Sri Krsna is the Supreme Lord. Still, although He is full with so many opulences, He is hiding Himself in the assembly of the gopis." The pure devotee then becomes happy and begins to laugh loudly. Sometimes he feels, "I have seen Radhika and Krsna." He then becomes extremely happy and begins to sing the glories of Radhika and Krsna. These are the moods a pure disciple should learn from his Gurudeva.

This human form is very mercifully given by Lord Sri Krsna, because He is causelessly merciful. So don't waste your time in household life. Lord Krsna has

personally told us that it is a blind well. You have tasted sense gratification in your past millions of lives. Don't go in that direction again. We should learn all these things from Gurudeva, and follow his instructions.

Gaura Premanande.

[Question:] You said that the Guru is not attached to the disciple; he is only attached to Krsna. Another time you said that the Guru loves the disciple, but is not attached. What is the difference?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] The Guru has so much love and affection for his disciple, but he is not attached. He is totally attached to Sri Krsna; he does not have even a fraction of attachment anywhere else. He will be merciful and teach all these things.

[Question:] What is the difference between love and attachment?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] There is so much difference. It is like the difference between Heaven and Earth or the Sky and Hell (Akash and Patala). Attachment is lust, and love is pure.

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