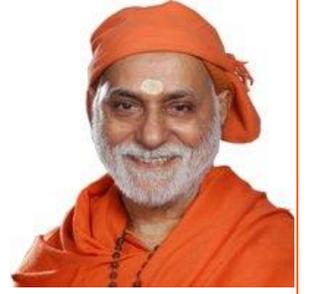


## Devotion – the *poorna* approach

*prabhāta-raśmiḥ*

24 May 2011



Swami Bhoomananda Tirtha

*Harih Om Tat Sat. Jai Guru.*

I think all of you should listen to me with additional care, attention, and fondness.

When Sri Krishna is advising Arjuna and Uddhava - now and then he says, “You are my devotee and you are dear to me, therefore I disclose to you the secret.” This attitude you should understand, otherwise you will miss it.

I have received an email from a disciple, a devotee of mine, in which he has written elaborately about how his mother is suffering from acute pain and distress and she is groaning. When the son tells the mother, “You think of God,” she is unable to think of God. The pain is so acute. The son is not very happy the mother is not able to do so. And he also says that, “I don’t want to be like this; I want to always be living in the thought and memory of God. Now the work has to start very early. I should have started it earnestly ever since you initiated me. But it has not taken place.” etc. etc.

I feel very sorry for what he said. This is a clear misunderstanding. When somebody is suffering from acute pain, what causes the pain? The body. And body produces pain according to the biological and other factors which govern the existence and functions of the body. So pain clearly indicates that there is a disorder and the gravity and intensity of the disorder are directly proportional to the intensity and acuteness of the pain you feel. When there is such a pain, immediately it has to be attended to. There are instances where some disorders will produce pain and the disorder cannot be treated. That is the time the patient is kept under morphia etc. So, when a pain is occurring is it right on the part of anybody to forget it or suspend it and then think of God? Or the pain should be attended to? If the pain cannot be relieved and the doctors say we can do nothing, at that time, of course, in a distress measure, the patient can think of deliberately forgetting or ignoring the pain for which also you require a will and a wish. When such severe pain is there in the body, the mind will not be able to apply its will in a different direction. That may not be possible. I will be able to think and express myself only when I am bodily fit. If I am not fit, I am extremely hungry, I am tired, I am suffering under pain and torture, then can I function well with the mind and intelligence? Certainly not! The connection with the body for the mind is something inseparable. This is something that you should understand.

Number two - whether the approach that "I must be able to think of God and depart from this world and for that I must cultivate the thought of God from right now," is this the proper way of thinking? I would like to say no, not at all!

We were discussing the second chapter and now the 3rd chapter of Bhagavad Geeta. What does Sri Krishna say? He is analyzing life and pointing out that it is an interaction between the senses on our body and the objects scattered around. This interaction inevitably produces sukha & dukha alternates and the right attitude will be one of forbearance towards both and dropping the preference to sukha and prejudice to dukha.

Now, in order to cultivate this evenness towards the only experiences, the only alternates resulting from all your interactions; every time is an opportunity, every day is an opportunity. Because interactions will go on, interactional outcomes also will be there. All that you have to do is - do not prefer sukha and hence, do not have prejudice to dukha. Whether you have to think about God in order to have this evenness, is something that you yourself can find out. What I want to say is in the language of devotion, thinking about God and dropping the body; that comes much later. The purpose of devotion, is it only to think of God and depart from this world? Or have the devotional joy, ecstasy and fulfillment right now, as early as possible in life. Now, if you want to have devotional joy and fulfillment, then you will have to incorporate more and more devotee and devotional characteristics, amongst which this evenness - *samattva*, becomes an important one.

Another is you should be able to perceive everything as God. The entire world is God. You are surrounded by the world. So, you are surrounded by God. Our body is *pāṁcabhautika*. That means that you are not only surrounded by, you contain Godliness in the *pāṁcabhūtas*. Then beyond the *pāṁcabhūtas*, the mind, intelligence and ego are there. They are also nature's constituents. They are a display and a manifestation of God. So, where is non-God? The world is God, the body is God, the mind is God, the intelligence is God, the ego is God! And so far as the Self is concerned, nothing is to occur to it and nothing has occurred to it.

The more and more you perceive, understand, you are governed by this kind of an all fold outlook, all fold vision, that is what is required, my dear Souls, in the language and process of devotion. Don't wait for the end point of your life. How shabby and how wrong it is! Death is sometimes to come, much later, may be decades later. And in the name of death, you are thinking and to focus devotion as the gift of remembering God and dying in this world, I think, this is a disgrace to devotion. You have to live, move, sing and dance with the devotional ecstasy while here. Whenever a plight or a fate occurs - mark my words - whenever a plight or a fate occurs, for that plight or fate to become meaningful you have to undergo it. In undergoing an experience lies enrichment and fulfillment!

So, whatever comes in life, whatever goes in life, simply accept it and then undergo, undergo. If there is a presence, experience that presence by undergoing. If there is an absence, experience that absence and undergo that absence. Every experience is to be undergone and in undergoing the experience lies

enrichment, expansion, fulfillment and enlightenment. A devotee who is carrying this kind of a uniformity in his mind, outlook, understanding etc., he becomes so excellent and so lofty that Krishna says, "I follow him". What for? "So that the dust of his feet will fall on my body and I will be purified."

So, do you like to be a meek and an n<sup>th</sup> rate, n<sup>th</sup> rate means the last number - n<sup>th</sup> rate devotee or do you like to be an excellent devotee? If you are an excellent devotee, handle your devotion in such a manner that instead of your running after God, God will himself be behind you. Put him into your heart and ask him to remain there forever. As long as he is there, he will not cause you undue hurt. So the right attitude towards any plight or fate will be; undergo it, undergo it, undergo it! Find out whether there is any remedy or redress possible and the pain is such a notice-giver that in its absence we cannot survive at all.

So, do not, do not classify devotion as a methodology by which you remember God while dropping the body. That comes much later. You cannot remember anything other than God. All memories are equally godly. Your memory is about the world, and the world is godly. So, accept the godliness of the world, godliness of yourself, the godliness of the mind, intelligence, ego and everything. This kind of an all-fold, *poorna* approach - that is the best and the most easy and fulfilling.

*Harih Om Tat Sat. Jai Guru.*

\* \* \*



## **Narayanashrama Tapovanam**

Venginissery, P.O. Ammadam, Trichur, Kerala - 680563, India

Email: [ashram1@gmail.com](mailto:ashram1@gmail.com); Website: <http://www.swamibhoomanandatirtha.org>