

SB 11.20.27-28

jāta-śraddho mat-kathāsu
nirviṇṇaḥ sarva-karmasu
veda duḥkhātmakān kāmān
parityāge 'py anīśvaraḥ

tato bhajeta mām prītaḥ
śraddhāluḥ dṛḍha-nīśayaḥ
juṣamāṇaś ca tān kāmān
duḥkhodarkāmś ca garhayan

SYNONYMS

jāta—one who has awakened; śraddhaḥ—faith; mat-kathāsu—in the descriptions of My glories; nirviṇṇaḥ—disgusted; sarva—with all; karmasu—activities; veda—he knows; duḥkha—misery; ātmakān—constituted of; kāmān—all types of sense gratification; parityāge—in the process of renouncing; api—although; anīśvaraḥ—unable; tataḥ—due to such faith; bhajeta—he should worship; mām—Me; prītaḥ—remaining happy; śraddhāluḥ—being faithful; dṛḍha—resolute; nīśayaḥ—conviction; juṣamāṇaḥ—engaging in; ca—also; tān—that; kāmān—sense gratification; duḥkha—misery; udarkān—leading to; ca—also; garhayan—repenting of.

TRANSLATION

Having awakened faith in the narrations of My glories, being disgusted with all material activities, knowing that all sense gratification leads to misery, but still being unable to renounce all sense enjoyment, My devotee should remain happy and worship Me with great faith and conviction. Even though he is sometimes engaged in sense enjoyment, My devotee knows that all sense gratification leads to a miserable result, and he sincerely repents such activities.

PURPORT

The beginning stage of pure devotional service is described here by the Lord. A sincere devotee has practically seen that all material activities lead only to sense gratification and all sense gratification leads only to misery. Thus a devotee's sincere desire is to engage twenty-four hours a day in the loving service of Lord Kṛṣṇa without any personal motivation. The devotee sincerely desires to be established in his constitutional position as the Lord's eternal servitor, and he prays to the Lord to elevate him to this exalted position. The word anīśvara

indicates that because of one's past sinful activities and bad habits one may not immediately be able to completely extinguish the enjoying spirit. The Lord here encourages such a devotee not to be overly depressed or morose but to remain enthusiastic and to go on with his loving service. The word *nirviṇṇa* indicates that a sincere devotee, although somewhat entangled in the remnants of sense gratification, is completely disgusted with material life and under no circumstances willingly commits sinful activities. In fact, he avoids every kind of materialistic activity. The word *kāmān* basically refers to sex attraction and its by-products in the form of children, home and so forth. Within the material world, the sex impulse is so strong that even a sincere candidate in the loving service of the Lord may sometimes be disturbed by sex attraction or by lingering sentiments for wife and children. A pure devotee certainly feels spiritual affection for all living entities, including the so-called wife and children, but he knows that material bodily attraction leads to no good, for it simply entangles one and one's so-called relatives in a miserable chain reaction of fruitive activities. The word *ḍḍha-niścaya* ("steadfast conviction") indicates that in any circumstance a devotee is completely determined to go on with his prescribed duties for Kṛṣṇa. Thus he thinks, "By my previous shameful life my heart is polluted with many illusory attachments. Personally I have no power to stop them. Only Lord Kṛṣṇa within my heart can remove such inauspicious contamination. But whether the Lord removes such attachments immediately or lets me go on being afflicted by them, I will never give up my devotional service to Him. Even if the Lord places millions of obstacles in my path, and even if because of my offenses I go to hell, I will never for a moment stop serving Lord Kṛṣṇa. I am not interested in mental speculation and fruitive activities; even if Lord Brahmā personally comes before me offering such engagements, I will not be even slightly interested. Although I am attached to material things I can see very clearly that they lead to no good because they simply give me trouble and disturb my devotional service to the Lord. Therefore, I sincerely repent my foolish attachments to so many material things, and I am patiently awaiting Lord Kṛṣṇa's mercy."

The word *prīta* indicates that a devotee feels exactly like the son or subject of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and is very attached to his relationship with the Lord. Therefore, although sincerely lamenting occasional lapses into sense enjoyment, he never gives up his enthusiasm to serve Lord Kṛṣṇa. If a

devotee becomes too morose or discouraged in devotional service, he may drift into an impersonal consciousness or give up his devotional service to the Lord. Therefore, the Lord here advises that although one should sincerely repent, he should not become chronically depressed. One should understand that because of his past sins he must occasionally suffer disturbances from the material mind and senses, but one should not therefore become a devotee of detachment, as do the speculative philosophers. Although one may desire detachment to purify one's devotional service to the Lord, if one becomes more concerned with renunciation than with acting for the pleasure of Lord Kṛṣṇa, he is misunderstanding the position of loving devotional service. Faith in Lord Kṛṣṇa is so powerful that in due course of time it will automatically award detachment and perfect knowledge. If one gives up Lord Kṛṣṇa as the central object of one's worship and concentrates more on knowledge and detachment, one will become deviated from one's progress in going back home, back to Godhead. A sincere devotee of the Lord must be sincerely convinced that simply by the strength of devotional service and the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa he will achieve everything auspicious in life. One must believe that Lord Kṛṣṇa is all-merciful and that He is the only real goal of one's life. Such determined faith combined with a sincere desire to give up sense enjoyment will carry one past the obstacles of this world.

The words *jāta-śraddhaḥ mat-kathāsu* are most significant here. By faithful hearing of the mercy and glories of the Lord one will gradually be freed from all material desire and clearly see at every moment the utter frustration of sense gratification. Chanting the glories of the Lord with firm faith and conviction is a tremendously powerful spiritual process that enables one to give up all material association.

There is actually nothing inauspicious in the devotional service of the Lord. Occasional difficulties experienced by a devotee are due to his previous material activities. On the other hand, the endeavor for sense gratification is completely inauspicious. Thus sense gratification and devotional service are directly opposed to each other. In all circumstances one should therefore remain the Lord's sincere servant, always believing in His mercy. Then one will certainly go back home, back to Godhead.

~~~

## JG's BS 217

According to one's nature, one can offer ordinary material activities. Gītā says:

yat karoṣi yad aśnāsi yaj juhoṣi dadāsi yat |  
yat tapasyasi kaunteya tat kuruṣva mad-arpaṇam ||

Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you sacrifice, whatever you give, and whatever austerity you perform, offer it to me, O son of Kuntī. BG 9.27

In offering actions according to one's nature ...those desiring *bhakti* offer the unwholesome actions thinking, 'May the Lord who is full of compassion be merciful, by seeing the suffering I undergo due to my wicked desires.'

~~~

VCT's Commentary {SB 11.20.27-30}

Having developed faith in topics about me and being disgusted with all *karmas*, a devotee knows that all enjoyments are filled with misery. But he is unable to give them up. Still, with affection for me, with faith and determination, he will continue worshipping me, while at the same time partaking of those enjoyments which give rise to suffering and yet condemning them.

In two verses Kṛṣṇa speaks of the initial state of a person qualified for *bhakti*. He is disgusted with the results of *karma* ruling Vedic ritual and ordinary life, disturbed by seeing the unhappiness it causes. This repeats what was said earlier: he is not overly attached to *karma* (verse 8). He knows that desires which give rise to attachment to wife and sons are filled with suffering. But he is unable to give them up. Having entered such a condition, he has resolve: "Let my attachment for family be destroyed or increase! Let there be millions of obstacles to my worship, or let the obstacles be destroyed! Let me go to hell if I have committed offenses by keeping those desires. But I will not give up *bhakti*. I will not accept *karma* or *jñāna* even if Brahmā personally comes and orders me." This is his determination. He does not have inclination to unfavorable things to the same extent that he has firm determination for *bhakti* which he has just started. He indulges in those desires which give rise to attachment to wife and children while criticizing them. "Oh! These material enjoyments cause obstacles for me. They are unfavorable for attaining the feet of the Lord.

Though I make an oath to give them up in name only, after a while I enjoy them again. I criticize them and enjoy them.” In this way he enjoys.

|| 11.20.29 ||

proktena bhakti-yogena
bhajato māsakṛṇ muneh
kā mā hṛdayyā naśyanti
sarve mayi hṛdi sthite

When an intelligent person engages constantly in worshipping me through *bhakti*, as previously described by me, all material desires within the heart are destroyed, since I am situated in the heart.

“So does your devotee remain attacked by enjoyment in the material world?”

No. This is explained in two verses. It has already been said *śraddhāmṛta-kathāyām me śaśvan mad-anukīrtanam*: he has firm faith in the blissful narration of my sweetest pastimes and constant chanting of my glories. (SB 11.19.20) Worshipping me by this process of *bhakti* which I have described, my devotee destroys all the desires in his heart, since I am situated there. If I am situated there, the sins cannot remain situated there, just as, if the sun shines, darkness cannot remain.

|| 11.20.30 ||

bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiś
chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ
kṣīyante cāsya karmāṇi
mayi dṛṣṭe ’khilātmani

Ahaṅkāra is cut and all doubts are destroyed. On seeing the Lord in the mind and with the eyes, all *karmas* are destroyed.

After the devotee passes through the stages of *niṣṭhā*, *ruci* and *āsakti*, the *ahaṅkāra* (*hr̥daya-granthiḥ*) is destroyed. This takes place on its own, not with the endeavor or desire of the devotee.

It has been said:

jarayatyaśu yā kośam nigirṇam analo yathā

“*Bhakti* quickly destroys the subtle body, just as the digestive fire consumes food.” SB 3.25.33

Thus there is no possibility of doubts. All the *karmas*, even the *prārabdhakarmas*, are destroyed.