

Communication

Protective Leadership: Bhagavan Krishna & Prahlada

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Bhagavan Krishna & His Incarnations

Krishnastu Bhagavan Svayam (SB.1.3.28) clearly indicates that Sri Krishna Himself is exclusively Bhagavan and Original. He is an all-pervading and Supreme Personality of Godhead. All incarnations of Krishna are either plenary portions or portions of the plenary portions of the Bhagavan.

Bhagavan Krishna manifests millennium after millennium to protect the universe when it is opposed by the enemies of Indra /atheists (SB.1.3.28). Bhagavan Krishna declared that “I appear in every millennium in My original transcendental form” (BG.4.6). Whenever and wherever ethical/ *dharmic* activities are on the decline and unethical/ non-dharmic activities are on ascendant, (BG 4.7) and to protect the pious and to annihilate the miscreants, (BG 4.8) Bhagavan Krishna descends Himself.

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Various incarnations of Bhagavan include but not limited to Purusavataras like Karanodakasai Vishnu/ Maha Vishnu, Garbodakasai Vishnu and Kshirodakasai Vishnu and lilaavataras like Varaha (*boar*), Krishna, Rama, Nrusimha, Vamana, Buddha, Matsya (fish), Parasurama, Kurma (tortoise), Kalki. Bhagavan Krishna is an incarnation (*avatar*).

Hiranyakasipu, brother of Hiranyaksha who was killed by the Lord Varaha-incarnation of Bhagavan Vishnu while lifting the earth. He wanted to be invincible, immortal, and free from old age and death. He wanted to be the monarch of three planets without any rival. Hence, he performed severe austerity in the Valley of *Mandarachala Mountain*.

Devarshi Narada's Intervention

After Hiranyakasipu left for Mandarachala Mountain, demigods headed by Indra declared war against demons. All the demons were scattered leaving their wives, children, and wealth. Demigods looted Hiranyakasipu's resi-

dence and Indra detained the queen-wife of Hiranyakasipu- who was pregnant at that time. Indra was taking her to heaven. Devarshi Narada suddenly appeared there and asked Indra to release the queen as she was sinless and helpless. Then Indra said to Devarshi that she would be released after the delivery as there was seed of Hiranyaksha. Then Devarshi Narada replied to Indra that the child in the queen's womb was a great devotee of the Bhagavan Vishnu and hence a great Bhagavata. After listening to Narada, Indra released the queen. Then Devarshi Narada provided shelter to the queen in his *hermitage/ ashram* until her husband returned to his kingdom. Devarshi Narada delivered instructions on religion and transcendental knowledge to the queen. The child who was in her womb also listened to these teachings. The child was named Prahalada after birth.

Devarshi Narada takes care of devotees by inspiring and guiding them when they are in the initial stage of devotion as well as in a confused state of the direction to proceed to the advanced stage of devotion. He sometimes acts as their spiritual master. In fact, Devarshi Narada voluntarily helped and showed direction to Dhruva when he determined to do austerities by going to the forest.

Devarshi Narada in the case of Prahlada also acted voluntarily, but at an earlier stage i.e., when he was in the womb of his mother. He protected him at that stage by informing Indra who was kidnapping Prahlada's mother. Devarshi by the grace of Bhagavan knew in ad-

vance that a devotee of Bhagavan/ Bhagavata who will be free from material desires is going to take birth/ going to start devotional practice. He provided information about the Bhagavan and of devotion to Prahlada through the latter's mother.

It may be inferred that Devarshi Narada provided information to Prahlada only. This helped Prahlada to become an exalted devotee of Bhagavan and also a preacher with the attitude of a pure Vaishnava who bothers himself for others, since his childhood stage. He exhibited qualities of a pure devotee at the age of five and pleased the Supreme Personality of the Godhead.

Boon to Hiranyakasipu

Hiranyakasipu pleased Lord Brahma through his severe austerity and the latter appeared before the former. He asked Lord Brahma "to grant the boon of no death by humans, animals, gods, demons, and any form of Brahmadev's creation, within indoors or outdoors, during day or night and on the earth or in the air and by any kind of weapon, by any kind of snakes, and no death in the battlefield". Further, he asked for no adversary on battlefield, undisputed lordship over all living beings and presiding deities, unfailing mystic powers and glory like Brahmadev. Lord Brahma granted the boon to Hiranyakasipu, though it was difficult to get those boons for living beings and left for his abode.

Hiranyakasipu performed severe austerities to please Brahmadev, but not

Bhagavan. Bhagavan would have corrected him, had he pleased Bhagavan with such austerities, rather than granting such boons which would bring imbalance in the societies and economies and harassment of people of various planets. In fact, Bhagavan never granted boons that have adverse effects. Lord Brahma and Lord Siva can't grant the highest boon as they have limitations in granting such boons, unlike Bhagavan.

It is inferred that approaching the highest would provide the right direction; if our direction was inappropriate.

Had Hirnyakasipu's goal been the highest i.e., going back to godhead, he would have approached Bhagavan. Nothing is impossible for Bhagavan. When Dhruva satisfied Bhagavan through his severe austerity, Bhagavan created a planet for Dhruva. Therefore managers/employees should have either an appropriate goal or approach the highest authority who would set an appropriate goal and/or modify the goal if it is inappropriate.

Excessive Power

Bhagavan Vishnu delegated authority to create to Lord Brahmadev and in turn empowered Him appropriately. In fact, the power of Bhagavan Vishnu is infinite. People with material desires are normally prone to satisfy demigods, not the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for getting material boons. Lord Brahmadev in turn empowered Hiranyakasipu with most of the power he received from the Bhagavan in return to his satisfaction

derived from Hiranyakasipu's severe austerity. So Hiranyakasipu became powerful beyond that of almost all of the demigods.

Thereafter, Hiranyakasipu brought all living entities of three planets under his control, made them to serve him and started harassing and terrorizing even demigods including Indra. He did not touch Lord Brahma; and Lord Siva. Anyhow, he cannot influence Bhagavan Vishnu. Hiranyakasipu became arrogant and harassed all living beings in three worlds including even Devarshi Narada due to the excessive power provided to him by Lord Brahmadev. Excess power made Hirnakasipu to develop hatred towards almost all living beings including the Brahmanas, demigods and even sages.

It is inferred that had employees and managers been empowered more than job requirements, then there would be the chances for them to be arrogant, misuse power and even harass others.

Request for Relief

Dissatisfied demigods, sages and *Brahmans* approached the Supreme Personality of Godhead and prayed for relief from Hirnyakasipu's rule. The Supreme Personality of Godhead told them that the one who develops hatred towards the demigods who are His representatives, cows and Brahmanas, Vaishnavas, pious souls, and Vedas will perish soon. Bhagavan further assured them that Hiranyakasipu's rule would come to an end when he exploits his own son who

would be Mahabhagavata/ person with exalted qualities and devotion towards Him. Then demigods, sages and Brahmanas were satisfied with the assurance that their problems would come to an end soon.

Prahlada's Qualities

Hiranyakasipu had four fabulous sons and the best among them was Prahlada owing to his virtues. Prahlada, though was born into a demon family, was a great devotee of Bhagavan Vishnu and used to respect the Vaisnavas. He controlled his senses and mind. Even demigods and sages used to praise Prahlada for his qualities and discuss them in discourses and assemblies. Prahlada had all Vaisnava qualities and used to concentrate his mind on and attached to Bhagavan Sri Vishnu due to his devotion in his previous birth. Prahlada had been completely in Krishna consciousness ever since his childhood. In fact, he was disinterested in playing like other children. He was thinking of the Bhagavan while he was performing all kinds of activities like eating and drinking even without his knowledge. He used to experience and enjoy Sri Krishna's association with him and was in ecstasy many times after experiencing the presence of Bhagavan.

It is surprising to note that Prahlada started to completely concentrate his mind on Bhagavan from his childhood. His mind had been at the Lotus feet of Bhagavan even his action senses were performing the tasks of walking, eating etc. Devarshi Narada foresaw, acted as

an intervention and helped Prahlada accordingly.

It is inferred that employees should set the highest goal for overall perfect life.

Prahlada's Schooling

Sukracharya was the spiritual master of Demons. Prahlada was admitted to the school of Sukracharya's sons viz., Sanda and Amrka. These two teachers taught Economics, Political Science and other knowledge dealing with material world to the students including Prahlada. They used to divide the people into two classes viz., friends and enemies, discriminating them that Prahlada did not like and digest. In addition, Prahlada's interest was in devotion towards Bhagavan Vishnu.

Hiranyakasipu wanted to know the progress of Prahlada during the period of schooling and asked him what he learned. Hiranyakasipu got angry with his son, when the latter told the father that his mind was disturbed by the concept of 'I and Mine', should go to the forest and perform austerities to please the Supreme Godhead Vishnu. Then the King instructed the teachers to correct Prahlada. The teachers took Prahlada back to the school. They enquired from him the source of his knowledge of devotion towards Bhagavan Vishnu. Prahlada replied that he heard from authorities about supreme knowledge and he was experiencing it. Then the aggrieved teachers wanted to punish Prahlada. Teachers threatened Prahlada

and taught him the material knowledge. Prahlada taught philosophy and spiritual knowledge to his schoolmates at the latter's initiation and told them that Bhagavan Narayana is a friend of all living beings including demons. (SB.7.6.2).

Harassment of Prahlada

After some time Hirnyakasipu asked Prahlada about the feedback of the knowledge he acquired from the teachers. Prahlada in his reply told about nine methods of devotion towards Bhagavan Vishnu. Then Hirnyakasipu aggrieved severely at the teachers also. Teachers told the King that they did not teach about devotion towards Bhagavan Vishnu. Then Hirnyakasipu asked his servants to kill Prahlada. Demons, based on the orders of their master, tried to kill Prahlada with spears, but Prahlada was just concentrating his mind upon the Supreme Lord. Hence, demons could not kill him as their weapon did not affect Prahlada at all. Then Hirnyksipu used other methods like throwing Prahlada under the feet of elephants, among huge serpents, hurling him from the top of high mountains, using conjuring / illusory tricks, poisoning, starving, exposing him to cold waves, throwing him into deep waters, fire, heavy stones etc. But nothing happened to Prahlada.

Hirnyakasipu learnt that Prahlada was unhurt by various means applied to kill him and he thought that this boy might be immortal. Hirnyakasipu was frustrated and was thinking that 'I may be killed or may not be killed due to enmity with this boy'. Then Prahlad's teachers

suggested to Hirnyakasipu to arrest Prahlada until their father Sukracharya came back. Then Hirnyakasipu asked the teachers to teach him the duties of royal householder and occupational duties. The teachers followed the king's instructions, but Prahlada did not follow the teachers' lessons.

Prahlada's Teachings

Prahlada used to teach his schoolmates, in the absence of their teachers, about devotion towards Bhagavan Vishnu for their long-run benefits and also the disadvantages of material life. Prahlada also taught his schoolmates to abandon qualities of passion and ignorance and concentrate on their life goal and detachment from the material life. Then his schoolmates asked him from where he learned the spiritual knowledge that was a rare phenomenon among the demons. Prahlad revealed that he learned from Devarshi Narada when he was in his mother's womb. Prahlad's schoolmates were attracted by his preaching and started devotional service to Bhagavan Vishnu and slowly magnified their devotion. Teachers observed these new developments and lodged a complaint with the King. The King was angry and also terrified of the situation. He decided to get rid of his son at any cost.

Attempt to Kill Prahlada

Hirnyakasipu called Prahlada and the latter paid his obeisance to the former and stood before him. Hirnyakasipu chastised Prahlada with harsh words and asked him: 'With whose support you are

disobeying my authority'. He further said 'none is more powerful than me.' Then Prahlada replied that 'Bhagavan Vishnu is the most powerful in comparison to anyone including yourself. He is the creator, maintainer, destroyer and supreme controller. Hiranyakasipu's anger reached the pinnacle, and said 'If your protector is everywhere as you mentioned that the supreme being is all-pervading, why he is not seen in this pillar', pointing towards a pillar?' (SB. 7.8.12). He took his sword and told Prahlad, 'I will kill you, let Bhagavan Vishnu protect you'. Then the King whacked the pillar with his fist.

Appearance of Bhagavan Nrusimhadev

Then, suddenly, Bhagavan Vishnu (*who is the original creator, cause of all causes including the cause of and beyond Brahmadev's creation*) incarnated as Nrusimhadev (half man and half lion form) and with a terrific roar appeared from the pillar to prove that the words of His devotee were true. Hiranyakasipu was bewildered for a moment and gauged that he was none other than Bhagavan Vishnu who killed his brother. He attacked Bhagavan with his mace perceiving that no one could fight him, and then Bhagavan Vishnu caught hold of Hiranyakasipu along with his mace. But, Hiranyakasipu escaped from Nrusimha's clutches as Bhagavan provided a chance for escape/ repent/ realize. After a while ignorant Hiranyakasipu thought that Bhagavan was afraid of his prowess, again again attacked the Bhagavan Nrusimha with his

sword. Then the Bhagavan Nrusimha caught hold of the King tightly, fixed him in his clutches, took him to the entrance of the hall, placed him on His lap at the time of dusk and killed Hiranyaksha by tearing his body with His nails thus fulfilling all the conditions of the boon Brahmadev conferred on him. Then Bhagavan also killed the king's followers who tried to attack Him with His nails and yet was roaring terrific. Then Bhagavan Nrusimhadev sat on the royal crown.

Upheld Brahmadev's Words

Bhagavan Vishnu incarnated as Nrusimha in the form of half man and half animal and killed Hirnyakasipu by following all the conditions that Brahmadev accepted while granting the boon to Hirnyakasipu. Thus, Bhagavan honored a significant subordinate's words.

Bhagavan Vishnu incarnated as Nrusimha and appeared from the pillar in order to uphold His devotee's (Prahlada) words and also to protect him.

Two-in-One: *The appearance of Nrusimhadev served two purposes viz., to annihilate the miscreants and protect the pious/ Prahlada/devotee (BG 4.8.).*

Perceptual Variance: When Hirnyakasipu attacked Nrusimha Bhagavan the first time, the latter escaped from the clutches of the former as Bhagavan allowed him to escape. But Hirnyakasipu perceived it as his strength.

Hirnyakasipu could not perceive close to reality due to his mode of ignorance and arrogance as he got various boons from Brahmadev.

It is inferred that employees and managers should be free from arrogance due to power and remain close to reality in order to perceive appropriately. This helps them to make appropriate decisions.

Excessive power leads to decay: People normally relish power beyond the job requirements. But excessive power made Hirnyakasipu arrogant and idiot and he could not assess properly when Bhagavan Sri Hari appeared in the form of Nrusimha Bhagavan fulfilling the three conditions of the boon. He was neither a man nor an animal and without any weapon and it was dusk, which was against to the boon granted by Lord Brahmadev. Had Hirnyakasipu, been in his intelligence, not in idiotism, he would have realized (when Nrusimhadev appeared) that he would be killed soon as Nrusimhadev already satisfied three of the four conditions of the boon he got from Lord Brahmadev. Had he surrendered to the Bhagavan, he could have averted his decay. His arrogance due to excessive power developed idiotism in him that led to his immediate downfall.

It is inferred that management should not empower employees more than job requirements as well as should not delegate authority more than job requirements in order make them free from arrogance, developing idiotism and preventing their decay as well as organisational decay.

Glorification to Bhagavan: All the living beings of three planets were relieved off from Hirnyakasipu's rule. Lord Brahma, Lord Siva, Indra, other demigods, servants of Bhagavan Vishnu, rishis and inmates of all other planets glorified Bhagavan Nrusimha. However, all of them including Lord Brhama and Lord Siva couldn't come closer to Bhagavan Nrusimhadev due to his anger which was at the peak. Then at the initiation of Lord Brahma, Prahlada approached the Bhagavan Nrusimha and glorified Him including, but not limited to the following: 'O'Lord, (i) You saved me by killing my father. He wanted to cut off my head with his sword, (ii) please deliver, not only me, but all suffering souls, (iii) You have directed me to exhibit the qualities of a pure devotee as most of the people in material world are with lusty qualities'.

Prahlada's Concern for Others: Prahlada was not just for his exclusive advancement in devotion. He taught classmates about devotion and inspired them as 'we are underprivileged as we are born with demonic qualities like ignorance under three modes of nature'. In addition, he asked Bhagawan to uplift all living beings, not just himself.

It is inferred that managers and employees should also think of their respective departmental colleagues/ team members and colleagues from other departments of the organisation. Similarly, organisations should also think of other organisations.

Then the Lord Nrusimhadev was pleased with the glorifications of

Prahlada and appeased. He then wanted to accord various material benedictions to Prahlada, but Prahlada said those will hamper his devotional service towards the Bhagavan indicating that expecting some return to devotion is a character of a businessman. He prayed the Bhagavan, 'grant me a benediction that there won't be any material desires within me'.

Role Model of a Pure Devotee: Prahlada exhibited qualities of a pure devotee. He rejected the offer of the Bhagavan about grant of material opulence in the pretext that they are hindrances for devotional growth. Thus Prahlada has assumed the 'role model of a pure and great devotee'. So Bhagavan took a special incarnation as Nrushimha to protect Prahlada.

It is inferred that employees and managers should not expect more powers and authority than required to perform job.

Because Bhagavan was repeatedly asking for a benediction, Prahlada asked Bhagavan to excuse his father for his sinful attitude and actions towards Him. Bhagavan said that 'he was already purified along with 21 forefathers due to your birth in this family'. Bhagavan further said Prahlada to perform rituals to your father's body and rule the kingdom and attach towards my devotional service. Then the Bhagavan told to Brahmadev not to grant such benedictions to demons. Afterwards, Bhagavan disappeared.

Lord Brahmadev Excessively Empowered Hiranyakasipu: Bhagavan Vishnu delegated authority to create to Lord Brahmadev and in turn empowered Him appropriately. Lord Brahmadev in turn empowered Hiranyakasipu with the power he received from the Bhagavan in return to his satisfaction derived from Hiranyakasipu's severe austerity. So Hiranyakasipu became powerful beyond control of almost all of demigods. In fact, Bhagavan Nrusimhadev asked Lord Brahmadev not to grant boons to demons who don't deserve like the latter granted to Hiranyakasipu.

Centred Around Devotee: Bhagavan always centred on his devotees. Hence, he is called 'parenthood towards devotees / bhaktavatsala and dependant on devotees/ bhakta paraadeena. Hence, He awaited until His great and pure devotee Prahlada was about to be killed by the King to end the rule of Hiranyaksha by killing him rather than when demigods and sages approached Him. In addition, Bhagavan saved Prahlada from all mistreatments or harassments from Hiranyakasipu.

It is inferred that managements should protect its committed subordinates and customers from all hindrances during the process.

Best Devotee: Prahlada was the best devotee and exhibited qualities concerned. People could practice the qualities of Prahlada.

Bhagavan: Does't Draw Lines: Bhagavan favoured Prahlada though he

was born in demon's family as the latter's approach was through devotion and surrender to the former. Thus Bhagavan responds in the way people approach Him, irrespective of their race. Thus Bhagavan doesn't draw lines.

It is inferred that managements should not draw lines between employees in providing facilities, benefits or work allotment etc.

Lord Brahma along with Sukracharya and rishis installed Pahlada as the King of all demons and giants and left for their abodes.

Transformation by Devarshi Narada: Devarshi Narada provided spiritual knowledge to Pahlada when he was in his mother's womb and empowered him. In fact, son of demon was transformed into the best devotee of Bhagavan. Thus Devarshi Narada transformed the possible demon into the best devotee with full of divine qualities. In fact, Devarshi Narada transformed King Dhruva at the latter's request, whereas he transformed Pahlada at his own initiative, perhaps at the direction from Bhagavan.

Summary of Inferences to Managers

Appropriate Goal: Managers/ employees should have either an appropriate goal or approach the highest authority who would set appropriate goal and/ or modify the goal if it is inappropriate. It is inferred that employees should set highest goal for over perfect life.

Empowerment and Delegation: Power and authority in excess of job and organisational requirements of performing job, develops qualities of ignorance, arrogance and passion among followers. Followers with excessive authority and power resort to unnecessary control and harassment of others by resorting to organisational politics.

Managers should empower subordinates up to a point based on job and organisational requirements as well as capacity and character of subordinates. They should not delegate all the authority they possess. If they delegate all authority they possess and empower the subordinates beyond the point/ character/capacity, even though subordinates satisfy them through either impression or performance or otherwise, they will be out of control and evolve as a threat to them as well as to the organisation. Hence, assess the degree of authority and power required for job performance to the subordinates and delegate accordingly.

Perceptual Variance: Managers have to perceive the one that is close to the reality by analysing total situational factors, so that they can save the possible cost of selecting perception that are not based on situational analysis. Managers need to be in the appropriate mode while analysing the situation rather than in the mode of ignorance.

Excessive Power, Arrogance, and Egoism: Excessive power sometimes develops arrogance and idiotism and then leads to downfall of employees. Power

in excess of performing job develops qualities of three modes of nature like ignorance and passion. People with excessive power resort to unnecessarily controlling and harassing others by resorting to organisational politics. Hence, rejection of excessive empowerment by employees would be better from their own view point. In addition, managers should assess the degree of authority and power required to the subordinates and do accordingly.

Excessive Power and Downfall:

People normally relish power beyond the job requirements. But excessive power led to the decay of Hiranyaksha. Excessive power sometimes develops arrogance and idiotism and then leads to downfall of employees as well as organisation.

It is inferred that employees and managers should be free from arrogance due to excessive power and remain close to reality in order to perceive appropriately as well as scan the environment close to reality. This helps them to make appropriate decisions.

Management should not excessively empower or delegate employees compared to job and organisational requirements. Even, if management fails to do so, rejection of excessive power/ authority by employees would be better from their own view point.

Policies centred Around Customer: Management's policies always should be formulated and executed centred on customers and employees in addition to protecting customers and

employees by not involving in unethical business practices.

Potential Employees and their Career:

Managements should identify potential employees whose mind is always concentrated on the job and organisation and plan their career, nurture and train them accordingly. In addition, management take care of such employees with regard to even their personal issues.

Uphold Your Subordinate's

Words: Subordinates may commit something within organisation's policy either to an external customer or to an internal customer on behalf of their boss or organisation. The boss has to uphold his/her subordinates rather than protecting himself/ herself.

Respect the Ultimate and Get the Protection from All:

Prahlada respected and worshipped the ultimate i.e., Bhagavan and he was unhurt by fire, snakes, poison etc.. Thus employees when they respect the ultimate, all the lower ranks would unhurt him/ her irrespective of open or perceived communication by the ultimate to lower ranks.

Honour the Words of Subordinates:

As Bhagavan honoured the conditions of boon given by Brahmadev to Hiranyakasipu, managers should honour the words given by subordinates to their employees to the extent possible.

Two-in-One: Managers should plan the actions that will serve two or more purposes.

See Out of the Box for 'Role-Model' Employee/ Customer: Managers should go out of the box and take special actions for the well-being and development of special employee or a special customer who acts as a role-model to other employees/ customers.

Plans and Reality: We always believe in our plans including back-up plans and fail to realise the external environment including the forces beyond our imagination and conception. Hence we should believe in external locus of control and respect the forces beyond our control i.e., Bhagavan.

Managers: Don't Draw Lines: Managers should not draw lines between competitors and collaborators as today's competitor may be tomorrow's collaborator and vice-versa. Similarly today's under-performing employee/ unreliable employee/ less significant customer may

be tomorrow's excellent employee/ trustworthy employee/ best customer. So managers should not draw lines and should treat employees/ customers equitably.

Grant from the Top: Managers shouldn't sanction significant favours to employees as such favours may create problems to the top management. Instead they should forward such requests to the top who would take comprehensive situation into consideration, before granting significant and critical favours which would have bearing on the total/ most part of the organisation.

References

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