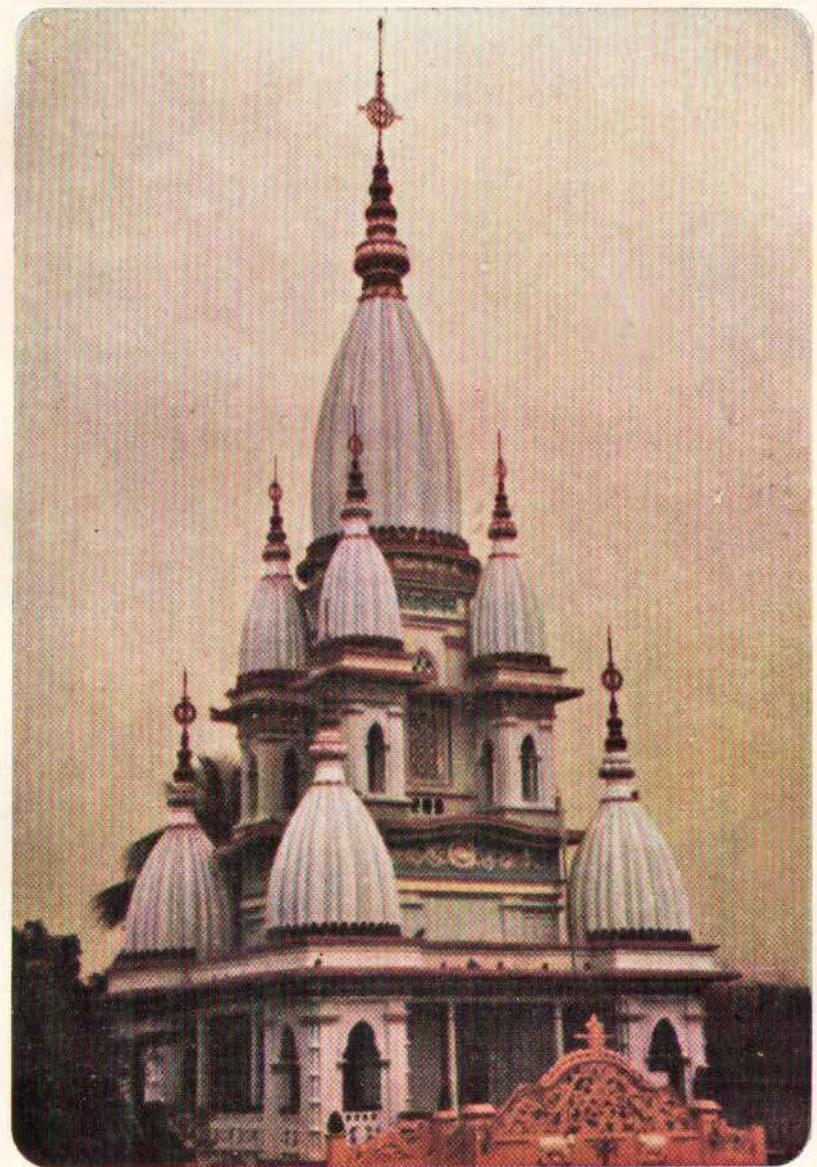


Guardian of Devotion

The innermost hankering of every living soul is for beauty, love, affection, and harmony; not for power, knowledge, or anything else. This is the diagnosis of the whole creation in time and space: Their common cause is one. But it is rare for a soul to reach such a clear stage of hankering for reality as to understand this point. Few souls are to be found in this world who are really conscious of their innermost necessity, who realize, "We want Krishna! We want Vrindavana!"

—Srila B. R. Sridhar Dev Goswami



Sree Chaitanya Saraswata
KRISHNANUSHILANA SANGHA
487, Dum Dum Park, Calcutta-700055

Guardian of Devotion

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Sree Chaitanya Saraswatā
KRISHNANUSHILANA SANGHA
487, Dum Dum Park, Calcutta-700055

All Glories to Śri Guru and Gaurāṅga

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Śrīla Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Deva-
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Present President and Successor Ācārya

His Divine Grace

Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Maharaja

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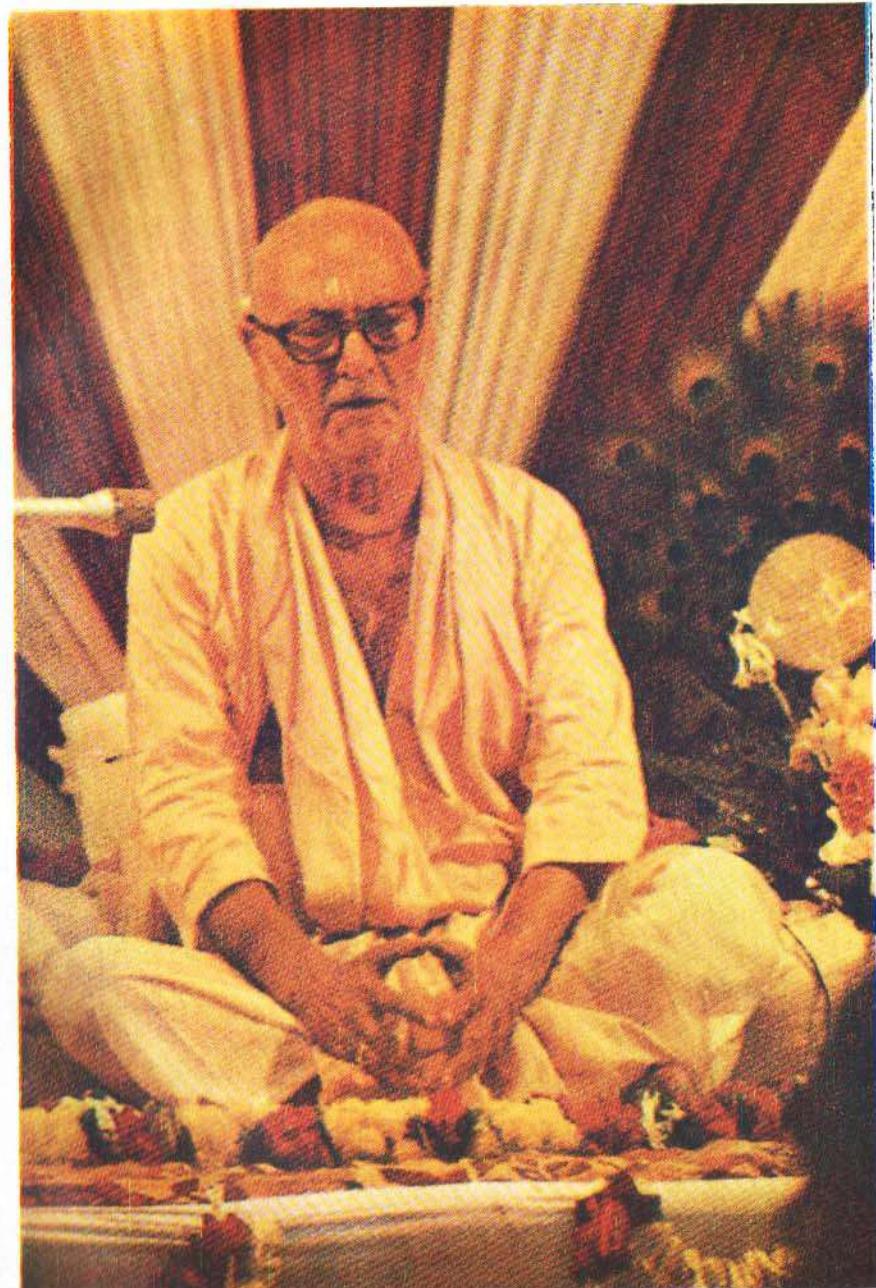
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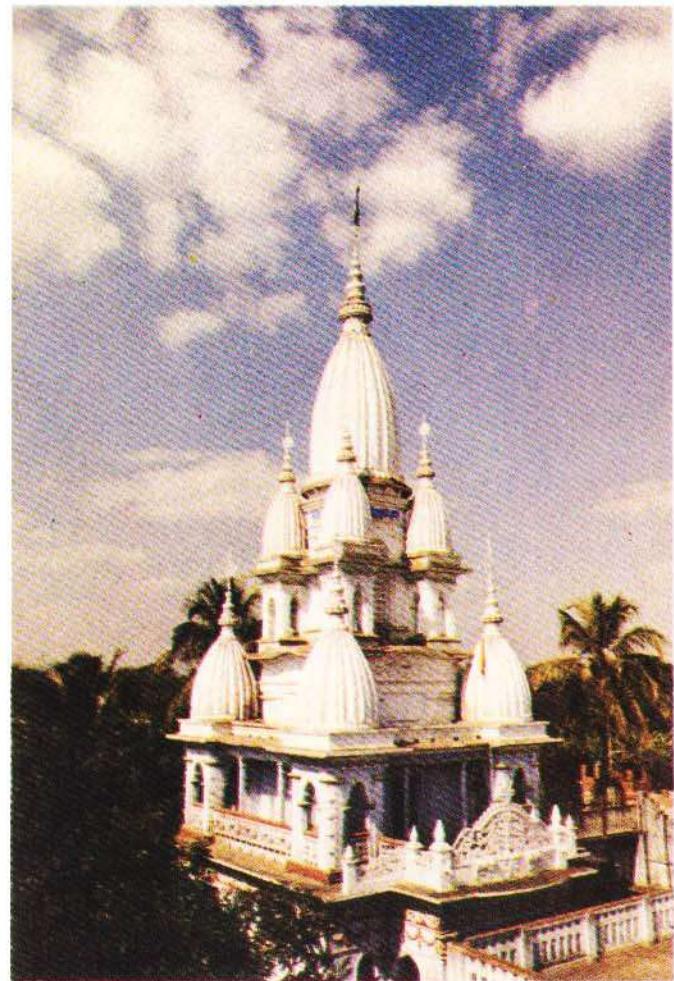
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His Divine Grace
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Paribrajakacharya
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Śrī Chaitanya Saraswat Math,
Kolerganj, Nabadwīp Dhām

All glory to the Divine Master
and the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya

Editorial

In His sublime teachings to Śrila Rūpa Goswāmīpāda, Śrīman Mahāprabhu compared the growth of pure devotion to a creeper. The sincere soul aspiring to achieve the ultimate purpose of life, love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, must first by the mercy of Guru and Kṛṣṇa receive the seed of that creeper. Śraddhā, or the noble faith that Kṛṣṇa's service summarily fulfills all needs, is the embodiment of that seed. As a gardener, the devotee must sow that seed in the land of his own heart and daily nourish it with the pure waters of faithfully hearing from the pure devotees the glories of the Supreme Lord and accordingly chanting those glories. Cautiously he is to nurture the tender creeper, pruning the unwanted sub-branches of all antidevotional evils that stunt the natural and healthy growth of the creeper which is later to pierce the universal shell and even the 'lofty' plane of non-differentiated Brahman aspired for by the liberationists. At the same time, he must protect it from outside aggressors, pests, and parasites that may uproot the creeper, the worst form being disrespect to the pure Vaiṣṇava, since even the Supreme Lord considers the worship of His pure devotee as superior to His worship (mad-bhakta-pūjābhyaḍhikāḥ).

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has referred in his writings to the pure sādhu devotees who guide and protect us on the difficult path of unalloyed dedication, as 'rakṣakas' or 'guardians.' Due to human fallibility (evaṁ prakṛti-vaicitryāt...), in the course of time the divine teachings of devotion are often adulterated by vested interest, misinterpretation, or adulteration. When conferring the sannyāsa title upon our most worshipful Divine Master in 1930, our Grand-guru Śrila Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswati Ṭhākura selected the title 'Śridhara' from the 108 scriptural titles. He recalled the line of Sri Jivapada, 'bhakti-eka-rakṣaka-śridhara (Chief Guardian of Devotion)' who once thus

Editorial

referred in his writings to the famous Bhāgavata commentator Śrī Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda. Śrīla Prabhupāda, in recognition of the stalwart quality of his beloved disciple, then conferred the title 'Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara' upon him. When hearing Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja's Sanskrit composition in separation of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, he commented on the most happy style of the composition and expressed his confidence that at least one man would successfully follow him and continue to uphold the standard of the Sampradāya (Divine Succession)

Thus, on this most holy day, the Blessed Appearance Day of the Most Merciful Descent of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahā-prabhu, by the grace of our most venerable Guardian of Devotion, Śrī Gurupādapadma Om Viṣṇupāda Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī Mahārāja, and also by the grace of his most beloved intimate disciple who he has personally appointed as the President-Ācāryya of Śrī Chaitanya Saraswat Math and Śrī Chaitanya Saraswata Krishnanu-shilana Sangha, the illustrious Parivrājakācāryya Śrimad Bhakti Sundara Govinda Mahārāja—it is our good fortune to present to the pious reader this humble publication of lectures and articles by Śrī Gurudeva and his disciples. Rakṣisyatīti-viśvāso—we are confident that this Guardian of Devotion will provide sweet water for the devotees the world over to nourish, sustain, fortify, and protect their creepers of devotion and graciously guide them ever upward to the holy lotus abode of Goloka Vṛndāvana.

All Glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga

Declaration of the Spiritual Succession of Śrī Chaitanya Saraswat Math & S. S. K. Sangha

by His Divine Grace Śrī Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka
Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī Mahārāja
the Founder Ācārya of the Math

"According to the desire of my Divine Master, I have been maintaining this disciplic succession but it is no longer possible for me, as I am now too old and invalid. You all know that from long ago I have chosen Śriman Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāja and I have given him sannyāsa. All my Vaiṣṇava Godbrothers are very affectionate towards him and it is also their desire to give him this position. I have previously given to him the charge of the Math and now I am giving him the full responsibility of giving Hari-nāma, dīkṣā, sannyāsa etc. as an ācārya of this Math on behalf of myself.

Those who have any regard for me should give this respect and position to Govinda Mahārāja as my successor. As much as you have faith in my sincerity, then with all sincerity I believe that he has got the capacity of rendering service in this way. With this I transfer these beads and from now he will do so on my behalf as ḥtvik. The ḥtvik system is already involved both here and also in the foreign land. The ḥtvik is the representative. So if you want to take from me, and you take by his hand, then it will be as well and as good as taking from me.

Spiritual Succession

In the Mahāmandal Sagar Mahārāja and many others, they are also ṛtvik of Swāmi Mahārāja and also myself. They may do so, but in this Math, he will be the representative. If anyone cannot accept this, he may leave the Math rather than stay here and disturb the peace of the Math. With all my sincerity and good feelings to Guru Gaurāṅga, to the Vaiṣnavas and ācāryas, Mahāprabhu, Panca Tattva, Rādhā Govinda and their pārṣadas, with all my sincere prayers to Them, henceforth he will represent me in this affair, beginning from today's function.

Now I shall go from here and he will do the necessary. On my behalf he will give Hari-nāma, dīkṣā, sannyāsa and everything.



Present Successor Ācārya Tridaṇḍi Swāmi Śrīla
Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāja

Complete Dedication

His Divine Grace Sri Bhakti Raksaka
Sridhar Dev Goswami Maharaj

Quality is necessary, indispensable in Krishna consciousness. Not partial dedication, but in connection with Krishna, the dedication must be of the whole-self, nothing less. The demand from an autocrat is categorically different. Krishna is not satisfied with any partial service. He wants to swallow the whole thing, not less than that. His is the demand of an autocrat. But He is the Absolute Good, and He is Beauty. He is Harmony. He is the Law. He is everything. But His demand is such. Self-giving, that is the symptom of Sraddha. Otherwise, intellectualism, just reading scriptures has no value. And also the physical association of the Sadhu, that also has no value, if there is no Sraddha. Insects, germs, and many other things are in physical association with a Sadhu. The association through dedication, Sraddha, is all important. And Sraddha means that if we dedicate ourselves to Krishna, we get everything. We receive whatever is necessary to result in fulfillment of our whole self.

Our guru-maharaja laid much stress in the service. We were not allowed to read so much even Srimad-Bhagavatam and the books of the Goswamis. Go and do service. The serving nature will attract your connection with the real thing. And no scripture, or knowledge, or even close connection with a saint can help, if there is no dedication, self-surrender, self-giving. If I am asked by a Sadhu, or by the Guru, to read a particular book, that is service. And if I read a book to enhance, or increase, my knowledge, that may be Jnana. If I, myself, take the initiative to read Shastra, that may contribute to some knowledge, but there is no service, as such. As Rupa Goswami states, Sevonmukhe

hi Jihvadau (to understand Him is possible only through surrender). Otherwise, if we do not approach with a spirit of service, then everything may be imitation. But we don't come in contact with reality. This is the speciality of the Gaudiya Math, ordered by our gurudeva, and also by Mahaprabhu and Rupa Goswami. That is the key to Vaikuntha, to deal with the infinite: surrender, service, dedication. Without knowledge and without much energy, one can attain fulfillment. Energy to move the hill, or the mountain, is not necessary. And to read all the religious literatures of the world, just to store them within the belly, that also won't come to any good.

THE BELL WILL RING AUTOMATICALLY

A typical external was shown in the Mahabharata. Krishna foretold that when the Rajasuya Yajna, the great sacrifice of Maharaj Yudhistira will be finished; then the bell will ring automatically. There was some bell, and when that bell would ring automatically, then everyone would know that the Yajna had been completed, so everything was finished, but the bell did not ring.

Then Bhima spoke to Krishna, "The bell is not ringing, although the whole Yajna has ended."

"No, one thing is still remaining," Krishna replied.

"What is that? What kind of thing?"

"The Vaisnava seva, the service of the Vaisnava."

"What do you say? So many munis, big rishis, Narada, Vyasa-deva, and Yourself, have eaten and are satisfied. And You say that Vaisnava seva has not been done?"

"Yes."

"Where is that Vaisnava?"

Then Krishna indicated, "Go to the outskirts of the town. There you will find one man of the lowest caste. And he does not go anywhere. He is satisfied with taking the name of the Lord. Going on in

his own way, he does not care for the passing of the world. His eyes are always full with devotion."

They went with their chariots to bring that man, and they found an ordinary poor man of the lower class. They wanted to take him to the Rajasuya, so they approached him with folded palms. The man was perplexed: "Oh, so many big men have come to my cottage. What is the matter?"

He was informed, "We have come for you. You must go and take some food there." What could he do? He could not avoid the situation; he had to go. Draupadi cooked many palatable dishes. She was thinking that so many rishis, munis, even Lord Krishna have been fed, but Vaisnava seva has not been done. With all her heart's might she prepared various kinds of cooked food. And the man was given, and he took. But the bell wasn't ringing.

"What is the matter?" Bhima asked. "It is finished, but the bell did not ring."

Krishna explained, "There must be some kind of offense committed against the Vaisnava seva. So the bell did not ring."

"What are you saying? You have some doubts about something, some conception against him?"

Then they asked one another if anyone had thought any evil about the man. And at last, Draupadi admitted, "I had something in my mind: that the man is low-born. I prepared so many curries with utmost skill, but the man mixed all the curries together and then eat them. He does not know how to eat because he comes from a very low caste. I had that in my mind."

Krishna said, "Because there is some contempt for the Vaisnava, the bell is not ringing."

So they had to go to the man once again, and again he was brought,

And this time, all were waiting with great respect when he was taking Prasadam. And the bell was ringing with each and every morsel.

Niskincana: he does not want anything, no name, no fame, nothing of the kind. Such a person does not aspire for anything, but is wholesale dedicated to the Lord. And he may be found anywhere, without any show of external grandeur. The richness is of the heart. No knowledge, education, elevated birth, power, or opulence is necessary. Krishna consciousness is so full, so self-sufficient and absolute, that even a particle of Krishna consciousness contains all opulence, all education everything. Service, self-dedication, Saranagati (surrender)—that's what is necessary,

*apicet suduracaro, bhajate mam ananya-bhak
sadhur eva sa mantavyah, samyag vyvasito hi sah*
(Bhagavad-gita: 9-30)

You fail to understand, but he is all right. He must be considered a Sadhu, the real honest man and nothing else. He has no obligation to name, fame, or the things which attract us. He has self-contentment. Contentment does not require anything; it can stand alone, that is contentment, fulfillment. Krishna consciousness is so self-sufficient that it does not depend on anything to establish itself, being self-established.

NATURAL HUMILITY—THAT IS WEALTH

There was one Vaisnava, Vasudeva by name, in Kurmaksetra, just beyond Puri on the southern side. He was a leper—but what sort of leper? Many worms would fall from his wounds to the ground. So that they would not die, he gathered those worms and again put them in the wounds. He was a Brahmana. Anyhow, he understood in his internal mind “the Lord is coming and I shall have a chance to have His Darshan.” Mahaprabhu went there, and after seeing, went away.

When Vasudeva heard that the Lord, one “Sadhu” of extraordinary capacity, had come and gone only a short time ago, he was disappointed and fell to the ground. “What is that? I could not have a glimpse of That Lord. He came and went away, and I did not have the capacity to have His connection, His Darshan.” Mahaprabhu went almost a mile. Suddenly, He felt some attraction pulling Him backwards, and He had to run, run back, and found Vasudeva and embraced him. Vasudeva's whole body was transformed. The leprous body vanished, and a beautiful one emerged in its place.

Vaisnavas rather feel they are the poorest of the poor. Amongst the humble, they are the most humble. They will feel they are lower than a blade of grass. That is Doinya. Bhaktivinode Thukura has written in one place how we are able to measure a Vaisnava. How can we understand? What is the key to diagnosis? Doinya: humility—natural, real humility. A show of humility has no value; imitation has no value anywhere. Proper humility can only occur when one feels his connection with the autocratic Lord, his master. Then only can he feel humble. The servant of an autocrat has no position, no ego, what so ever. So natural humility is a wealth. What sort of Wealth that can capture the Autocrat? The real servant has that position with the master. He is also attracted to that sincere servant. He is not heartless. He may be an autocrat, but He is not heartless. So service is necessary, nothing else. How can we attain that position, continue, and develop? How is it possible? The Sraddha will make us understand. Only one thing is required and nothing else: *Laulyam api mulyam ekalam*. We are thinking that we are such sound devotees, but we are devotees in dress. But the real inner hankering you feel there, it should be wholesale. Otherwise, only want, and you will have but there must not be any adulteration in that wanting; it must be sincere, *Laulyam*. No complaint can come against you, from

any quarter. If you do not want, you don't have. The only price is to really want it. Don't refuse it. Understand the value of it, want it, and you will have it. Sraddha is a real regard to have: this is The thing, the highest thing, and only that can satisfy, my quench, my inner thirst. By giving your small self, you can get the whole infinite, How can we develop that sincere hankering? With the contact of the Sadhu and with the help of the Scripture, we can try to satisfy that inner demand. The inner demand can only be satisfied by Krishna consciousness.

THE GREATEST TREASURE

This is the justification of the declaration: Sarva-dharman Paritya-jya, mam ekam saranam varja. (Bhagavad-Gita: 18-66) Give up all conceptions of duty, all phases of duty. And "mam ekam," only reserve one. That is my, and your, position by nature, by constitution. Try to understand this, and act. "Aham tvam sarva-papebhyo:" and whatever undesirable, sinful reaction that may exist, everything will vanish. No repentance will come to you; you will have all satisfaction. This is the assurance. The greatest treasure ever found is so clearly and boldly put. The call is so bold and clear: give up all phases of duty and come to Me alone, and you won't have to repent for any loss. And Mahaprabhu says:

Yare dekha, tare kāha 'Krishna'-upadesa.

There is no other duty, if you want to do anything good for the world, only go talk about Krishna. Try to distribute Him, who can compensate for all other alternatives. Try to distribute that central and absolute thing to help the people, the environment. No other duty will help. Enlist yourself and you will be loved. Your compassion and disposition will increase more and more. So many will be benefitted. There can be no holier duty, as He has come in this age of Kali. Mahaprabhu said:

*Yare dekha, tare kāha 'Krishna'-upadesa
amara ainaya guru hana tara ei desa*

Accept this because I have ordered it. Know that it is My instruction, so the ego that you have become a guru and are distributing Krishna consciousness, that dirt won't touch you. It is My order: with this idea on your head, go on distributing Krishna. Talk about Heart of the heart.

:—:

Pure Devotion

Srila Bhakti Raksaka Sridhar Deva
Goswami Maharaj

*Bhidya hṛdaya-granthih, chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ
Kṣiyante cāya karmāṇi mayi dṛṣṭe'khilātmani*

“Our inner aspiration for *rasa*, ecstasy, is buried within our hearts which are tied down and sealed. But hearing and chanting the glories of Kṛṣṇa breaks the seal on the heart and allows it to awaken and open to receive Kṛṣṇa, the reservoir of pleasure, ecstasy Himself.”

Here, *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* is saying: “There is a knot within the hearts but that knot will be torn asunder by Kṛṣṇa consciousness. At that time, the flow of our innate tendency for divine love (*svarūp Śakti*) will inundate the whole heart. When the knot of the heart is torn apart, then, as the sleeping soul awakens, the Goloka conception within will emerge and inundate his entire being.”

But this is apparently a difficult problem. How is it possible that all our doubts may be cleared? Is it possible for the finite to know everything? This statement seems rather inconsistent. It seems absurd. The *Upaniṣads*, however say: “Who knows Him, knows everything. Who gets Him, gets everything.” How will the finite know that he has everything, that he has known everything? It

appears absurd, but it is confirmed in the scriptures. And if this problem is solved, then all problems are solved automatically. The finite will realize wholesale satisfaction; all his inquisitive tendencies will be satisfied. This is confirmed not only in the *Upaniṣads*, but also in the *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*.

When I first came to the Gauḍiya Math, I mixed very carefully with the devotees. I thought, “They say that what they teach is the only truth and that all else is false—this is a bitter pill to swallow. They say, ‘Everyone is suffering from ignorance. And what we say is the right thing.’ “I thought, “What is this! A sane man cannot easily swallow such a pill.” “I also could not digest it so easily at first. But what they were saying was confirmed by Śī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, *Bhagavad-Gītā*, and the *Upaniṣads*. All these authorities say, “Yes, it is so. If you know Him, everything is known. If you get Him, everything is gotten.”

Śrimad-Bhāgavatam (4. 3¹. 14), in a verse similar to the above line from the *Upaniṣads*, also says that all doubts are cleared by Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and as a result, we come into real Knowledge. There it is written:

*Yathā taror mūla-niṣecanena
trpyanti tat-skandha bhujopasākkhāḥ
prāṇopahārāc ca yathendriyānām
tathaiśa sarvārhaṇamacayutejyā*

'By watering the root of a tree, all the leaves and branches are automatically nourished. Similarly, by supplying food to the stomach, all the limbs of the body are nourished. In the same way, if we satisfy the central conception of the Supreme Absolute, all our obligations are automatically fulfilled.'

If we put food into the stomach, the whole body is fed. If we pour water on the root of the tree, the whole tree is fed. In the same way, if we do our duty towards the center, then everything is done. This is the greatness, the mysterious position of the absolute center. He has control over the complete whole. This is the peculiar position of the center in the system of the organic whole.

If a particular position of the brain is captured, then the whole body is controlled: one needle in that particular section of the brain, and all the functions of the body will be paralyzed. The peculiar position of the absolute center is some thing like that. So the impossible becomes possible.

Suppose I am a Poor girl who has nothing. Ordinarily it would not be possible to acquire anything. But if I marry a rich man who is the owner of a big property, I can have command over many things by my relationship with him. Although we may be poor, our relationship with a powerful master makes us the master of many things. In the same way, the Absolute Center controls everything, and our affectionate relationship with Him may endow us with

the command of many things. This is how it is possible for the finite soul to have possession of everything—through the subtle link of affection.

Through Kṛṣṇa everything is possible. And the nearer we come to Him, the more we shall catch. His influence inspires His devotees, and all His qualities fill their hearts (*sarva mahā-guṇa gāṇa vaiṣṇava-śarire, kṛṣṇa-bhakte-kṛṣṇera guṇa sakali sañcāre—Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 22. 75*). In that way, although a devotee is not himself a Master, through the link of love he can be master of anything. This is the line of thought explained by *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* and the *Upaniṣads*.

Without having a real connection with the Absolute centre, your attempts to know everything will be useless. If you try to know even a particle of sand, lifetimes will come and go, millions of lives will pass, and you will continue to analyze the sand, finding no end to understanding even one particle.

THE ABSOLUTE CENTRE

We are told "If you want to inquire—inquire about the center. That is the call of the *Upaniṣads*: 'Don't waste your time trying to analyze the smallest part of this creation, trying to be its master; it is not possible. Your inquiry should be properly guided.'" Kṛṣṇa says, 'I am the center, and I say, 'Come to know Me, and through Me you will be able to know everything because I know everything

and I control everything. Your connection with Me can give you that capacity. Approach everything through Me. Then you will be able to know the proper position of all things. Otherwise you will become acquainted with only a partial aspect of reality and that will be external and incomplete. And you will pass millions of lives trying to know and understand reality to no end. "Bhāgavatam says:

athāpi te deva padāmbhuja-dvaya-
prasāda-leśānugṛhita eva hi
jānāti tattvām bhagavan mahimno
na cānya eko 'pi cirām vicinvan

"Only one who is blessed with the mercy of the Lord can know His true nature. On the other hand, those who try empirically to understand His inconceivable glories can study and speculate forever without arriving at the proper conclusion."

Here, through *Bhāgavatam*, Kṛṣṇa tells us, "You may devote yourself for eternity in an erroneous direction, with no possibility of coming to the end of understanding. But if you try to approach the absolute center, then in no time you will be able to know what is what." That is the direction given by the *Upaniṣads* and *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, that is the direction we must take, and that is devotion.

It is so satisfying that once you have attained it, you won't care to know any other thing. We need only con-

centrate on Kṛṣṇa's service. *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* (10-14-3) declares:

jñāne prayāsam udapāsyā namanta eva
jivanti san-mukharitām bhavadiya vārtām
sthāne sthitāḥ śruti-gatām tanu-vāñ-manobhir
ye prāyaśo 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyām

"Hatefully giving up all intellectual attempts to understand the Supreme Truth, those who want to realize You should completely surrender unto You. They should hear from self-realized devotees about Your holy name and transcendental pastimes. Whatever situation they may find themselves in, they should progress by fully dedicating their mind, body, and words to You. In this way the infinite, who is never conquered by anyone, becomes conquered through love."

We can approach the Supreme Lord only through submission, and when we achieve Him, we won't care for knowing anything else. We will have no regard for what is happening or not happening in the outside world. We will deeply engage in His service for His satisfaction. There, in His service, we will find the object of our lives fulfilled. And this external knowledge of "thing outside" will seem to us as rubbish. We will realize, "What is the necessity of wasting time with all kinds of calculation—the nectar is here! It is far deeper than what is found in the external plane." And at that time, we shall give all our attention to His service.

The question is often asked why *varṇāśrama-dharma*, the Vedic system of social stratification, was ignored by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and why it is that anyone from any social position is accepted by our devotional school. We have to cross over the constraints of the caste system (*varṇāśrama-dharma*), offering the results of our work to Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇa karmārpanam), devotion mixed with the desire to enjoy the fruits of work (*karma-miśra-bhakti*) and devotion mixed with the desire of liberation (*jñāna-miśra-bhakti*). They have all been rejected by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. His slogan was “*eho bāhya āge kaha āra:*” “These things are external; go deeper, go deeper.” When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked what is further and higher than all these different conceptions of theism, Rāmānanda Rāya suggested *jñāna-sūnyā bhakti*, unalloyed devotion. When this was suggested by Rāmānanda Rāya, Mahaprabhu said, “Yes, here real theism begins.”

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THE ONLY ENJOYER

SRILA BHAKTI RAKSAKA SRIDHARA
DEVA GOSWAMI MAHARAJA

Real selflessness is not shown in the conception of renunciation, which is only mere withdrawal from the negative side. But there is a positive side of divinity: self-giving. And self-giving to the extreme will go to Krishna, the autocrat. He will absorb everything; He is the only enjoyer. Our guru-maharaja, in His famous poetry wrote, “*duṣṭa mana! tumi kisera Vaiṣṇava?*” “My wicked mind, how can you claim to be a Vaisnava?” That is the heading of the poem written by our guru-maharaja, Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati ThaKur. “oh, my wicked mind, how can you think that you are a Vaisnava proper?” There he has given one line, “*Kāminīr kāma nahe tava dhāma, tāhāra mālika kevala yādav:*” “the enjoyment, the pleasure, that one gets from the association of ladies should only be desired for Krishna, and no one else.”

One gentlemen came to enquire, “what do you mean by this expression?”

“But what I mean there is clear.”

The man responded, “Then where is our position?”

"You have no position," A clear answer.

None are to enjoy but Krishna. That is reserved for Him only. This is the "Krishna conception." Also in Vaikuntha the tendency to be subservient prevails, although not so much so as in Krishna-lila.

A HARD NUT TO CRACK

There are three things, Narayana is the master of *kanak*: money, wealth, *aisvaryā*. All wealth, energy, belongs to Narayana. And all *pratistha*, the credit, belongs to Gurudeva, Baladeva, Radharani. And all pleasure is reserved only for Krishna. It is very hard to crack the nut, to understand these three things. Then we can come to realize our position. If these three things are reserved for these three principal entities of the highest order, then what is our position? Where are we? And who are we? Our position is secondary in the objective side. With our wealth we may be suppliers to Krishna, in this respect. And the *pratisthā* is all coming from gurudeva. The main capitalist is gurudeva—Baladeva or Radharani in the original position. We are making transactions with his property. We are like small industrialists who take delivery of the articles from the big industrialist, and then take them to the market for ordinary sales. The Krishna consciousness we are spreading is like that. From Gurudeva we take the articles and sell them in the market. This refers to *Krishna-kathā*, and to all other things.

We belong to a secondary, subordinate position.¹ We are not owners of potency—we are but a part of the potency. Being constitutionally potency, we have no freedom to enjoy. The master of the potency is to enjoy it, and we are to supply His enjoyment. He is the master while we are many particles of potency, and thus our position is to be enjoyed, to be subservient to the higher. Herein lies our *svarūpa*—our intrinsic identity. We shall be best situated if we can come to such an understanding. In a nutshell, this is *Vaiṣṇavism*: we are not enjoyers—we are to be enjoyed, we are not positive—we are negative; we are not predominators—we are predominated.

FOR ITSELF

Initially we will have to abandon both enjoyment and renunciation (*bhoga-tvāga*). And positively, we must come into connection with the plane of service (*sevā*). This is possible by self-dedication and self-surrender. Such a conception is difficult to understand, and even more difficult to adopt and to follow. But the Supreme Lord is present. Because He is, everything is possible. Hegel's statement, "The Absolute is for Itself," assists us. Everything is for Him. This is the plenary movement of the Absolute, and we need to link ourselves with that movement.

Aham hi sarvva-yajñānām, bhoktā ca prabhur eva ca: "I am the enjoyer of everything in this world. All sacrifices are

to be performed knowing Me to be the recipient. This is your relationship with Me."

THE BLIND MAN AND THE CRIPPLE

*kāryya-kāraṇa-kartṛtve, hetuḥ prakṛtir ucyate
puruṣaḥ sukha-duḥkhānām, bhoktṛtve hetur ucyate*
(*Bhagavad-gītā* 13 : 21)

The action of the body and senses is said to be supplied by *prakṛti*, or material nature (dominated by the conditioned soul). And the soul, although marginal by nature, is said to think himself an enjoyer of happiness or a sufferer of misery, on account of misidentifying himself with mundanity. The pure soul, however, does not conceive himself to be an enjoyer or *puruṣa*.

Similarly, in *Sāṅkhyā* philosophy, by the logic known as *pāṇḍanda-nyāya*—wherein a cripple is seated on the shoulders of a blind man and directs the blind man to his desired destination—the *puruṣa* (as the conditioned soul) is considered to be crippled and the *prakṛti* (as material nature) is considered to be like a blind man who possesses full energy to move although he cannot guide. Thus, the guide is the *puruṣa*, who can see—the guide is consciousness, or intelligence. And the blind energy can move and work. The *puruṣa* possesses consciousness, and the feelings of pain and pleasure exist within that consciousness. Yet, his consciousness is inert and passive, and his activity is

performed by the agency of another energy. This, in other words, is the conception of a lower plane of activity. Still, consciousness does not evolve from matter as supposed in any theory advocating "fossilism."

THE POSITIVE LIFE OF THE SOUL

There is no necessity of movement for the soul in this mundane world. He is inactive, indifferent, and passive in this lower enjoying plane. He does not participate in this negative plane of existence—he is meant for the positive side, in divinity. Yet, admitting the presence of the soul in the background, the *prakṛti* or material nature works on his behalf.

Our *Guru Mahārāja* gave this example : a minor may become the proprietor of an estate, and his managers, taking advantage of his youth, may loot and enjoy his estate. Similarly, the position of the conditioned soul (*baddha jīva*) is like that of a minor. He cannot control the rebellious managers. He must have the contact of a major soul, and with that help he can subjugate his managers and regain control of his own property.

Thus, a fallen soul's position is just like that of a minor proprietor in a helpless situation. He is inactive and the managers are conducting all the affairs, but they are usurping everything in the name of the proprietor. The soul is inactive and non-participating. But his managers (body, mind, senses, etc.) are working on his behalf as though supported by him. If his real interest is aroused within his heart by a major soul who is connected with the Supersoul (*Paramātmā*), the Supreme Lord (*Bhagavān*), the soul will achieve his intrinsic position. He will control the senses and utilize them in the service of the Lord, realizing, "Everything is for Him : everything is for *Kṛṣṇa*, not for me."

The Wave of Love

Om Visnupada Sri Srila Bhakti Raksaka Sridhara
deva Goswami Maharaja

*tat te' nukampām susamikṣamāno
bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtam vipākam
hṛd-vāg-vapurbhir vidhān namas te
jīveta yo mukti-pade sa dāya-bhāk*

(Bhā. 10.14.8)

With the help of the *Guru*, the *Scriptures*, and the previous experienced persons, I shall try to stand the test, that "Yes, because the bile is so, everything is tasting bitter. But this process will remove the bile. I shall have to wait for some time, and when the bile is gone, I shall taste sugar candy as sweet."

When normal, I will be able to feel that so many sweet waves are coming from all around to me. *Mayā santuṣṭa manasāḥ, sarvāḥ sukhāmayaḥ diśāḥ* (Bhā. 11.14.12) "For one who is satisfied with Me, then all the directions, all the four directions will bring only good news to him." All waves will carry only welfare to that person who is satisfied with God only and nothing else. "I want God, and His interests are my interest. He is the loving father, guardian, or friend of everyone."

Now we are distracted and have many different interests, but if we can put God's interest in the center, then we shall be able to find, to read, that from all directions only good news is coming to me—no bad or unfavorable news. All favorable news will come to me if I can be on that level, that plane, if my ego can take a stand there. In that universal wave, every vibration will only carry favorable news to me. *Mayā santuṣṭa manasāḥ*, "He who is satisfied with Me alone, *sarvāḥ sukhāmayaḥ diśāḥ*, he will see that all the directions are only carrying happy news to him, cent-per-cent good news". So a readjustment is necessary, and religion means proper adjustment. We are now incorrectly adjusted and are concerned with different types of separate interests; that is the difficulty. We have to change and find out the universal interest. That universal wave is the most fundamental current.

Sa vai pumsām paro dharmmo: The highest type of duty for everyone is *yato bhaktir adhokṣaje*, that your attention, your submission will go to *Adhokṣaja*, that unknown universal guardian. *Ahaituky-apratihata*: this submission is causeless and can never be opposed. The original vibration is forever existing. It is self-existent: none can have created that. It is eternally continuing. And none can oppose it—that wave is irresistible. Try to identify your interest with that wave. That is *bhakti*, *bhakti* proper. This is the definition of *bhakti*: *sa vai pumsām paro dharmmo*; the highest duty of

everyone, every soul is this. That *bhakti* is *adhoksaja*. Your attention, your interest should be diverted towards the infinite, to the unknown, to the unknown quarter, up to the Nth degree. The mathematicians speak of calculating, continuing to the Nth degree. But this is beyond the Nth degree. *Yato bhaktir adhoksaje*. What are its qualities? *Ahaitukī* and *apratihatā*. *Ahaitukī*: No *hetu*, no cause; it is causeless. And that is eternal, *apratihatā*; it can never be stopped. None can oppose it; none can give any hindrance to it. It is so forceful and continuous, forcefully continuous, that none can stop it.

Such is the original vibration, and that is all sweet, all-accommodating, and all-embracing. So this is the advice of *Bhāgavatam* and *Mahāprabhu*, and there we will find the wave of love, *prema*. This is most accomodating—comprehensive. And fulfillment is given in that way: *bhakti*, *prema-bhakti*—love. Without love, none can be, none can hold a dignified position. Everything else is defective—only love is perfect. Justice is also defective. Justice comes to divide things between many; no unity results. This is the position of justice. But above that is the land of affection, the land of love: *prema-bhūmi*. Love only can be the most comprehensive cause; that can accomodate or harmonize anything and everything. Love is the most generous, the most accomodating, and the most fulfilling.

This is the conclusion of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*,

which has been conceived as the ripe fruit of the *Veda*. The ripe fruit of the *Veda* means that it is revealed truth. Revealed truth is that which does not originate from the experience of so many fallen souls, from their limited brains. No, it is coming from above, from the land of the eternally extended truth. And ripe fruit means it is in its full-fledged position: the highest conception of love. There we will find love, beauty, affection, mercy, charm. They are all similar, of the same taste and kind.

Our soul must go to that land of love. This body will remain here. Our mind which is always seeking the limited happiness of this world will also be dissolved. They will all disappear. At the present, the body and the mind are our 'property'. But the inner factor, the soul—that conscious unit which is within us—can only be a member of that soil. Soul is our proper self, and these other things are all encasements. The mental system and the physical system are encasements, and *they* want this mortal world. That is their misconception.

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The Kṛṣṇa Conception of Divinity

Śrīpad Bhakti Sudhīra Goswāmī Mahārāja

A Christian theologian predicted that Christianity is on the verge of a Copernican revolution. Prior to Copernicus, it was believed that the earth was at the center of the universe, and that the sun and other planets orbited the earth. Until recently, in the Western world it has been thought that Christianity was the central conception of divinity in the theistic universe. But as Western man has begun to gaze Eastward, he has discovered a plurality of theistic conceptions orbiting the Supreme Truth.

Accepting that plurality, we must also accept the accompanying gradations of theism, superior and inferior. As the planets are situated according to their gravitational attraction for the sun, the varieties of theistic conception are situated higher or lower according to their attraction toward the Absolute Center. The Kṛṣṇa conception of divinity is one of being irresistibly drawn in attraction toward the infinite center of all love, beauty, and harmony.

The infinite can make Himself known to the finite, and the divine agent through whom this function manifests is Śrī Guru or the divine guide. His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī is an agent of

divinity and a messenger of that supreme reality. He has reminded us that we are all "sons of nectar," and that we shall have to "die to live," "dive deep into reality," and enter the "land of dedication." As much as we sacrifice ourselves in this plane, we shall become released from its influence and be drawn through dedication into the higher plane of reality where the divine pastimes "move in a crooked way." And there we will find the "Hidden treasure of the Sweet Absolute" in the service of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

His Divine Grace has informed us that the heart's inner hankering for ecstasy, charm and sweetness, leads it in the search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa—Reality the Beautiful. The Kṛṣṇa conception of divinity is so irresistible that even Kṛṣṇa Himself becomes overwhelmed by His own potency and is madly engaged in tasting His own sweetness, ecstatically dancing, and thereby distributing that sweetness to others.

In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kaviraja Goswāmī describes that while dancing at the Ratha-yātrā, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu would sometimes fall in an ecstatic swoon and appear like "a golden mountain rolling on the ground." Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja describes that "In the agony of separation from Kṛṣṇa, ecstatic eruptions of ecstasy flowed like lava from the heart of the Golden Volcano of Divine Love, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu."

And now in his newly published book *The Loving Search for the Lost Servants*, he explains how the Lord's heart is such that He also feels the agony of separation from His fallen devotees, and as they are engaged in searching for Him, He is also engaged in a loving search for His lost servants.

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Personal Knowledge

Srīpad Bhakti Mādhava Puri Mahārāja

The modern scientists think that everything can be explained in terms of matter. Their conception is that matter is at the base of everything, and that whatever we experience is in reality only atoms and the void. First of all, we would like to present a simple example to demonstrate the unreasonableness of this viewpoint. Then we will present a more viable alternative conception that will incorporate all the aspects of experience in a reasonable way.

Consider a book. It can be seen and felt. A chemical analysis can be made. A statistical analysis of the letters in a book, according to frequency of use, distribution, etc. can be made. But the meaning of the book cannot be ascertained by such studies. The meaning of the book is certainly experienced, but it cannot be explained by any physical description, chemical analysis, or mathematical computation. Then what is it, where does it come from, and how does it arise? All these questions must be asked when we consider the meaning of a book.

“Meaning” is a synthetic thing involving thoughts and feelings. It cannot be analyzed in an atomic way. Thus thought and feeling are considered mental experiences to distinguish them from gross material phenomena. The “meaning” of a book does not actually arise from the letters of the book. Letters are symbols which have their own meanings. Letters are combined to form words which also have their own meanings. Words are combined in sentences which have further meanings. And sentences are combined to form books which have higher meanings. Thus letters, words, sentences and books

all proceed from an original idea in the mind first, and then a symbol is used to represent that idea.

The author has an idea first and then writes a book. Thus the origin of the idea or meaning of the book comes from the consciousness of the author, not from the book. The reader is able to grasp the meaning of the book because the symbolic representation of the book invokes a mental impression in the reader similar to the one experienced by the author. This is certainly a complex affair which cannot be explained merely in terms of phsyco-chemical analysis, or as arising from the combinations and permutations of atoms and the void.

Love, beauty and consciousness are all terms which are categorically different from the material objects of the world, but which never the less are experienced. We must then come to the admission of a subjective as well as objective reality. In fact, one Nobel Laureate in physics, Eugene Wigner, concluded from his study of quantum mechanics that there are two kinds of reality: consciousness and the field of matter. Any observation requires the interaction of an observer with the observed thing, and this produces an irreversible change in both.

Consciousness is the first type of reality because it is the primary, most direct experience. The field of matter is a secondary phenomenon that is detected only through consciousness. Actually, the scientist cannot say what matter is ultimately because behind the ultimate particle of nature is the original idea of the scientist which always precedes the thing which is being experienced or described. Thus network of thought is always placed over the experiences which stimulate the consciousness of any observer.

Just as when light falls upon an object, a shadow is produced, so too when consciousness comes in contact with an object a thought is

produced. Pure consciousness is primary. The thought is hazy consciousness. The material object is also part of consciousness which we can call material consciousness. Thus consciousness is the prime cause of everything. This is just the opposite of Darwin's Theory which says that the material things produce consciousness. Consciousness produces matter, but in between, subtle production called thought appears first. Thus everything is associated with consciousness or person. In the oldest days we find that the people of antiquity referred to everything in a personal way; the sea was a person, the sun was a person, etc. This can be understood in the light of non-materialistic world view which considers consciousness as fundamental to matter. Even thoughts were associated with underlying personalities. Even a shadow had its ultimate associated personality. Thus life is an all-pervading fundamental principle. The universe is the biggest thing we experience. It also represents the biggest person or universal consciousness, or God. He is the all containing person. And beyond the universe lies the inconceivable infinite creation, which, because of our finite nature, can only be detected by faith. But it is not blind faith. As soon as we say "blind" we must imply that there is also a faith that can "see." That supersubjective, all-containing consciousness can be seen, but not with our ordinary eyes. Only consciousness can detect pure consciousness.

Modern science can deal only with the objects in the field of consciousness but not with consciousness itself. Actually it cannot even properly explain the object of consciousness, matter, because the consciousness is the underlying principle of matter itself. Matter is the result of personal, localized or limited self-interest. The original pure consciousness is a universally orientated one. We have lost sight of the universal interest, the real center of our lives. We are, infact, but parts of a larger organic whole. It is not a fossilized, static

environment that can be recorded in so many scientific books.

Thoughts of man and the universe that go by the name of scientific knowledge are actually attempts to petrify reality and place it in books in the hope of gaining some future adoration by society. Knowledge has come to mean a dry and dead thing, a mere categorization of phenomena of nature which is ultimately a pure mechanism. But this is all based on the assumption that the 'knowable' is dead matter.

Our contention is that the knowable is alive and conscious. It can be experienced or known in the same way that our own consciousness can be experienced and known—synthetically, organically, dynamically. Feeling is an inextricable and fundamental component of conscious reality. We are not afraid of it in the plane of consciousness. Thinking takes a more peripheral role, in a subordinate and not so prominent position. Such a conception is anathema to the material scientists because it undermines provincialism, it dissolves fossilism and amalgamates the observing entity into a flowing, living reality in which he is but a small subordinate part of an inconceivably larger whole, which is not so frightening or big as He is personal.

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Service To Guru

*tad viddhi pranipātena, paripraśnena sevayā
upadekṣyanti te jñānam, jñāninas tattva-darśinah (Bg : 4.34)*

Approaching a spiritual guide is the end-all and be-all of our lives. It is the life of our lives—our greatest fortune and easily the most difficult prospect in our life. If it is not, then in all likelihood, that is not *guru*—that is a sham, a social gesture fraught with misfortune and with little prospect of progress, what to speak of purity or perfection. So, to feel some difficulty or anxiety about approaching or serving *Sad-guru* is not unfortunate. It is necessary.

Guru means teacher; teacher means pulling—the higher is pulling the lower; pulling means stretching, and you shall have to stretch your every fiber to approach *Śrī Guru*. He has come to challenge us, "Why you are satisfied with your meager plane of consciousness? This is no habitat for the *jivatma*." And when we can take such a challenge as our greatest fortune in this life, then we have come to the foot of the mountain of Truth: the lotus feet of *Śrī Guru*. Then our task begins. The ascent is underway and Mercy awaits with Her sweet waters to bathe the *jiva* in his sojourn.

The task need not be confused. There is only one task to be considered: the satisfaction of *Śrī Guru*. And what

will satisfy *Śrī Guru*?....ascent. Your ascent on the path of Positive and Progressive immortality, will satisfy *Śrī Guru*. And how is that ascent accomplished? It is not a pushing, ascending process dependent on your capacity or sagacity. It is a pulling, descending process dependent on your humility, your utter helplessness to put one foot in front of the other. But this state of dependency is not to be confused with indolence and lethargy. Nor is it to be confused with dreamy conceptions of purity or futility of one's prospect. It is to be equated with an intense desire for real service to *Śrī Guru*, a relentless and quiet pursuit of that service in spite of one's meager capacity and qualification, and a willingness to sacrifice one's prejudicial conceptions based on experience and intellectual capacity and to stretch one's every fiber to understand and serve the desire and conception of *Śrī Guru*. This is unavoidable; this is inimitable; this is the real meaning of "*pranipātēna*"—the offering of one's all, one's very self unto that *Sad-guru*. And when you think you have begun to understand it, you haven't yet begun to stretch. Do you think it is so easy to give to *Guru* and *Kṛṣṇa*? It is not; full stop. *Śrīla Guru Mahārāja* has spoken, "First give everything you have to *Kṛṣṇa* and *Guru*—give everything until nothing is left to give. And then,.....learn.....to give more." You have come here to give, you are a giving, serving moiety (part). YOU ARE THAT. And yet, you have not yet even

discovered your true wealth, the great fortune which lies within you which can be given. You don't even know that. You have come here to give and you do not even connote your true wealth? Then you must be demented. We are all bereft, we are all demented. This is our qualification to initially receive the Sweet Waters of Mercy from *Śrī Guru*. But who can feel fulfilled about such a qualification? Our qualification will grow with "*sevayā*"—sincere service to *Śrī Guru*. And although initially it can be overlooked, ultimately that service is not what we think we can or want to do for *Śrī Guru*, but, it is what HE WANTS ME TO DO. After all, it is his service which is being offered to *Kṛṣṇa*, not ours. And our only hope, our greatest prospect, is to come in line (connection) with that need: not our need—HIS NEED. We must learn to give what is valuable. We do not want to give some valueless thing to *Śrī Guru*. We want to give the most valuable thing, our greatest treasure and our true wealth. Of course, at first, we must give what we think we have, such as money and some facility here and there, but, "these are negative things.... *Kṛṣṇa* is not after these things, no.... *Kṛṣṇa* wants more—He is after the mind"—our free will, our independence. This is real giving, this is real service, this understanding is *Śrī Guru*'s gift to us :

upadekṣyanti te jñānam

This is what we are all looking for—this is the essence of our being—this is the sweetness we are all craving for;

this is the real gift—affection, devotion—love, “*bhakti*”. This is not a cheap thing. Throughout our lives, we have developed our skills, developed our mental capacity through knowledge, and now—we shall have to develop our feeling capacity, our sentiency, our giving tendency through service. This is the meaning of surrender. “I have so much capacity, so much to give, so much facility and more; yet, *Śrī Guru* is not asking for this—he is not asking for what I can give. He is asking for what I cannot give, what I myself don’t even know I have. He wants that. And I—I have to surrender to that? Oh! What a glorious opportunity we have to discover our true wealth! He can see what I have—that which I cannot even see, and he has come to help me to discover that. This is *Śrī Guru* and His Grace; this is “*Prapanna*”, surrender, this is the Lord’s loving search for the Lost Souls epitomized in the person of *Śrī Guru*. And this is the intrigue of our lives. Reality the Beautiful has come to find us out by his most revered servitor in the person of *Śrī Guru*.

FULFILLMENT OF THE DESIRE OF *ŚRĪ GURU*

So we shall have to carefully consider our position as distant, but connected to *Śrī Guru*. Now our prospect lies in strengthening that connection by pleasing His Divine Grace. His Mercy is waiting to be given, but our sincerity must be sure, our hand mustn’t waver. Once our relevant inquiry is completed, our own integrity of purpose must be

self-evident. And no matter what stage or plane we find ourselves in, we can always rely on one thing to please *Śrī Guru*: that is our progressive march on the path of devotion. *Śrīman Mahāprabhu* exhibited this quite clearly in the case of *Ragunātha Dāsa Goswāmī*.

Raghunātha Dāsa came to surrender at the Holy Feet of *Śrīman Mahāprabhu* as a young boy running from his home. His father was a wealthy land-owner, but *Ragunātha* was convinced of the propriety of surrender unto *Sad-guru*. However, upon his surrender, *Śrīman Mahāprabhu* ordered him to return home to finish his schooling. Although completely opposite to what *Ragunātha Dāsa* expected from a renunciate, he obeyed. Later, he left home again to come to *Mahāprabhu*, and *Mahāprabhu* told him to serve the *brāhmaṇas*—the holy order of priests in the *vārṇāśrama* society of *Jagannātha Puri*. Upon receiving money from his father’s servant, *Ragunātha Dāsa* would utilize the funds to offer *prasāda* to the entire brahminical community of *Jagannātha Puri*. *Mahāprabhu* was extremely pleased. Then seemingly, against *Mahāprabhu*’s order, *Raghunātha Dāsa* became disenchanted with this level of service. He refused the money brought to him by his father’s servants and begged for his own food on the steps of *Jagannātha Puri* temple of *Śrī Jagannāthaji*. *Mahāprabhu* heard of this and praised *Raghanātha Dāsa*.

When I queried *Śrīla Guru Mahārāja* as to why *Mahāprabhu* praised *Raghunātha Dāsa* for renouncing his

service, he replied, "Mahāprabhu did not praise Raghunātha for that, but for cutting the bodily connection by refusing money from his father."

Thereafter, without money from his father, Raghunātha Dāsa could not even maintain himself, and he would go to the gates of the Jagannātha Puri temple to beg "Jagannātha Prasāda" from the priests as they left the temple. Mahāprabhu was extremely pleased with that change of venue. After some time begging on the steps of the Jagannātha Puri temple, Raghunātha Dāsa could see that there was no difficulty in obtaining his necessities from the priests. When they saw him begging, invariably, they would have to offer him some Jagannātha Prasāda. Then, suddenly Raghunātha Dāsa disappeared from the steps of the Jagannātha temple one evening. He no longer begged *prasāda* from the priests. When Mahāprabhu inquired from the devotees about Raghunātha Dāsa's welfare, they reported that Raghunātha Dasa was taking *prasāda* behind Lord Janannātha's temple. He would go behind the temple and take the unsold rice *prasāda* that had gone rotten and was considered inedible. Raghunātha Dāsa would clean the rice and take it for his daily *prasāda*. Mahāprabhu was excited. He went out to see Raghunātha Dāsa behind the temple and upon seeing him collecting the discarded rice he at once challenged him, "You are taking such nice *prasāda* and you are not offering me even one grain?"

Raghunātha stepped back holding the rice away from Mahāprabhu and fearfully replied, "Oh, no my Lord, these grains are not fit for Your Grace." Then Mahāprabhu caught Raghunātha and forcefully pulled some of the grains from his hand and immediately took them. Then Mahāprabhu spoke, "Oh Raghunātha, this is the most wonderful *prasāda*". And Raghunātha was mortified, but fulfilled. The pleasure of Śrī Guru was evident on Mahāprabhu's face. Mahāprabhu was pleased that Raghunātha Dāsa could not see any honour in begging *prasāda* from priests who couldn't possibly turn him away. He had progressed from a calculative devotional sentiment to a more spontaneous, honourable and noble activity with more opportunity to receive Kṛṣṇa's mercy by refusing to take easily obtainable *Mahāprasada*! And Mahāprabhu was pleased. All glories to Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga. All glories to the Holy Feet dust of the great Vaiṣṇavas who carry that pearl of wisdom the undefinable, unassailable conception of the surrendered souls.

—Śrī Dayādhara Gaurāṅga Brahmācārī Bhaktiprabhākara

Marching On To Glory

by Yudhamanyū Sevā Vikrama

His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī Mahārāja has clearly pointed out that the main problem of everyone is how to discard our internal hankering for anything other than Kṛṣṇa and His servitors. The infinite road towards the realm of love and beauty, where the Divine Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa can be found enjoying with His most confidential associates, is not one covered with flowers. Nasty desires and troublesome situations are sure to strike suddenly like thieves hiding in bushes. They appear constantly and they act as if they are taking us away from Kṛṣṇa. But Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja kindly explains that these so-called dacoits are coming to us as a test to prove our faithfulness to Him. Therefore, we should not be afraid of obstacles that seemingly appear to hinder our progress on the road of spiritual life, but rather, we should "boldly stand those tests."

It can readily be imagined that the journey towards the infinite, with all of the trials and tribulations encountered on the way, would be a discouraging, exhausting and

self-defeating exercise yielding nothing tangible or positive for the traveller. Yet that does not need to be the case at all. Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja advises that one should not traverse the spiritual path alone, but with good association, one can minimize the disappointment, dejection and weariness one faces while travelling. "With a good group," he says, "we can forget all these problems and we'll get strength from one another and the long march will be a pleasant thing for us." To perfectly exemplify the advantage of having such favorable association, Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja uses a reference found in history, known as the "Napoleonic chair." Once, during a march, Napoleon and his soldiers became bogged down in a marsh. They were forced to stand for a long, long time. Unable to get any relief from standing, due to the wet condition of the area, the soldiers were ordered by Napoleon to form a circle. While standing in a circle, with each man facing the back of another man, Napoleon asked them to sit down so that the lap of one man was a seat for another. In this circular fashion, Napoleon's army was able to rest without sitting on the wet surface.

Represented by this footnote in history, the obvious parallel to the situation all of us face in spiritual life dramatically illustrates the necessity of *sādhu-saṅga*. When my mind is disturbed in some way, the others will encourage me and when in due course someone else's mind be-

comes perplexed, then perhaps I'll have the strength at that time to come to his aid. In this way our journey proceeds joyfully. Everything becomes even more ecstatic when, by the mercy of Mahāprabhu, we can have as our Napoleonic Guru, His Divine Grace Śrīla Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī Mahārāja to lead us on the march back home, back to the land of the Sweet Absolute.

An Experience on the Way

“Wonder of Wonders”

Paribrajakacharya

Tridandi Swami Srimad Bhakti Sundar Govinda Maharaja

It was a Saturday. I was returning home with a friend of mine by the 5 O'clock evening train. Fatigued after the whole day's work, the daily passengers like me were also getting into the train in great numbers their faces beaming with joy at the prospect of getting back home. The train bound for Katwa was terribly crowded.

We, two friends, somehow secured a place in a compartment and just when we sat down with a sigh of relief to give our restless selves a little respite from the monotonously rigid atmosphere of Calcutta, some gentlemen pushed their way through the crowd and boarded our compartment. Although they were all of the same age, the one seemed to be over fifty but he could not be considered as an old man by any standard. It was evident from his talk that he in his old age, did not have the good fortune of having the aptitude of a young mind.

Any way, we noticed that no sooner he got into the train, the first thing he did was to discover two young Sadhus. The expression of his face revealed as if he had discovered a great thing. Thereafter, he managed to get some sitting place by the side of the two Sadhus and he cast a side look at his companions

in such a way as if to say that atleast he had got something very amusing. Without any further delay, he started questioning the two boys.

Old man—"I say, my child ! Gauranga ! How far will you go ?" The two boys would be of eighteen to twenty years of age. By looking at their faces, one could realise that they were very happy. The faces had no marks of worry so far, as such looked very bright and cheerful. The older one answered in a leisurely manner, "Sir, we will go home".

Old man—"You are going home, is it ? Well, well, that is good. But where is it, my son ? Is it in that land of rosary and bag ? Atleast, the proof of that can be seen around your neck". The boy again replied, smilingly, "Yes Sir, in a way, it is so. But, then where are you going ?" Old man—"Myself ? I will get down on your way—that is, at Chandan Nagar". The boy immediately answered in a shortime manner, "Then, why in my way only ? Why don't you come along with me ? I will reach you home "Back to God and back to Home".

I could realise that the boy was not at all a fool, on the contrary, he was quite intelligent and witty. But the old man replied, "But, my son, I will not be Gouranga like you as I have wife and sons. And then, if all of us become Gouranga like you, then your God's creation will become completely static (so saying he laughed).

The boy also laughed and so did we. But I could see that the boy's face suddenly turned serious and immediately after that he replied, "Well, well, that is

very good seeing your sense of duty, now, atleast, I can realise your greatness. Now tell me, who else but people like you will be so vigorously active in helping God's creation ? If you don't mind, may I ask you till to-day as the proof of your preserving creation.....

Just then the whistle sounded from far annoucing the train's departure. This time it appeared as if the gentleman was a bit crestfallen. We all laughed at his discomfiture. But the boy did not laugh this time. Just at that time, another gentleman who had drawn our attention by his charming, looks, came out with the remark, "why are you all wasting time ? Instead, why not you ask the Brahmachari some questions seriously ? I feel he is capable of giving proper answers to our queries".

Our train, then by giving some jolts started leaving the station. The atmosphere also gradually started changing.

After hearing the gentleman talk in that way, it seemed as if all other passengers were getting sympathetic towards the two Brahmacharies.

But the old man was rather obstinate. As such, he again questioned (though this time in a slightly sober way).

Old man—"I say, my child ! Is there no happiness in domestic life ?"

Brahmachari—"Sir, how can I say so ? I am a life-long celibate. Moreover, I am not much concerned about it's ways. You are better placed to answer this

question—whether there is happiness or not. I can only guess by looking at you all. Suppose, for example, you had been to the office. There, the superior officer's high-handedness is not unknown to any one ; you have to travel by this train also. I do not have to tell you how enjoyable it is to be pushed about by fellow passengers, and after reaching home, you have to face your irate wife and listen to her complaints, like—there is no rice, no pulses, no oil, no salt, no clothes for the children etc. Then, at least, it will not be improper, to imagine the extent of your happiness and otherwise also, it is better not to give the clue to real happiness. So why ask me at all ?".

My friend was silent so far, now he could not contain himself any longer, he asked, "Dear brother ! why don't you tell us about the real thing ?".

Brahmachari—"Years back, the Arya-Rishies have told about this for our benefit - why do I have to say ? The way they, by delving deep into our mind had known our inner aspirations and had given expressions to the same with their sacred pen, I can give a small example of that. Please listen,"—

The old age has crept in, happiness has vanished,
Illness has made me sorrowful.
Weak sense organs, body emaciated.
The heart grieves at the want of worldly pleasures.
Devoid of a grain of knowledge,
Deprived of the sentiment of devotion etc.....

This time, the gentleman, mentioned earlier, addressed the boy directly, "Brahmacharijee, I fell so happy to see you two. Please do not worry about these gentlemen. Then pointing towards the oldman he said, "He likes to have a bit of fun, but to-day he has made a wrong choice, Any way, I will request you not to mind".

Any way, kindly give us some instruction in an easy way. Brahmachari—"you see, it is a railway compartment. Many types of people have gathered. As such, it is very difficult for an insignificant person like me to say anything—specially to advise".

Oldman—"Yes, yes, let us hear some advice". So saying he heaved a sign of relief.

Brahmachari Continued—"Moreover, you see, will you be able to hear even if I say ? And even if you hear will you be able to follow it ? I cannot except that even if you understand it, you will be able to put it into practice in your life. Still, your enthusiasm has some what encouraged me, so I humbly submit--you better ask me some questions—I will try to answer them as best as I can."

The gentleman—"At first, please excuse my audacity, and then kindly tell us why you have left home".

This time, the Brahmachari, again with a pleasant face and a sweet smile said, "Although the question is quite concise and beautiful but the answer will take sometime as several other questions also are involved in it, so you will have to listen somewhat patiently."

Every one—‘Let it be so—please go on’. Brahmachari, feeling some what encouraged started saying, “See, first of all we must know. ‘who am I ? After that, I will answer to queries like—mine, home, renunciation and why etc.

“Who am I ?” the very question immediately reminds us of Sreela Sanatan Goswami. Probably all of you have heard his name, more or less. The Friend,—“Yes, we have read about him in a poem. There is a beautiful description of an incident. Sanatan Goswami, inspite of finding a touchstone kept it under a tree like a worthless piece of stone, later on, when a Brahman being commanded by Lord Shiva approached him for wealth, he asked him to take it from underneath the tree. But the man after taking away the precious stone could realise his foolishness, he came back and fell as Goswami’s feet and beseeched him saying—

“The treasure that has made you so rich that you do not consider a precious stone as a jewel at all, I humbly bow down and beg of you to kindly give me a bit of that only and so saying threw away the touchstone in the river water. What a delightful character it is !”

Brahmachari—“The characters of great saints are incomprehensible. Although, they themselves are great liberated souls, they show various way for the welfare of the unliberated ones. Sreela Goswami was Sreeman Mahaprabhu’s very intimate associate. The time when Sreeman Mahaprabhu went to Vrindavan, Sreela Sanatan Goswami, for the good of mankind, after discarding even the prestigious position of a chief

Ministership under Hussain Shah, the pleasures of the materialistic world and all other transient possessions, offered himself at the feet of Mahaprabhu at Kashi. It is he only who asked Sree Chaitanya on our behalf, Who am I ? why do the three miseries make me suffer ?”.

Mahaprabhu used to know Sanatan through and through. So he said, “You are intimately acquainted with the divine truth, you have no miseries of any kind. Even then, you have put this question for the enlightenment of human beings. So, I am telling everything by and by, you listen—so saying Mahaprabhu said—

*Jeever swarup hay Krishner nityadas
Krishner tathastha sakti bhedabhed prakash*

“Your Constitutional position is that you are pure living soul”, the Lord told Sanatan. “This material body cannot be identified with your real self; nor is your mind is your real identity, nor your intelligence, nor false ego. Your identity is that of eternal servitor of the Supreme Lord Krishna. Your position is that you are transcendental. The superior energy of Krishna is spiritual in constitution and the inferior external energy is material. Since you are between the material energy and the spiritual energy, your position is marginal. Belonging to the marginal potency of Krishna you are simultaneously one with and different from Krishna and because you are only a minute particle of Krishna, you are different from Him.”

“First of all, we must find out ‘who am I ?’ And now, you will have to listen with some patience because the discussion that I am going to start on the preliminary part of a discourse, is completely different.”

The gentleman said with great modesty, "See, we are not much conversant with Shastras, moreover, I think there is no one amidst us who is able to realise the mysteries of the Shastras; as such, you will have to make us understand, as far as possible, with the help of reasoning.

Brahmachari—"Alright, I will try, but please remember,—It is not possible to ascertain the true nature of that object or that of my own self with the help of wordly reasons, arguments, knowledge, intelligence or scholarship. But, for the sake of varied observations, I will take help, as far as possible, from the reasons put forward by the greatmen.

Suddenly another gentleman broke his silence, so far he was a listener, but now he assumed the role of a speaker and said, "Whether you say with reasonings or with the assistance from Shastras, as long as there is a subject, there will be a doubt and where there is a doubt there must be a query. So without determination of the question and settlement, is it proper to hear what Rama and Shyama say ?"

Brahmachari—(smiling a little) "Certainly not. Hearing you talk, I feel you are very fond of logic. Any way, I only, am asking you, are reasons and arguments capable of ascertaining the true state of one's self or the real nature of God ? And where can we find this ?

The sense objects of this material world may be governed by the argumentative theories, have you not heard that the self can not be perceived by any other power except that of its own power of perception ? what

is the use of applying microscope to the cars ? Can we see a picture through a microscope ? Then, how can, through an instrument made of arguments one have the knowledge or the realisation of an object that is beyond the power of speech and mind ? According to the conception I have, after studying the shastras, there is no possibility of ascertaining the true nature of self by argumentation. All the shastras like Vedas say the same-thing—"Nayatma Pravacanena labhya na medhaya ba Bhunasrutena", "Tarkaprathisthanang" etc.

There are plenty of statements like these. As such, I do not ask you to listen to what Rama or Shyama says, but to pay heed to the statements of the omniscient great souls or the teachings of Vedas."

I could see that the gentleman was disheartened and was trying to say something but the first gentlemen hastily said "Brahmacharjee, we have got very little time. we have got only one more station to go. So, please try to finish what you have to say, because if two learned men come across each other, their arguments will never cease.

Brahmachari—"Good now listen to what I am saying. Firstly we will have to find out which is the real "I", whether it is the body or the mind or something else. In this connection a sloka from Geetaponisada will help us to understand".

*Indriyani paranyahur, indriyebhyah parm manah
Manasas tu para budehir, buddher yah parastu sah*

"They say that the senses are superior to the body, superior to the senses is mind, superior to mind is intellect, one who is even superior to intellect is the the Atman".

The sense organs in this body are preeminent. But when analysed it is found that they are nothing but slaves of the mind because if one is unmindful, even if a drum is beaten near his ears, he is unlikely to hear it—is it not so ? There again, even a mad man has got a mind, but because of his deranged brain his mind is not under his control. Everything about him is out of element— inconsistent. As such, it can be concluded that intelligence is superior to all, there again, intelligence without a support, or a prop or a light cannot manifest itself or be active, that is the Atman—full of consciousness, self luminous, Truth shining by its own light.

Moreover, you see, the body may be self contained but in the absence of only one thing it becomes immobile. To-day, we are fondling a boy because of his beauty, qualities and general intelligence and we cannot bear his absence even for a moment but if he dies tomorrow what do we do ? His beautiful body, which was so very dear to us, an object of my great attachment, instead of keeping it at home, we carry at straight to the cremation ground – to remove even the last trace of him. We do that although the heart may break in grief— Why ? We know very well that one who used to dwell in that body all these days, who used to play and laugh with them, used to feign annoyance and sulk attimes, to-day he is no more. He has left the body which was the abode of the senses, now it will rot. Then we can understand very well that the body is not the real person, the body is his house, his residence and that which used to dwell in the house has left it and that is known as Atman, that carries with it distant memories of its entire past. In the absence of Atman, earth, water, fire, air, ether knowledge and desire become inanimate objects only.

Contd.....

Trans.— Smt. Bela Brhma

All glory to the Divine Master
and the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya

The Advent of the Golden Moon

Śrī-Gaura-pūrṇimā, 1988

Tridāṇḍi Swāmī Bhakti Ānanda Sāgara

*rāhugraste jada-śaśadhare phālgune pūrṇimāyāṁ
gauḍe śake manu-śata-mite sapta-varṣādhike yaḥ
māyāpuryyāṁ samajani śacīgarbha-sindhau pradoṣe
tam cic-chakti-prakaṭita-tanum miśra-sūnuṁ smarāmi
viśvambhara-prabhu-hari-dvija-gauracandra-
nimbeśa-nāma-nicayah kramato babhūva
yasyāryya-khaṇḍa-mukutopama gauḍarāṣṭre
gauram smarāmi satatam kalipāvanam tam
aṅgikurvan-nija-sukhakarīṁ rādhikā-bhāva-kāntīṁ
miśrā-vāse sulalita-vapu-gaurovarṇo harir yaḥ
palli-strīṇāṁ sukham abhidadhat khelayāmāsa bālye
vande' ham tam kanaka-vapuṣam prāṅgane riṅgamāṇam
(Smarāṇa-māngala-stotram 1-3,
Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura)*

“In the heart of my heart I remember that Divine Son of Śrī Jagannātha Miśra, whose form appeared by His own internal potency ; He graciously arose from the ocean of Śrī Śacidevī’s womb when the moon of this world was

swallowed (eclipsed) by Rāhu on the full-moon evening of Phalguna month, 1407 Śaka era. In the land of the righteous (India), He gradually (according to His various pastimes) came to be known as Viśvambhara, Mahāprabhu, Gaurahari, Dvijarāja, Gauracandra, Nimbeśa (Nimāi), etc. Perpetually do I remember that Śrī Gauracandra, the only Saviour of this iron age of war, Kali-yuga. Thus, the Supreme Lord Hari, in order to embrace the heart and halo of Śrī Rādhikā and thus enable Him to savour the glorious felicity of His own Self, appeared in a golden form which was charming and beautiful in the extreme. In His childhood, He delighted the hearts of all the neighbourhood ladies as He enjoyed His playful pastimes. I bow down to that golden-bodied child who 'crawled on all fours' as a toddler in the courtyard of Śrī Sacidevi's house."

The supreme 'fatefully fortunate' day of the appearance of the Golden Lord measures in Christian chronology as Sunday, 18th February, 1486. The shining full-moon of the world is said to have momentarily lowered his head in shame, his lustre having been 'eclipsed' by the Divine Golden Moon Śrī Gauracandra, although in general terms we may consider that a lunar eclipse was occurring. As is customary on such occasions, the devout multitudes of India took shelter in the numerous sacred rivers headed by the Ganges. While performing their holy ablutions, a tumultuous vibration resounded throughout earth and skies as they wholeheartedly exhorted in the tidal wave of the holy name. Their piety manifest in this twilight revelry was no mere coincidence. In the ancient Vedic Scriptures and histories we find that the moon was born from the ocean. The ocean was at the time being churned by the

combined efforts of the demigods and the demons who were bent on producing elixir. Now, as foretold by the same *Vedas*, *Upaniṣads*, *Purāṇas*, *Mchābhārata*, *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, etc., the Golden Moon, the Supreme Lord, origin of all incarnations and expansions—Godhead Himself—was to arise from the ocean in the form of the womb of Mother Śacī. He is the Moon that casts His cooling rays throughout the entire universe, radiating in all directions the nectarine grand congregational chanting of the holy name (*Hari-nāma-saṅkīrtana*), which divine mission He began (ostensibly) as a mere boy of sixteen years who clapped His hands in the courtyard of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, in the company of His selected eternal associates. But this Mahāprabhu was not the general incarnation of the age, who, in a greenish hue appears millennium after millennium to distribute the 'general' chanting of the holy name.

In this particular case, the 28th millennium of Vai-vasvata Manu, not the Supreme Personality of Godhead alone appeared, but He appeared replete with His Supreme Predominated Moiety, His Counterwhole Intrinsic personal potency of the absolute acme in ecstatic joy, thus substantiating His superb, charming golden form. Replete with all the bodily symptoms of a supramundane personage, Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu rolled on the ground in madness like a gigantic mountain—a golden volcano exploding with divine lava—divine love which makes the heart of even the common worldlywise fettered soul burn in the pain of separation from his natural Lord.

In a beautiful song by Śrila Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura we find :

ārādhya bhagavān vrajeśa-tanayas tad dhāma vṛndāvanam
 rāmyā kācid upāsano vrajavadhū-vargena yā kalpitā
 śrimad-bhāgavatam pramāṇam amalam premā pumartho mahān
 śri-caitanya-mahāprabhō matam idam tatrādaro nah parah

“The object of worship is the Supreme Lord Vrajen-dranandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the holy abode Śrī Vṛndāvana which is the expansion of His own body. The zenith of all worship is exemplified in the method by which the damsels of Vraja worshipped Kṛṣṇa. The holy book Śrimad-Bhāgavatam is the spotless authority, and *prema*, (supramundane) love, is the supreme goal of mankind. All these truths constitute the Gospel of Śrī Caitanya Mahā-prabhu. Our highest reverence is for this perfect established conclusion (*siddhānta*) alone and no other.”

O blessed will be the day when this fallen soul may receive an incidental glance from that all-merciful Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya.

Holy Talks of the Supreme Lord

BY HIS DIVINE GRACE OM VIŚNUPAD SRILA
 BHAKTI SIDDHANTA SARASWATI THAKUR

A:—The derivative meaning of *māyā* is ‘what is measurable.’ Bhagavan is the Lord of *māyā*; He cannot be measured. Where there is attempt to measure God, there is maya and not God. ‘*Ma*’ means ‘not’ and ‘*ya*’ means ‘what’, i.e., ‘what is not God’, is *māyā*. The *māyā* as said in the Shrimad Bhāgavatam is not like the Satan in the Christian theology, a separate entity from God, altogether another entity. According to the Bhagavata school, *māyā* is in Bhagavan (God) in the condemned state in order to award condign punishment on the atomic sentience (i.e. *jīvas*) controllable by *māyā*. In the Gītā God has said: “Earth, water, fire, air, sky, the mind, intelligence and egoism—these constitute My separate inferior potencies, whereas other than this is My superior potency constituting the *jīvas* by which is supported the universe.” This inferior potency is the *māyā* potency. This inferior potency has been stupefying the *jīvas* that are apathetic towards God since before the beginning of time and causing misunderstanding in them, sometimes assuming the form of ‘twenty-four items of entity’ of Kapila, (the originator of the Sāṅkhya System), sometime as the ‘atom’ of Kanāda (of the Vaisesika System), sometimes also as Jaimini’s principle of ‘elevation’ (in the Purva Mīmāṃsā System), sometimes again as the ‘sixteen objects’ of Gautama (in the Nyāya system), sometimes as ‘superhuman power and absolute oneness with God’

of Pātanjali (of the Yoga System), and sometimes as the pretence of search after Brahman (of the Shankar School).

Q:—Why does such an event happen ?

A:—Because the jīvas have free will of their own.

Q:—Then how can this be reconciled with the teaching of the Gīta which says : “God stays in the heart of all the creatures and makes them whirl round, in a machine, as it were, by the agency of māyā” ?

A:—This instruction in the Gīta rather supports the above statement. It is Shri Vishnu Who is God, the Controller of all beings. God gives the jīvas their fruit according to the karma they perform. Their nature acts under the direction of God according to their previous karma. Jiva is the doer and God is the Giver. God's authority is seen in the giving of the fruits and governance of the cause and effect. So God is the Giver of the fruit and the jīvas, the enjoyers thereof.

Q:—Why is there the independence of the jīvas ?

A :—Jīvas are the atomic parts of God, the *vibhu-chit* (Plenary Sentience). The property of the sea, viz. water, is present in an atomic degree in a drop, too. *Vibhu* (or Over Lord) God is totally independent ; there is independence in *anu-chit-jīva* (i.e., atomic sentience, too, proportionally).

Q :—Is the proper use or abuse of the independence of jīvas instigated by God ?

A :—If it had been God-instigated, then that would have amounted to the service of God and not caused the jīva's forgetfulness of Him.

Q :—Then how can the conclusion be arrived at, viz., “everything depends upon God's Will” ? I am putting these questions not for the sake of discussion, I am asking them

because you are a great scholar and a great devotee at the same time. In the Hindi Gītā of Shri Tilaka I read an *abhanga* (panegyric to God) by Tuka-Rama, the sense of which runs thus : “O God, if my karma bring me liberation then what should I have to do with You ?”

A :—The Shrimad Bhāgavatam has given a reply to this, “He is an heir to liberation, O God, who, feeling Your Grace in everything and enduring the troubles caused by his own karma, bows down to You with mind, speech and body i.e., wholeheartedly”. He who has acquired fitness for being freed from the world understands that if the blame is laid at the door of God, then, on account of the want of the tendency towards doing service to God, liberation is never available. Only a person who is fortunate to have the tendency for the *chit*-service aroused in him can easily become the possessor of the position of liberation, and he can be more attracted towards God, considering all the troubles and difficulties as His Grace.

Q :—Then are the sins that we commit due to God's Grace ?

A:—No, they are not. The predilection for sins has been given to test us, in the same manner as money, paddy, a copy of the Shrimad Bhāgavatam, etc. are placed before an infant at the time of the first-rice ceremony to see what it takes according to its innate tendency. Before the thread ceremony, too, the Achāryā tests the tendency of the boy to be initiated. God's cruelty is what the human intellect apprehends when it is apathetic towards God. If one take it to be a punishment, it is to be understood that such a one is wanting in a serving temper and in attraction for God. God is the shelter for all. He sends many obstacles

and inconveniences to those who wish for shelter under Him, in order to test their ardour and steadiness. For example, when the Vaidya prescribes bitter and astringent medicines and distasteful diets, or the doctor opens the abscess with his lancet, if the patient is displeased with them on the ground that they are cruel and not his well-wishers, his decision is wrong as he has taken his real friends to be enemies.

"The divine potency, *māyā*, has kept tempting objects as exhibits for alluring me just as the fishing hook or the net, or the rat-trap or the chain, is set to delude fish, rats, elephants, etc. The object is that I may thereby get more and more entangled in the worldly meshes. Misled by these deluding traps, sometimes I become a wanton performer of misdeeds, sometimes a philanthropist doing good deeds, sometimes again consider oneness with non-distinct Brahman as the good for me, feeling a high regard for the doctrines of Buddha, Shankarācharya or Kapila." *Māyā* Devi has placed in order alluring things according to the diverse temperaments of the persons who are deluded by the tenets of karma or *jnana* due to their having desires for things other than the Truth. Jiva will attain his true well-being, when he engages himself in the accounts relating to God ; there is no other way thereto. God does not set up obstructions against anyone, and He is not the destroyer of *chetana-dharma* or sentience in him. It would have been an act of cruelty on His part, if He had placed obstacles against this sentience ; He is only informing the sentient entities of what is the proper use of their sentience and what are its abuses.

Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has asked us not to act

upon the instruction of the sage Jaimini about worldly elevations, nor upon those of Shri Dattātreya, Shankara, etc., about the culture of non-distinct Brahman, for that is not the proper use of our sentience or independence. Just work for doing service to God, and never do a thing which is not meant for it. He has said all this for the true well-being of jivas who have got material perceptions for generating, rather uncovering, their sentience. No one is engaged in a piece of work being propelled by a desire for distress. The bereaved mother is hitting her chest hard with her hands and hurting her head against a piece of stone only to destroy her grief. A patient is belching out by disturbing his throat with his fingers, only to obtain a speedy relief. The Karmis being desirous of the fruit of their karma are making different performances only to get such speedy remedies. Their inner motive is to secure instantaneous relief. Being duped by matters pleasant for the time being, they are running towards the mirage of *māyā*. According to them, the method for the speedy end of worldly troubles is : 'I shall be the overlord of the world, become Indra of the heaven, or enjoy and distribute the various worldly enjoyments. This is only apathy towards God. The culture of non-distinct Brahman is only another phase in our attempts to secure a speedy remedy. The fact is that we want some fees (i.e., the return of some good for our exertions) in some shape or another. We run for enjoyments when we think ourselves dissociated from God. Then we think that it is necessary to make the proper use of our canine teeth, to revel in the functions peculiar to youth, to bring round other people to civic order or social civilization and so forth. Those attempts are only the results of our

forgetfulness about God. These predilections are only meant for enjoyment, as God has said : "All acts are performed by the *gunas* of nature or *māyā* and being misled by egotism the soul thinks himself as the doer.

The *jivatma* is an entity beyond the *gunas* ; he is above the *Māyāshakti*, for he serves God. But the power of *māyā* is far above. The aptitude or inclination of a *jiva* apathetic towards God is to be bound down by *māyā*, to swallow the bait, and bathed in sweat from head to foot due to hard labour and wasting the invaluable life, to gather fuel for the enjoyment of the wives, sons, daughters, grandsons, great-grandsons, many of whom we shall not have any chance even to see, and leave it behind for their sake. I plant a palm-tree, the fruit of which will be enjoyed by others whom I shall never meet with and who will one day squander away all my hoarded wealth and property. All my efforts are to this end ! There is a *Shloka* to the effect : "O Krishna, I have obeyed the wrong commands of *kāma* (desires), etc., numberless and of any type, but yet they are not kind to me, not feel ashamed, and there is no cessation of these. Now I have got true intelligence, and having rejected them I have taken shelter in You with the prayer that I may be employed in Your service."

Those who are given to karma admit God indirectly ; those of the *jñāna-mārga* wish for being one with God ; but we do not cherish any such wrong desire. Our hope is to become the carriers of foot-wear for servants of Hari unlike those who adopt *jñāna*. We do not claim to possess learning nor intelligence ; we mind only the truth received from the lotus-feet of Shri Gurudeva in the capacity of his servants ; we do not lay down any new proposition. We say only what we have got to say in favour of the realisation of that one Truth.

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The Temple of Sriman Mahaprabhu

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850 N Reyes St., Sampaloc, Manila, Philippines

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Via Dandola 24, No. 41, Sc. B 00152 Rome, Italy Tel : (58) 99422

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