

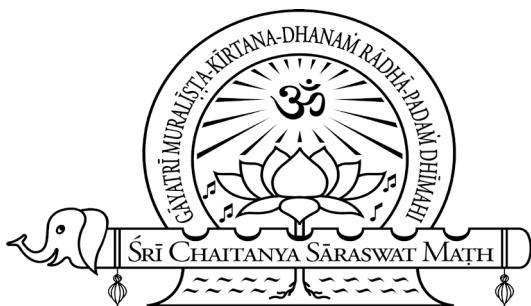
Guidance

by
His Divine Grace
Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti
Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj

All Glory to Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga

GUIDANCE

*Compiled from the discourses emanating from
the heart of Ananta-śrī-vibhūṣita Om Viṣṇupād
Paramahaṁsa-kula-chūḍāmaṇi Viśva-vareṇya
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj
— { Volume 1 } —*



Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh,
Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām
2015

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PRESENTATION

Placed humbly and carefully in the holy lotus hands of
Śrīla Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj on the holy day of
His Divine Grace's Śrī Vyāsa Pūjā, 13 October 2015,
together with *Guidance, Volume 2*.

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the successor Sevāite-President-Āchārya of Śrī Chaitanya
Sāraswat Maṭh, the present day holder of the current of pure
devotion in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu*



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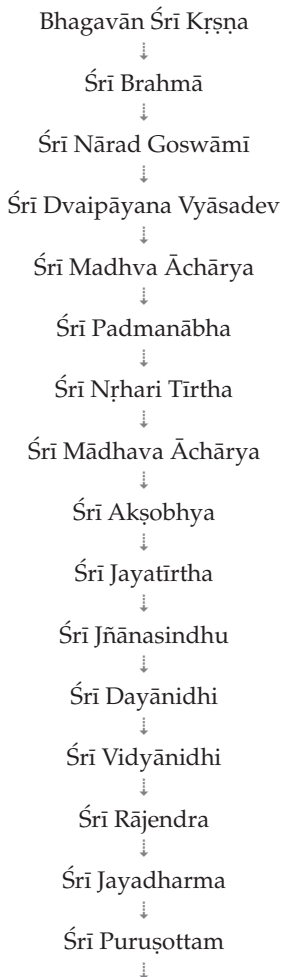
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the Founder-Āchārya of Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭh and the modern age
reviver of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's movement and conception.*

Introduction

Brahmā–Madhva–Gauḍīya Sampradāya (Our Disciplic Succession)





— { Declaration of Succession } —

*From the lotus mouth of His Divine Grace Oṃ Viṣṇupād
Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj*

“The Next Āchārya”

4 December 2009

“He, (Śrīpād Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj), is highly qualified and I have chosen him as the next Āchārya of this Maṭh. All of you should unitedly proceed under his guidance, serve under him faithfully, and love him. His love for the Maṭh is his greatest quality. That the Maṭh should not lose even one inch of its land, even one inch of its property—he is continuously working towards this end.

“Maṭh secretary, Maṭh manager, future Maṭh Āchārya, Śrīpād Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj kī jay! After me, all of you should continue as his followers. Everyone makes mistakes, but I very rarely see anyone with a sincere, heartfelt service mood like him. The type of profound vision and attentive care he has for every matter cannot be seen anywhere. I pray the Lord will bring him all goodness and auspiciousness.”

“A Miracle”

7 February 2009

“We are so blissful and so much indebted to Śrīpād Āchārya Mahārāj because he hears what Śrīla Guru Mahārāj wants, what I want, and does that. He has done everything, all arrangements.

He has the capacity and has done so much. It is a miracle. Śrīpād Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj is an impossible man, a miraculous man whose energy is over-flooding for the service to our society. He is my very dear friend, very dear disciple, very dear worker, everything. My blessings to him. He is doing, attending to all of my own service duties, and I am so happy.”

“My Desire, My Order, and My Wish”

13 September 2008

“As per direction of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, the members of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh will be those who are under the guidance of the Sevāite-President of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh. If somebody cannot understand, cannot proceed with help, affection, and love to Śrīpād Āchārya Mahārāj, they must not disturb the Mission’s affairs and must get out.

“At present I see that Śrīpād Āchārya Mahārāj is the fittest person as the Sevāite-President-Āchārya. So, this is my order. My well-wishes and my affection and love are with Śrīpād Āchārya Mahārāj. He is fully dedicated to the Mission and to Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga Gāndharvā Govindasundar, he wants to do all the good things for the Math. So, to stay in the Math everyone must support him. This is my desire, my order, and my wish.

“Everyone follows him, but not everyone follows him with affection—everyone must respect him as the Maṭh Āchārya and help him. Those who cannot accept him must get out. This is not only my desire, even Śrīla Guru Mahārāj’s desire is like that. In this way the Mission will continue.”



— { Praṇām-mantra } —

Composed by His Divine Grace

Oṃ Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

pūjya-śrī-guru-varga-vandita-mahābhāvānvitāyā sadā
paurvāparā-paramparā-prachalita-prājya-pramūrtākṛteḥ
bhakter nirmala-nirjharasya nibhṛtaṁ samrakṣakaṁ sādaram
vande śrī-gurudevam ānata-śirā āchārya-varyaṁ nijam

“I bow my head in eternal obeisance to my Gurudev, the best of āchāryas, Śrīla Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj. He is the ever vigilant, stalwart guardian of the current of pure devotion—the devotion whose highest form flows from our most worshippingable Śrī Rūpānuga Guru-varga in their exclusive dedication to Mahābhāv, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.”

prerakaṁ prāchya-pāśchātya-śiṣyānāṁ bhakti-vartmani
bhakti-nirmalam-āchārya-svāmināṁ praṇamāmy aham

“I offer my respectful obeisances to Swāmī Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya, who is energetically inspiring all Eastern and Western disciples on the path of pure devotion.”



— { Autobiography } —

*By His Divine Grace Ōm Viṣṇupād
Śrīla Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj*

...We had a large joint family of about 150 people, and we chanted the Holy Name, but only on special days—the family did not follow the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇav tradition. My father was a political man, he did not like religion. My mother was from a religious family, but she was religious without the proper conception.

I remember when I was about ten years old, I would wake up every day very early in the morning, put on a *dhotī*, and go to our small family temple to read *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*. My father did not like it and chastised my mother for this, but I still went there, secretly.

Then, after a few years, I went to study at college and then at university. When I finished university and passed the post-graduate exams, I started teaching at college.

I stayed in the paternal house, where my uncle was staying, for a few days, and then my uncle got me a job in Kolkata. He was an income tax commissioner in Kolkata, a very prominent person, and he knew a college principle. This is how I got the job of a part-time teacher. I started giving lectures on mathematics and physics there.

My maternal uncle liked to tell to me that his father, that is my grandfather, had always wanted me to become a lawyer, or a judge, and he encouraged me to start studying law. So, I studied

at night and taught at daytime, all at the same college. I studied like this for three years and received the LLB degree (Bachelor of Law), after which I took up practice under a senior advocate at Alipore Court, and sometimes at Kolkata High Court, and also continued lecturing at college.

At that time I was about twenty-seven years old. My mother always chastised and pressed me to get married. All my brothers and cousins had got married, but internally I had already decided that I would not get married. I had seen how much family people suffer, and I did not want to do that. I thought, “I can take care of myself, I can cook my own food, then why would I want to earn money with so much labour and spend it on some lady? What for?”

One day I came from the court and saw that my mother had not cooked for me. She said, “You are not getting married—who is going to cook for you?” She chastised me that day again and I ran away from the house.

I rented a house near Nabadwīp, in Śrīrāmpur, Bardhamān District. It is a five-minute walk from the Nabadwīp train station. I made a big centre in that house, Challenger Coaching Centre, and tutored there privately. I taught boys (from fifteen years old to graduate, postgraduate) mathematics, physics, chemistry, English grammar, Bengali grammar, geography, history. I made a sign board where I wrote I could teach all subjects, and when students saw the sign board they were impressed, “Oh, one teacher can teach all the subjects. I want to go there!”

Sometimes some college boys and girls came and asked me about my degree. I told them I had MSc in mathematics; then they challenged me to explain English grammar, and I explained it to them easily. This is how I began to teach there. Within fifteen days after opening the centre, I was already teaching 250 students. I would start early in the morning, 5 a.m. and continue until late

at night, 12 a.m. I charged 50 rupees per student and earned a lot of money at that time. Because I had a law certificate, I also practised law at Kṛṣṇa Nagar Court from time to time.

Then once I could not sleep the whole night. When a little bit of sleep was coming, somebody called me, “Govinda Mahārāj is alone! Take care of him.” I was thinking and searching, “Who is Govinda Mahārāj? Who is this?” I did not know... It was like *ākāś dhvani*, a sound coming from the sky. All night that sound kept coming to me.

Next day was a Sunday. It was a holiday and I did not teach on that day (some students came to me, but I sent them away). I never brushed my teeth outside, but that day I took my toothbrush and left as I was, wearing a *punjabi*. I walked from Śrīrāmpur to the Gaurāṅga Setu bridge and all the time kept thinking, “Who is that Govinda Mahārāj? Who is that? What was that sound I heard?” From the bridge I saw the domes of the temple and I wondered, “What temple is this? I want to go see it.” And I came to the temple.

The main gate was not always open like now because at that time all roads were mud roads, there were no bricks or anything like that, and when a car or a tractor passed by there was a lot of mud everywhere. So, I sat beside that iron steel-sheet gate where the bookshop is now. I was sitting and thinking.

An hour later, a *brahmachārī* came out. He saw me and asked, “Who are you?” I told him I lived nearby and was from a town near Kolkata. He asked me what job I did, and I told him I was a private teacher and a lawyer. Then he left.

Next, I saw an old *brahmachārī*—the manager of the temple at that time. There was somebody fishing in Govinda Kuṇḍa and that old *brahmachārī* was hiding to catch the fisherman. He caught that boy and chastised him so much. Apologising and promising not to do it again, the boy begged him to return his hook...

Then, at three o'clock the first *brahmachārī* came back. Later I learnt he had come from Hāpāniyā Dhām. At that time I had never even heard of Hāpāniyā. He was surprised to see me again,

“You are still sitting here! Have you taken *prasādam*?”

“What is *prasādam*?”

“Food! It is our food.”

“Oh, nobody told me I could get some food...” I did not even know what *prasādam* was, and I was very hungry—I came early in the morning, but it was already three o'clock and I had not eaten anything.

He took me with him. At that time the *prasādam* place was where the storage room is now, and there was a plate with some *prasādam* kept for him. He gave me a plate and put half of his *prasādam* for me. I said to him, “Prabhu, it is too less for you!” but he insisted, and I ate. After that he showed me around and told me about the temple. There were not so many buildings at that time: he showed me the main temple, Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj's *samādhi mandir*, and some other buildings.

After that he said to me, “You are a good, educated boy. Why do you not stay here, at the temple? You are not going to get married, then why will you return to your house and tutor people? What do you earn the money for? You can stay at the temple.” He asked the manager of the temple if I could stay. The manager did not like it,

“He is a lawyer, what is going to do here?”

“Oh, he will do some service...”

Finally, he agreed, “All right, take him to Dāmodara Mahārāj.”

Dāmodara Mahārāj was in charge of the guest house and he gave me a room (it was room number 11; now it is number 13) and a mattress. For three or four years I stayed without a bed-sheet or a pillow—I only had that coconut mattress on the floor, nothing else, and I did not ask for anything. I was also given one *dhotī*.

This is how I moved into the temple.

After I joined, in three-four days, one devotee chastised me,

“What have you come here for?”

“I do not know.”

“Then why are you here if you do not know?!”

“I want to do some service, want to stay in the temple. That *brahmachārī* said I could stay here. He said I could do what they were doing.”

“Who is the Guru here?”

“I do not know.”

“Then why are you here? You do not even know the Guru’s name here!”

“OK, Prabhu, I do not know. Tell me the name of the Guru.”

He told Gurudev’s name, and I remembered that message from the sky. He was calling me. Somebody was sending me to him, “That is your spiritual master.” So, I did whatever I was told to do and was waiting for Gurudev to come.

Soon after that, perhaps a few days later, Gurudev came back from his first world tour (it was 1992). Everyone went to pay *daṇḍavat* to him, I also went behind everyone and paid my *daṇḍavat*. Somebody told him, “This is a new boy,” and then he saw me. He gave a class and I sat there, always behind. I just listened and did not ask any questions.

He asked me, “What service are you doing?” I told him that the Maṭh manager sent me to the crops field. Gurudev said, “Good. Do you go there alone now?”

“Yes, I go alone.”

“Do you know all our land?”

“Yes. I know all land.” After the manager went with me on the first day, he did not go again—he understood that he did not have to supervise me.

“Do you know the name of the villages where our land is?”

“Yes, I do.”

“Tell me the village names.”

“Nrisinghajuli and Bonorpukur.” He was very happy.

“Do you know the name of the servitor who lives there?”

I told him the name, and he was also very happy.

He told the manager of the temple, “Take care of this boy.” After a few days Gurudev gave me initiation and the name Vinod Rañjan Dās. On that day I was given one more *dhotī*. Before that I had been wearing the same *dhotī* for one month—when I went to rest in the afternoon, I washed it and while it was drying I wore my trousers.

For two months I could not sleep well, I always dreamt of mathematics, physics, writing on the blackboard, solving the problems. I was thinking about my room—my big bed, my almirah, big mattress, my fan, attaché case, suitcase, the money, all these things—and one day I just threw the key from my room into Govinda Kuṇḍa.

Next were my clothes. When I saw my trousers, my *punjabi*, I again remembered my previous house, so when I got that one more *dhotī* after the initiation I decided to burn my old clothes. I could not ask for a candle or matches because they would think I was smoking, so I waited. When there was no electricity somebody brought me a candle, and I burnt my clothes with that candle.

This is how, little by little, I removed the illusory environment.

Every day I listened to Hari-kathā: morning class, afternoon class, and evening class—I would be sitting there. I listened to *Chaitanya-bhāgavata* and *Chaitanya-charitāmṛta* classes happily, but when Dāmodar Mahārāj or some old devotee read *Bhāgavatam* in the afternoon, it was hard for me and I could not understand it.

...Sometimes Māyā would also come. Once a man came to me and said, “Why did you come to the temple at this age? You

can still get married, you can earn money!" I thought, "He is not a temple man, he is against the temple. He is staying at the temple but spreading bad ideas." I was always observing everything—who is doing, and who is doing what...

I remember when Gurudev just came back he asked me, "Do you want to stay at the temple?"

"Yes."

"Whom will you worship—Gaura or Kṛṣṇa? Do you like Gaura's or Kṛṣṇa's *līlā* more?"

I did not know what to answer. I knew something about both Gaura and Kṛṣṇa, so I said, "Both."

"Yes, it is the right answer."

One day in 1999, it was in Rāma Didi's house—Gurudev asked me, "Vinod, will you get married?"

I was surprised, "What for? I did not come to the temple to get married. I came here to the temple because I was afraid to get married..."

"Oh, so you will not get married... Then you can take *sannyās*!"

"*Sannyās*? I will give my answer tomorrow, after twenty-four hours..."

After twenty-four hours I came, paid my *daṇḍavat*, and went away immediately. I was waiting. Forty-eight hours passed, seventy-two hours passed like this. Finally, Gurudev said, "You are stretching time but not giving the answer!"

Rāma Didi, Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj's sister, also said to Gurudev, "Now you have to make somebody who will be the *āchārya* after you." Then Gurudev said to me at once, "You can take *sannyās*."

I told Gurudev at that time, "Gurudev, you can say I am like your goat. You can cut my head or tail, no problem. So, whatever you tell me to do, I agree. I am unqualified, but if you think I am qualified for *sannyās*, you can give it."

You know that after *sannyās* I went preaching. Before that I also went to many places for preaching, collection. I took so much responsibility for that. “It is service to Gurudev. If somebody is not doing it, I must do it”—that is my mood. Before me they also preached, but they would go only for some rice collection, but I thought, “Why go house to house and collect only one-two kilograms of rice? If I go preaching to other places, then more rice will also come.”

When I came to the Maṭh, only 250 people joined the *parikramā* at that time, so I thought, “If I go preaching, people must come. It is a good conception—Mahāprabhu’s conception, Gurudev’s conception. Śrīdhara Mahārāj gave so many books, it is like fish food—when there is food in a pond, the fish must come.”

...I remember my first construction service was the *gośālā*. It was 1993. Previously, it was a small place and the cows were always too crowded there. Our field was there, but there was no boundary wall. Gurudev told me, “Do this job, it is necessary for the cows,” and at the same time Gurudev also said to Dāmodara Mahārāj, “Do not give any money to him. I want to see how he arranges it.” So, I had to borrow some money from others to make the boundary wall...

Actually whatever I have done, it is Gurudev’s hand, I am only an instrument...



Guidance

Volume 1

*Drops of nectar collected from the lectures
emanating from the holy lotus mouth of
Ananta-śrī-vibhūṣita Oṃ Viṣṇupād
Paramahaṃsa-kula-chūḍāmaṇi Jagad-Guru
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj.*

Śrīla Gaurī Dās Paṇḍit

20 September 2009

Nitāi and Gaura Themselves installed Their Deities in the house of Gaurī Dās Paṇḍit. One day Nityānanda and Mahāprabhu went preaching, and They came to Gaurī Dās Paṇḍit's house. Gaurī Dās Paṇḍit said,

“Prabhu, You came to my house willingly, I did not invite You. It was Your wish to come, and it is my wish that You cannot go. Without my permission, You cannot go.”

“How is it possible? We have to go preaching everywhere. We have to distribute the Holy Name everywhere, house to house.”

“That is Your matter, but my wish is like this.”

“Look behind!”

When Gaurī Dās Paṇḍit turned round, he saw the same Gaura Nitāi inside his house, and They were talking too. Gaurī Dās Paṇḍit could not recognise, “Are You the original, or are They the original?”

Mahāprabhu asked him,

“OK, who will stay, those who are outside or inside?”

“Well, those who are inside my house are better.”

From that time, Nitāi and Gaura stayed there.

Gaurī Dās Paṇḍit had a disciple called Chaitanya Dās. Once they were going to celebrate Gaura Pūrṇimā, and Gaurī Dās Paṇḍit went for preaching and collection while Chaitanya Dās stayed at home to worship the Deities. Three days passed, but Gaurī Dās Paṇḍit had not returned. Chaitanya Dās became very anxious, “Why is Gurudev not coming? The festival is near...”

Chaitanya Dās decided not to wait longer and invited all the local devotees for Gaura Pūrṇimā. The next day, however, Gaurī Dās Paṇḍit returned, and Chaitanya Dās told him,

“Gurudev, you were coming late, so I invited all devotees while you were away...”

“It is not good! Without my permission you invited everybody? It is not the mood of a disciple! Get out of my temple.”

Chaitanya Dās went away and stayed at the bank of the Ganges. On the Gaura Pūrṇimā day devotees brought *bhog* and other things for the festival. Gaurī Dās Paṇḍit asked them, “Who invited you? He who invited you, is not here. Maybe he is at the bank of the Ganges.” The devotees took the *bhog*, went to Chaitanya Dās, and started the festival there. It was Gaura Pūrṇimā, but Gaurī Dās Paṇḍit stayed alone.

At noon he saw that the Deities were not there. Gaurī Dās Paṇḍit got angry, “My Gaura Nitāi?? Have They gone *there*!!” He went to the bank of the Ganges and saw thousands of thousands of devotees and Gaura Nitāi dancing! He took a stick, “I will beat Them!” Gaura Nitāi became afraid and entered the heart of Chaitanya Dās. From that day his name became Hṛdaya Chaitanya (he in whose heart Chaitanya is).

You see? When devotees are there, Kṛṣṇa is there.



Disappearance of Śrīla Haridās Ṭhākur

24 September 2009

One day Mahāprabhu asked Haridās Ṭhākur, “Prabhu what disease do you have? What has happened to you today?” Every day Haridās Ṭhākur would chant three *lakhs* (300 000) Names, and so he replied, “Prabhu, my only disease is that I could not finish my chanting of the Holy Name... That is my disease. *Śarīra sustha haya mora, asustha buddhi-mana* (Cc, 3.11.22): my body is not sick, only my mind is sick.”

Without having finished his chanting, he did not eat, did not take *prasādam*. Do you know that? There was like a rule that every day *prasādam* would come from the Jagannāth temple, and when Mahāprabhu finished His *prasādam*, He would send the remnants to Haridās Ṭhākur. Govinda (Mahāprabhu’s servant) would take that *prasādam* to Haridās Ṭhākur.

Every day Haridās Ṭhākur chanted loudly (to give benefit to all *jīva* souls—those who cannot talk, cannot hear, trees, birds, etc.), but one day when Govinda came to Haridās Ṭhākur, he saw him lying down on his bed and chanting, but the sound was not coming. Govinda asked, “Prabhu, please take this *prasādam*.” Haridās Ṭhākur replied, “*Āji lañghan*: today I have to break the rule. Every day after I finish chanting, you bring *prasādam*, and I take it, but today my chanting is not finished, then how am I to take *prasādam*? But Mahāprabhu sent His *prasādam*, so how shall I reject it? What can I do? I have to honour this *prasādam*, and so I have to break the rule today.”

Then he took a bit of the *prasādam* and said, “Govinda, now go.”

Govinda told everything to Mahāprabhu. The next day Mahāprabhu came to Haridās Ṭhākur and asked him,

“Haridās, what has happened to you?”

“Prabhu, *śarīra sustha haya mora, asustha buddhi-mana*. My health is not a problem, only my mind is a problem. My mind is sick—I could not finish my chanting on the beads...”

“You are a *siddha mahāpuruṣa*, you are already a liberated soul. You are Namāchārya Haridās Ṭhākur, a great Vaiṣṇav—it is not necessary for you to chant so many rounds, you can do a little less.”

“Prabhu, in all my life I have not asked You for anything, and now I want to ask You for something...”

Mahāprabhu agreed, and Haridās Ṭhākur said,

“Prabhu, You have given me Your mercy and I could see Your Pastimes from Your birth day up until now. I have seen everything, all Your Pastimes, but I think You are going to finish Your *līlā* soon... Prabhu, I do not want to see that kind of *līlā*. I want to go before You—I want to leave my body before You.”

“Yes, no problem, but...” Then immediately Haridās Ṭhākur fell down at His lotus feet—he did not want to hear anything further from Mahāprabhu, “Prabhu, do not give me *māyā*. I know You love me so much, and that is why I do not want to hear You further. Please give me some mercy—I want to go before You.”

“You will go, no problem, but I always do My every *līlā* with you, and if you go, how can My *līlā* finish?”

“Prabhu, I am only an ant. If just one ant dies, what is the loss for You? Many devotees come to You... Please, Prabhu, fulfil my desire. I want You to come to me, I want to see Your face, and place Your feet on my heart.”

“When a pure, permanent devotee asks Kṛṣṇa for something, Kṛṣṇa always fulfils his desire...”

So, the next day Mahāprabhu came and asked, “What has happened?” Haridās Ṭhākur replied, “*Ye ichchhā tomāra*: as You wish, Prabhu.” Haridās Ṭhākur was lying down, and Mahāprabhu told everybody to circumambulate his body. Mahāprabhu sat down by the side of Haridās Ṭhākur’s bed, and Haridās Ṭhākur pulled His leg and put it on his chest. He was looking at Mahāprabhu and kept saying, “Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya.” And that *jīva* soul left... This is how Haridās Ṭhākur left his body.

Mahāprabhu Himself took Haridās Ṭhākur’s body to the *samudra*, the sea. All devotees bathed him and Mahāprabhu said, “Today this *samudra* is a *mahā-tīrtha*, has become even holier.” Everybody drank some water from the sea, put *tilak*, and took Haridās Ṭhākur’s body to the shore. Mahāprabhu Himself dug the ground, seated Haridās Ṭhākur, and put the sand and some salt.

Then Mahāprabhu Himself went begging to the Jagannāth temple’s market. Everybody gave so much, and the devotees made a Vaiṣṇav festival, where Mahāprabhu Himself distributed *prasādam*. This is how He made the festival for Haridās Ṭhākur.

One day Mahāprabhu asked Haridās Ṭhākur, “How will the souls in this Kali-yuga be rescued?” Haridās Ṭhākur replied, “*Nāmābhāse mukti pāibe*.” It means that through *Nāmābhāse* (imperfect chanting, or chanting the shadow of the Holy Name) everyone will be rescued. For example, all Muslim people say, “*Hārām!*” It means “bad, not to do,” but it can also mean, “*Hā Rām*: O Rām, O Rām!” So, if they say “*hārām*,” they will be rescued from this world too.

Mahāprabhu said,

prabhu kahe, “kahilān ei mahā-mantra
ihā japa’ giyā sabe kariyā nirbandha”

(Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata, Madhya-khaṇḍa, 23.77)

“Always chant the Holy Name—there is no obstruction, no binding, you can chant this Holy Name at any time.”

ki śayane, ki bhojane, kibā jāgaraṇe
aharniśa chinta kṛṣṇa, balaha vadane
(Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata, Madhya-khaṇḍa, 28.28)

“Even when you sleep, when you eat, sit, or sit in a car you can also chant—you can chant at any time!”

ihā haite sarva-siddhi haibe sabāra
sarva-kṣaṇa bala’ ithe vidhi nāhi āra
(Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata, Madhya-khaṇḍa, 23.78)

“Everybody will be rescued from this environment through the Holy Name.” Also,

yadi āmā’-prati sneha thāke sabākāra
tabe kṛṣṇa-vyatirikta nā gāibe āra
(Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata, Madhya-khaṇḍa, 28.27)

“If you have some love and affection to Me, if you love Me, please only chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, nothing else. If you do not love Me, then do not chant.”

Mahāprabhu told these kinds of things very strongly...



A Speck of Dust of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh

25 September 2009

Sincerity is always necessary in our practising life. Sincerity is *most necessary* in our life. Gurudev also said that many devotees may have sincerity, but only 10% or 5% of the devotees have chastity. These are Gurudev's words.

When Śrīla Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī Prabhu stayed at Rādhā Kuṇḍa, some devotee, a Vraja *bāsī*, used to every day bring him some buttermilk in a *donā*, a bowl made from leaves. One time that devotee could not bring a bowl from the usual place, and instead he brought it from some other place. Dās Goswāmī Prabhu threw it away. He said, "I only accept a bowl from Rādhā Kuṇḍa or Kusum Sarovar." That is the kind of chastity they have. They are Rādhārāṇī's followers, not followers of anybody else...

You are devotees of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, and Gurudev says that you are all on the ship of Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, and everybody should come under one umbrella.

Sometimes we have some problem, or some ego... We hear, "Come under one umbrella," but we bring our own raincoat.

Another time Gurudev said to me, "If you become a speck of dust, *dhūli-kaṇā*, of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, then I will make one place for you." He told me that.

He also told me this story about A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swāmī Mahārāj, Śrīla Prabhupād. When he went to America, he went once to the jail to see one of his disciples. When he saw him, that

devotee cried and said, “I earned some money and gave it all to you to make a temple in Vṛndāvan, Kṛṣṇa Balarām temple, but what has happened? Why am I in this kind of position? Why am I in jail?” But Prabhupād said, “This is your previous *karma*. But you have given a donation for the temple, so do not worry, there is a place reserved for you in Goloka Vṛndāvan.”

That is called service result, service mood...



Chant Constantly

June 2010

Question: *I live far from the temple and do not have the association of devotees. Is it good if, while I am at home and away from the temple, I chant and practise on my own?*

Of course! “*Gṛhe vā vanete thāke*”: you can stay anywhere, in a forest or a house, it is necessary to chant, only to chant constantly. When you stop chanting, illusory environment can come. Chant constantly!

Sometimes you will not get taste, but you should think, “Why am I not getting taste? Because something bad has come into my mind, that is why I am not getting taste through chanting.” So, you should chant constantly. Those who only talk, talk, talk, their energy goes into talking, and they cannot chant.

Yesterday also I was coming by car, and someone there was always talking, talking, talking, and I could not tolerate it. Then I started chanting, and the talking stopped. Actually, I do not like so much talk, you know that.

Question: *We are chanting the songs, but generally we do not understand their meaning. Does it bring the same result, the same benefit to us?*

Of course. When Mahāprabhu went to South India, there was one *brāhmaṇ* who was reading *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* with tears in his eyes, but his reading was wrong, he did not know how to pronounce the Sanskrit. Mahāprabhu asked that *brāhmaṇ*, “*Brāhmaṇ*, why are you crying? You are reading *Śrīmad Bhagavad-*

gītā, but your reading is wrong, then what are you reading? Why are tears coming to your eyes?" The *brāhmaṇ* replied, "My Gurudev told me, 'Read *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*,' so I am reading. I do not know what is the meaning or anything, but when I am reading I can see Lord Kṛṣṇa, Arjun, their chariot running like this. I can see that, but when I stop, I cannot see it, that is why I am reading—I want to see that..."

You must use most of your time for chanting. Sometimes you work or sometimes cook, but you do not cook with your mouth, you cook with your hands; you work on a computer, but you work with your hands. When you are not working with your mouth, you are wasting your time. Use your time for chanting. Through chanting, everything comes: through chanting you will get the real service.

And do not do so much *pūjā* every day. Do not spend three hours a day doing *pūjā* and other things like that, it is not our line. Whatever you do, you must spend most of your time on chanting.

I saw many devotees of Śrīla Gurudev, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj, Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj, and in the Gauḍīya Maṭh also: they follow so many rules and regulations, they spend three to eight hours a day doing some *pūjā*, but they do not chant at all. For this reason such devotees do not last so long. They continue for a few years, and then they stop, but those who chant more, their devotional activities get more and more energy, and they last longer.

Sometimes you are not able to chant on the beads, but then you chant without the beads, no problem. What is your work, you do that, what is your service, you do that, and all other time you only chant Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. Do like this for one year, and then you tell me after one year what result you have got. OK?



The Four Regulative Principles

June 2010

Question: *To take initiation, we must follow the four regulative principles, but some people can be afraid to take initiation because they know they may fall down, break, or not follow the regulative principles. What advice could you give us?*

You should not force anybody but should give them advice, tell them, “You should follow the instruction. It is not good.” *Dyūta*, *pāna*, *striya*, *sūnā* (gambling, intoxication, illicit sex, animal-eating) are the four types of bad things where Kali always stays. ‘Kali’ means *kalau*, always fighting.

Kali is a very bad age, *Kaler doṣa-nidhi* (Kali has many faults), but we are fortunate that we have got this life: Mahāprabhu, the Lord Himself, came in this age, and we have got a bona fide Guru under the guidance of Mahāprabhu. At the same time, you must follow these rules. It is not a question of not chanting or not taking initiation, the question is that if you do not stop these four—*dyūta*, *pāna*, *striya*, *sūnā*—it is bad for *you*, and *you* can be attacked by Kali Mahārāj. You can tell it to them in this way, and they should slowly, slowly avoid it. Kali Mahārāj always stays in these four places, so you should preach that we should avoid these places.

If you do not avoid that, it is like somebody has a gastric disease, acidity, and they take antacid (the medicine), but also take so much chilli, sour food, etc., then how will they get relief? They must think both ways—either you drink milk or you drink whiskey. Which do you choose? You cannot drink both. You

must drink milk and avoid these things. Śrīla Prabhupād said, “*Kupatha varjan korte habe āṛ supatha grahaṇ korte habe* (you should reject unhealthy things, and take wholesome, healthy things).” It means take *prasādam* and avoid these things; otherwise if you chant the Holy Name and take these kinds of things, it will not give any cure in your life.

I saw also many people in India, Bengal, who had taken initiation from Gurudev. Gurudev asked them directly, “Will you obey the four rules and regulations?” They promised to follow, but in India people can actually follow only three regulative principles, and the only one they cannot follow is giving up *māch*, fish. They can leave meat, but they cannot leave fish. So, some take the Holy Name, but after one-two years they leave everything, they cannot chant or practise any more. I saw this even in Param Guru Mahārāj’s disciples—some do not follow the rules and regulations, and a few days, six months, or one year after taking initiation they put the beads away in some high place and the beads dry up, or get eaten by insects...



Śrī Guru: Mercy at Your Doorstep

June 2010

Param Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, mentioned in his book *Śrī Guru and His Grace* a very nice expression. I am giving you that example now, and if you read the book, you can easily find it there. Param Guru Mahārāj told:

There is a lotus blooming very nicely in a pond, and there is so much heat coming from the sun, but the lotus blooms even more in that heat: the heat cannot cause any damage to the lotus. Once you take that lotus out of the pond—out of the shelter of the soil and the water—and keep it somewhere outside, it will immediately, within two minutes, change its colour, wither, and dry up.

So, when the lotus is under the shelter of the soil and the water, the powerful sun cannot destroy that lotus, but when it is not under the shelter of water and soil, it immediately dries up. So, Guru Mahārāj compared the sun to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the soil and the water to Gurudev, and the lotus to ourselves: when we are under the shelter of Gurudev, Kṛṣṇa cannot destroy us, cannot break us; but when we are not under the shelter of Gurudev, then any time we can be destroyed. Like this.

That is why we must take shelter of the Guru:

sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair
uktas tathā bhāvyata eva sadbhiḥ
kintu prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya
vande guroḥ śrī-charaṇāravindam

“I offer my obeisance unto the lotus feet of Śrī Guru, who is said by all the scriptures to be the Lord Himself, and considered to be so by the sādhus, yet is also the Lord’s beloved devotee.”
 (Śrī Gurvaṣṭakam, 7, by Śrīla Viśvanāth Ṭhākura)

Viśvanāth Chakravartī Ṭhākura wrote this. *Sākṣād-dharitvena*, Gurudev is the Lord Himself, and at the same time *sākṣād-dharitvena* means Gurudev is a close associate of Rādhārāṇī or Nityānanda Prabhu. What has he come for? Kṛṣṇa has sent him to rescue us, to take us home, but we do not want to go. Kṛṣṇa is pulling us one way, and we are grasping onto our house pillar. Kṛṣṇa and Gurudev are saying, “Come with me! I have come to take you home,” but we reply, “No, I must go take some food... I will go later.”

On the other hand, Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj also said, “Even if Lord Brahmā comes to take me, I will not go. I will tell him that I have so much service to my Guru.”

Mahāprabhu went house to house, door to door, and told Nityānanda Prabhu also, “Go door to door,” but Prabhupād, Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura said, “Not door to door—go heart to heart!”

jīva jāga, jīva jāga, gorāchāda bale
 kata nidrā yāo mājā-piśāchīra kole
 (Gītāvalī, Aruṇodaya kīrtan, 2.1, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

“How long are you going to sleep? Wake up. You have lost your address and I have come to take you back!” Mahāprabhu went door to door, and some opened the door, some did not; Prabhupād went heart to heart, and somebody’s heart was open, somebody’s heart was closed. Those who are fortunate souls open their door; it is called *sukṛti* (good fortune). There is *jñāta sukṛti* and *ajñāta sukṛti*: known and unknown *sukṛti*.

Maybe before we were some flower tree, and a flower from our tree was offered to the Lord, then through that kind of *sukṛti*

we have got this human body so that we can serve the Lord. Sometimes people go to India as tourists, and if they get some association from the devotees, they can immediately come to our Gurudev's lotus feet. You can see that this is *ajñāta sukr̥ti*, 'unknown *sukr̥ti*'. People get good association, and through that good association their hearts will become clean. Bhakti Devī said, "I do not go to a dirty place. I always go to a clean place." You may ask, "How to make our hearts clean?" The answer is through good association, *sādhū-saṅga*.

'sādhū-saṅga', 'sādhū-saṅga'—sarva-śāstre kaya
lava-mātra sādhū-saṅge sarva-siddhi haya

"Even a moment's association can give you supreme benefit." (Cc, 2.22.54) People serve and serve for millions and millions of lives, but they do not get good association, but once you get some *sukr̥ti*, you can immediately get that kind of mercy. Through *sukr̥ti*—*sādhū-saṅga*, *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*—you will get relief. Gurudev always said, "It is not necessary to wait for the next life."

durlabha mānava- janama sat-saṅge
taraha e bhava-sindhu re

"Having attained this rare human birth, cross over the ocean of material existence by associating with sādhus."
(*'Bhajahū re mana'*, 1, by Śrīla Govinda Dās Kavirājī)

It is so rare to get this human body, but at last you have got it! Why wait for the next life? Kṛṣṇa Himself says that those who have a good brain and good intelligence (*sumedhā*) can receive the Holy Name, but at the same time you must be a good receiver, otherwise if the telephone line works but your telephone is dead, you will not receive the signal. That is why you must be a good receiver, then easily you can reach your goal, your destination.

Lord Nṛsimhadev and “Kṛṣṇa in my heart”

June 2010

Question: *Why do we not worship Lord Nṛsimhadev? Can some devotees, for example grhasthas (householders), worship Nṛsimhadev?*

They can, but Lord Nṛsimhadev is not the Supreme Person. He is an *Avatār*. There are ten *Avatārs* (Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha, Nṛsimha, Vāmana, Paraśurāma, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Buddha and Kalki), and one of the *Avatārs* is Nṛsimhadev, but Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇ. Our conception is that we do not follow even Nārāyaṇ of Vaikuṇṭha. We pay obeisance to Nārāyaṇ, but our destination is more than that—we are going to Kṛṣṇa of Goloka Vṛndāvan. There, Kṛṣṇa always plays, chants, dances, Kṛṣṇa is a baby, and we worship Him in *śānta*, *dāsyā*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, or *mādhura rasas*. So, our worship is more than that. If somebody likes Nṛsimhadev, they can worship Nṛsimhadev, no problem.

Also, I remember I asked Gurudev this same question, and his answer was, “Nṛsimhadev is worshipped by those who are afraid.” I remember that answer of Gurudev... For those who are fully surrendered to Gurudev it is not necessary to go to Nṛsimhadev.

Question: *What is better: to develop some attraction for the Deity, devotees, this external environment in general, or to think that I have Kṛṣṇa in my heart and that is enough?*

No. Those who say, “Kṛṣṇa is in my heart, it is not necessary to do anything,” want to cheat you. Somebody may say, “Oh, it is not necessary to wear the neck beads, it is not necessary to put *tilak*, not necessary to do anything—Kṛṣṇa is in my heart!” Actually, they are not practising, they are cheating.



Yamadūts and Ego: How to Survive?

16 June 2010

***Question:** When we leave our body, Yamadūts come to take us. How can we avoid being taken by them?*

If you are a surrendered soul, if you do service and follow Kṛṣṇa consciousness, Yamadūts (messengers of Yamarāj, the Lord of Death) will never come to you. Only Viṣṇudūts (messengers of Lord Viṣṇu) will come to you.

Practise well, follow Gurudev’s instruction, that will be good... Where are your neck beads? You must always wear the neck beads. If you wear Tulasī neck beads, Yamadūts cannot touch you.

In India also some are afraid to wear Tulasī beads, and they do not wear it. I tell them forcefully,

“Who is telling you not to wear Tulasī beads?”

“Oh, my friends are teasing me, they are telling some bad things to me...”

“Who is feeding you?! Tulasī or your friend? Tell me.”

They are silent. Tulasī feeds you, the Lord feeds you!

In India some also make Tulasī very long and try to hide that they are wearing it—they button up their shirt’s collar so that nobody can see their Tulasī beads. It is very offensive. They are wearing Tulasī in a wrong way. They do not know that Tulasī feeds us. Why are we afraid to wear Tulasī beads? She protects us in our devotional activities...

Question: *How can a gr̥hastha be totally surrendered? How is it possible?*

It is possible. Everything is possible because you will do everything for the Lord. You are doing some job, you are doing it for the Lord; your wife is cooking, that cooking is for the Lord. Everything is like this—for the Lord. That is called surrender. You must surrender, then there will be no problem. A gr̥hastha may think, “A sannyāsī is so surrendered,” but that is not so. A sannyāsī may have another desire inside, then how can he be surrendered? A gr̥hastha can do what even a sannyāsī cannot do.

Question: *You were explaining that sometimes when we do a lot of service, our ego can increase, our ego can become an obstacle, and we start retarding in our service. How can we avoid it?*

It is necessary to avoid it through practising. Actually, when somebody, through some mercy of Gurudev and devotional activities, does a lot of service, they may think, “Oh, I am not doing anything,” while somebody else may do a little and think, “Oh, I have done so many things! I am doing this, I am doing that...” This depends on their qualities. When you get good association, you can understand, “What I am doing is wrong.”

I told yesterday about Dāruk. Dāruk is Kṛṣṇa’s devotee. He was fanning Kṛṣṇa with a *chāmar* (a yak tail fan) and suddenly thought, “Oh, I am getting some *sambhoga-vāda*, pleasure!” He at once stopped fanning: he could not move, thinking, “I am doing such a great service!” He was enjoying himself more than doing service.

When we do some service and increase our own enjoyment, it is not good. Through that enjoyment ego can come.

As for avoiding it, that actually comes automatically. If somebody does not avoid it, it becomes a big problem for them, and they eventually fall down. This is what I was talking about.

If there is a very heavy load in a boat, the boat will sink. “Oh, I am doing so much, I am doing this, I am doing that. I have done this”—so much ego comes, and you become very, very heavy, and in the end you sink with the boat. That is a big problem.

You must know what is bad and avoid it. That is called *bhakti-pratikūl*: avoiding what is not in favour of devotion. You can do it easily—just keep trying to avoid it and you will be able to do it.



Do Not Follow Your Mind: Surrender to Your Guru

16 June 2010

Actually, how can we understand that we are doing *bhajan*, that we are proceeding, we are practising and developing our Kṛṣṇa consciousness life? We do not realise this.

We cannot avoid rain, or some bad weather, but as soon as we can avoid it, we should immediately join the Kṛṣṇa consciousness program. If you are getting pleasure from your practice, then you should think that something is happening, that you are practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness and that some *bhajan* is happening.

We do not know what is good for us, what is bad for us, what will happen to us. Gurudev knows everything, the Lord knows. We cannot decide anything for ourselves: Kṛṣṇa will decide everything for me, Gurudev will decide everything for me, but we ourselves cannot decide what should happen and what should not happen.

Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī tried to come to Mahāprabhu many times, so many obstacles came to him through practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but Mahāprabhu sent him back, “Go back to your house.” Who would have thought? Mahāprabhu said to him again and again, “*Bātul hao nā, pāgal hao nā*. Do not become crazy, do not become crazy. You go back to your home and serve your family, and internally, in your heart, you can remember Me. That is sufficient for you.” What happened to him later? In the end, he got shelter of Mahāprabhu’s lotus feet, you all know that.

In another way, you can see Śrīla Sanātan Goswāmī also. Sanātan Goswāmī thought, “I will commit suicide. I will throw my body under the chariot of Jagannāthdev during the Ratha Yātrā,” but Mahāprabhu chastised him so much: “What are you doing? Do you think this body is yours?” *Dikṣā-kāle bhakta kare ātma-samarpaṇ*: when a devotee takes shelter, takes initiation, at that time he gives his body and his everything to Gurudev. So, Mahāprabhu said to him, “You have taken My shelter, you have given everything, even your body, to Me, then why do you want to spoil and destroy My things, My property?!” After that Mahāprabhu reassured Sanātan Goswāmī, “I will use this body for so much service. You think it is your body, but it is not. It is My property, and I will use this property in many ways—I have so many things to do through this property.”

So you think about it. Even Sanātan Goswāmī is showing that he wanted to follow his mind, but what did the Lord Himself say? He changed everything. Later, Mahāprabhu sent him to Vṛndāvan to preach His conception. He instructed him, “Serve the Vaiṣṇavs, print books, and when from Gaura Maṇḍal some old Vaiṣṇavs come to Vṛndāvan, take care of them.” That kind of service Mahāprabhu gave to Sanātan Goswāmī...

We cannot follow our mind. We do not know what will be good for us, so what instructions Gurudev gives, what Gurudev’s desire is, and what will happen—depend on him, give up everything to him. Do you understand?



Householders: Appearance Is Deceptive

17 June 2010

Question: *It is said that we should give up our material activities and increase our devotional service, but how to harmonise it if a person has to work hard to maintain their family?*

They can do everything within their family life as devotional activities, because actually it is not their family, it is Kṛṣṇa's family. If they think it is their family, it is a problem; but if they think that it is Kṛṣṇa's family, then whatever they do will be for Kṛṣṇa.

If you have children, taking care of these children is also service to the Lord. You can teach them how to practise devotional activities, and that child will be a devotee, will serve the Lord and the Guru. Everything is for Kṛṣṇa—you can turn your house into a temple.

In this world people know only exploitation and renunciation, but Prabhupād Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura and Mahāprabhu explained that Kṛṣṇa is the biggest enjoyer in this world—no one can enjoy more than Kṛṣṇa. All *gopīs* also said, “We do not want renunciation, we do not want to go to the jungle and chant. We want You to stay and enjoy with us.” This is very important for our spiritual life—we do not want a life of renunciation, we do not like that, but we want to live a happy life with the Lord, to live a happy life through Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Question: *Externally, Puṇḍarik Vidyānidhi used to behave as an ordinary person, and sometimes we may become confused—how*

can it be possible that such great personalities can behave like an ordinary soul?

Mahāprabhu always called Puṇḍarīk Vidyānidhi ‘bābā’, father. In Dvāpar-yuga, he is Rādhārāṇī’s father, King Vṛṣabhānu, and in Kali-yuga he becomes Puṇḍarīk Vidyānidhi. Mahāprabhu knew this and gave much honour to him although Puṇḍarīk Vidyānidhi was a householder.

Puṇḍarīk Vidyānidhi was a rich man, looking like a landlord, and he would always chew *pān* (a mixture of tobacco, pulses, nuts, etc.) and spit it out at the wall. Everyone was appalled, “What is this man doing? It is a dirty habit!” People did not like him, and even Gadādhara Paṇḍita was surprised to see Puṇḍarīk Vidyānidhi’s behaviour, but when he asked Mahāprabhu to give him initiation, Mahāprabhu said, “Your Guru is coming, wait for him,” and later He told Gadādhara Paṇḍita to take initiation from Puṇḍarīk Vidyānidhi.

Also, how can you understand that Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura is a great personality? He was actually *saptam* Goswāmī, the seventh Goswāmī, but he would mix with *āul*, *bāul*, *kartābhajā*, with all these bad people of *apa-sampradāya*. He knew why he mixed with that kind of misconception. When he was in Kṛṣṇa Nagar, he saw that Mahāprabhu’s conception had been lost and there was much misconception going on instead, and because he wanted to purify, conquer the people with this kind of mentality he had to mix with them.

Gurudev also sometimes mixed with such people. There was a very big man who donated some money to build a house for the *gośālā* in Nabadwīp, but he smoked a pipe. Once he asked Gurudev, “Do you know what my pipe is saying?” Gurudev joked, “Yes, it is saying, ‘Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa.’” Gurudev also mixed with such kind of people, but anyhow later that man became a great devotee.

So, how can you understand such personalities? Sometimes their behaviour seems bad, but they are actually great. You cannot understand who they are by their appearance.

When Dās Goswāmī Prabhu went to meet Mahāprabhu, at first Mahāprabhu told him to go back to his house, and he did that: he got married and led a household life. The *gṛhasṭha* people say, “Oh, but after that he left his wife and again went to Mahāprabhu”—they think bad, but it was necessary to rescue us, the *jīva* souls, to rescue all universe.

Until you have reached a particular stage, level of realisation, you cannot understand who is a devotee and who is not just by their external behaviour. You must reach that stage, then you can understand it.



The Devotee and the Barber

18 June 2010

Once a devotee went to a barbershop to shave his hair and face. It was a barbershop like in India. There were many people waiting in the queue because there was only one barber, so somebody was reading a newspaper, somebody was doing something else, and when that barber saw the devotee's *tilak*, *kaṇṭhi mālā*, he became jealous. The barber said, "There is no Lord, no Kṛṣṇa, no Bhagavān in this world!" The devotee replied, "You will see..."

Another day the devotee went to a train station and saw a big crazy person who had not shaved perhaps for ten years: he had long-long hair and a long-long beard. He brought that man to the barber shop and said,

"Look! There is no barber in this world!"

"There is! I am a barber. I shaved you the other day, then why are you saying there is no barber here?"

"If you are a barber, then why does this man have long hair and a long beard—why?"

"That man did not come to me, how could I shave him?"

"Then how do you know there is no Bhagavān? You never went to Bhagavān. You never go to Kṛṣṇa's devotee, you never go to Kṛṣṇa's temple. Go and you can understand whether Kṛṣṇa exists or not. You can understand it easily if you get association of Kṛṣṇa's devotee, otherwise you cannot. This man did not come to you, then you cannot shave him; if you cannot go to Kṛṣṇa's temple, you cannot understand whether there is Kṛṣṇa or not."

It is a good example, is it not? I read it once in an article.

Actually, Kṛṣṇa consciousness comes through practising, through *Kṛṣṇa-anuśīlana*. You know some devotees do not come to the temple, do not get good association, do not practise, and think, “Oh, it is not necessary to go to the temple...”—their Kṛṣṇa consciousness will eventually disappear.

Param Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj, gave our *saṅgha* a good name: Kṛṣṇa-anuśīlana-saṅgha. *Anuśīlana* means practising: our *saṅgha* is practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Our main temple’s and society’s name is Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, and we are all under one *saṅgha*, and that *saṅgha*’s name is Kṛṣṇa-anuśīlana-saṅgha.



Vaiṣṇavs: Not What They Seem

24 June 2010

Sanātan Goswāmī asked, “*Koi se hita haya?* What is good for us?” There are many ways given—*śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*, etc.

ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-saṅgo ‘tha bhajana-kriyā
tato ‘nārtha-nivṛttiḥ syāt tato niṣṭhā ruchis tataḥ
athāsaktis tato bhāvas tataḥ premābhyudañchati
sādhakānām ayaṁ premṇaḥ prādurbhāve bhavet kramāḥ

“In the beginning there is faith, then good association, then practising life. After that, the offences gradually go away, faith becomes stronger, taste comes, then attachment, then there arises affection and love. This is how love to God comes to those who practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

(Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhuḥ, 1.4.15-16)

It is written very nicely—first is *śraddhā*, then from *śraddhā* *sukṛti* comes, and so on. Nityānanda Prabhu, on the other hand, said only one thing, and said it very strongly:

“How to prosper in our life?”

“*Bhāgavata paḍa Vaiṣṇavera sthāne, ekānta āśraya kara Chaitanya-charaṇe!* Yao! Go! Go read *Bhāgavatam* under the guidance of bona fide Vaiṣṇavs and take shelter at Mahāprabhu’s lotus feet! *That* is your benefit.” (Cc, 3.5.131) Nityānanda Prabhu says like this.

Question: Could you please explain the qualification of a Vaiṣṇav?

Once, Prabhupād Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur went to give a lecture in some place near Delhi. The people

thought a guru was coming and he would have long hair, a big beard, like that, but when Prabhupād came, they saw a simple man. The audience was unhappy, and Prabhupād started his lecture with the words, “I cannot see anybody here who can recognise a Vaiṣṇav, who has the eyes to see a Vaiṣṇav!”

Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī explained it, and Mahāprabhu’s conception is the same—there is a Vaiṣṇav (ordinary Vaiṣṇav), a Vaiṣṇavatara (better Vaiṣṇav), and a Vaiṣṇavatama (best Vaiṣṇav). There are three different qualities of a Vaiṣṇav, they are also the same as *kaniṣṭha* Vaiṣṇav, *madhyam* Vaiṣṇav, and *uttam* Vaiṣṇav.

Gurudev and all our *āchāryas* are *uttam-adhikārī*, but they have to come down to the stage of *madhyam-adhikārī* because an *uttam-adhikārī* Vaiṣṇav always sees the Lord everywhere, he does not even see a disciple, so he cannot make a disciple. For an *uttam-adhikārī* to take a disciple, he has to come down to the middle stage.

Mahāprabhu also said: those who chant the Holy Name, Kṛṣṇa Nām, once are *kaniṣṭha* Vaiṣṇavs; those who always chant Kṛṣṇa Nām are *madhyam-adhikārī*; and *uttam-adhikārī* is described as follows:

yāhāra darśane mukhe āise kṛṣṇa-nāma
tāhāre jāniha tumi ‘vaiṣṇava-pradhāna’
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 16.74)

“When somebody sees you and Kṛṣṇa comes to their mouth, then you are an *uttam-adhikārī*.”

Gurudev also told about the three kinds of disciples: Gurudev tells a disciple, “Do this job,” but he does not do it—that is *adham*, the lowest. The second kind is when Gurudev tells his disciple, “Do this,” and the disciple does it. The third kind is when Gurudev does not have to tell it—the disciple does what is necessary himself. These are the three different qualities.

Prabhupād Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur explained also, “*Saṁsāra bhitare, nā bāhire.*” You cannot recognise a Vaiṣṇav through your eyes. You must first acquire the eyes, the qualification, then you can recognise through your eyes who is a Vaiṣṇav and who is not a Vaiṣṇav. You must see the Vaiṣṇav not with your eyes—you must see the Vaiṣṇav through your ears!

“*Saṁsāra bhitare, nā bāhire*” (lit. material life is within, not without) means that somebody may be wearing saffron colour, may be in a *sannyāsī* dress, but they can be a hypocrite if they do not practise, do not follow the *sannyās* rules and regulations. In another way, it means you cannot recognise who has a wife and who has no wife just by their clothes. These are strong words...



Mahāprabhu's Teachings to Śrīla Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī

*Speaking on Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta,
Antya-līlā, Chapter 6
6 September 2010*

Mahāprabhu teaches us so many things.

grāmya-kathā nā śunibe, grāmya-vārtā nā kahibe
bhāla nā khāibe āra bhāla nā paribe
amānī mānada hañā kṛṣṇa-nāma sadā la'be
vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa sevā mānase karibe

*“Do not listen to the mundane talks, do not listen to the
mundane news. Do not eat fancy food, do not wear fancy clothes.
Do not expect honour to yourself, but offer all respect to others.
Always chant the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa, and in your mind serve
Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.”*

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Antya-līlā, 6.236-237)

We are always gossiping, always talking so much: talking, talking, talking. We lose our energy. Talking so much with your tongue, with your mouth, you waste your energy on other purpose, then how will you get the energy to chant the Holy Name? If you waste your energy on talking some nonsense, *grāmya-kathā* (village talks, gossiping), *grāmya-vārtā* (village news, mundane news), how will you get the energy to chant the Holy Name, how will you get the energy to serve to the Lord, *sādhū*, your Guru? Do you understand it? It is an easy matter.

Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta tells about Mahāprabhu's conception. There are so many things there.

āra dina raghunātha svarūpa-charaṇe
 āpanāra kṛtya lāgi' kailā nivedane
 ki lāgi' chhāḍāilā ghara, nā jāni uddeśa
 ki mora kartavya, prabhu karuna upadeśa

"The next day, Raghunāth Dās inquired at the lotus feet of Svarūp Dāmodar about his duty. 'I do not know why I have given up the household life. Please advise me what is my duty?'"
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Antya-līlā, 6.228-229)

"You have brought me here, but what is my duty? I was in a family life, and now I have brought my everything here, so what is my duty? Please tell me." Then Mahāprabhu said,

bhāla kaila, vairāgīra dharma ācharila
 vairāgī karibe sadā nāma-saṅkīrtana
 māgiyā khāñā kare jīvana rakṣaṇa
 vairāgī hañā yebā kare parāpekṣā
 kārya-siddhi nahe, kṛṣṇa karena upekṣā

"'Raghunāth Dās has done well,' Mahāprabhu said. 'He has acted suitably for a person in the renounced order. A renunciant should always chant the Holy Name of the Lord. He should beg some alms to eat and should sustain his life in this way. A vairāgī (a person in the renounced order) should not depend on others. If he does so, he will be unsuccessful, and he will be neglected by Kṛṣṇa.'"
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Antya-līlā, 6.222-224)

Do you understand? If some renounced person is waiting for others to give something to him, Kṛṣṇa will always reject him. *"Vairāgī hañā yebā kare parāpekṣā"*: you are expecting from others, "Oh, he will give me this," and, "I will get that." *"Kārya-*

siddhi nahe, Kṛṣṇa karena upekṣā": Kṛṣṇa will reject you. These are Mahāprabhu's words.

vairāgī hañā kare jihvāra lālasa
paramārtha yāya, āra haya rasera vaśa

"If a renunciant is eager for his tongue to taste different foods, his spiritual life will be lost, and he will become controlled by the tastes of his tongue."

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Antya-līlā, 6.225)

This is important to understand. If somebody always follows their tongue (*vairāgī jihvāra lālas kore*), their spiritual matter always goes down (*paramārtha yāya*)—they become servants of *kāma* (lust), servants of anger, servants of greed; they forget the Lord, forget their Guru, and become servants of their ego instead.

vairāgīra kṛtya—sadā nāma-saṅkīrtana
śāka-patra-phala-mūle udara-bharaṇa
jihvāra lālase yei iti-uti dhāya
śiśnodara-parāyaṇa kṛṣṇa nāhi pāya

"The duty of a renunciant is to always engage in Nāma saṅkīrtan. He should fill his bellies with vegetables, leaves, fruits, and roots. Those who go here and there trying to satisfy their tongue, follow their genitals and belly and cannot attain Kṛṣṇa."

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Antya-līlā, 6.226-227)

Your know the meaning of 'śiśnodara-parāyaṇa': if you follow your tongue, you cannot control your sex life.

grāmya-kathā nā śunibe, grāmya-vārtā nā kahibe
bhāla nā khāibe āra bhāla nā paribe
amānī mānada hañā kṛṣṇa-nāma sadā la'be
vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa sevā mānase karibe

“Do not listen to the mundane talks, do not listen to the mundane news. Do not eat fancy food, do not wear fancy clothes. Do not expect honour to yourself, but offer all respect to others. Always chant the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa, and in your mind serve Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Antya-līlā, 6.236-237)

Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī wrote this...

**viṣayīra dravya lañā kari nimantraṇa
prasanna nā haya ihāya, jāni prabhura mana**

“(Raghunāth said,) ‘I take things from materialists and invite others. I know that the Lord’s heart is not happy with this.’”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Antya-līlā, 6.274)

Do you see? You cannot use even your family’s money. If your father or mother gives you some money and you use that for your own purpose, it is also not good.

Sometimes Dās Goswāmī Prabhu’s father sent him 400 rupees, *chāri-śata mudrā* (400 coins). Dās Goswāmī did not actually take that money—he invited Mahāprabhu and all the Vaiṣṇavs for big feasts—but still, Mahāprabhu did not like that, “Oh, he invites everyone, and his *pratiṣṭhā* (name and fame) is coming. All the Vaiṣṇavs are going there, taking some *praṇāmī*, he is giving them some *prasādam*, and through that his *pratiṣṭhā* is coming.” Name and fame were coming, and Mahāprabhu did not like that. Dās Goswāmī understood it, and he rejected that money: he told his father not to send him any money again. He became a beggar.

**viṣayīra anna haya ‘rājasa’ nimantraṇa
dātā, bhoktā—dūhāra malina haya mana**

“When one accepts an invitation from a person contaminated by the material mode of passion, the person who offers the food and the person who accepts it are both mentally contaminated.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Antya-līlā, 6.279)

“The mind of those who are taking *prasādam* (*bhoktā*) will be disturbed, and the mind of those who are giving *prasādam* (*data*) will be disturbed—both are getting disturbance through that.” It is written very nicely.

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj kī jay!



Be Fixed in Your Service

6 September 2010

bhakti-anukūla mātra kāryera svikāra
bhakti-pratikūla bhāva—varjanāṅgikāra
 (Śaraṇāgati, 1.4, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Thākura)

“You must accept what is in favour of devotion; you must reject what is not in favour of devotion.” That is called sincerity. *Niṣṭhā* (be fixed): “I will do what I am doing every day.” Everybody does not have that service mood, *sevā pravṛtti* (attitude to service). “I am only doing it today, the next day I am not doing it”—this is not devotion, this is emotion. Do you understand now the difference?

Once, a lady came with her grandson to Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj. Param Guru Mahārāj was giving Hari-kathā, and hearing his Hari-kathā that grandson began to cry. The lady said, “Oh, Mahārāj, do you see? When you speak Hari-kathā, my grandson cries!” Param Guru Mahārāj said, “It is not devotion, it is emotion.”

If you give one drop of water for the service of the Lord, that is sufficient. Sincerity, *niṣṭhā*, is necessary.

tad viddhi praṇipātena, paripraśnena sevayā
upadekṣyanti te jñānaṁ, jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ

“You will be able to attain knowledge by satisfying the divine master with submission, relevant inquiry, and sincere service. The enlightened souls who are learned in scriptural knowledge

and endowed with direct realisation of the Supreme Absolute Truth will impart divine knowledge to you."

(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā, 4.34)

I have told many times that for seven years, from 1992 when I came to 1999 when I took *sannyās*, I did not sleep one night outside Nabadwīp—I did not sleep outside even one night! I went to many places, Bamunpara and other places, but I never slept there. I sleep here. Sometimes I would come at night, or at midnight.

When Gurudev was in Nabadwīp too, I would every day go to see him at 2:30-3 o'clock in the morning. I was there at his veranda every day without fail.

Once I was in the bathroom when Gurudev called me. My mobile phone was there, and when I answered it, Gurudev said, "Come immediately." I ran as I was: in a *gāṁchhā*, towel. When I came to the veranda, Gurudev asked me,

"Why are you wearing a *gāṁchhā*?!"

"I was in the toilet..."

"Ai, toilet!!! Shower, take shower first!"

"You told me to come immediately, so I have come."

"You should have taken a shower, then come!"

"OK, I will go shower, and then come."

"No, no, stand there. I will only take five minutes, then you can go."

So, I stood there, and he said what he wanted to tell me.

When I came from some place, or from some foreign country, I would first go to see Gurudev, then I would go to the room. Even when I came from the crops field, there would be so much mud on my legs, but I would first go to see Gurudev, then I would go to my room, clean my feet, and so on, then go for *prasādam*, then back to my room, go to the toilet, then take bath. First I would see Gurudev. Even if I saw he was taking rest,

I would pay *daṇḍavat* and come back. If he was lying down, or his body was sick, then I would pay *daṇḍavat* and come out. That is our duty, and we are doing it in this way. Even when I came from Australia, Singapore, I did not go first to freshen up, I went first to Gurudev—whatever *praṇāmi* I got, I gave everything to him, then I went to the room...



Overeating and Prasādam

7 September 2010

Question: Sometimes we hear, “You will control your tongue by taking prasādam,” and sometimes, “Atyāhāra, it is necessary to avoid eating too much.” So, sometimes as soon as people hear about taking prasādam they think they can eat as much as they like...

I can tell about my own example. At the time when I joined the temple, I could easily eat twenty-three, twenty-five chapatis (on my first day I ate twenty-five), but now I cannot eat more than one or two chapatis, maybe one and a half only. So, this is easily controlled by prasādam. At night time I take a chapati, and to eat even one chapati is very hard now. How is it possible? It is possible through prasādam.

prasāda-sevā karite haya,
sakala prapañcha-jaya

*“By honouring the Lord’s prasād I conquer all worldly illusions.”
(Śaraṇāgati, 31.5, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)*

That is the thing. It is written simply by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura.

If you take prasādam, everything will be controlled. I saw that. When I first joined, I sometimes took the little money that somebody gave me, went to buy something, and ate it here, because I felt so disturbed, and also I did not taste very good prasādam. At that time I thought, “Oh, I want to eat this, this, this,” and I ate something, a samosa or something like this, but

now I cannot tolerate outside things, I cannot eat without temple *prasādam*.

Another way to look at it is *prasād sevā*: you offer something, and when that *prasādam* comes, you must first pay obeisance to the *prasādam*, then take it.

prasāda-sevā karite haya,
sakala prapañcha-jaya

"By honouring the Lord's prasād I conquer all worldly illusions."
(Śaraṇāgati, 31.5, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

It is easy.

As for *atyāhāra*, *prajalpa*, etc., why is it written? *Atyāhāra* means too much eating, but when you take *prasādam*, there is no question of that. *Atyāhāra*, *prajalpa*, etc. is written for the outside people. When you take *prasādam*, all your greed and all kinds of bad things will be reduced—for sure. *Prasād* will be *bhakti*.

Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya used to never take *prasādam*—did you know that? Once Mahāprabhu came to Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya's house with some *prasādam*. Mahāprabhu went to the *maṅgal ārati*, did everything, then He got some *prasādam* and came to Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya, who was still sleeping in bed at that time. Mahāprabhu said,

"O Sārvabhauma, O Bhaṭṭāchārya! Where are you, Paṇḍitji? I have come to you with some *prasādam*!"

"O Prabhu, I am sleeping... I have not brushed my teeth yet..."

"Not necessary! It is not necessary to brush your teeth to take *prasādam*!"

Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya sat on his bed, Mahāprabhu gave him *prasādam*, and he ate it... It is not necessary to brush your teeth to take *prasādam*, nothing is necessary—just take *prasādam* and eat it. Mahāprabhu said, "Today he got some devotion through *prasādam*! *Prasāde bhakti haya*."

Otherwise Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya did not like *prasādam*. He took something in his house, but he did not take *prasādam* from the Jagannāth temple, but from that day he started to. He was Jagannāth's main servitor; he arranged everything, but he did not take *prasādam* from the Jagannāth temple, but when Mahāprabhu gave it to him, he took it and said, "Yes! Very nice, very nice! I have never tasted anything like that!" That day Mahāprabhu said (it is written in *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*), "Oh, *āji haite Sārvabhaumer prasāde bhakti haya!* Today he has got some attachment to *prasādam*."

If you think *prasād* is rice and dal, that is not proper honour to *prasādam*. You must give proper honour to *prasādam*. When *prasād* comes, you must take some *prasādam* in your hand and touch it to your forehead—offer it to your Guru. Even when you are not making an offering, before taking something you must take what you are about to eat in your hand and remember your Guru, then it will be *prasādam*. When Gurudev took *prasādam*, he would always first touch his forehead, giving honour to his Guru in this way. I saw he always did it, only later, when he was sick, some disbalance came...

Do you understand what I am saying?

As for *prajalpa*, I told it: if you use your energy for talking nonsense, then you will lose the energy to chant the Holy Name. It is not necessary to talk so much, *mithyā bhāṣī* (telling lies). Always talk little. Talking is not necessary—without talking about Kṛṣṇa consciousness, that is *grāmya-kathā*. It is written in *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, *Amṛta Bhāṣya* that when a husband and a wife talk in their *dāmpatya jīvan* (married life), they talk about the family life, family matters, talk with their family, discuss how to continue their life, and so on. This is called *grāmya-kathā*. Mahāprabhu said to Dās Goswāmī, "*Grāmya-kathā nā śunibe, grāmya-vārtā nā kahibe*, do not talk like common people or hear

what they say.” Why are we not getting energy? We cannot get a chance, we cannot get energy to chant the Holy Name because we waste our energy on other things.



Varnāśrama and Practising Life

7 September 2010

Here in India Hindu people say they follow the Veda. When you ask any Hindu, they say, “Oh, we are under this kind of Veda,” but they do not follow the rules and regulations of the Vedas. No Veda gives the direction, “Kill a *jīva* soul.” Vedas do not tell this, but people say, “We follow the *Veda*.” There are four Vedas: *R̥g Veda*, *Sāma Veda*, *Yajur Veda*, *Atharva Veda*.

There are also four *āśrams*. It is said in *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*,

chāri varṇāśramī yadi kṛṣṇa nāhi bhaje

svakarma karileo se raurave paḍi maje

(*Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, *Madhya-līlā*, 22.26)

Mahāprabhu said, “Somebody may strictly follow *brahmacharya āśram* from the age of 1 to 25, then *gṛhastha āśram* from 25 to 50, *vānaprastha āśram* from 50 to 75, and *sannyās āśram* from 75 to 100, but if they do not follow Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they still have no hope: they have to go to hell.” *Raurav* means hell. “They are sinners (*pāpī*), and they will go to hell.” Mahāprabhu says it very nicely.

Even when Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu came to Katwa to take *sannyās*, Keśav Bhāratī told Him many times, “How will You take *sannyās*?”

Before that, when Keśav Bhāratī came to Jagannāth Miśra’s house, he saw Nimāi as a *sannyāsī*, and Nimāi also thought, “I will take *sannyās* for preaching because people do not listen

to Me. What have I come here for? I cannot rescue all of them because they are not following Me. I am a *gṛhastha*, householder. If I tell them something, they tell the opposite, ‘Oh, You take Your wife’s food, You sleep on a good cushioned bed, and then You give some good advice—who will listen to You?’” He thought, “To rescue the whole universe, I must take *sannyās*.”

Mahāprabhu asked Keśav Bhārati something, and Keśav Bhārati said, “What are You thinking about? Do You want to take *sannyās*? Do not do that. Do not even think about it because Your wife is here, and Your mother is also here. If, however, You get the permission from Your mother and wife, then only take *sannyās*.” He left. When Mahāprabhu came to Keśav Bhārati later, they spent the whole night speaking Kṛṣṇa-kathā. Keśav Bhārati spoke like this:

“You are only twenty-four years old, how will You take *sannyās*? You have not even finished Your *brahmachārya* life! Even when You become fifty, You still cannot control Your senses (*rūpa, rasa, gandha, śabda, sparśa*—the senses of sight, taste, smell, hearing, touch), then how will You take *sannyās*? Even at fifty You still cannot take *sannyās*.

“Then You think, ‘I am sixty,’ but when You are sixty, You still suffer from the six faults of *kāma, krodha, lobha, moha, mada, mātsarya* (lust, anger, greed, attachment, illusion, envy) and You still do not know how to use *kāma*, where to use anger, greed, attachment, etc. You have an ego, but what is this ego for?”

Everybody has some ego, but what is that ego for? Your ego must be, “I am the servant of the Lord. I am the servant of my Guru.” There is *kāma, krodha, lobha, mada, moha, mātsarya*, but Kṛṣṇa said, “I am giving five places where you can use the other five, but I cannot tolerate *mātsaryatā*, the jealous mood. I am not giving any place for *mātsaryatā* (envy, jealousy).” *Mātsarya* is very bad.

kṛṣṇa-sevā kāmārpaṇe, krodha bhakta-dveṣi-jane,
 lobha sādhu-saṅge hari-kathā
 moha iṣṭa-lābha-bine, mada kṛṣṇa-guṇa-gāne,
 niyukta kariba yathā tathā

“My lust will be for service to Kṛṣṇa, my anger will be towards those who are envious of the devotees, my greed will be to hear Hari-kathā in the association of devotees, the feeling of illusion will be when I realise I do not attain my worshipping Lord, and my madness will be to sing the glories of Kṛṣṇa. In this way I will engage these enemies in their proper places.”

(Śrī Śrī Prema-bhakti-chandrikā, 22, Śrīla Narottam Dās Ṭhākura)

anya abhilāṣa chhāḍi, jñāna karma parihari
 kāya-mane kariba bhajana
 sādhu-saṅge kṛṣṇa-sevā, nā pūjiba devī-devā
 ei bhakti parama kāraṇa

“The topmost process of devotional service is to worship the Lord with body and mind, giving up desires for fruitive activities and mental speculation. One should serve Lord Kṛṣṇa in the association of devotees without worshipping any demigods.”

(Śrī Śrī Prema-bhakti-chandrikā, 13, Śrīla Narottam Dās Ṭhākura)

He wrote it in this way. You should read these things, they are very nice. You can read this one śloka and understand full Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Also,

anyābhlāṣitā śūnyaṁ jñāna-karmādy anāvṛtam
 ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśīlanam bhaktir uttamā

“The highest devotion is that which satisfies Lord Kṛṣṇa, free from the coverings of any pursuits such as action, knowledge.”

(Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhuḥ, 1.1.11)

Narottam Dās Ṭhākura wrote that *“Anyā abhlāṣa chhāḍi...”* śloka giving the full meaning of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu’s

śloka (“*Anyābhilāṣitā śūnyaṁ...*”), and there you can understand all Kṛṣṇa consciousness: what your practising life is, and what the *abhidheya-tattva* is. You can understand it all easily.

So, sixty years. Then Mahāprabhu jumped to ninety, “OK, Prabhu, suppose I am ninety now.” Keśav Bhārati replied, “When You are ninety, You still cannot practise *nava-vidhā bhakti*.”

ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-saṅgo ‘tha bhajana-kriyā
tato ‘nartha-nivṛttiḥ syāt tato niṣṭhā ruchis tataḥ
athāsaktis tato bhāvas tataḥ premābhyudañchatī
sādhakānām ayaṁ premṇaḥ prādurbhāve bhavet kramāḥ

“In the beginning there is faith, then good association, then practising life. After that, the offences gradually go away, faith becomes stronger, taste comes, then attachment, then there arises affection and love. This is how love comes to those who practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

(Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhuḥ, 1.4.15-16)

Niṣṭhā (sincerity, faith) and āsakti (attachment) are necessary. Gurudev told many times about it: everybody does some service, but they have no attachment to their service, they do not take the responsibility. Not even 10% or 5% of the devotees have attachment to their service. It is necessary to do service with attachment.

So, ninety. “When You reach ninety, You still cannot practise *nava-vidhā bhakti*,” he said.

If you practise, you chant and follow everything, then all bad things, all illusory environment—*bhukti-mukti-siddhi-ādi vāñchā*—will be removed from your heart through *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*. Only through this. Those who do not do it, will go to hell—Māyā attacks them. *Śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam* are the main things. There are sixty-four *bhaktyaṅga* (practices of devotion), and it is difficult to practise them all, but there are five main practices:

**sādhū-saṅga, nāma-kīrtana, bhāgavata-śravaṇa
mathurā-vāsa, śrī-mūrtira śraddhāya sevana**

“One should associate with devotees, chant the Holy Name of the Lord, hear Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, reside at Mathurā and worship the Deity with firm faith.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 22.124)

If you get some little association through these five practices, you will be rescued from this material environment. You know the meaning of *sādhū-saṅga*, *śravaṇ*, *kīrtan*, *Bhagavat-śravaṇ*, it is not necessary to explain it, and ‘*Mathurā-vāsa*’ means living in the holy places where Kṛṣṇa-kathā is going on. That is called Mathurā, that is called Vṛndāvan—wherever there is Kṛṣṇa-kathā going on, Kṛṣṇa always appears there. We cannot see it, however, with this kind of eyes because these eyes are always polluted by Māyā—we have illusory dust in our eyes.

**aprākṛta vastu nahe prākṛta-gochara
veda-purāṇete ei kahe nirantara**

“Spiritual matter can never be an object of material perception. All Vedas and Purāṇas always tell about this.”

](Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 9.195)

We are blinded by the illusory dust, so how will you see that transcendental abode? You need another kind of eyes.

**bhukti-mukti ādi-vāñchā yadi mane haya
sādhana karileo prema utpanna nā haya**

“If in your heart you have a desire for enjoyment, liberation, or something else, then even if you practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness, you will not get real love.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 19.175)

If you practise, do service, etc., but have another desire in your heart, any time you can fall down. You will not be able to get

entrance. “I will be the Guru, I will be the manager, I will take this post, I will be the secretary, I will be this, I will be that”—if you have this kind of mood, if your mind is polluted with this kind of desire, and you are showing that you are doing so much service, then you cannot succeed. Everything is inside desire, so do not attach yourself with that—always keep yourself away from that.

Śraddhāya śrī-mūrti sevana: Somebody does some *pūjā*, but they do not do it with affection and faith. No *śraddhā*. They think, “Oh, I should stay there. I have got a good room and I get *prasādam*, but if I do not do any service Mahārāj will kick me out, then I have to do something.” This is not *śraddhā*. They do *pūjā* but without *śraddhā*, without full faith. “Oh, if I do not do some service, Mahārāj will be angry, maybe they will take away the room, take away the room key, and will not give me *prasādam*,” they say like this. Just to do some service is not faith, *śraddhā*. You must do service with sincerity.

Question: *Is it natural to feel like an offender, to feel I am not able to do these things, I am so fallen?*

If somebody thinks, “Oh, I am doing so much,” that is bad for them. But “Oh, I cannot do anything”—if this kind of feeling is coming, then it is something. Prabhupād Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura also told it. One disciple said to him,

“Prabhupād, I cannot do *bhajan*.”

“Are you telling the truth?”

“Yes, Prabhupād, I am telling the truth. I cannot do *bhajan*, I cannot practise properly.”

“Are you sure you are telling the truth?”

“Yes, Prabhupād.”

“Then something *is* happening.”

This is a good symptom. If somebody says, “Oh, I am doing *bhajan*, I am practising so much, I am doing this and that,” it is

not a good symptom; but it is a good symptom if somebody says, “Oh, I cannot do anything, my *bhajan* is not coming.”

Question: *You have told many times about ‘bhukti, mukti, siddhi ādi-vāñchā’, but I feel everything I am doing is for ‘bhukti, mukti ādi-vāñchā’...*

No, actually it is not for everybody. We are not for ‘bhukti mukti siddhi ādi-vāñchā’. “*Tad-viddhi praṇipātena, paripraśnena sevayā*: our *viddhi* is *sevā-viddhi*, *sevā pravṛtti* (all we know is service mood, service attachment). We have come for service: we have got a human body, and this body must be used only for the service to the Lord, service to the Guru. You must think like this, do not to say such things.

Sometimes there is a lack of mercy or if we have some bad association, then we may do something wrong. Mahāprabhu said that sometimes one unknowingly does something wrong, but Kṛṣṇa, the Lord Himself, said, “I will rescue this kind of sinner. Sometimes he does not know, he uses some bad language, or sometimes his angry mood comes, but if he is My devotee, if he does this for service, then whatever sinful work he does in his practising life I am removing from him all reaction for that.” Sometimes you can do something wrong, but the Lord will rescue you so that you again can engage in the service of the Lord.



Loving Search for the Lost Servant

10 October 2010

You took initiation in 1996, and Kṛṣṇa has brought you here again... It is loving search for the lost servant: “*Kabe Āmā’ Mādhava āsibe, kabe Āmā’ karibe sevān?* When will Mādhav come to Me? When will he come to serve Me?” Kṛṣṇa is waiting for our service.

Kṛṣṇa’s *prapautra*, great-grandson called Vajranābha, installed and served the Deity of Gopāl in Vṛndāvan Dhām. When the Muslim people were breaking all the temples, the *pūjārī* wrapped the Deity and hid Him in the jungle. The Deity stayed there, waiting for Mādhavendra Purī to come. He had not waited for just a year or two—He had waited for Mādhavendra Purī for maybe 100-300 years, or more than that.

Then Mādhavendra Purī came to Vṛndāvan. He was once sitting on the bank of Govinda Kuṇḍa under a banyan tree, thinking, “When will Kṛṣṇa come? I wish I could see the Lord...” He was alone, sitting and chanting on his beads, when suddenly a beautiful looking boy came by with some milk for him,

“O *sādhū*! You have been fasting all day, please take this milk.” Mādhavendra Purī was very surprised,

“How do You know I have not eaten or drunk anything? How do You know I am fasting?”

“Oh, some ladies came to take water in the morning and in the evening, and they said a *sādhū* had come and he was only chanting, chanting, and had nothing to eat. So I have brought some milk for you.”

“But where are You staying?”

“I am a cowherd boy and look after the cows in this area.” Then the boy said quickly, “All right, I will come later. Drink the milk, and I will come for the empty pot later,” and left.

Mādhavendra Purī drank the milk and was surprised, “I have never tasted such milk before! It is nectar! I have drunk milk many times, but I have never tried such milk before!” He was sitting and waiting for that boy to come, but He did not come back, and Mādhavendra Purī decided to take rest. The boy came to him in a dream and said, “You were asking Me who I was, where I was from, where My house was. My Name is Gopāl, and Kṛṣṇa’s great-grandson Vajranābha established My Deity, but now I am suffering so much—there is so much rain, the sun is scorching Me... Please, take Me out of this place.”

Mādhavendra Purī was surprised. He thought, “Kṛṣṇa came to me, gave me milk, but I could not recognise Him!” He was very sad...

When the morning came, he told everybody, “Villagers! Your village Deity is hiding here.” Everybody began clearing the jungle and searching, searching, but nobody could find the Deity, only Mādhavendra Purī knew where the exact place was. Finally, they took this Deity out. It was Gopāl—it was that Gopāl who said, “I have been waiting for you to come and take Me away, to rescue Me from this situation!”

Param Guru Mahārāj wrote a book called *Loving Search for the Lost Servant*: Kṛṣṇa is waiting for us, waiting to take our service, but we cannot understand it because we are covered by the illusory environment.

*Bhramite bhramite yadi sādhu-vaidya pāya**: we come and go, come and go, but if suddenly we get good association, through that good association the illusory environment will be removed. Otherwise we cannot see anything:

daivī hy eṣā guṇamayī, mama māyā duratyayā
 mām eva ye prapadyante, mām etām taranti te
 (Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā, 7.14)

“The illusory environment is very powerful, but those who surrender to Me, can overcome it.” We pray to Māyā Devī, “Please remove the net of the illusory environment.” When the illusory environment is removed, we will be able to see the *nirmal dhām*, *chinmaya dhām*! We will be able to see the transcendental vibration, the transcendental abode, otherwise we cannot—we are blind!

We are blinded by the illusory dust and cannot see anything, but through good association we can see everything. That is why it is necessary to keep good association. *Śravaṇam* (listening), *kīrtanam* (practising) is necessary. So, you are very fortunate—you have come here, to this Nabadwīp Dhām, which is *aparādh bhāñjan pāṭ* (place where all offences are forgiven)...



**kāma-krodhera dāsa hañā tāra lāthi khāya*
bhramite bhramite yadi sādhu-vaidyā pāya
tāra upadeśa-mantre piśāchī palāya
kṛṣṇa-bhakti pāya, tabe kṛṣṇa-nikaṭa yāya

“The conditioned soul becomes a servant of its masters, Lust and Anger, and always gets beaten by these two, but as the soul keeps wandering throughout the universe, it may by chance get connection with the doctor: a devotee, whose instructions and mantras can chase this witch (Māyā) away. Those who come in touch with devotion to Kṛṣṇa, come closer to Kṛṣṇa.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 22.14-15)

A Lesson on Surrender: Body, Mind, and Words

10 October 2010

The other day I spoke about surrender... To surrender is a problem: you know that devotion comes from devotion.

Even Śrīla Sanātan Goswāmī's mind was a little disturbed: he came to Purī and wanted to commit suicide. Even Sanātan Goswāmī himself wanted to commit suicide! Do you know about that? You must learn something from this.

When Mahāprabhu got to know that Sanātan Goswāmī wanted to do that, He chastised him, "Have you gone mad? What has come over you?

**dīkṣā-kāle bhakta kare ātma-samarpaṇa
sei-kāle kṛṣṇa tāre kare ātma-sama**

"At the time of initiation, when a devotee fully surrenders to the Lord, Kṛṣṇa accepts them as His very own."

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Antya-līlā, 4.192)

"You have come to Me and already surrendered to Me, that means you have given everything to Me. How can you even think now that you want to spoil your body?"

Sometimes we follow our mind, we think we will do this, we will do that—our mind is always telling us something... Sometimes Gurudev also said: "You have already packed your luggage and, ready to leave, you come to me, 'Oh, Gurudev, I want to go to this place. Can you give me permission?' but you

have already decided everything and packed your things! If I say no, then you will be angry, maybe you will not follow me, or maybe you will leave without my permission. Then it is better if I say, ‘OK, you can go there.’”

Another time, Gurudev did not want to let a devotee go to some place, but that devotee again came with all his luggage and asked, “Gurudev, can you give me permission? I want to go to this place...” Gurudev saw that he had already packed everything, he thought, “How is it possible?” and said, “OK, you can go, but come back quickly.”

Actually, Sanātan Goswāmī said to Mahāprabhu, “Prabhu, my body is useless. This skin disease came, and so many things have happened to my body. This body cannot be used for the service to the Lord, the Vaiṣṇavs, then what is this body for? It is useless! That is why I want to commit suicide.”

Mahāprabhu did not accept it, “Do you have no shame? Are you not ashamed?! You have already given this body to Me, then how can you want to spoil My property? This is My property! This is not your property. What are you thinking about?”

Sometimes we think, “I will go this way, I will go that way, I will do this, that,” but we must not ask Gurudev for anything (“Gurudev, I want to do this, I want to do that”). What Gurudev tells you to do, you must follow *that*. That is what is necessary.

Mahāprabhu said, “This body is not your body. It is My property, and I will use it as I want, and you are going to spoil My property—what is this?!”

It is like you give some money to me, “Gurudev, I am giving you some *praṇāmī*,” and I tell you, “OK, keep it. When I need it later, I will take it from you.” You keep it, but it is not your property.

Mahāprabhu explained, “I have some purpose for this property—some Vaiṣṇav *sevā*, preaching, writing scriptures, and

so on—I will use it for all this. You cannot spoil this body.”

Mahāprabhu even told Haridās Ṭhākura, “Be careful and look after that boy—he cannot take care of himself, he can do something wrong...” In this way, Kṛṣṇa, the Lord, is using our body, ourselves, even when we are doing so many wrong things.

We can do something sinful without knowing it, but Kṛṣṇa said, “The fault will be removed through service.” Sometimes we are doing some service and do something wrong, make some mistake, but Kṛṣṇa said, “He is My devotee, so if he does something wrong, I will remove his fault, it is not necessary to make *prāyaścitta*, atonement.”

This is what Mahāprabhu said. It is loving search for the lost servant: we are searching for the Lord, and Kṛṣṇa is also searching for us, to take us to our own place...



Bhukti, Mukti, Bhakti

*Reading from Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta,
Ādi-līlā, chapters 8 and 10
6 November 2010*

kṛṣṇa yadi chhuṭe bhakte bhukti mukti diyā
kabhu bhakti nā dena rākhena lukāiyā

*“If a devotee wants liberation or material enjoyment, Kṛṣṇa immediately bestows it, but He keeps pure devotion hidden.”
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 8.18)*

rājan patir gurur alaṁ bhavatām yadūnām
daivam priyaḥ kula-patiḥ kva cha kiṅkaro vaḥ
astv evam aṅga bhagavān bhajatām mukundo
muktim dadāti karhichit sma na bhakti-yogam

*“Nārada said, ‘Dear Yudhiṣṭhira, Kṛṣṇa is your and your family’s eternal master, Guru, God, dear friend, guardian, and sometimes He also becomes your servant. It is known that He easily gives mukti to the devotees engaged in devotional activities, however He gives bhakti-yoga to those who are engaged in devotional activities with strongest faith.’”
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 8.19)*

“If you are asking for some kind of *mukti* (liberation) or *bhukti* (material enjoyment), Kṛṣṇa will never give you devotion to Himself—He will always hide it from you.” So nicely it is written.

hena prema śrī chaitanya dilā yathā tathā
jagāi mādhai paryanta—anyera kā kathā

“Śrī Chaitanya gave this love of Kṛṣṇa everywhere and anywhere. What to speak of others, He gave it even to Jagāi and Mādhāi.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 8.20)

If somebody is simple-hearted and does not know anything about *bhukti*, *mukti*, and they have some faith, *śraddhā*, they can get devotion easily.

Question: What does ‘mukti’ mean?

Mukti means liberation, desire to be liberated. Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī gave the following example in his *Vidagdha Mādhava*. Some straw floats in the Ganges or in a big ocean, some water evaporates from it at night, and that drop of evaporated water thinks, “Oh, I am very small, but this ocean is so great! I also want to be big like this ocean.” It then grows heavier and falls into the water, where it is not able to find itself any more. *Mukti* is like this—we get merged and cannot find ourselves any more; we will not get any taste. That is *mukti*. Devotees put their foot on top of Mukti Devī and climb higher up in their devotional activities—they never ask anything from *mukti*.

svatantra-īśvara prema-nigūḍha-bhāṇḍāra

bilāila yāre tāre, nā kaila vichāra

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 8.21)

“Even though Bhagavān, the Lord Himself, never exposes *Kṛṣṇa-prema*, still He distributes it everywhere as Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.”

‘nityānanda’ balite haya kṛṣṇa-premodaya

āulāya sakala aṅga, aśru-gaṅgā vaya

“Chanting of Nityānanda Prabhu’s name awakens Kṛṣṇa-prema: all limbs become dishevelled, and Ganges-like streams of tears begin to flow.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 8.23)

When you chant “Nītāi Gaur Haribol”, “Nītāi Gaur Haribol,” no offence comes, but when you take Kṛṣṇa Nām with offences, no *vikār* (transformation), no result comes through that. That is why good association is necessary to be able to remove the offences.

‘eka’ kṛṣṇa-nāme kare sarva-pāpa nāśa
premera kāraṇa bhakti karena prakāśa

“One Name of Kṛṣṇa can destroy all sins. The Name reveals devotion and is the source of divine love, prema.”
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 8.26)

The offences will be removed by chanting the Holy Name only once.

premera udaye haya premera vikāra
sveda-kampa-pulakādi gadgadāśrudhāra

anāyāse bhava-kṣaya, kṛṣṇera sevana
eka kṛṣṇa-nāmera phale pāi eta dhana

“When divine love awakens, there arise transformations of divine love: perspiration, trembling, throbbing of the heart, faltering, and tears. Without any effort the material existence then stops and one gets service to Kṛṣṇa—such is the wealth attained as a result of chanting Kṛṣṇa’s Name.”
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 8.27-28)

hena kṛṣṇa-nāma yadi laya bahu-bāra
tabu yadi prema nahe, nahe āśrudhāra
tabe jāni, aparādha tāhāte prachura
kṛṣṇa-nāma-bija tāhe nā kare aṅkura

“If you chant this Name of Kṛṣṇa so many times but still there is no love, there are no tears streaming from your eyes, then as I understand there are too many offences and the seed of Kṛṣṇa’s Name does not sprout.”
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 8.29-30)

“We chant this Kṛṣṇa Nām again and again, and no result comes: because of our offences the seed of the Holy Name does not sprout.”

**chaitanya-nityānande nāhi e-saba vichāra
nāma laite prema dena, vahe aśrudhāra**

“Chaitanya and Nityānanda, however, do not have any such considerations—anyone who takes Their Name attains love and tears begin to stream from their eyes.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 8.31)

**svatantra īśvara prabhu atyanta udāra
tāre nā bhajile kabhu nā haya nistāra**

“Mahāprabhu, the independent and supreme Lord, is extremely magnanimous. You will never become liberated if you do not worship Him.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 8.32)

**yasyāsti bhaktir bhagavaty akiñchanā
sarvair guṇais tatra samāsate surāḥ
harāv abhaktasya kuto mahad-guṇā
manorathenāsati dhāvato bahiḥ**

“All good qualities and all demigods manifest within the one who has exclusive devotion to Kṛṣṇa. If one, however, has no devotion to the Lord, inauspicious, mundane thoughts always run through their mind. It is impossible for them to ever have any good qualities.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 8.58)

It means, “When somebody does not practise devotional activities, their mind always goes to the bad things, and it becomes impossible for them to get the good qualities—those qualities will not come.”

Question: *What can we do about this?*

Practise *bhaktyaṅga*, practise what is favourable to devotion and reject what is unfavourable to devotion. There are sixty-four *bhaktyaṅgas*, they are written here in *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, it is necessary to practise them properly, then everything will be all right.

Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī says, “I am not writing this book. Madan Mohan is writing it.”

ei grantha lekhāya more ‘madana-mohana’
āmāra likhana yena śukera paṭhana

“Madan Mohan writes this book through me; I only repeat after Him like a parrot and write it down.”

(*Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, Ādi-līlā, 8.78)

sei likhi, madana-gopāla more ye likhāya
kāṣṭhera puttali yena kuhake nāchāya

“I write what Madan Gopāl makes me write. I am like a wooden doll that is made to dance by some magic.”

(*Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, Ādi-līlā, 8.79)

kulādhidevatā mora—madana-mohana
yāra sevaka—raghunātha, rūpa, sanātana

(*Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, Ādi-līlā, 8.80)

“My worshippable *iṣṭadevatā* is Madan Mohan, and I always pray to His servitors, Raghunāth, Rūpa, and Sanātana. I am not going directly to Madan Mohan, but I am praying to Him through His servitors.” Also, Kṛṣṇa Dās Goswāmī worships the lotus feet of Vṛndāvan Dās:

vṛndāvana-dāsera pāda-padma kari’ dhyāna
tāra ājñā lañā likhi yāhāte kalyāṇa

“I meditated on the lotus feet of Vṛndāvan Dās and received an order from him to write this auspicious work.”

(*Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, Ādi-līlā, 8.81)

That is a Vaiṣṇav's quality. Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī says, "I am praying to Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākura, and I am always remembering his lotus feet."

chaitanya-līlāte 'vyāsa'—vṛndāvana-dāsa
tāra kṛpā vinā anye nā haya prakāśa

"Vṛndāvan Dās is the Vyāsa of Chaitanya līlā, without his mercy no one can produce anything."

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 8.82)

"Without his mercy we cannot write anything, we cannot do anything."

mūrkha, nīcha, kṣūdra muñi viṣaya-lālasa
vaiṣṇavājñā-bale kari eteka sāhasa

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 8.83)

"I am a great sinner, foolish, and so small. I am always attracted to material things, but I am going to write a book! I am only doing it remembering my Guru and the Vaiṣṇavs, and following their order. I am not doing it myself. I am doing so many big things, but it is only possible by the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavs."

It is written here about Śrīla Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī also:

mahāprabhura priya bhṛtya—raghunātha-dāsa
sarva tyajī' kaila prabhura pada-tale vāsa

"Mahāprabhu has a dear servitor whose name is Raghunāth Dās. Raghunāth left everything and made the lotus feet of the Lord his residence."

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 10.91)

prabhu samarpila tāre svarūpera hāte
prabhura gupta-sevā kaila svarūpera sāthe

"Mahāprabhu put him in the hands of Svarūp. Together with Svarūp he then rendered confidential service to Mahāprabhu."

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 10.92)

ṣoḍaśa vatsara kaila antaraṅga-sevana
 svarūpera antardhāne āilā vṛndāvana
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 10.93)

“He had served Mahāprabhu for sixteen years, did *antaraṅga sevā* (personal service), and when Svarūp Dāmodar left, he came to Vṛndāvan.”

vṛndāvane dui bhāira charaṇa dekhiyā
 govardhane tyajiba deha bhṛgupāta kariyā

“I will see the feet of the two brothers, Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī and Śrīla Sanātan Goswāmī, and then give up my body by jumping from Govardhan.”
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 10.94)

ei ta’ niśchaya kari’ āila vṛndāvane
 āsi’ rūpa-sanātanera vandila charaṇe

“Determined to do so, he came to Vṛndāvan. Upon his arrival he first of all went to pay his obeisance to Rūpa and Sanātan.”
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 10.95)

tabe dui bhāi tāre marite nā dila
 nija tṛtīya bhāi kari’ nikaṭe rākhila

“The brothers did not let him commit suicide: taking Raghunāth as their own third brother, they kept him by their side.”
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 10.96)

mahāprabhura līlā yata bāhira-antara
 dui bhāi tāra mukhe śune nirantara

“Every day the two brothers heard about all Pastimes of Mahāprabhu, both external and internal, from his mouth.”
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 10.97)

anna-jala tyāga kaila anya-kathana
 pala dui-tina māṭhā kareṇa bhakṣaṇa
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 10.98)

“He rejected rice, water, everything, and took only some *māṭhā*, buttermilk.”

sahasra daṇḍavat kare, laya lakṣa nāma
 dui sahasra vaiṣṇavere nitya paraṇāma
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 10.99)

“He paid obeisance a hundred times, chanted a hundred thousand Names, and every day paid obeisance to two thousand Vaiṣṇavs!”

rātri-dine rādhā-kṛṣṇera mānasa sevana
 prahareka mahāprabhura charitra-kathana
 “Day and night he served Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa within his mind,
 and for three hours a day he spoke about the Pastimes of
 Mahāprabhu.”
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 10.100)

tina sandhyā rādhā-kuṇḍe apatita snāna
 vraja-vāsī vaiṣṇavere āliṅgana dāna
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 10.101)

We are afraid to bathe in Rādhā Kuṇḍa even once, but it says here, “Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī bathed in Rādhā Kuṇḍa three times a day and always embraced the Vraja *bāsīs*.”

sārdha sapta-prahara kare bhaktira sādhanē
 chāri daṇḍa nidrā, seha nahe kona-dine
 “Every day he spent more than twenty-two and a half hours on
 devotional service, sometimes spending one and a half hours on
 resting, sometimes no time at all.”

tāhāra sādhanā-rīti śunite chatatkāra
 sei rūpa-raghunātha prabhu ye āmāra
 “It is amazing to hear how he lived and served. These Rūpa and
 Raghunāth are my masters.”
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 10.102-103)

Śrīla Gaura Kīśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj

17 November 2010

Today is Utthāna Ekādaśī: Śrīla Gaura Kīśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj's disappearance day.

Bābājī Mahārāj came to Nabadwīp from Vṛndāvan. He got inspiration from Rādhā Kṛṣṇa, "Why are you staying here at Rādhā Kuṇḍa? You must come to Nabadwīp. My *līlā* is not in Vṛndāvan, now My *līlā* is going on in Nabadwīp, so you must come here." Even though he was old at that time, he came.

Everybody saw him as *pāgal*, crazy—he could not see anything, did not wear good clothes, he did not care for anything. Some boys threw stones at him, and he would say, "Gopāl, what are You doing? I will complain to Your Mom, Yaśodā, and Your Dad, Nanda Mahārāj!" He would say like this, but people threw stones and spat at him... It was too much.

One time he went from Chāpāhāṭī to Godrumdwīp, Svānanda Sukhada Kuñja, Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura's place. He was blind and could not walk, and it was *amāvasyā*, a dark moon day—it was pitch dark outside. (There was no electricity in Nabadwīp at that time. You can see at Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura's place, his things are still kept there—his kerosene lamp, kerosene powered fan, etc.) So, Gaura Kīśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj came there and called out to Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura. Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura came out and was surprised, "Mahārāj, you came on such a dark night! How did you come here?!"

"Oh, somebody helped me."

"Who? Nobody is here, you are alone!"

“Oh, am I? No, somebody took my hand and brought me here. He was here just now...”

Bābājī Mahārāj took some dead body’s cloth at a burning *ghat*, washed it, made knots and chanted on that. He would get some rice, but he did not cook it: he soaked it in some water and ate it three-four days later, when it got softer. That was his only food...

Once he was sitting inside a big palm tree’s hollow on the bank of the Ganges, chanting, and when some naughty people walked past, they heard that he was talking with somebody: it was a lady’s voice. They thought that some lady came to him at night, and they decided to watch the place in the day time to see who the lady was when she would come. They had kept guard there for two days but did not see anybody, although they could still hear Bābājī Mahārāj talking with a lady. In the end, they broke in and saw nobody was there. As they went away they could again hear the lady’s voice, but they did not know who was talking and what they were talking about. Then you understand: Śrīmatī Rādhikā came there, Gaura Kīśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj was Her *svapārṣad*, close associate.

When Gaura Kīśor Dās Bābājī expired—today is the day when it happened—there was a big story on that day. All *smārta bābājīs*, *goswāmīs* of Nabadwīp wanted to take the body of Bābājī Mahārāj, and they started fighting. When Prabhupād Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur heard what had happened, he came there with Kuñja Bābu, his disciple. He saw that many people were fighting over the body and the police were already there, but they could not decide who should take the body. Everybody claimed it was their Guru. Prabhupād said,

“They are saying they are disciples of Bābājī Mahārāj, but actually none of them is his disciple! When he was alive, no one

cared, and now everybody is saying, ‘He is my Guru.’ They are all liars! They are dressed as *sādhus*, but none of them are *sādhus*. I am a *naistik brahmachārī* (a life-long strict *brahmachārī*), no one can tell a lie in front of me. There are many *bābājīs*, but they are all doing *strī-saṅga* (have ladies’ association). Let those who have not associated with a girl for the past six months raise their hands.”

Some of them left.

“Let those who have not associated with a lady for the past three months raise their hands.”

Some left.

“One month.”

More left.

“Who has not done *strī-saṅga* for the last three days?” (There are eight types of *strī-saṅga*, it can be also thinking of a woman, etc.)

Then all of them went away. A policeman who was there asked Prabhupād, “How would you know it if they had said they had not done any *strī-saṅga*?”

“I said I was a *naistik brahmachārī*—none can tell a lie in front of me.”

Prabhupād took the body of Bābājī Mahārāj and made his *samādhi*...

Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur sent Prabhupād (his previous name was Bimala Prasād) to take initiation from Bābājī Mahārāj. At that time he did not know so much—he knew his father was a big personality, a district magistrate. When he came to see Bābājī Mahārāj, Bābājī Mahārāj said to him, “Get out! I want you to get out!” Prabhupād was surprised, “A boy comes for initiation and Gurudev says, ‘Get out!’ What is this?” He came back to his father and said that Bābājī Mahārāj had told him to get out.

Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur told him to go there again, and when he came again, this time Bābājī Mahārāj said to him, “You have

come again, but your father is a very big personality, a great Vaiṣṇav. Why do you not take initiation from your father?"

"My father has sent me to you."

"No, go to your father."

He went back to Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur, "Father, I have come back."

"Why? Have you not taken initiation?"

"No, he told me to take initiation from my father."

"No, no, go again tomorrow."

He again went to Bābājī Mahārāj the next day. Bābājī Mahārāj asked, "Why have you come?"

The next day again, "Why have you come? I must ask Gorā Hari." (He always said, "Gorā Hari.") Then another day he said, "Yes, I asked, but I did not get an answer."

The next day Prabhupād came again, very humbly. Bābājī Mahārāj was testing his devotee: How tolerant is he? How much surrender does he have? He tested him in this way, and then finally gave initiation to Prabhupād Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur.

So, today is the disappearance day of this Bābājī Mahārāj.

ye ānīla prema-dhana karuṇā prachura
hena prabhu kothā gelā āchārya ṭhākura

*"Where has Advaita Āchārya, the Lord who mercifully brought
the wealth of divine love to this world, gone?"*

('Viraha-gīti', 1, by Śrīla Narottam Dās Ṭhākur)

It is a very auspicious day. Mahāprabhu asked Rāmānanda Rāy,

‘duḥkha-madhye kon duḥkha haya gurutara?’

‘kṛṣṇa-bhakta-viraha vinā duḥkha nāhi dekhi para’

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 8.247)

"What is our saddest day? What is a sorrowful day?"—"It is *bhakta-viraha*, separation from a devotee."

Your mother dies, your father dies... but who is a *brahmachārī*'s mother? A *brahmachārī*'s father and mother is Lord Kṛṣṇa. “*Kṛṣṇa mātā, Kṛṣṇa pitā*”—we are saying this, but at the same time we hear such things as, “Oh, that *brahmachārī*'s father died, his mother died.” What news is that? Does a *brahmachārī* have a father, a mother? A *brahmachārī*'s only father and mother is Kṛṣṇa. “*Kṛṣṇa mātā, Kṛṣṇa pitā, Kṛṣṇa dhana prāṇa*”: Kṛṣṇa is your parent, Kṛṣṇa is your father, Kṛṣṇa is your mother. Your other “mother/father” are false. (These are not my words—it is said so in the scriptures.)

Gurudev often told me, “Always be careful.”

In front of Gurudev's veranda there is Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj's well and pump, and one time Gurudev saw me walking there and almost slipping. Gurudev said, “Be careful! You are a *brahmachārī*, and the *brahmachārī* life is very slippery! Any time you can fall down.” Gurudev always gave examples.

Another example Gurudev gave was about iron and magnet. If you are always together with a girl, always talking, talking, talking, it is like iron and magnet—attraction is inevitable. Also, if there is a fire and some dry straw, the fire will be attracted to the straw—the fire is here and the straw is there, they are far from each other, but before you know it you will see the fire has already gone there. Do you understand? Be careful.

māyāre kariyā jaya chhāḍāna nā yāya,
sādhu-guru-kṛpā vinā nā dekhi upāya

“It is not possible to conquer māyā by illusory environment (by engaging in māyā), but it is only possible to get relief by the mercy of Guru, Vaiṣṇava.”



Strong Foundation

22 November 2010

Through practising, we must make our foundation very strong. I saw what happens if the devotional foundation is not strong. Many disciples of even Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, Param Guru Mahārāj, who had no faith in Gurudev, have gone another way. They did not practise the proper way, and after they had served for a few months, or a few years, they went another way.

Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta and the scriptures tell us clearly what happens if the foundation is not strong, and almost every day I am telling the story about the *sādhū* and a scorpion. A *sādhū* always rescues us, the fallen *jīva* souls—we always go to the illusory environment, but the *sādhū* takes care of us:

durdaive sevaka yadi yāya anya-sthāne
sei ṭhākura dhanya tāre chule dhari' āne

“If a servant falls down and goes astray, glorious is the master who grabs him by his hair and brings him back.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Antya-līlā, 4.47)

‘Durdaive sevāk’ is ‘an unfortunate servitor’. An unfortunate servitor always goes another way, but Gurudev, Vaiṣṇavs take him and engage him in service. That is our only hope, but we must *accept* their help—if we willingly go another way, it becomes very difficult. That is why if we follow our mind, it becomes a big problem.

Actually, we do not know what is good for us. We think we will get benefit in a certain way, and we go that way, but then some problem comes...

Once, Prakāśānanda Saraswatī invited everybody, including Mahāprabhu, to join his assembly. Mahāprabhu came and sat down in a dirty place, whereas all the *sannyāsī* were sitting in a higher place. Prakāśānanda Saraswatī saw Him and said,

“You look like a good *sannyāsī*, but why are You sitting in this dirty place? Please join us.”

“I am a *sampradaic sannyāsī*, but I have no qualification to sit with you.” As Mahāprabhu was saying this, He showed some of His *aiśvarya*, opulence.

“You look like Nārāyaṇ, but You are sitting here. Come with us, let us sit together.”

Mahāprabhu came there and all the *sannyāsīs* gave Him respect and a seat. Prakāśānanda Saraswatī asked Him,

“You took *sannyās* from Keśav Bhāratī, that means You belong to our *sampradāya*. A *sannyāsī*’s religion is to practise meditation, *dhyān*, and to read Veda, Vedānta, but why are You, like a *bāul* (madman), chanting and dancing?”

“Because My Guru told Me, ‘You cannot read Veda, Vedānta. You are ignorant and foolish, so You have no qualification to read it. Better if You just chant.’ So, I am chanting on the order of My Guru.”

When Gurudev gives us an order, we must follow it.



Disentangled

6 December 2010

alpa-bhāgye sevā nāhi haya
koti janma thākle bhāgya
viṣaya sei haye vairāgya

“It takes more than just a little fortune to get service. Only after ten million births of good fortune, can one renounce this material world.”

Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākura writes this in his *Chaitanya-maṅgal* (later renamed as *Chaitanya-bhāgavata*). Only after you have got ten million lives of fortune, can you come to the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness—it is not easy.

It is not easy, but we have got this chance, and we must use the opportunity to serve, because even though we have got the chance, the illusory environment is always ready to remove us from this line. Illusory environment is very strong, so if we do not practise properly, if we do not serve properly, at any time we can lose our mind and leave this line. Be careful.

māyāre kariyā jaya chhāḍāna nā yāya,
sādhu-guru-kṛpā vinā nā dekhi upāya

“It is not possible to conquer māyā by illusory environment (by engaging in māyā), but it is only possible to get relief by the mercy of Guru, Vaiṣṇava.”

Be careful, always be careful.

dina yāya michhā kāje niśā nidrā-baśe
nāhi bhāvi maraṇa nikaṭe āchhe base

“My days are passed in useless work and nights are wasted on sleeping. It never occurs to me that there is death sitting next to me.”

(Kalyāṇ-kalpataru, 4.4, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

It is a very nice song, and another song is also ‘*Bhuliyā tomāre, saṁsāre āsiyā*’ (*Śaraṇāgati*, 2). If you can recite and think about the meaning of this song, you will see how nice it is:

bhuliyā tomāre, saṁsāre āsiyā
 peye nānā-vidha vyathā
 tomāra charaṇe, āsiyāchhi āmi,
 baliba duḥkhera kathā

“I have forgotten You, Prabhu! Now I have come to Your lotus feet, I surrender to You and will tell You what my sadness is.”

jananī-jaṭhare, chhilāma yakhana,
 viṣama bandhana-pāśe

“When I was in the mother’s womb, I got very much austerity.”

eka-bāra prabhu, dekhā diyā more
 vañchile e dīna dāse

“One time You showed me Your form—I saw You in my mother’s womb, but now I cannot see You.”

takhana bhāvinu, janama pāiyā,
 kariba bhajana tava,

“At that time I thought and promised You that I would worship You, I would chant Your Name.”

janama ha-ila, paḍi’ māyā-jāle,
 nā ha-ila jñāna-lava

“Then I was born, and māyā, the illusory environment, attacked me. I have become surrounded by the net of illusory

environment and now I cannot come out—*māyā* has bound me in her net.”

ādarera chhele, svajanera kole,
hāsiyā kāṭānu kāla,

“When I was a small boy, I sat on the lap of my relatives and everybody—my uncle, father, mother, and others—gave me so much affection.”

janaka-jananī- snehete bhuliyā,
saṁsāra lāgila bhāla

“They gave me much affection, and I felt so nice that I could not come out.”

When your wife or your husband give you much affection, you cannot come to this line, but when they kick you, then you can come. Is it correct or not? If they kick you, give you austerity, then you suffer so much and think, “Oh, it is not good, I have got to come out.” When they give you much love and affection, you cannot come to this line in that life...



Ego: a Play of Kali

8 December 2010

We sing in the morning,

bhakti-anukūla mātra kāryera svikāra
bhakti-pratikūla bhāva—varjanāṅgikāra
(Śaraṇāgati, 1.4, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

We must accept what is in favour of devotion and reject what is not in favour of devotion.

‘śraddhā’-śabde—viśvāsa kahe sudṛḍha niśchaya
kṛṣṇe bhakti kaile sarva-karma kṛta haya

“Śraddhā is a firm, determined faith that by service to Kṛṣṇa all actions are accomplished.”
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 22.62)

It depends upon faith, strongest faith, and practice. Scriptures give us so much advice, and we must follow it: *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*, *smaraṇam*, *vandanam*, *dāsyam*, *sakhyam*, *ātma-nivedanam* (hearing, chanting, remembering, offering obeisance, rendering service as a servitor, as a friend, and self-submission). *Ātma-nivedanam*: we must be surrendered souls:

ṣaḍ-aṅga śaraṇāgati ha-ibe yāhāra
tāhāra prārthanā śune śrī-nanda-kumāra

“Śrī Kṛṣṇa hears the prayers of those who surrender in this six-fold way.”
(Śaraṇāgati, 1.5, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

There are six types of *śaraṇāgati*:

dainya, ātma-nivedana, gopṭṛtve varaṇa
 avasya rakṣibe kṛṣṇa viśvāsa pālana
 bhakti-anukūla mātṛa kāryera svīkāra
 bhakti-pratikūla bhāva—varjanāṅgikāra

“Humility, self-submission, embracing the Lord’s guardianship, maintaining the faith that ‘Kṛṣṇa will certainly protect me’, engaging only in activities that are favourable to devotion, rejecting everything unfavourable to devotion.”

(Śaraṇāgati, 1.3-4, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

This is necessary, otherwise we cannot proceed in our spiritual life—we cannot develop, cannot improve our spiritual life. Also great fortune is necessary.

Param Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, made this centre, Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, and Gurudev is also protecting this temple and Rūpānuga *sampradāya*, but it is very difficult to find a pure devotee now. It is very difficult, and it is also very sad.

Gurudev said once, “If you want pure devotion, you must associate with a pure devotee.” Sometimes he also asked, “Who will you associate with?” You can learn something from a great devotee, but if you mix with those who do not know the proper conception, you will be polluted by them. This is a very difficult matter.

Once Yudhiṣṭhir was asked, “Where does the Lord, Bhagavān, stay? What does Bhagavān eat?” Yudhiṣṭhir replied, “Bhagavān eats people’s ego, *ahaṅkāra*.” That is the problem, that is our greatest difficulty. *Ātma-sammān* (feeling of self-importance) and *abhimān* (the world of “me” and “mine”) means ego, and it is very bad.

Even a young boy can have *ātma-sammān*. I heard yesterday that a thirteen- or fourteen-year-old girl hung herself. Why did

she do that? It is *abhimān*. Her bosom friend had lost her mobile phone at school, and it was found in that girl's bag. Her friend charged her, "You are my bosom friend and *you* have stolen my mobile phone?!" The girl was shocked, she did not know who had put the phone into her bag, and she could not tolerate that her bosom friend had called her a thief. She left school and at midnight she committed suicide—hung herself from a tree...

A fourteen-year-old girl is creating *abhimān*. Do you see? You can understand that it is so easy to create it—not only a thirty-year-old person can have an ego, even a fourteen-year-old can have it.

It is the time of Kali-yuga and *ātma-sammān*, so we cannot tolerate anything. Somebody says something to me, somebody calls me something, and I cannot tolerate that—it is a play of Kali. *Kalau doṣa-nidhi, Kali kalaha yug*: Kali is the age of quarrel, it is like an ocean of faults, and it is spreading very quickly. I know about these kinds of things better than you... That is very difficult. "*Ahaṅkāre maṭṭa haiñā, Nitāi-pada pāsariyā, asatyere satya kari māni*: maddened with pride, forgetting Nitāi's feet, I accept untruth as truth." Despite all that, Kṛṣṇa will arrange everything: everything depends upon Kṛṣṇa, so He will harmonise everything. As Gurudev always said, "Wait and see."

Question: *We hear about abhimān all the time, but still we cannot overcome it. Sometimes people get some qualification, but instead of abhimān going down, it goes up... How to proceed and get rid of it?*

Only by the mercy from Vaiṣṇavs, mercy from Gurudev. No other way. Ego is very bad, and it can come even through service.

Somebody may be a temple manager, and they do not want to clean toilets, "I am the temple president, why should I clean the bathroom?" On the other hand, I saw Siddhāntī Mahārāj: when Gurudev went to a foreign country, Siddhāntī Mahārāj

always sat by Gurudev's side, he always helped Gurudev, but he had no ego—he would come to Nabadwīp and clean the toilets. I saw it. I saw Āśram Mahārāj also: even though he is the head of a temple, he goes to *gośālā* and serves there. You must learn something from them.

When I was a *brahmachārī*, it was 1994 or 1995, I went to Hāpāniyā to supervise the land cultivation, and there was a man ploughing our field. I said to him, "You do not know how to do it, let me do it." Another *brahmachārī* became angry with me, "You are a *brahmachārī*, you came here to supervise the temple, and now you are ploughing the field. What will people say?" I told him, "What? It is my work! What is anybody going to say if I cultivate the land? What of that? What is the difference, a *brahmachārī* or a *sannyāsī*?"

I also saw Gurudev's example. When I joined I saw Gurudev was managing everything himself—he looked after the *gośālā*, ordered bricks, ordered cement, and so on. He did everything himself.

I remember once a man asked Gurudev for *sannyās*. Gurudev told him it was not necessary to wear a *sannyāsī* dress. It is not necessary to show, "Oh, I am a *sannyāsī*," and think it is an opportunity to use somebody to serve me. In Śrīla Prabhupād's time also many *sannyāsīs* served Kuñja Bābu, who was a *gr̥hastha*. Many *bābājīs* and *sannyāsīs* served Bhakti Vinod Thākura— from far away they would pay full obeisance to him, "Oh, such a big man is coming!" Many *sannyāsīs* also paid their obeisance to Puṇḍarīk Vidyānidhi—even Mahāprabhu paid obeisance to Puṇḍarīk Vidyānidhi!...



The Power of Surrender

14 December 2010

“Bhaktera adhīn Bhagavān”: the Supreme Lord is controlled by His devotees.

**bhaktera hṛdaye sadā govinda-viśrāma
govinda kahena—mama vaiṣṇava parāṇa**

“Govinda always resides in the hearts of His devotees. Govinda says, ‘Vaiṣṇavs are My life and soul.’”

(‘Ei-bāra karuṇā kara’, 5, by Śrīla Narottam Dās Ṭhākura)

Kṛṣṇa Himself said, “Devotees have Me tied within their hearts.”

When Mahāprabhu wanted to go to Vṛndāvan, He asked devotees for permission. Even when He was going to take *sannyās*, He first asked Śāchī Mātā and Viṣṇupriyā for permission. He told them that He wanted to take *sannyās*, although Śāchī Mātā had already understood that Nimāi would not stay there. She blamed Advaita Āchārya for that, “You are taking away my only son! One son has already left, and that was also because of you, and now Nimāi is also going to leave. It is your fault! Your name was Advaita, but for me you are now Dvaita. You do not care who will look after me and Viṣṇupriyā. You have preached to Nimāi, and now He wants to leave this house. How am I going to stay here?”

When Gurudev joined the mission in 1947, his mother also asked Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj, “Who will take care of me?” If Kṛṣṇa protects you, no one can destroy you. Kṛṣṇa says, “If you

care for Me, I will care for you.” You think that your children and other people will look after you, but no, it is not so.

We were just singing this song today:

**dainya, ātma-nivedana, goptṛtve varaṇa
avasya rakṣibe kṛṣṇa viśvāsa pālana**

*“Humility, self-submission, embracing the Lord’s guardianship,
maintaining the faith that ‘Kṛṣṇa will certainly protect me.’”*
(Śaraṇāgati, 1.3, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

Full faith is necessary. Even Draupadī could not understand it. She asked Kṛṣṇa, “Why did You not protect me when they were beating me?”

Duḥśāsan came to Draupadī’s house and said, “The kingdom now belongs to us, and so do you. You have to go with us.” Kuntī, her mother-in-law, was also there, and she tried to stop him, “She is just a housewife, why does she have to go?” but they forcefully took her by hair and threw her on the floor at the *rāj-sabhā* (royal assembly). Duryodhan was sitting in the place of the king, and the Pāṇḍavas were sitting with their heads down because they had been defeated in the *pāśā khelā* (dice game)—their uncle Śakuni made the arrangement for them to lose the game.

When Duḥśāsan came to take Draupadī, she thought of her husbands, “I am alone, and they are beating and taking me away! Where are you, Yudhiṣṭhir, where are you, Bhīm and Arjun?” When Duḥśāsan brought her into the hall, she saw all of them sitting there and cried out, “Yudhiṣṭhir! Bhīm! Arjun! Why are you not protecting me? I am your wife, and they are abusing me!” but they had no power. Everyone knew how chaste Draupadī was to her husbands, so Duḥśāsan came to take her sari off.

So, when she later asked Kṛṣṇa why He had not protected her, Kṛṣṇa explained, “Did you remember Me? No, you remembered

your husbands. Even when they were taking your clothes off, you thought you could protect yourself. They were pulling your clothes, and you were holding it, trying to cover your body and save yourself. Then you were clasping onto your sari with one hand, and calling out with the other. That is not full surrender. When they had taken almost all your sari off, then with both hands up, heart and soul, you called out to Me, ‘Please protect me!’ Did I not protect you at that time?” Draupadī admitted it.

**dīkṣā-kāle bhakta kare ātma-samarpaṇa
sei-kāle kṛṣṇa tāre kare ātma-sama**

*“At the time of initiation, when a devotee fully surrenders unto the service of the Lord, Kṛṣṇa accepts them as His very own.”
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Antya-līlā, 4.192)*

When you take initiation, you do not only receive a mantra, you also receive *divyā-jñāna* (divine knowledge). If a devotee surrenders to Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa thinks, “This devotee is My soul.” Surrender is necessary for that. Without surrender you cannot do anything.

It is also said about Nityānanda Prabhu:

**uṭṭama, adhama, kichhu nā kare vichāra
ye āge paḍaye, tāre karaye nistāra**
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 5.208-209)

“Nityānanda Prabhu does not distinguish who is bad, who is worse, who is good—He gives mercy to whoever surrenders, whoever falls at His lotus feet.”

This is how Kṛṣṇa rescues the souls...



Make Kṛṣṇa Your Friend

14 December 2010

It is written in the song glorifying Prabhupād Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura, “*Uṭhare uṭhare bhāi āra ta samaya nāi*: wake up, wake up, you have no time in your hand!” Any time we can leave, any time we can die. What will give us a solution?

If you want to cross a river, you have to pay the fee, but if you do not deposit anything, if you have no coin, how will you cross it? Devotional service is your coin. It is necessary to deposit something in your bank.

Every day Chitragupta (a bookkeeper appointed by Yamarāj) keeps record of your life. You are keeping your account, but that is not the actual account—Chitragupta keeps your record. Then, one day when you are called, you can get permission to cross the river—if you have got the visa. If you do not have the visa, you have to come again and get the visa from the visa officer, and to get the visa you must first apply for it—it is necessary to have desire to get it.

Kṛṣṇa Himself said, “If you have desire, one day mercy will come.” If you make one step to Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa will make ten steps to you. He is always ready to come to you, He always wants to serve you. Gurudev also said, “If you serve devotees, Kṛṣṇa will come to serve you.” That is sure.

We have got a devotional seed from our bona fide Guru, and we must protect it now. *Niji nijer bandhu, niji nijer śatru*: you are

your own friend, you are your own enemy. In this world no one is your enemy, no one is your friend, only Kṛṣṇa is your friend—*if* you make Him your friend. That is what is necessary.



A Sādhū's Character

18 December 2010

A *sādhū* should be humble, tolerant, and give honour to others:

**ṭṛṇād api sunīchena taror iva sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena kīrtanīyah sadā hariḥ**

“One who is humbler than a blade of grass, more tolerant than a tree, who gives honour to others without desiring it for himself, is qualified to always chant the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 17.31)

Once a *sādhū* was sitting on the bank of the Ganges, when he saw a scorpion going towards the Ganges, where it was sure to die. He caught the scorpion and kept it away in a safe place. While he was doing it, the scorpion stung him. Soon it again started moving towards the Ganges, so the *sādhū* picked it up and kept it in a safe place again. It repeated many times, maybe ten or twelve times, and every time the *sādhū* did it the scorpion stung him.

A man was passing by and, seeing this, thought, “What is going on there? Is this *sādhū* crazy? What is he doing?!” He came to the *sādhū* and asked him, “O *sādhū*! What are you doing? Have you lost your mind? You save this insect from death, it stings you, but still, again and again, you keep saving it. What is this?!” The *sādhū* replied to the man, “My character is to protect those who are going in the wrong way. Why should I change my character if this scorpion cannot change its character?”

It is necessary to have such quality: somebody may do something wrong, but still we must correct them.

There is also another story. There was a *sādhū* who would go every day to bathe in the Ganges after the *maṅgal āratī* (morning worship). Once, after the *sādhū* had finished his bathing, some naughty boy of that area threw cow dung at him. The *sādhū* had to bathe again. When he finished bathing for the second time, the boy threw some mud at him, and the *sādhū* had to bathe again. Time after time, the boy kept disturbing the *sādhū*: he threw some dogs' stool, monkeys' stool, or even some men's stool at him, and every time the *sādhū* went to bathe again. The boy could see that the *sādhū* did not say anything, he only silently went to bathe again, so finally he cried to him, "But why?! Why are you not becoming angry? Why are you not saying anything to me?! I have disturbed you so many times, but you only go and bathe again!"

"You did not disturb me. Actually, you did me good."

"What?!"

"Every day I bathe only once, but today I had to bathe ten times. So, today, in one day, I have got ten times more *sukṛti*. This is my benefit."

Can you see now? This is an example of tolerance.



Sincere Surrender

18 December 2010

Gurudev told one time that somebody may have one foot already in the door of Vaikuṇṭha, inside, and the other foot outside, but still that person may not enter Vaikuṇṭha—he may still go to the illusory environment...

**tad viddhi praṇipātena, paripraśnena sevayā
upadekṣyanti te jñānaṁ, jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ**

“You will be able to attain knowledge by satisfying the divine master with submission, relevant inquiry, and sincere service. The enlightened souls who are learned in scriptural knowledge and endowed with direct realisation of the Supreme Absolute Truth will impart divine knowledge to you.”

(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā, 4.34)

Surrender, honest enquiry, and service temper, *sevā vidhi*, are necessary...

**bhajiba baliyā ese saṁsāra-bhitare
bhuliyā rahile tumi avidyāra bhare**

“You came into this world saying, ‘O Lord, I will serve You’, but, having forgotten this promise, you have remained in ignorance.”

(Gītāvalī, Aruṇodaya kīrtan, 2.2, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

You promised that you would serve the Lord, but you have forgotten it. That is called illusory environment. How is it possible to come out? Only by surrender to the Lord. If you can surrender to the Lord, it becomes easy.

Surrender means not pretending that we surrender fully (“*dīkṣā-kāle bhakta kare ātma-samarpaṇa*”), but when Gurudev tells us to do something, we say, “Oh, Gurudev, I am tired...” What is the surrendered mood? It means you surrender fully, you give a full obeisance, *sāṣṭāṅga praṇāma*, to your Guru. A full obeisance means the disciple tells their Guru, “I am giving you a sword—you can cut my head, you can cut my legs, you can cut my body, that is your matter because I cannot see anything. I am surrendering my everything to you.” You think like this, but when you get up, you immediately forget everything... Is what I am saying correct or not? Surrender must be sincere.

Mahāprabhu said to Sanātan Goswāmī, “Are you not shy? You want to use My property, want to spoil My property?! This is My property, not yours! You have surrendered to Me, it means you have given this body to Me and I told you to keep it safe, not to spoil it.”

When a devotee surrenders, they cannot spoil anything—they cannot use their mind, intelligence, ego, eyes, nose, mouth, tongue, ears for any other purpose—they must use everything for the service to the Lord, to their Guru. Do you understand? It is easy to say it, but very hard to do, still it is necessary to practise it. Without practising you will not get anything.



Impaled by Illusion

18 December 2010

There was once a guru who was walking with his disciple to some place. At that time there were no cars, so they had to walk. They had been walking for a long time when the disciple said, “Gurudev, I cannot walk any further, I am very hungry!” Gurudev is merciful, and he immediately gave him one rupee coin and said, “OK, bring some *chānā*, chickpea dal.”

The disciple took Gurudev’s coin and happily went to the market. Gurudev told him to bring some *chānā*, but instead he began looking around, “Oh, such a big market, such big shops...” He started asking the price of everything—fruit, apples, oranges, paneer, sweets, etc. He bargained about everything.

(Gurudev says, “Bring some *chānā*,” so you must go to the *chānā* place immediately, but he began bargaining, and that is our mood—our mind is always disturbing, always going everywhere...)

So, he asked the price of so many things, and the shopkeeper said, “Everything is the same price: one rupee. One rupee per one kilo.” The disciple was impressed, “What a nice area! Everything here is the same price!” (Everything is the same: you worship Durgā, Kālī, Ganeśa, or Kārtik, you go to Rāma Kṛṣṇa Mission, Bhārat Sevāśram, or Sat Saṅga...) He thought, “It is a very nice area. I do not want to leave this place. Here is my own interest, my own enjoyment.”

He got one kilo *chhānā*, paneer, and came back to his Gurudev.

“Let me see what you have bought—give me the *chānā*.”

“Oh, no, Gurudev, it is a very nice area, and the market is very nice. Everything is the same price...”

“What? Everything is the same?! We cannot stay here any longer. We have to leave at once!” Then he saw that the disciple had brought paneer instead of *chhānā*, and he became angry that the disciple had not listened to him, “Eat it yourself, I will not take it.” The disciple ate everything—the whole kilo of paneer.

“Have you finished? Let us go now. We have to go to our destination, Vaikuṇṭha, Goloka Vṛndāvan.”

“Gurudev, I will not go... It is a very nice area, there are so many good things here.” The disciple became attached. “I have never seen such kind of enjoyment... I will not go from here.”

“Tsk, bad *karma*... Please, come with me.” Gurudev asked him many times to come with him, but the disciple refused,

“No, Gurudev, you go, I am tired now. I have just eaten a kilo of paneer, I have got to sleep now...”

“OK, stay here. I am going.”

(Sanātan Goswāmī also left his disciple, Īśān. How is it possible? It is the same thing—the disciple’s bad *karma*...)

When the Guru was leaving, he said to his disciple, “You do not want to go with me now, what can I do? The illusory environment can attack anyone... but Kṛṣṇa is merciful, so when you are in danger, you will remember me.” He gave this boon to him and left for his own place.

The disciple remained under the banyan tree. Later, he thought, “What am I going to eat?” He put on the *tilak*, and whenever he saw anybody was coming down the road he shouted loudly, “Hare Kṛṣṇa! Hare Kṛṣṇa!” The people had never seen anybody chanting, and they thought, “Oh, such a good devotee, such a big *sādhū*!” and they gave him a coin. In this way, he got some money. He went to the market and again bought some *chhānā*, paneer. Gradually, he grew a big fat belly.

Soon some problem came to that area. Every day somebody went house to house stealing, and all the villagers went to the local leader, like the mayor, or you can say the king, and complained that there was so much stealing going on in the area, and there was no police, no security... In the end, one night a big rich and powerful man's house was burgled. That rich man went to the mayor to complain. The mayor asked him,

"Did you see the thief?"

"Yes! I was sleeping, but then I thought I heard some noise and I saw him."

"What does he look like?"

"Very fat."

"Very fat?"

"Yes, he is very fat."

The mayor sent a policeman to search the area for a fat man. Finally, the policeman saw a stranger, a new person in the area, sitting under a banyan tree—and he was fat. "This is the fat man!" The policeman ordered his men to take that disciple to the mayor's house. Then the trial happened and he was unanimously found guilty. The disciple thought, "Oh, Gurudev told me not to stay in this area... All are equal... I am not a thief, and they are saying I am a thief. They are making a thief out of me..."

Then the sentence was announced. In those days there was no microphone, no megaphone, so they would come out and give a public announcement of the sentence. The sentence was death. In those days they killed people by means of '*śūl*', impalement. *Śūl* is a kind of a wooden pole that would, from bottom to head, pierce (impale) the body of the man placed on it. So, they announced that the thief had been caught and would be executed.

The disciple of the *sādhu* was crying in the jail, "Oh, why did I not listen to my Gurudev? But Gurudev told me when I am in

danger I will remember him...” He began to pray and call out to his Gurudev. All night he had been praying and begging for help—he knew the next day he would be dead. In the end, his Gurudev appeared in front of him and said, “I told you before that in this area all were equal, and I told you that you could not stay here, but you did not go with me. Now listen to what I am going to tell you, and you must follow this instruction. When people will be taking you to the *śūl*, I will also go with you. I will tell everybody that I want to die instead of you—”

“No, no, Gurudev, you have not done any wrong, I have made all the problem. It was me who did wrong, I will die!”

“Hey! ‘*Guru-mukha-padma-vākya, chittete kariyā aikya!*’ (Make the teachings from Śrī Guru’s lotus mouth one with your heart!) *Now* is your time. Listen to what I am telling you, then you will be OK.”

“Yes, I will do as you say, I will.”

The next day the disciple was escorted to the *śūl*. Everybody assembled there—the mayor, his wife, and thousands of people. They saw there was some old bearded man also walking next to the thief. The old man, Gurudev, cried out, “Hey! I want to go there instead!” The mayor asked, “Who is this man? Why does he want to go to the *śūl*?”

“You do not know me. I am Janak Rāja’s astrologer.”

“An astrologer? What have you come here for?”

“You made this platform and the *śūl* at a very good time—it is *amṛta yoga* (effective accomplishment) and *mahendra yoga* (success). One who goes to this *śūl* will go to Vaikuṇṭha!”

The mayor thought, “I made this *śūl*, and why should *they* go to Vaikuṇṭha? My father is sick and suffering so much. I would rather send my father there. I did not make this *śūl* and spend all the money to send them to Vaikuṇṭha!” Finally, he said, “My father will go to Vaikuṇṭha! Hey, get out of there!”

At this moment, Gurudev told his disciple, “Now is the time to run!” and the mayor put his father in that “*Vaikuṇṭha*”...

— • —

se chhala se-kāle kṛṣṇa sphurābe tomāre
kṛṣṇa-kṛpā yāre, tāre ke rākhite pāre
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 16.241)

Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī Prabhu asked once Mahāprabhu, “Prabhu, how can I come out of this kind of illusory environment? I have eleven security men...” Mahāprabhu said to him, “That is not your concern. It is not your concern how Kṛṣṇa will rescue you—if you surrender, He can save you any time.” It is necessary to surrender first.

Do you understand now what the protection of Gurudev is?

durdaive sevaka yadi yāya anya-sthāne
sei ṭhākura dhanya tāre chule dhari’ āne

*“If a servant falls down and goes astray, glorious is the master
who grabs him by his hair and brings him back.”*
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Antya-līlā, 4.47)

Gurudev takes his disciple by the *śikha* and throws him at the lotus feet of their Divine Master, or Deity.

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj kī jay!



Mahāprabhu's Pastimes

20 December 2010

There are so many Pastimes of Mahāprabhu...

One day Nimāi was eating soil. When His mother saw it, she slapped Him and took the soil out of His mouth. Nimāi said, "But why? Everything comes from soil—even the food you cook and give Me comes from soil."

Another time while Nimāi's mother was cooking—she used clay pots, and when a clay pot broke, she threw it away—Nimāi found a broken clay pot and messed His face with the soot from the pot. His mother became angry, "What are You doing?" She slapped Him, and a neighbour saw it. The neighbour came to her and asked, "What are you doing? Do you not know who this boy is? How can you beat Him!" Śāchī Devī replied, "You do not have to tell me who this boy is. He is my son, and I have the right to chastise or beat Him."

He shows so many Pastimes... He rescued Kazi, Keśav Kāśmīrī, Digvijayī Paṇḍit, Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya, King Pratāparudra, Chāpal Gopāl, and so on, but now even in Purī some do not believe in His Pastimes...

Once Mahāprabhu jumped into the sea in Purī and floated all the way to Konark. The sea is so big, we cannot go even five-ten feet into it, but Mahāprabhu got lost in that sea. He was found in Konark, sixty kilometres away from Purī—a fisherman found Him in his net. How is it possible?

He also chastised Jagadānanda Prabhu, Gadādhara Paṇḍit... Mahāprabhu told Gadādhara Paṇḍit to take *kṣetra-sannyās*, stay in

Purī, and do the service of Ṭoṭā Gopīnāth, and Gadādhara Paṇḍita said, “A million of services to Gopīnāth are equal to seeing Your lotus feet once.” Gadādhara Paṇḍita is expert—he is the incarnation of Rādhārāṇī.

Once Gadādhara Paṇḍita wanted to go with Mahāprabhu to Nabadwīp, but Mahāprabhu objected, “*Sevā doṣa lāge*: if you do not follow Me, My words, it will be *sevā aparādh*.” Gadādhara Paṇḍita replied, “I will not go there with You. I will go there to see Āi (Śacī Mātā).” Mahāprabhu knew He could not compete with Gadādhara Paṇḍita, so He did not say anything. When a boat came to take Mahāprabhu away, Gadādhara Paṇḍita fainted—he had so much affection, so much love and attachment to Mahāprabhu.

Mahāprabhu also performed a Pastime with Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya. Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya did not believe that Mahāprabhu was an incarnation of the Lord. He said to his relative, Gopīnāth Ācārya, “You think He is the Lord, but I do not think so. What makes you say He is the Lord?” Gopīnāth Ācārya replied, “I have got some mercy from the Lord, that is why I am sure He is the Lord, but you have no mercy, that is why you cannot understand that He is the Lord.”

The house of Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya and his Deity are still there in Purī, near Gambhīra, Kāśī Mīśra's house. Gaṅgā Mata Goswāmīnī served that Deity before.

There were also Rāmachandra Purī and Īśvara Purī. They were both disciples of Mādhavendra Purī, but what is the position of Īśvara Purī and what is the position of Rāmachandra Purī? Rāmachandra Purī could not change his character, he made a Vaiṣṇava *aparādh*, and had to leave. Gurudev told once that if you make a Vaiṣṇava *aparādh*, then that *aparādh* will go to your Guru, then it will go to the Lord...



20 December 2010

Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura at that time sang ‘*Nadīyā mātāya*’ (driving all Nadia mad with the Holy Name), but you can sing

now ‘*jagata mātāya*’, the whole universe (driving the whole world mad with the Holy Name).

After Mahāprabhu’s song you can sing any song. For example, in the morning we usually sing ‘*Vibhāvarī śeṣa*,’ a song about the Lord. Gurudev says this song is very nice.

How many hours are necessary for that? Most offices open at ten o’clock, so if somebody does a job, leads a householder life, they can also practise. It is not so hard. Wake up early in the morning, take a bath, come to the *maṅgal āraṭi*, sing, then go to work. Is it possible or not? Everything is impossible for those who do not do anything.

nidrālasya-hata sukārye virata
akārye udyogī āmi

“I am subdued by laziness and sleep, averse to performing good deeds, and eager to perform sinful deeds.”

(*Śaraṇāgati*, 5.4, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

Kali-yuga has come and everything is going to the bad side. It lasts four 400 000 years, and only about 5 500 years have passed so far, but it is becoming very difficult. Kṛṣṇa Himself will have to appear, otherwise so many bad things are coming, waiting for us in future. At the same time, everything is possible if people only chant the Holy Name and engage in *kīrtan*, Kṛṣṇa *sāṅkīrtan* movement—it is the only way that can rescue the whole universe, nothing else.

In Mahāprabhu’s time also there was much opposition and many problems. Gurudev said that Mahāprabhu rejected Nabadwīp and accepted Purī because He could not tolerate it. One of His classmates was a debating man. He always came to Mahāprabhu and debated with Him, and he even arranged for some *guṇḍā* to beat Mahāprabhu. There were so many problems, and Mahāprabhu rejected and suddenly left everything and everyone—Viṣṇupriyā, Śācī Mātā, and others.

Mahāprabhu even went to Bangladesh for preaching, but some are telling the opposite about Mahāprabhu. He went to Bangladesh only one time, and you can go and see that everyone there knows Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. They do not know the pure conception, but they know Mahāprabhu, and they all respect Mahāprabhu. There is not so much misconception, nonsense, but they are a little *sahajiyā*—they do not get good guidance, an expert Guru. Prabhupād Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur went there only a few times, he did not spend there much time, that is why they did not get good guidance. *Kīrtan*, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* are all over Bangladesh, but they do not follow the rules and regulations properly. Still, they are devotees—they have a devotional mind...



Gurudev's Vyāsa Pūjā Is Coming

21 December 2010

You all know that Gurudev's appearance day is coming soon. Gurudev came to this world on this day to rescue the whole universe.

As you know, he appeared in Bamunpara, but actually, Vaiṣṇav's *āvirbhāv*, Guru's *āvirbhāv* (appearance) are non-different from the Lord's appearance day, that is why we celebrate this festival every year all over the world.

Gurudev always stayed here in Nabadwīp for his appearance day, and he is still here, but in *samādhi*. He can see everything—who offers a flower on his appearance day, who does not, and so on.

adyāpiha sei līlā kare gorā rāya
kona kona bhāgyavāne dekhibāre pāya

"Gorā Rāy continues performing His Pastimes, and those who are fortunate can see it."

Gurudev's *līlā* is also going on, but only the fortunate souls can see it, that is why we must engage everybody in service on his appearance day. Whatever capacity we have—in *kāya*, *mana*, *vākyā*, (body, mind, and speech)—we must serve his appearance day.

There are so many services here—cleaning, decoration, picking mango leaves, etc. The new *samādhi mandir* is there, and we can hang some decoration. The construction is still going on, and I cannot say how many more days it will continue, but we

are trying heart and soul to install Gurudev's *mūrti* very soon. It depends on his wish—it will happen when he wants it to happen.

Gurudev is very merciful. We have no quality or qualification, but still he keeps us, tolerates us so much. Everybody has some fault, nobody is pure, but Gurudev is very merciful—he tolerates us and engages us in service to his lotus feet. We must think of it in this way.

All over the world on this day, devotees are celebrating Gurudev's Vyāsa Pūjā, appearance day, but somebody thinks, "Oh, Gurudev is not here, what we will go there for?" But I think they do not have a relation with Gurudev then. A relationship must come when you realise that Gurudev never disappears, never appears. Guru always stays with us, always gives instruction to us. If we remember his instruction, his words, read his books, then we will always get his association through that, and you can easily understand it.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj also left and is now in *samādhi*, but Gurudev always said, "Śrīla Guru Mahārāj always protects me, he always gives me energy, gives me enthusiasm and shelter. He gives me everything." We must also think like this. Gurudev has left, but he has left many things here—he has left his devotees, his Deities, his temples; he has left the scriptures, his words. We will find Gurudev there.

We must worship and serve him properly, then we will get everything. Gurudev can see everything—if somebody thinks Gurudev cannot see any more, this is a misconception, a wrong conception.

Very soon we are going to celebrate his festival, and we are only praying to him for his mercy, "Give me some power, some energy, some devotional activities, devotion so that I can serve your lotus feet until death." That is our only hope and prayer to the Guru. Nothing else.

**guru-mukha-padma-vākya, chittete kariyā aikya,
āra nā kariha mane āsā**

Make the teachings from Śrī Guru's lotus mouth one with your heart and do not desire anything else within your heart.

(‘Śrī Guru-Vaiṣṇava Māhātmya-gīti’, 2, by Śrīla Narottam Dās Ṭhākura)

Wherever you stay, you must distribute Gurudev's mercy, but first you must accept his mercy—we must empty our heart to make space to accept and keep his mercy. We only ask, “Mercy, mercy, mercy,” but we have no place where to keep his mercy. It is necessary to make ourselves qualified through practising, otherwise we will not be able to accept and keep his mercy.

If you have a glass full of water and pour more water in it, the water will spill. You must empty your glass first—you have some desires in your heart, and you must remove them first. It is not easy to remove these bad elements from your heart—*bhukti*-, *mukti*-, *siddhi-kāmī*, *kanak*, *kāmiṇī*, *pratiṣṭhā*, *kāma*, *krodha*, *lobha*, *mada*, *moha*, *mātsarya* (desire for enjoyment, liberation, power, money, women, fame; lust, anger, greed, illusion, madness, envy), ego—but it is possible through *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*, and also mercy from the Guru, the Vaiṣṇavs, through the service to the Vaiṣṇavs. Once you get some space in your glass, you will be able to get some mercy and you can fill your glass with that.

There is so much service we can do. Somebody always says, “Gurudev, Gurudev, Gurudev,” but when Gurudev wants a glass of water, you cannot give it to him. You keep saying, “Oh, my father is very nice, my father is very affectionate to me.” Day and night you keep on praising your father, but you do not give food to your father, and you kick him out of your temple or house, “You are now an old man, you cannot do anything. Get out of here.” Such is our position: we always say, “Gurudev, Gurudev,” but we are not following what Gurudev wants. You always say,

“Gaura Hari, Gaura Hari”, “Rādhe Rādhe”, “Nitāi Nitāi,” but you do not do what Rādhārāṇī wants, what Gaura Hari wants, what Nitāi wants. Then what is the use?

That is why we are praying to everybody—serve Gurudev’s mission, serve his devotees. Do service, it will bring benefit to you. Whatever your capacity is, serve with your *kāya*, *mana*, *vākya* (body, mind, and words). Everybody has different qualifications. Maybe somebody cannot do something nicely, but they have another qualification. Somebody may not be a good singer, somebody cannot sing Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* so well, but Kṛṣṇa does not want your tune, Kṛṣṇa knows what you are singing, what you want to say. Gurudev knows it. You must understand it. Somebody may not be doing something well, but they have some other qualification.

In Prabhupād Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura’s time, a well-educated man, Sundarānanda Vidyā Vinod Prabhu, came to the main Gauḍīya Maṭh from Bangladesh. At that time, it was rare to see an educated person, so if somebody passed the BA (Bachelor of Arts), people would come to see them from far away villages. So, when Sundarānanda Vidyā Vinod Prabhu came to Gauḍīya Maṭh, everybody complained, “He is not doing any service.” Prabhupād saw that boy and asked Kuñja Bābu,

“Why are you not engaging this boy in any service? What can he do?”

“That boy has no quality or qualification. He cannot do anything.”

“You are the one who has no quality or qualification, that is why you cannot engage him in service.”

Do you understand? Sometimes we say, “Oh, he cannot do anything, he has no quality or qualification,” but we must see our own fault first—before you blame anybody, you must first see your fault.

Vaiṣṇav is *adoṣa-daraśi* (forgiving), he does not see others' fault, but he sees his own fault. That is the quality of a Vaiṣṇav. If somebody does not like you, you must see: maybe you have some fault, that is why they do not like you. In this way, you can correct yourself.

viṣaye ye prīti ebe āchhaye āmāra
sei-mata prīti hauka charaṇe tomāra
(*Gītāvalī, Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, 4.5, Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura*)

People feel affection to their children, wife, husband, relatives, and if you think that kind of relation is coming to you towards your Guru, towards your Guru's mission, then you can think that some devotion is coming to your heart...



Intolerable

26 December 2010

“Maryādā-laṅghana Prabhu sahite nā pāre”: Mahāprabhu cannot tolerate disrespect of senior, bona fide Vaiṣṇavs.

Once Jagadānanda Paṇḍit advised Sanātan Goswāmī to go to Vṛndāvan, but when Mahāprabhu heard it, He said to him, “Sanātan is My Guru. You were born only yesterday, and now you are teaching Sanātan Goswāmī?! It is not right.”

Mahāprabhu chastised Jagadānanda Paṇḍit very much, and Sanātan Goswāmī became shy to see how much affection Mahāprabhu was giving to Jagadānanda Paṇḍit, “Prabhu, You are giving sweet to him, but You are not giving sweet to me.” Now, however, is the Age of Kali, it is not like at that time: now if you chastise some *brahmachārī*, he will at once say, “I do not need such a guru. There are so many other gurus, better I go to another one.” But Sanātan Goswāmī was *crying* because he was not chastised.

You heard also about Śrīkaṇṭha, the nephew of Śivānanda Sen. When Nityānanda Prabhu and all the devotees went to Purī from Nabadwīp, there was a dog who followed them. On their way, they had to cross a river, but the boat man did not want to let the dog into the boat (he considered it inauspicious). Śivānanda Sen negotiated with the boatman, “I will pay you ten times the fare,” and he immediately allowed the dog in—suddenly the ‘inauspiciousness’ was gone. That dog reached Mahāprabhu in Gambhīra long before the devotees. (Do you see? How will you recognise a Vaiṣṇav? Just imagine it—devotees had not reached

yet, but the dog was already with Mahāprabhu.) Śivānanda Sen was searching, “Where has the dog gone? Where has the dog gone?” He fasted that day, “I will not eat today, and everybody has to fast this night too.” He was anxious about the dog, but when the devotees finally came to Mahāprabhu, they saw that very dog eating a coconut that Mahāprabhu had given to it.

Also, on the way at that time there was some tax to be paid. Nityānanda Prabhu was walking at the head of the devotees, and Śivānanda Sen was managing everyone behind. The tax collector asked Nityānanda Prabhu for the tax, but Nityānanda Prabhu replied, “The leader is behind, he will pay.” All the devotees went through saying the same, “Our leader is behind.” There was a big line, and Śivānanda Sen was very busy, managing everyone, helping them pass the place.

While Śivānanda Sen was busy with the crowd, Nityānanda Prabhu became very hungry. He sat under a tree and was waiting, waiting—one hour passed, two hours passed, but Śivānanda was not coming. “Where is Śiva? Where has he gone? These householder people are misers! How is it possible to deal with them?” Nityānanda Prabhu began swearing. Angry that Śivānanda was so late, Nityānanda Prabhu gave a curse that his two sons would die. When Śivānanda Sen’s wife heard this, she began to cry, but what is the meaning of that curse?

Śivānanda Sen finished bargaining with the tax collector and ran to Nityānanda Prabhu. Understanding that Nityānanda Prabhu was angry, he paid full obeisance to Him saying, “Prabhu, everything is my fault,” and Nityānanda Prabhu kicked him. Hearing the curse, he said, “If you get mercy from Nityānanda Prabhu and your child dies, it is good! It is a great mercy.” Śivānanda began dancing, “I have got mercy today!”

While Śivānanda Sen was dancing for joy, his nephew, Śrīkaṇṭha, became angry, “My uncle is an honourable person,

a great personality. He brought so many devotees, and so many devotees give honour to him, but Nityānanda Prabhu is giving so much dishonour to him. What kind of a *sādhū* is He?!" Śrīkaṇṭha went to Mahāprabhu to complain. Mahāprabhu had already understood what happened there and asked Śrīkaṇṭha, "Do you wish to say something?" but Śrīkaṇṭha could not say anything: when he saw Mahāprabhu, he could not complain—he forgot everything.

Śrīkaṇṭha thought that people would see Nityānanda Prabhu giving so much disrespect to a big *sādhū*, then they would criticise Him, but those who have some pure devotion, who have a deep devotional mood, can easily understand why Nityānanda Prabhu had kicked Śivānanda Sen. It is a very important matter. If you understand it, then you can understand how merciful Nityānanda Prabhu is.

Mahāprabhu Himself gave a certificate to Nityānanda Prabhu, "If Nityānanda Prabhu brings a drunkard Muslim lady along—if He pulls and catches her—He has no fault. Moreover, seeing this, even Lord Brahmā will come and pay *daṇḍavat* to Him."

It is said in the scriptures that if somebody does some sinful work unknowingly, Kṛṣṇa does not ask for his *prāyaścitta* (atonement)—*prāyaścitta* is not necessary. Bhagavān, the Lord Himself always rescues His servitors. Through chanting, through service, everything can be removed, but practice is necessary—practice, strongest faith, and full surrender (*ṣaḍaṅga śaraṇāgati*):

ṣaḍ-aṅga śaraṇāgati ha-ibe yāhāra
tāhāra prārthanā śune śrī-nanda-kumāra

"Śrī Kṛṣṇa hears the prayers of those who surrender in this
six-fold way."

(*Śaraṇāgati*, 1.5, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)



One More Year Passed

31 December 2010

2010 is going to finish today at midnight. Only four hours are left, and one more year will be gone...

jīvana anitya jānaha sāra
tāhe nānā-vidha vipada bhāra
nāmāśraya kari' yatane tumi
thākaha āpana kāje

"Understand the essence: the life is temporary and filled with all sorts of danger. Carefully take shelter of the Name and do your work."

(Gitāvalī, Aruṇodaya kīrtan, 1.3, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

Life is very uncertain, temporary—we do not know when this life will be gone.

bhajahū re mana śrī-nanda-nandana
abhaya-charaṇāravinda re
śīta ātapa vāta variṣaṇa
e dina yāminī jāgi re

"O mind, serve the son of Nanda—His lotus feet will make you fearless! Day and night I remain awake, suffering from the heat and cold, wind and rain..."

(‘Bhajahū re mana’, 1, 2, by Śrīla Govinda Dās Kavirāj)

kamala dala jala, jīvana ṭalamala
bhajahū hari-pada niti re

"Life is shaky—it is just like a drop of water tottering on a lotus leaf. Serve the Lord's feet!"

('Bhajahu re mana', 3 by Śrīla Govinda Dās Kavirāj)

hari hari! viphale janama goñāinu
manuṣya-janama pāiyā rādhā-kṛṣṇa nā bhajiyā
jāniyā śuniyā viṣa khāinu

"O Lord! My life has passed uselessly. I have got a human birth, but I did not serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Knowingly I drank poison."

('Hari Hari viphale', 1, by Śrīla Narottam Dās Ṭhākura)

Everybody knows that, but still they do not worship—it is the same as taking poison.

golokera prema-dhana hari-nāma-saṅkīrtana
rati nā janmila kena tāya
saṁsāra-viṣānale divā-niśi hiyā jvale
juḍāite nā kainu upāya

('Hari Hari viphale', 2, by Śrīla Narottam Dās Ṭhākura)

This is glorification of the Holy Name. "Harinām saṅkīrtan comes from Goloka Vṇḍāvan, and it is its very wealth, but I do not have any taste, any attachment to that... I always suffer so much in my family life, and I cannot find any relief or solution."

vrajendra-nandana yei śachī-suta haila sei
balarāma ha-ila nitāi
dīna-hīna yata chhila hari-nāme uddhārila
tāra sākṣī jagāi mādhai

('Hari Hari viphale', 3, by Śrīla Narottam Dās Ṭhākura)

"He who is known as Vrajendra Nandan (Vraja Kumār, Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself) came as Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu (Śachī Suta, the son of Śachī Mātā); and Balarām appeared as Nityānanda Prabhu. How did They rescue the souls through the Holy Name? Jagāi and Mādhai are the witnesses to that."

hā hā prabhu nanda-suta vṛṣabhānu-sutā-yuta
karuṇā karaha ei-bāra
narottama-dāsa kaya nā ṭheliha rāṅgā pāya
tomā vine ke āchhe āmāra?

(‘Hari Hari viphale’, 4, by Śrīla Narottam Dās Ṭhākura)

“Narottam Dās Ṭhākura is praying to Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, asking the Lord, ‘Please, give me some mercy, please allow me to take some shelter at Your lotus feet. Do not reject me. Please accept me.’ Narottam Dās Ṭhākura cries and sings, ‘Prabhu, You are my only hope, without You there is nothing, no one. My hope is only You—I can depend only upon You.’”

anya-abhilāṣa chhāḍi jñāna karma parihari
kāya mane kariba bhajana
sādhu-saṅge kṛṣṇa-sevā nā pūjiba devī-devā
ei bhakti parama-kāraṇa

“Serve the Lord with body and mind, giving up all other desires and the pursuit of material benefit and knowledge. One should serve Lord Kṛṣṇa in the association of devotees without worshipping any demigods.”

(Śrī Prema-bhakti-chandrikā, 13, by Śrīla Narottam Dās Ṭhākura)

If you do something for the Lord but do not get good association, proper guidance, then it will not be proper service, this is why it is said, “Sādhu-saṅge Kṛṣṇa-sevā, nā pūjiba devī-devā: serve Kṛṣṇa in the association of devotees without worshipping any demigods.” Some also worship so many demigods, but we must follow our *Guru-paramparā* line and follow the way they serve, the instruction they give:

mahājanera yei patha, tāte habe anurata

“Love and be attached to the path of the great souls.”

(Śrī Prema-bhakti-chandrikā, 14, by Śrīla Narottam Dās Ṭhākura)

mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ

"The true path is the one that the great souls have walked."

(Mahābhārata)

sādhana-smaraṇa-līlā ihāte nā kara helā

(Śrī Prema-bhakti-chandrikā, 14, by Śrīla Narottam Dās Ṭhākura)

"Do not neglect, do not avoid your *sādhana* (practising) and *smaraṇa* (remembering)."

asat-saṅga sadā tyāga

chhāḍa anya gīta-rāga

karmī jñānī parihari dūre

kevala bhakata-saṅga

prema-kathā rasa-raṅga

līlā-kathā braja-rasa-pure

"Always reject bad association, give up attachment to the songs, and always keep away from karmīs and jñānīs. Keep devotees' association only and take joy in the nectar of the talks about love and devotion to the Lord and the Pastimes of Vṛndāvan."

(Śrī Prema-bhakti-chandrika, 15, by Śrīla Narottam Dās Ṭhākura)

"Avoid dishonest association, take association of devotees."

Association means consulting, talking about Kṛṣṇa consciousness, about your service, spiritual life—not about material things.

"Avoid *yogīs*, *nyāsis*, *karmīs*, *jñānīs* (pursuers of mystic powers, renunciation, material benefit, or knowledge)"—reject all this, and only worship Girivaradhārī, worship your Guru, the Lord.



Do Not Fear Service

23 January 2011

ye-dina gr̥he, bhajana dekhi,
gr̥hete goloka bhāya

“On the days when I see devotional service taking place at my home, I feel that Goloka has manifested there.”
(Śaraṇāgati, 31.6, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

“Kṛṣṇa personally appears wherever His *saṅkīrtan* is going on.” Mahāprabhu said, “I stay at the kitchen of Mother Sachi, where Nityānanda Prabhu dances, at the house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit, and at the house of Rāghav Paṇḍit.” Wherever there is service of the Lord going on, wherever the Lord’s glory and Name are chanted, the Lord always stays and plays there. The Lord’s Name, Form, Qualities, Pastimes, associates and features (*Nāma, guṇa, rūpa, līlā, parikar, vaiśiṣṭya*) are all nondifferent from the Lord Himself.

brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja

“Having travelled throughout the universe and having got the mercy of Guru and Kṛṣṇa, a fortunate soul receives a seed of the devotional creeper.”
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 19.151)

Only the fortunate souls can get that kind of devotional seed, and it does not take just a little fortune:

alpa-bhāgye sevā nāhi haya
koṭi janma thākle bhāgya
viṣaye sei haye vairāgya

“Service does not come by just a little fortune. Only after ten million births of good fortune, can you leave this material world behind.”

A great fortune is necessary.

Once I said to Gurudev that a *brahmachārī* wanted to leave, and Gurudev replied in Bengali, “*Yāoyā tāi sambhāvit, thākā tāi asambhāvit*: it is probable that people will come, but it is not probable that they will stay.” It is not so easy to stay here. My duty is to engage everybody in service to Gurudev, but some do not come to me, and it has been like this since the early days. Some are afraid, “Oh, if I go to Mahārāj, he will give me service”—they think it is bad, or they think, “What if I cannot do it? I am afraid.” If you think *you* are doing it, then the burden will come to you, but if you understand that you cannot do anything and the Guru does everything, then what is the problem?

Gurudev does everything, and we must depend on him, “I have no qualification or quality, Prabhu, but you can easily take my service, you can easily accept me...”

When I was a young boy I would often sing one song, and at that time I did not understand what I was singing, but that song’s meaning is that my mind always takes me away, but if I engage my mind in the Lord’s service, then I will get the result.

Gurudev told it to me many times, and I have also told many times to you: if you serve Vaiṣṇavs, if you serve your Guru, Kṛṣṇa Himself will come to serve you.



Service Without Attachment

23 January 2011

I remember when I once went to Govardhan, a monkey stole a *brahmachārī*'s shoes and he came to me to complain, "Mahārāj, my shoes were gone today." I replied to him, "It is good! When you stay in Govardhan and Vṛndāvan, you must walk on your head, but you were using shoes and the monkey could not tolerate it."

When Sanātan Goswāmī rejected the last thing he had—he gave his *bhoṭ kambal*, woollen blanket, to a Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇav—and, when asked, told about this to Mahāprabhu, Mahāprabhu said, "At last all your material attachment has come to an end. You have given up, discarded your last material possession."

When I just joined the temple, I was staying in the Indian guest house (the building that is now behind the *samādhi mandir* of Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj). During the day I did much service and my mind was busy, but at night time when I went to bed, I could not sleep at first. Every day I dreamt about writing on the blackboard, teaching at school—every night it would be on my mind. I could not tolerate it, but what could I do? When I came, I only brought one set of *punjabi*, and because every day, whenever I saw it, I remembered my house, I burnt it. Then was my room key. I had my own room, and I would remember the things in my room—the almirah, the bed, and so many other favourite things—but it was too much disturbance, so one day I threw that key into Govinda Kuṇḍa. I wanted to forget all that, and slowly, slowly Kṛṣṇa, Gurudev removed it all.

Whatever birth you take, you will always get a father and a mother, but it is not in every life that you can get a bona fide, honest Guru; but it is possible in this life. That is why I was chastising one man recently: he had service to Nityānanda Prabhu, but he left it to arrange his nephew's wedding ceremony...

tomāra sevāya, duḥkha haya yata,
seo ta' parama sukha

"All the distress that I face in Your service is my greatest happiness."

(Śaraṇāgati, 16.4, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

Even Brahmā may come to us and offer so much opulence, but we have no time to go there. One way or another, you must use yourself for the service to your Guru, for the service to your Lord, otherwise, as I told that man, you are committing suicide—leaving your service, disobeying your Gurudev's order is the same as committing suicide. We sing every day:

lochan bale hena nitāi yebā nā bhajila
jāniyā śuniyā sei ātma-ghāti haila

"Lochan Das says, 'Anyone who did not serve Nitāi knowingly committed suicide.'"

('Nitāi guṇamaṇi āmāra', 5, by Śrīla Lochan Dās Ṭhākura)

Lochan Dās says it—it is not my words.

'Bhajan' means 'bhaj dhātu', 'bhaj' means 'sevā'. Śrīla Prabhupād also gave an explanation of the meaning of *bhajan*. *Jīver sevā korte korte ātma kalyāṇ lābha haya*. *Jīver sevā* (service to the souls) does not mean giving some medicine to people. *Jīver sevā* means you must engage the *jīva* soul (any kind of *jīva* souls) in service to the Lord.

Sometimes it may come to your mind that what you are doing is *bhajan*, service, but it may be all *karma*.

When I joined the temple, from 1992 to 1999 I never asked Gurudev, “I want to go to Vṛndāvan,” “I want to go to Purī,” or “I want to go to Ekachakra.” Never. Gurudev would send me in my *brahmachārī* life for begging and rice collection, and only in 1999 for the first time he sent me to Purī for some service. I had never been in Purī, and when I was at the Howrah station I did not even have a proper ticket, I just paid to somebody at the station. I had to do a big service there in Purī, and I prayed to Jagannāth and Gurudev, “Gurudev, you have sent me here for your matter, please you settle the problem.” Everybody has some plan, but Kṛṣṇa said, “I have My own plan, and you must go with *My* plan.” So, the Lord does everything, and you must engage yourself in *His* service.

If you follow your Gurudev, serve the Vaiṣṇavs, then you can easily call it service.



Vigraha Is Not a Doll

7 March 2011

Sākṣād Vrajendra-nandan: vighraha (Deity) is not a doll. This is why it is told: “*śraddhāya śrī-mūrtir sevān*” (worship the Deity with faith). Deity worship is going on everywhere, but you must have *śraddhā*, full faith, when you give an offering to the Deity.

You know Arjun Miśra’s story (when the Lord Himself came to him as a boy) and there is also another story. There was a husband and a wife, and they had a son. Their Gurudev had told them, “Offer *bhog* and always take *prasādam*,” and every day they did *pūjā*, offered the *bhog*, and so on, but they did not have so much strong faith that Kṛṣṇa was actually accepting it—just as some may think, “You give something to Kṛṣṇa, but you see that the same plate comes back from the altar room, so how can you say that Kṛṣṇa takes it?”

One day this husband and wife told their small son called Raghunandan to offer the *bhog*, and went somewhere, perhaps to the market. Raghunandan made the offering, but he saw the Deity was not taking it. He took a gong stick and charged the Deity, “Hey! My mother gives You food every day and You take it from her, but when I am giving You, You are not taking! Today a little boy comes to offer and You are neglecting him! Why are You not taking it from *me*?!” He talked to the Deity like this, and the Deity began to take the food.

His parents came back from the market and saw that all the food was gone. His mother asked,

“Where is the *prasād*?”

“*Prasād*? Today you probably cooked less—the Deity has taken everything.”

“What? Ṭhākur (the Deity) never takes it when I offer it. You must have given it to some of your friends, otherwise where could it all be gone?”

“No, I did not do anything wrong.” He began crying, and His mother was perplexed.

In the evening, she finished cooking and sent her son to again go and make the offering. Raghunandan again went there and spoke to the Deity, “Eat now! At noon time You ate, and now You are not eating... Eat, otherwise my mother will beat me! She will not believe me. Take it!”

His mother heard his voice and looked through a hole in the door. She saw he was talking to the Deity and the Deity was taking the *bhog*. She fainted.

Śāchī Mātā also was cooking and crying, “If only Nimāi was here today, He would take it... He likes this, that...” She was thinking about it and crying.

Nārad Goswāmī asked the Lord, “Where do You stay, Prabhu?” The Lord replied, “I stay in four places: at Śrīvās Paṇḍit’s house, at Śāchī Mātā’s kitchen, where Nitāi is dancing, and at Rāghav Paṇḍit’s house (where his sister Damayantī cooks for Me every day).”

So, Śāchī Mātā cooked and tears would come to her eyes, “Nimāi likes this so much, but He is not here, who will eat it? Who will take it?” She cooks and cries.

Mahāprabhu sent Dāmodar Paṇḍit to Śāchī Mātā, another time He sent Nityānanda Prabhu, and another time Jagadānanda Paṇḍit with some cloth. Mahāprabhu asked Jagadānanda Paṇḍit once to go and tell His mother that on a certain day Śāchī Mātā cooked certain dishes, and that He came and ate

it all. Jagadānanda told that to Śachī Mātā, and it was true: it was Saṅkrānti day (Saṅkrānti means the end of the Pauṣ month, winter season, December-January; we also make some special *pīṭhā*, cakes at this time), and Śachī Mātā did actually cook *pāṭisāptā*, *saruchākli*, and many other things for Nimāi...

Sometimes with tears she offered the *bhog* and saw the plate was empty. Nimāi had come and eaten everything, but she thought maybe she had forgotten to offer it. She went and looked into the pots, but the pots were full (there was some illusion). Sometimes she also suspected her daughter-in-law, Viṣṇupriyā, “Maybe she has eaten it...”

Kṛṣṇa takes everything that a devotee gives Him—even banana skin. Once, Vidura’s wife gave banana skin to Kṛṣṇa and He took it. Do you see? The Lord takes even that, but those who are not devotees cannot give anything to the Lord—they give something, but in lieu of that they ask for something, they have some desire within, some asking mood. That is not *niṣkāma bhajan*, *niṣkāma sevā*—it is *sakāma*. When you give something, do not keep any desires, do not ask for anything. We must have unconditional surrender, unconditional mood: everything is causeless mercy, *ahaitukī kṛpā*.

Also, Nimāi went to Śrīdhara Paṇḍit’s house and asked for some water, but Śrīdhara Paṇḍit did not have a proper glass—there was a hole in it; but Nimāi took water from it. Another time, Mahāprabhu took *thor mochā* (banana stem) from him. It was His favourite, and He would play with Śrīdhara Paṇḍit—He would take a *thor* and Śrīdhara Paṇḍit would catch it and refuse to give it to Him. Nimāi then would pull it from Śrīdhara Paṇḍit’s hands and, because *thor* is slippery, sometimes Śrīdhara Paṇḍit would lose it and fall down.

...In Mahāprabhu’s time, Mahāprabhu’s Deity installation happened in three places—Viṣṇupriyā’s Deity, Gaurī Dās

Paṇḍit's Deity in Kālnā, and Dvija Vāṇīnāth's Deity. Later, Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur installed also His Deity—he always served Nitāi, Nityānanda, and Mahāprabhu's form came later, after Mahāprabhu had left.

The Lord wants our service. He comes to rescue the whole universe, and He comes in a Deity form—sometimes Himself, sometimes through His devotees. Today is the day when Rādhā Raman Sundar came to the Kaikhali temple through Gurudev. Some Deities came through Guru Mahārāj; some Deities were installed by Gurudev. Also Mahāprabhu's Deity is now in various countries. I am thinking that some places are a few thousands of miles away, but Mahāprabhu went there, and now devotees are worshipping His Deity there. How merciful the Deity is, how merciful Mahāprabhu is, and how merciful Nityānanda Prabhu is —They rescue the *jīva* souls all over the world...



Take Care of Your Seed

7 March 2011

Yesterday there was a wedding festival in a rich family in Bihār. They celebrated so much, but when they fired guns into the sky, some bullet fell down and killed a brother of the groom. This is the Age of Kali: one way or another, they have to die. Death is inevitable, you know that.

There is an example also. Suppose there is a pond all covered with *kochuripānā* (water hyacinth). If you throw a stone into that pond, you will see some water, but then a wave comes and the water again gets covered. In the same way, I saw when somebody's friend died, the man came to Gurudev saying, "What is this life for? It is pointless. Nothing. It is only a few moments of enjoyment, but we did not know before that we had to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness..." He came emotionally, but ten days later he went back to the material world...

Once a man invited us, "You must come to my house tomorrow! I will feed you and your party breakfast, lunch, and supper—I will give you *prasādam* three times a day. Do not go to any other house." I said to him, "Everybody wants us to come to a different house each day so that we can make everybody happy, but you are saying that we must take *prasādam* at your house three times a day." Anyhow, he forced us to come.

When we came, that man showed me his new house—his room, bathroom, etc. He said, "We will inaugurate the house and do Vaiṣṇav *sevā*. My father did not give me any money, I have done all this with my own earnings." He told his story

and boasted that he had done so much—always “I, I, I.” The next day in the morning, he went to cut some small tree at the gate, and there was a small snake near that tree. He was about to cut the tree when the snake bit him. He did not even get three minutes that it takes to reach the hospital—his life was taken.

I have seen with my own eyes how people die... “*Viṣaya-viṣama-viṣa satata khāinu*: we always take the dangerous poison of material enjoyment.”

I told before about the loving search for the lost servant: Kṛṣṇa, the Lord, always wants our service. Kṛṣṇa Himself says, “I do not take food from everybody—I take service from devotees, not just from anybody.” Such fortunate souls are rare to find:

brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja
mālī hañā kare sei bīja āropaṇa
śravaṇa-kīrtana-jale karaye sechana

“Having travelled throughout the universe and got the mercy of Guru, Kṛṣṇa, a fortunate soul receives a seed of the devotional creeper. As a gardener, they must plant that seed and water it with practising: hearing and chanting.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 19.151-152)

“*Śravaṇ-kīrtan-jal*”: you have a flower garden, and if you transplant a new plant but do not give it water—you plant the devotional seed but do not give it proper nourishment—one day it will dry. Also there are “*bhukti-mukti-siddhi-kāmī sakali aśānta*”—many insects will come and you must use some spray; many branches will grow and you must cut them, otherwise the tree will not grow big. This analogy is given in *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, Madhya-līlā, Chapter 19. If you read this chapter, many things will come to you.

Some say, “Oh, I took initiation twenty years ago”, “I took initiation fifty years ago,” or think, “I took initiation from Śrīla

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupād”—but they do not practise, so they do not get the result. If you plant a marigold flower and then do not go there for ten days, do not give it water, nourishment—how do you expect it to grow on its own?

Practice is necessary. I have told many times: why do we make a festival? It is like charging the battery. For example, today we had to push Gurudev’s car because it did not start—the accumulator, the battery charge was low. So, Gurudev has given you a battery, but if you do not charge it, the battery will be damaged. It is necessary to charge the battery—and charging means *śravaṇ*, *kīrtan*, *Bhāgavat śravaṇa*, *Mathurā vās*, *śrī-mūrtir śraddhāya sevān* (hearing, chanting, hearing *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, residing in Mathurā and worshipping the Deity with faith), and so on—there are sixty-four *bhaktyaṅgas*.

Practice makes perfect, so practice is necessary, otherwise the plant will dry: “*śukhi’ yāya pātā*.” There is also offence to the Vaiṣṇavs (that is compared to a *hātī mātā*, mad elephant), *sevā aparādh*, *Nāma aparādh*. Many kinds of *aparādh*, offence, will come, so you must be careful.

A devotee sometimes makes some offence, but that offence will be removed through their service. An offence to the Holy Name can be removed through chanting, but if you do not chant, how will it be removed?...



Preaching Mahāprabhu's Conception

17 August, 2011

We must have chastity, “I will not listen to bad things. My Guru is my Guru.” Do you know what Vṇḍāvan Dās Ṭhākura said? He said, “My Guru is Nityānanda Prabhu. Even if He goes to the prostitutes’ quarter, He will still be my Guru.” I am telling it today strongly.

Do you have any questions?

Question: *I wanted to ask you for advice about preaching. I am not a good preacher...*

Yes, I know that, but you are asking this kind of question, then I think you will be a good preacher.

Good preaching is not so many things—preaching movement is a simple matter. How did Chaitanya Mahāprabhu preach? He had three types of preaching—a high conception that He discussed with Rāmānanda Rāy, a middle conception that He gave to Rūpa Goswāmī and Sanātan Goswāmī, and a simple conception that He gave to Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī.

The conception that Mahāprabhu discussed with Rām Rāy is very, very high and difficult for us, practitioners, because it deals with *antaraṅga-prema*, intimate love of Rādhārāṇī. If we try to practise it, we will become *sahajiyā*.

Once somebody asked Gurudev on the Janmāṣṭamī day, “Gurudev, can you explain Kṛṣṇa *līlā*?”

“Do you want to hear Kṛṣṇa *līlā*?”

“Yes, Gurudev.”

“If you hear it, you will become pregnant.”

Gurudev said it very strongly. So, we are not to discuss this. Rāmānanda Rāy explained all stages—*karma-miśrā-bhakti*, *jñāna-miśrā-bhakti*, *jñāna-śūnya-bhakti*, *śuddha-bhakti*, and *prema-bhakti*. It is all in *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, and it is called Rāmānanda *saṁbād* (“the news, the message of Rāmānanda Rāy”).

The middle conception was given to Rūpa Goswāmī and Sanātan Goswāmī—Mahāprabhu told Sanātan Goswāmī clearly how one should practise.

Sanātan Goswāmī asked Mahāprabhu five questions, “Who am I (*ke āmi*)? Why am I suffering (*kene āmāya jāre tāpa-traya*)? How can I prosper in my spiritual life (*kise hita, maṅgal haya*)? What is the eternal goal, and how can I attain this main goal (*sādhya, sādhan vastu ki*)?” Mahāprabhu taught this to Sanātan Goswāmī and explained how we must practise:

**śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ smaraṇam pāda-sevanam
archanam vandanam dāsyam sakhyam ātma-nivedanam**

“Hearing, practising (chanting), remembering the Lord, serving the lotus feet of the Lord, serving the Deity, offering obeisances, considering oneself a servant, thinking of the Lord as of a friend, and full surrender.”

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, 7.5.23)

Before *śravaṇam* (hearing Hari-kathā), there is *sukṛti*. *Sukṛti* means when somebody is used for the service to the Lord, they get a commission from that. You can say to somebody, “Please, say, ‘Hare Kṛṣṇa.’” If they say, “Hare Kṛṣṇa,” they will get some commission through it—you will give some benefit to them. That is a preaching movement.

There is another example also. If you take some fruit, put a Tulasī leaf on it, and offer it to the lotus feet of the Deity, you will give benefit to the fruit tree; or you can take some flowers,

make a garland, and give it to the Deity. Fruit cannot serve the Lord on its own, but if you offer it, then it is possible. In this way, you can use everybody for the service to the Lord.

Everybody in this world exists for service, and you must use everybody for the service to the Lord, in this way you will give them benefit, *sukṛti*. This is what preaching means.

Then, through *sukṛti* one gets faith.

‘śraddhā’-sabde—viśvāsa kahe sudṛḍha niśchaya
kṛṣṇe bhakti kaile sarva-karma kṛta haya

“Śraddhā is firm, determined faith that by service to Kṛṣṇa all actions are accomplished.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 22.62)

You may not know who your father is, but your mother knows it, and if your mother says, “This is your father,” you must believe it. Gurudev says, “Serve the Lord, serve the Guru,” and you must believe that, and to believe it means you must have faith.

There are different kinds of faith. There is *kamala-śraddhā*: ‘śraddhā’ means faith, ‘kamala’ means lotus. Lotus is very gentle, fragile, and our faith is also like that. If somebody says something bad about my Guru, I believe that and become crazy—I leave everything and start dancing to that tune. This is not real faith!

There is also *tarāṅga-śraddhā*: ‘tarāṅga’ means a wave. Some festival comes as a wave, and everyone comes, but when the wind is gone, the wave of faith is gone too. How many people come for Gaura Pūrṇimā? Ten thousand people dance and chant at the festival, but how many of them come to serve Gurudev? Not one thousand people; maybe only five people—not even 1%! That is called *tarāṅga śraddhā*.

Sudṛḍha-śraddhā (very firm faith)—it means if somebody says something bad, I do not believe it—I believe my Guru, my Lord. It is necessary to have such strong faith. Haridās Ṭhākura is

an example of it. When the guards were beating him, they said to him, “We will not beat you if you stop saying, ‘Hare Kṛṣṇa,’” but in reply Haridās Ṭhākura chanted, “Hare Kṛṣṇa!” even louder, and they again started beating him. That is called the strongest faith.

Through *śraddhā* you will get good association, *sādhū-saṅga*; and through *sādhū-saṅga* you will do *śravaṇ*, *kīrtan* (hear and practise). A *sādhū* only speaks Kṛṣṇa-kathā—he will give you advice, his association. A *sādhū* will not say anything bad about anybody, he sees the fault within himself. Through such *śravaṇ* and *kīrtan*, bad elements within you will be removed. You may ask me how to remove bad things, bad desire, and this is the answer—it is possible to remove it through *śravaṇ*, *kīrtan*, and nothing else. *Kīrtan* means chanting the Holy Name properly, doing Gāyatrī three times a day, and so on.

After that, there is *smaraṇ*, remembering, *vandan*, offering obeisance, feeling, “I am a servant of Kṛṣṇa,” feeling, “Kṛṣṇa is my friend.” There are five types of relationships—*śānta*, *dāsyā*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, *mādhura* (neutral relationship, relationship as a servitor, friend, parent, and paramour). It is a very high conception.

Mind is always very bad—for example, if you sees a good-looking boy (or girl) in the street, even when he is no longer in front of you, you can still see him in your mind. Through *sādhū-saṅga* (good association) your senses and mind will be controlled.



Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī: Celebrate and Realise

22 August, 2011

I am very happy today because today is Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī *mahā-mahotsav* and everyone all over the world is celebrating it. Our centres are also making festivals, and it is an important day for us. In some countries, like here in India, they are already doing the *ārati*, and in some countries they are only starting the morning of Janmāṣṭamī.

Today is a very auspicious day. We are celebrating Yaśomati Nandan's appearance day in such a gorgeous way, we are making a grand offering to the Lord, but how will we offer it? We have no quality or qualification, so how will we offer anything to Him? If I surrender to my Gurudev, he will purify me—good association of Gurudev, Vaiṣṇavs and all the devotees will purify me. For this reason, we must speak Kṛṣṇa-kathā today. This day does not come in every life so easily—it is rare to get this opportunity to hear Kṛṣṇa-kathā, hear about Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes.

Today everybody is celebrating, and I am remembering Gurudev and how much nourishment and glorification he always gave to the devotees. Today we must offer everything to our Guru, to the Vaiṣṇavs, Bhagavān, and we must surrender fully, not to be in the jealous mood, not to be in the 'ego mood'. If I show externally that I am a *sādhū*, Vaiṣṇav, but inside there is another thing, that is *kapaṭatā* (hypocrisy) and *phalgu-vairāgya* (false renunciation), and it is not good for us on this day. We must

think and realise what Gurudev wants, what his mood is, what his service mood is. With love and affection, we must realise and understand it, otherwise we cannot progress in our spiritual life.

We have got some *sukṛti*, some good fortune, and through that good fortune we have got a great bona fide Guru, but Gurudev said, “If somebody already has one leg in Goloka, Vaikuṇṭha, and the other leg is outside, they can still come out of that place.” You must be careful about our line and conception because it is very easy to fall down—to lose your service and go to hell. You have been practising for so many years, and even doing some Vaiṣṇav *aparādh*, Guru *aparādh*, *sevā aparādh*, Nāma *aparādh*... but Vaiṣṇav *aparādh* and Guru *aparādh* are very heavy. It is very bad and creates a critical situation in our spiritual life. We must always watch out for that.

We think, “The temple cannot run without me,” but it is ego. Kṛṣṇa does all arrangement for His service—you must understand that even if everybody dies, Kṛṣṇa will still arrange everything for His service. Once, Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj became angry because his disciple had done something wrong, and chastised that devotee, “Get out from here! I will here stay alone, it is not necessary for anybody to stay here!” We must understand that Gurudev can oust us, but we must keep our feet firmly fixed.

I remember once Gurudev chastised me very much, but later when I was sitting in front of him and the others were there, Gurudev said, “I can chastise only one person, I know he will not run away from me. If I chastise anyone else, they will run away, ‘Keep your temple to yourself, I will not stay here.’” We must have full faith, full love and affection. Gurudev chastised me, but when he talked to me later, I would forget everything. I actually did not think that Gurudev was chastising me; I thought it was good for me.

When your Guru chastises you, it is good for you. Once Mahāprabhu chastised Jagadānanda Paṇḍit, and Sanātan Goswāmī was crying, “Prabhu, you are giving bitter to me, and giving sweet to Jagadānanda Paṇḍit!”

Gurudev said to me, “*Bṛhat svārtha pāite haile, kṣudra svārtha tyāga korte habe*. If you want to get great things, you must avoid small matters. Big things are waiting for you, why are you running after small things?” Gurudev said it, and I wholeheartedly believe it.

So, today I must offer whatever good that comes to my Guru and the Vaiṣṇavs. I want to serve all the godbrothers of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, of Gurudev—I want to serve those who want to serve Gurudev. That is my feeling, that is my realisation, that is my religion.

You must understand what we are making the Janmāṣṭamī festival for. To show ourselves and our big ego? No. We are making this festival to give much nourishment to the devotees through Hari-kathā, through Kṛṣṇa-kathā, by giving good things to them. Also we are making this festival because it gives an opportunity for communication. Such festivals do not happen every day, but day by day we lose our faith, we lose our devotional activities because there is this communication gap. We must realise and understand this.

What do we need? Why have we come to this world? Why have we surrendered to our Guru? To get something from him? Get what? Money? Name? Fame? To become a guru? No! Not to become a Guru, but to become a great *servant*! That should be our mood. We should be a great servant—not a great manager, a great temple president, or a great guru. We want to serve our Guru, but how can we serve him? How can we fulfil his desire? We must realise what he wants, what he says.

‘āsakti-rahita,’

‘sambandha-sahita,’

viṣaya-samūha sakali ‘mādhava’

“When you are free from material attachment and establish relationship with the Lord, then you will see that everything around you is Lord Mādhav Himself.”

(‘Vaiṣṇav ke?’ 12, by Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura)

Some think, “This temple is my property,” or, “It is my parents’ property,” but it is not so. It is Gurudev’s property. Gurudev said many times that if all devotees stay together, it is good for *us*. Somebody can make many mistakes, but we should not throw them out—we should correct them. If you pull threads out of a blanket, soon there will be no blanket left.

Everybody has some fault, we are not fully pure—everybody has some quality, and everybody has some fault; we must take the good quality and avoid the bad quality. Why should you see anybody’s fault? See their good side. If we see bad things, our eyes will become blind—if I always look for bad things, I will always see bad things. When there is much dust on a mirror, you will not be able to see anything—you must first clean that dust.

Today we must serve Mother Yaśodā, serve Nanda Mahārāj. If you have no love for Nanda Mahārāj, no love for Yaśodā Māyī, you will not get mercy from Kṛṣṇa. They are so powerful—they have got the Lord as their *son*! It is important that we serve the Lord’s devotees. Gurudev said, “If you want to love me, you must first love my dog.”

Today, on this very special day, you are making an offering to the Lord, but the Lord is Kṛṣṇa Himself, *sākṣād Vrajendra Nandan*! He is not a doll, He is not just a Deity: He is *sākṣād Vrajendra Nandan*. Rūpa Goswāmī served Govinda, Sanātan Goswāmī served Madan Mohan, Madhu Paṇḍit served Gopināth, and they talked with the Deity, played with the Deity.

You can even play football with Lord Kṛṣṇa if you can serve properly. Proper service comes through your Guru: have full faith in your Guru, then you can get that kind of realisation. Our Guru is Rādhārāṇī, and Śrīmatī Rādhikā always captures Kṛṣṇa, so if we serve Rādhārāṇī, we will get Kṛṣṇa immediately. There is no doubt about it. If you invite Lord Kṛṣṇa, He will not come; but if you invite Mother Yaśodā, she will bring Lord Kṛṣṇa to your house.

ye-dina gr̥he, bhajana dekhi,
 gr̥hete goloka bhāya
 charaṇa-sīdhu, dekhiyā gaṅgā,
 sukha nā sīmā pāya

*“On days when I see devotional service taking place at my home,
 I feel that Goloka has manifested there. Seeing the Ganges, the
 nectar from the Lord’s feet, my happiness has no limit.”*

(Śaraṇāgati, 31.6, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

You cook every day for the Lord, and Kṛṣṇa takes it from your hand. Why do you not believe it? You heard that Sanātana Goswāmī would give burnt roti to Madan Mohan, but Madan Mohan took that. Madan Mohan also made His own temple... We cannot even image how many Pastimes of the Lord there are. You can see many are described in *Mahābhārata*, *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, *Kṛṣṇa-prema-taraṅgiṇī*, *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*; there are many Pastimes written there, but we do not have qualification to hear about all of them...

Tomorrow we are making another big festival (we must make Nanda Mahārāj happy), and tomorrow is also our Viśva-Guru, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swāmī Mahārāj Śrīla Prabhupād’s appearance day.

This Krishna consciousness movement is now all over the world, but who spread it? It was spread A.C. Bhaktivedanta

Swāmī Mahārāj Śrīla Prabhupād—he made the tunnel, laid the route, and our Gurudev, our Guru Mahārāj went through that tunnel. You can also say that Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj prepared the land and our Gurudev put there the seeds and some fertiliser. Those seeds have sprouted and grown into mango trees, and we are now happily taking that mango.

brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja

“Having travelled throughout the universe and having got the mercy of Guru and Kṛṣṇa, a fortunate soul receives a seed of the devotional creeper.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 19.151)

This is how we get the *bhakti-latā-bīj* (the seed of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s *prema*). “*Janama saphala tāra Kṛṣṇa-daraśana yāra*: if you get to see Kṛṣṇa, your life is fulfilled.” How can we see Kṛṣṇa? We have no eyes:

andhībhūta chakṣu yāra viṣaya dhūlite
ki rūpe se para-tattva pāibe dekhite

“Our eyes are full of material dust (*viṣaya*) and we cannot see the good things...” We can clean our hearts by good association. In our heart we have other eyes, and through those eyes we will see what is good for us and what is bad for us. That is why good association is necessary, and that is why we have gathered here today.

Everybody is dancing, chanting, enjoying with everything, but how many people come to this line? How many people become great pure devotees? You will need a microscope to be able to see that...

In some countries, devotees do not have a big temple, but they think if in some country there is a big temple, everything is grand there, but Kṛṣṇa goes to every devotee’s house. Kṛṣṇa went

to all *gopīs'* houses, so why cannot He go to all devotees' houses? If we fully surrender to our Guru, then Gurudev himself, who is non-different from Kṛṣṇa, will come. If you offer everything to your Guru properly, then Kṛṣṇa will give mercy to you.

On this important and very special for us holy day I am praying to all the devotees with all my heart and soul that they will follow Gurudev's line, they will serve their Guru, follow their Guru's order, instruction. I am also praying to the devotees that they may please forgive my offence.

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj kī jay!

*Oṃ Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī
Mahārāj kī jay!*



Śrī Rādhāṣṭamī: Worship with Extreme Care

Vṛndāvan, 5 September 2011

Today is a very auspicious day in our spiritual life, a very important day. Today is Rādhāṣṭamī: Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's appearance day. Śrīla Gurudev and Śrīla Guru Mahārāj always worship this day in the most proper way.

rādhā-bhajane yadi mati nāhi bhelā
kṛṣṇa-bhajana tava akāraṇa gelā

"If you do not worship Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, your worship of Kṛṣṇa is useless."

(Gītāvalī, Śrī Rādhāṣṭaka, 8, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

How can we worship Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī? We do not know the process how to worship Her. We sing, "Śrī-guru-charaṇa-padma, kevala-bhakati-sadma, vandō muṇi sāvadhāna mate: we must worship the lotus feet of Śrī Gurudev very *carefully*." If we are not careful, an offence can come, so we must be very careful when we worship Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's lotus feet—it is very difficult.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj showed that he was cautious to read the chapter in Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta about Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes: *antaraṅga-līlā*, *prema-līlā*, Rāmānanda Rāy's *prema-kathā*. He said we must have qualification to read that chapter, and that is very difficult. We can, however, do what Gurudev told us to do. Gurudev told us that we can worship Lalitā Devī, who controls Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and also we can

worship Nityānanda Prabhu. Guru is called *āśraya vigraha*, and Lalitā Devī is Rādhārāṇī's *āśraya vigraha*. If we do not worship *āśraya vigraha*, we cannot worship *vijaya vigraha*.

When Gurudev heard somebody saying, “Jaya Rādhe!” he would always become angry. When Rādhārāṇī's Name always comes to somebody's mouth, it is not serious because it is actually not so easy to take Her Name. If we always say, “Jaya Rādhe!” it means we are *sahajiyā*. We must be very careful.

rādhāra dāsira kṛṣṇa sarva-vede bale

(*Gitāvalī*, Śrī Rādhāṣṭaka, 1, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

Who does Kṛṣṇa belong to? “Kṛṣṇa is ‘Rādhāra dāsira’: He is the property of the servants of Rādhārāṇī. All Vedas state this.”

**rādhā-padāṅkita dhāma, vṛndāvana yāra nāma,
yatane ye nāhi ārādhila**

“(How will they bathe in the ocean of rasa if they) have never made an effort to worship the abode called Vṛndāvan that bears the footprints of Śrī Rādhā's feet?”

(*Gitāvalī*, Śrī Rādhāṣṭaka, 1, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

But how to worship Rādhārāṇī—how? “*Yatane ye nāhi ārādhila, Rādhā-padāṅkita Dhām.*” Gurudev said, “You must walk in Rādhārāṇī's place on your head, not on your legs.” It is that kind of place, but how can we see it? “*Andhībhūta chakṣu yāra viṣaya dhūlite*”: our eyes are blind. If I take poison, how can I taste anything after that? “*Jānīyā śuniyā viṣa khāinu*: I knew that it was poison, I had heard that it was poison, but still I drank it.” If I take poison, and I know it is poison, I will have to die.

We are now in Vṛndāvan Dhām, but we do not sing, do not practise, do not do *kīrtan*; we are staying here but living like in an ordinary house—sleeping, eating, doing all these same things... but this is Goloka Vṛndāvan!

rādhā-padāṅkita dhāma, vṛndāvana yāra nāma,
yatane ye nāhi ārādhila

“(How will they bathe in the ocean of rasa if they) have never made an effort to worship the abode called Vṛndāvan that bears the footprints of Śrī Rādhā’s feet?”

How should I worship this place? Śrīla Gurudev made this temple here in Vṛndāvan to sing *kīrtan*, to practise, and we must do that, and worship it through that. If, however, you follow your mind, how will you serve?

Gurudev always tells us, “Do not follow your mind. You must follow what I am saying.” Something may be going on in your mind—dismiss it. If your mind and heart are full of other things, how will you follow Gurudev? You must become a proper, good receiver. Everything is in your heart, but you must make the fuse.

We take initiation from Gurudev, but what is the meaning of *śiṣya*, being a disciple? “*Dīkṣā-kāle bhakta kare ātma-samarpaṇa*: at the time of the initiation, the devotee offers himself to the Guru.” We are not in charge anymore.

Gurudev said to me, “If you serve the Vaiṣṇavs, Rādhārāṇī’s servants, Lalitā Devī’s servants, Kṛṣṇa will come to serve you.”

Once Rādhārāṇī Herself came to cook sweet rice for Sanātan Goswāmī. Sanātan Goswāmī wanted some sweet rice, and Rūpa Goswāmī thought, “How can I get sugar, rice, milk, and the other ingredients?” Suddenly, a girl came, and offered him the ingredients,

“Please take this.”

“Who are You?”

“I live in this village.”

“But I do not know how to cook sweet rice...”

“My mother knows how to make it, and she has taught Me something. I can try to make it.” She actually cooked it herself—brought the pot, made the fire, did everything!

When Sanātan Goswāmī tasted it, he was astonished, “What nectar! How much nectar this is!!” He searched for that girl, “I want to see that girl, that girl’s father,” but he could not find Her. Sanātan Goswāmī began to cry, “Rūpa, you do not know... We are here to serve Her, but She Herself came to serve *us*!”

Then you must understand what this place is...

Gurudev got this place, here is Rādhā Rāsa Bihārī, here is Śrīla Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī’s place, here is Rādhā Dāmodar also...

Once, a godbrother of Śrīla Gurudev, a disciple of Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj came to Gurudev and offered to make a *puṣpa-samādhi* of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj in Rūpa Goswāmī’s place. Gurudev answered, “We do not want that. Here everything is mixed—any *sahajiyā* people or anybody else can give some money, and their father or mother can also be buried here. I do not want to give my Guru’s *puṣpa-samādhi* there.” Fortunately, he got this place, on the same land with Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī’s place.

Also Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj spent here ten years, and after translating *Bhāgavatam* he went to the foreign land. At his old age he went to a foreign country! What sort of impression did he get here? Also, before going abroad, he first went to Nabadvīp: he took shelter of Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj and asked him for permission to go there...

That is that place. You must worship this place. If anybody sits in this place, plays *kartāls* and chants, “Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa,” they will go to Goloka Vṛndāvan—such kind of place this is! But we are not chanting, we are not practising properly; we are thinking about our own self, we are thinking about eye exercise, ear exercise, mind exercise... We are doing all kinds of exercise, and “*andhībhūta chakṣu yāra viṣaya dhūlite*”: our eyes become blind with so much illusory dust. How then shall we see this kind of environment?

Once a *sannyāsī* came to me and said, “Oh, Mahārāj, Vṛndāvan is nothing special. Monkeys are always disturbing and passing stool there...” I told him, “Your eyes are like that, that is why your eyes saw monkeys disturbing and passing stool, but some can see the *nitya dhām*, Rādhārāṇī’s Pastimes here...”

Rādhārāṇī’s birthplace is nearby, in Rāmakeli, and the house of Her parents—King Vṛṣabhānu and Kīrtidā Mayī—is in Varṣāṇā. When King Vṛṣabhānu and Kīrtidā Mayī lived in Rāmakeli, King Vṛṣabhānu went every day to the Yamunā to bathe. One day when he went to the bank of the Yamunā, he saw a big lotus with a baby inside it. Rāja Vṛṣabhānu brought the baby home, and the feeling came to Kīrtidā Mayī that the baby had been born like this.

So many demigods came then disguised to their house, so many people came to see Her, but no one could recognise who She was. Kīrtidā Mayī and Rāja Vṛṣabhānu also invited Nanda Mahārāj and Yaśodā. Everyone was wondering how the girl had appeared and why, although so beautiful, She did not open Her eyes. While everyone was talking like this in a crowd, Kṛṣṇa crawled away to Rādhārāṇī’s room, and when He saw Her face, She opened Her eyes. First She saw Her Lord. She had asked Him before, “Promise Me that when I am born I will not see anyone’s face until I have seen Your face.”

There are so many *līlās* in Vṛndāvan Dhām, Govardhan, Uddhav Kuṇḍa, Rādhā Kuṇḍa...



When the Family Is Against

6 September 2011

A devotee asked me the other day what to do: his father does not allow him to come and is always against Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

There is a very nice example. Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī always wanted to go to serve Mahāprabhu, always wanted to go to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but his father always stopped him—every time he would bring him back to the house and lock the door. Some devotees have only one-two ‘security men’ (their father and mother), but Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī’s father was a very rich person and he engaged eleven security men for his only son.

Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī again and again went to Mahāprabhu, but Mahāprabhu told him, “Go back!”

**antare niṣṭhā kara, bāhye loka-vyavahāra
achirāt kṛṣṇa tomāya karibe uddhāra**

“Be fixed internally and behave like everyone else externally.

Kṛṣṇa will rescue you soon.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 16.239)

“It is not necessary to show your external devotion so much,”
He said.

There was also one devotee who grew a beard because he had a problem with his father: you can show your father you are not involved in devotional activities, and inside you can continue. It is not necessary to show anything externally, you can do

everything internally. This is why a strong relation is necessary, then no one can stop you. Śrīla Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī is an example of that.

Mahāprabhu told him, “Go back to your home. Do not show *markaṭa vairāgya*: do not be renounced like a monkey.” Hanker for the Lord internally—it is not necessary to show anything to your father. If, when you show your chanting beads to your father, he becomes crazy, then do not show it to him. Be sincere and follow the rules and regulations within (*antare niṣṭhā*), but show your parents that you are not a devotee, or not a devotee any more, then your father will be very happy. He will again send you to Delhi to study, and from Delhi you can from time to time come to Vṛndāvan to see the Deities. Finished. That is the answer; that is the policy. “*Kṛṣṇa ye bhaje sei baḍa chatur*: those who worship Kṛṣṇa are very clever.”

I have told many times how I came here. My father was searching everywhere, going from place to place, and a year later he thought, “My son had some attachment to *Bhagavad-gītā*, maybe he went to a temple.” My mother had searched all Māyāpur and then came here. One day, I was making the roof of a building here, and I saw from the roof my mother was coming. I immediately ran downstairs and told the security, “There is a lady coming. She will probably ask about this person (I told him my previous name). Tell that lady he is not here.” Do you see how cruel I had to be? At that time I was a new boy, a one-year-old boy, and I did not have so much foundation in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, did not have so much spiritual consciousness, so they could have easily converted me and taken me away to the illusory environment. That is why I had to be cruel and do that. This is how it happened.

Somebody may think, “Oh, he is very bad. He told his mother he was not here,” but it is not a problem for me. Somebody can

say this or that, but it is not a spiritual matter why I took such a decision. I did what I had to do.

Once I asked Gurudev (it was after I took *sannyās*, in 2002 or 2001),

“Gurudev, I need to go to my previous place, the father’s house. There is some land in my name, I can sell it, and that money will come to the temple...”

“How much money will you get?”

I said how much I could get, and Gurudev replied,

“OK, I will give you that money. You do not have to go there.”

“I do not want any money, but if for the temple somebody can take the land, why not?”

“It is not necessary to go there. I will lose you because of some money. Money is not necessary, I will give it to you if you want.”

So, it is not necessary to show anything. You can pretend and say, “O mother, I will never go there again, I will not leave you. I will stay in the family and will serve you. I will do everything.” At the same time, you can say, “How will I serve you if I do not study? Please, allow to me to go to Delhi to study.” From there you can go to Vṛndāvan sometimes.

That is devotional activities. You are telling a lie, but a lie for what? For service, so there is no problem. If for the service to the Lord you do something wrong, it is not a problem. Who do you do it for? If you do it for the Lord, for Gurudev, then it is allowed. It is not my words, it is said in the *śāstra*, scriptures. The scriptures also show it: many devotees do something wrong for the service to the Lord—actually they can do anything for the service to the Lord, to Kṛṣṇa. That is the main *siddhānta*.

Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī also asked Mahāprabhu, “How can I come to You? If I become involved in the family life, how will I ever come to You? How will I cut the bondage of the illusory

environment?” Mahāprabhu said to him, “That is not your business. That is My business.”

se chhala se-kāle kṛṣṇa sphurābe tomāre
kṛṣṇa-kṛpā yāre, tāre ke rākhite pāre

“Kṛṣṇa will reveal to you how you can come. Who can stop the one who has got mercy of Kṛṣṇa?”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 16.241)

Mahāprabhu explained, “Kṛṣṇa will give you some intelligence and you will understand how you can come, how you can again join Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and how you can come to Me. That is not your business. Leave this to Me.”

No one can tie or lock you if you have got mercy from the Lord, from Gurudev, from Mahāprabhu. You will come—for sure; but you must have desire to come. It will depend upon your desire—no one can stop you if you have a strong desire and the strongest faith. The scriptures say this clearly.



Control the Root

Year 2012

The mind is always naughty, but you must follow Gurudev's instruction.

You are young and sometimes do something a little wrong, but it can be forgiven: if someone is a surrendered soul, they have no offence. Practice makes perfect—it is not necessary to be a big scholar or a big scientist. Which university did Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī go to? Did She go to Cambridge or Oxford? Rādhārāṇī studied in 'Kṛṣṇa university'. She never went to Cambridge or Oxford, but we worship Her. Nityānanda Prabhu left His house when He was twelve years old: what school did He go to after that?

Mercy comes from above, but for that your pot must be empty—you must remove the ego that you are a great scholar, that you are very beautiful, and so on, from your pot—then immediately mercy will come.

Do you understand what my advice is? This is my prescription. If you follow it, you will be successful in your spiritual life, as well as material life (although a devotee has no material life—a devotee has only spiritual life).

Another point is that money must be used for service, not for enjoyment. You can go to Kolkata, Bombay, or Delhi, and spend two *lakhs* rupees (200 000) for one night in a hotel, but you can also go to Paharganj and spend 100-200 rupees for one night. Simple living, high thinking—what is necessary for your life, is sufficient for you.

“By honouring the Lord’s prasāda I conquer all worldly illusions.”
(Śaraṇāgati, 31.5, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

If you do not control your tongue, your mind will be disturbed. *Prasāda sevā*: always take *prasāda*, do not take what your tongue and your mind wants. It is possible to do it if you try.



Appendix

The Ten Offences to the Holy Name

1. Criticising *sādhus*.
2. Considering Śiva or other gods to be independent of or higher than Kṛṣṇa.
3. Considering the Guru to be a human being.
4. Criticising the scriptures.
5. Interpreting the Name with the help of a dictionary, etc.
6. Considering the Name imaginary.
7. Indulging in sin and chanting the Name to cleanse that sin.
8. Considering chanting the Name equal to pious activities.
9. Instructing faithless persons in chanting the Name.
10. Remaining attached to material things, your body, or your bodily wealth.

The Sixty-Four Practices of Devotion

(Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura's *Amṛta-pravāha-bhāṣya*
on *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*)

(1) Taking shelter at Sri Guru's feet; (2) Accepting initiation; (3) Serving Sri Guru; (4) Asking and learning about true religion; (5) Following the *sādhus'* path; (6) Sacrificing one's own enjoyment out of love for Krishna; (7) Residing in Kṛṣṇa's abode; (8) Accepting only what is required to maintain one's life; (9) Observing Ekādasī; (10) Honouring myrobalan trees, banyan trees, cows, *brāhmaṇs*, and Vaiṣṇavs; (11) Avoiding offences to the Name and the Deity; (12) Giving up non-devotees' association; (13) Not making many disciples; (14) Not studying partially and commenting upon numerous texts; (15) Being indifferent about loss and gain; (16) Not becoming subdued by lamentation; (17) Not disrespecting other Deities or scriptures;

(18) Not listening to blasphemy of the Lord or His devotees; (19) Not listening to village talk (any talk that has to do with sense gratification); (20) Not disturbing others with one's mind or words; (21) Hearing about the Lord; (22) Chanting about Lord; (23) Remembering the Lord; (24) Worshipping the Lord; (25) Praying to the Lord; (26) Serving the Lord; (27) Having the mood of the Lord's servant; (28) Having the mood of the Lord's friend; (29) Surrendering oneself to the Lord; (30) Dancing before the Deity; (31) Singing for the Deity; (32) Expressing one's heart to the Deity; (33) Offering obeisance to the Deity; (34) Standing up out of respect when the Deity or a devotee arrives; (35) Following the Deity or a devotee in the procession; (36) Visiting holy places and Temples of the Lord's Deities; (37) Circumambulating the Deity; (38) Reciting hymns; (39) Chanting *japa*; (40) Chanting in congregation; (41) Honouring incense, garlands, and so on, that have been offered to the Deity; (42) Honouring *mahā-prasādam*; (43) Participating in *arātis* and festivals; (44) Visiting the Deity (45) Offering what is dear to oneself to the Deity; (46) Meditating (47) Serving Tulasī; (48) Serving devotees; (49) Serving the Lord's abode; (50) Relishing *Bhāgavatam*; (51) Endeavouring solely for Kṛṣṇa's sake; (52) Looking for the Lord's mercy; (53) Celebrating festivals with devotees honouring the Lord's Pastimes; (54) Surrendering in all respects; (55) Observing Kartik and other rites; (56) Marking the body with devotional symbols; (57) Marking the body with the Lord's Names; (58) Adorning the body with offerings of flowers made to the Deity; (59) Drinking the Deity's *charaṇāmṛta*; (60) Associating with *sādhus*; (61) Chanting the Name; (62) Hearing *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*; (63) Residing in Mathurā; (64) Faithfully serving the Deity.

The Five Places of Kali

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam)

(1) *Dyūta*: dice, cards, chess, horse racing, the lottery, and other sorts of gaming or gambling. Its basis is falsehood, and it destroys the virtue of truthfulness. (Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Thākura notes that Kali is always creating newer and newer forms of games to lead people away from *dharma*.)

(2) *Pāna*: alcohol, wine, ganja, tobacco, opium, and any other intoxicant. Its basis is pride, and it destroys the virtue of mercy.

(3) *Striya*: illicit association with the opposite sex, attachment to one's spouse, and association with those who engage in illicit association. Its basis is lust, and it destroys the virtue of purity.

(4) *Sūnā*: taking the life of an animal for the sake of one's own body. Its basis is violence, and it destroys all virtues (truthfulness, mercy, cleanliness, and austerity). Anyone who kills an animal, as well as anyone who prepares, cooks, transports, sells, serves, or eats it, is implicated in such sin.

(5) *Jāta*: gold, silver, money, and other forms of wealth. Within these, falsehood, pride, lust, violence, and enmity are all present.

Four Types of Sādhū-Nindā (Criticising Sādhus)

- (1) To criticise for a fault in the circumstances of their birth.
- (2) To criticise for an unintentional or unknowing fault.
- (3) To criticise for faults that are almost rectified.
- (4) To criticise for faults that occurred prior to their surrender.

The Thirty-Two Sevā Aparādhās

(1) Entering the Lord's Temple in a vehicle or while wearing shoes; (2) Not celebrating the Lord's birthday and other Pastimes; (3) Not offering obeisance when coming before the Deity; (4) Worshipping the Deity with an unclean body or while in an impure state; (5) Offering obeisance with one hand; (6) Strolling or pacing before the Deity; (7) Spreading your legs before the Deity; (8) Sitting before the Deity while holding up your knees with your forearms; (9) Lying down before the Deity; (10) Eating before the Deity; (11) Telling lies before the Deity; (12) Speaking loudly before the Deity; (13) Conversing privately before the Deity; (14) Crying before the Deity; (15) Quarrelling before the Deity; (16) Chastising someone before the Deity; (17) Being charitable to someone before the Deity; (18) Behaving or speaking cruelly towards common people; (19) Serving the Deity while covered with a wool, fur or down blanket; (20) Criticising others before the Deity; (21) Praising others before the Deity; (22) Using foul language before the Deity; (23) Passing air before the Deity; (24) Financial fraud: organising a festival or offering worship at a lower cost or with fewer ingredients than one is able to provide; (25) Taking items that have not been offered to the Deity for oneself; (26) Not offering fruits and grains to the Deity when they are fresh, or in season; (27) Giving the best part of collected ingredients to others and offering the remains to the Deity; (28) Sitting with your back to the Deity; (29) Offering obeisances to others before the Deity; (30) Remaining quiet and not offering praise, obeisance, and so on before Sri Gurudev; (31) Praising yourself before Sri Gurudev; (32) Criticising the demigods.

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bhukti-mukti ādi-vāñchā yadi mane haya
sādhana karileo prema utpanna nā haya

*“If you have material desires (if you want
liberation, enjoyment, mystic powers, etc.),
then even if you practise life after life,
divine love will not come.”*

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 19.175)