

Guidance

by
His Divine Grace
Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti
Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj

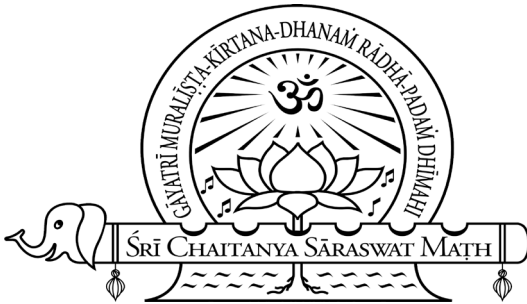


All Glory to Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāᅅga

GUIDANCE

*Compiled from the discourses emanating from
the heart of Ananta-śrī-vibhūᅣita Om Viᅣᅅupād
Paramahaᅅsa-kula-chūᅁᅁmaᅅi Viᅣva-vareᅅya
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj*

— { Volume 2 } —



Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maᅥh,
Śrī Nabadwĭp Dhām
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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,
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Contents

INTRODUCTION

Our Disciplic Succession	2
The Supreme Benefit	4
Praṇām-mantra	10

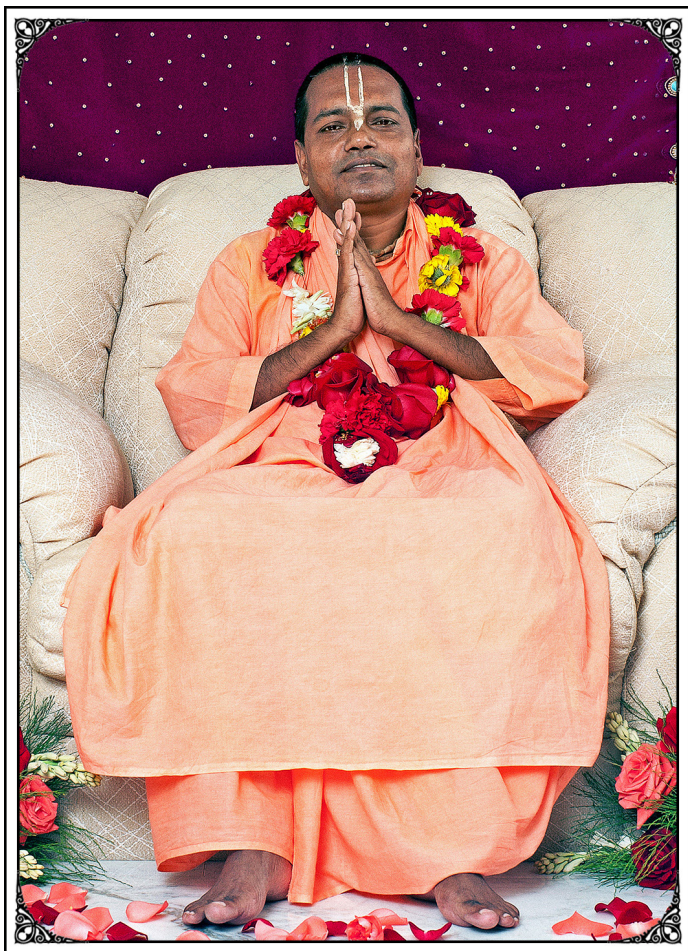
GUIDANCE

Perfect Character	13
Disciple's Mood and Guru's Power	17
Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu	21
Initiation into Chanting of the Holy Name	24
Come to Your Home	29
The Meaning of Sahajiyā	31
Pratiṣṭhā, Singing Songs and Doing Kīrtan	34
Chastity and Service Attachment	37
When One Feels Hopeless	40
Firm and Fearless	43
Do Not Waste Your Time	45
Practise and Believe	47
Floating On the Surface	51
Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu	53
Games of Māyā Devī	56
Śrī Lalitā Devī: Prema-Guru	58
Stuck	60
Sāltāmāmi	62
The Bond with the Guru	64

The Key to Guru’s Heart.....	68
Devotion Conquers—Ego Repels.....	75
Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī: Surrender and Practise Daily	83
Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī: Path Back to Home.....	87
How to See the Guru (1): Mercy.....	96
How to See the Guru (2): Chastity	101
Good Association	107
Practical Questions.....	110
See the Guru with Your Heart	115
Your Well-Wishers.....	120
Make a Temple in Your Heart.....	122
Practice Makes Happy.....	126
Other Preachers: No Free Mixing.....	128
Proceed Smoothly.....	131
Success, Attachment, Fearlessness.....	134
Fulfilment of Life.....	137
Laziness.....	143
Pure Line: Disciples, Quarrels, and Prasādam.....	145
The Guard and the Guardian	148
Service: Proof of Love	150
Love for Guru: Service and Commitment	154
Gurudev: His Example and Teachings.....	158
New Year Message	164

APPENDIX

Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh Book List.....	167
Temples and Centres of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh.....	169



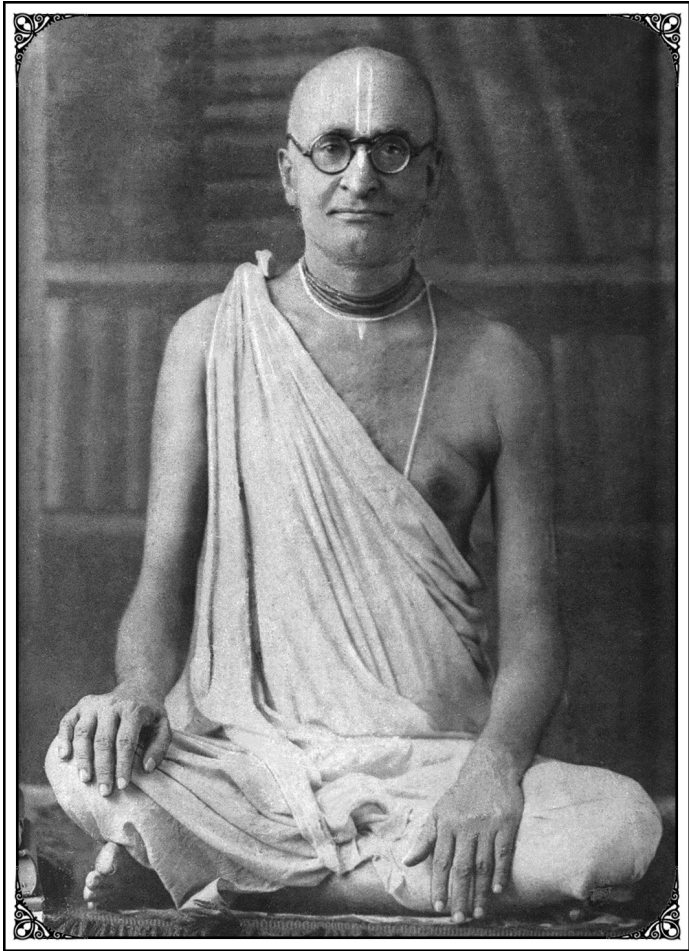
*Om̐ Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj,
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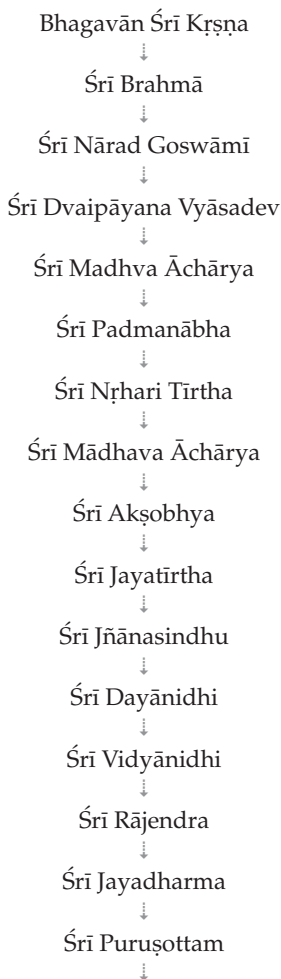


*Bhagavān Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda,
the Founder-Āchārya of Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭh and the modern age
reviver of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's movement and conception.*



Preface

Brahmā–Madhva–Gauḍīya Sampradāya (Our Disciplic Succession)





The Supreme Benefit

*A lecture delivered by His Divine Grace Om Viṣṇupād
Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj*

Respectable Vaiṣṇavs, honourable gentlemen and ladies, beloved children, and my dear Godbrothers and Godsisters, I feel very fortunate to meet with you all here today. You all give me much affection, respect, but what can I give to you?

Actually, you have got connection with Kṛṣṇa consciousness, that is the supreme goal of life for every living entity. Not so long ago our beloved Divine Master Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupād came to this city and bestowed his mercy upon you all, and I think that mercy is sufficient for everybody. However, when we take something from others, it is necessary to give something in return. I do not have anything new for you, I can only give you some remembrance of our Divine Master Śrīla Bhaktivedanta Swāmī Mahārāj and my Divine Master Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj by presenting myself here. They are very merciful and have bestowed their causeless mercy on such an insignificant soul as myself.

You all know that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the goal of our life, and you have heard from the Vaiṣṇavs, as well as our Divine Masters, about the process how to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness; but I think you may still feel, “Why are we not progressing so nicely?”

**tṛṇād api sunīchena taror iva sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena kīrtanīyah sadā hariḥ**
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 17.31)

Mahāprabhu said, “If we chant the *mahā-mantra* with humility, tolerance, and giving honour to others, then we must proceed to our destination, to the life’s goal, that is Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the devotional plane.”

You know that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and you know why He is the supreme—you have heard about it from many Vaiṣṇavs and also read in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, and many books of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj. We have got the connection with that Supreme Personality of Godhead, but after that if we try to realise how much we are proceeding in the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, if we try to see where our fault is, then we must be benefited and must make some adjustment in our lives.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is within everybody’s heart—Kṛṣṇa lives within every living entity—it is not necessary to discover it, it is already with us; but the problem is that we cannot *see* it, we cannot *feel* it, although we have got the connection. It is necessary to realise where the deficiency is. That is called realisation, or self-realisation.

Kṛṣṇa said in *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* (6.5), “*Ātmaiva hy ātmano bandhur ātmaiva ripur ātmanaḥ*: I am my own best friend, and I am my own worst enemy.” Devotion to Kṛṣṇa brings supreme benefit to a practitioner’s life, and that devotion is *ahaitukī*, *apratihatā* (causeless and uninterrupted), it gives full satisfaction to the *jīva* soul. Why is it then that we are not getting the full result in our life? If we try to realise it, we must see there is some fault.

We live on the plane of exploitation, or sometimes the plane of renunciation, but devotees welcome neither of these planes—their plane is the plane of dedication only. If we can establish ourselves there, we will get the supreme benefit.

Actually, we have no time in hand. We do not know when we will leave this mundane world, and we do not know where

we will take our next birth, but this life is in my hand—it may be uncertain, but even within a few moments we can proceed very well if we can establish ourselves in the plane of dedication.

sarva-dharmān parityajya, mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo, mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ

“Give up all kinds of religion and surrender to Me alone. I will liberate you from all sins, do not despair.”

(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā, 18.66)

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said, “Take shelter at My lotus feet, and I shall take charge of you.” That is the plane of dedication.

If we can take shelter of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, we will have no fear from anywhere; our all good and bad account will merge into the account of Kṛṣṇa, and if any bad reaction has to come to me, it will be taken care of by Kṛṣṇa. So, we must try to establish ourselves in that plane of dedication, and establish ourselves not just formally—it is necessary to do so from your heart, with full affection and hankering, then we will get the benefit.

We must see also the advice of Śrīmān Mahāprabhu. When we come in this line we must come with three qualifications—humility, tolerance, giving honour to others—then we can make everybody our friend. It is already within us, and if we try to realise it, we can see it very clearly.

Today I only want to give you this consciousness—try to change yourself in the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then you will definitely get the benefit.

In every philosophy, Indian or any other, the *ṛṣis*, *munis*, and other experts try to take us up to Paravyoma, Goloka Vṛndāvan, but we can cross this material world if we follow the directives of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. We must know that what we want is within us—we must only wake up from this illusory environment. External relationship with Kṛṣṇa consciousness can

give us a position up to liberation, but the Kṛṣṇa consciousness that Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj brought and that Guru Mahārāj gave us is much more than that—it is not external, it is an internal wealth of every *jīva* soul.

We know that Śrī Hari *saṅkīrtan* is the best process to get that consciousness, but what is the way to do that Hari *saṅkīrtan*? It is necessary to do it properly, that is why first we must avoid the ten kinds of offence to *saṅkīrtan*, to Harinām. Harinām *saṅkīrtan* is the *mahā-mantra* of this Age of Kali. ‘*Mahā-mantra*’ means it is the supreme *mantram*, but still there are obstacles—offences to the *mahā-mantra*—and we must try to avoid them.

eka bāra kṛṣṇa-nāme yata pāpa hāre
pātakīra sādhya nāhi tata pāpa kare

“One Holy Name can remove more offence than a sinner can even conceive of making.”

We see this written in the scriptures, but still we are not getting that benefit, we must try to realise why. Mahāprabhu came to give us *Kṛṣṇa-prema* so that we could chant and dance through the Name, through Harinām *saṅkīrtan*. No doubt, it is a miracle, but we do not get that result. Why? We must see where our fault is.

There are ten offences to Harinām, and because of these offences we are not getting a good result, but if we can avoid them, we will definitely get the best result through *saṅkīrtan*. The only hope we have is that it is said in the scriptures that if we chant, chant, and chant Harinām, then Harinām must be merciful to us and one day will give us the supreme benefit. Still, it would be very good if we tried to avoid the offences and tried to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* properly.

Mahāprabhu gave most importance to two processes: *śravaṇ* and *kīrtan*, hearing and chanting. *Śravaṇ* means listening to

the *sādhus* with faith; and *kīrtan* means chanting the *mahā-mantra* or the glories of the Lord without offence. We should try to chant without offence—this is my prayer to you all.

I have nothing new to give you, I can only remind you about this consciousness that I have got from Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, and after that you will feel everything in your heart.

I am very happy to be with you all here and I will not be able to forget the affection, mercy, and so much respect that you have given me. I know that it is not for me, it is for my Guru Mahārāj—he is the supreme holder of all respect in the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I know that, and it is my duty to offer all respect to his lotus feet. Your affection will definitely give me more light and more enthusiasm in my practising life, and I will be even happier if you always remember Mahāprabhu’s advice. Mahāprabhu said that the chanting process is humility, tolerance, and giving honour to others, and if you follow it, you must get supreme benefit in your life!

Actually, we need transcendental benefit. Nothing is for us here—we can accumulate so many things, but one day we must leave it all. We are transcendental and eternal souls, and what we need is the supreme transcendental benefit—love, affection, beauty, charm, so many other things. That is our wealth, and *that* you will get, I have no doubt.

I cannot speak English very well, but I am trying to express my heart. You are not a one-day friend for us—we have had your affection and unconditional friendship for so many years. I know many of you do not know English or Bengali, and I do not know English or Spanish—but our heart-to-heart transmission, affection transmission has not stopped up until this day, and I pray to Kṛṣṇa that nothing will ever break our friendship.

We can always pray to Kṛṣṇa, but we have no right to forcefully take anything from Him. Everywhere people give some

blessings, “God bless you,” but we can pray to Guru, Gaurāṅga, and Kṛṣṇa, and my prayer is, “May Kṛṣṇa give full satisfaction to your spiritual life, and may our friendship be eternal.”

*Jay Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī
Mahārāj kī jay!*



— { Praṇām-mantra } —

pūjya-śrī-guru-varga-vandita-mahābhāvānvitāyā sadā
paurvāparya-paramparā-prachalita-prājya-pramūrtākṛteḥ
bhakter nirmala-nirjharasya nibhṛtaṁ saṁrakṣakaṁ sādaram
vande śrī-gurudevam ānata-śirā āchārya-varyāṁ 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-pāschātya-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.”



Guidance

• *Volume 2* •

*Drops of nectar collected from the lectures
emanating from the holy lotus mouth of*

Ananta-śrī-vibhūṣita Om Viṣṇupād

Paramahaṁsa-kula-chūḍāmaṇi Jagad-Guru

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj

Perfect Character

Year 2012

Every day we sing songs, and it is written there so beautifully:

vṛkṣa-sama kṣamā-guṇa karabi sādhana
pratihimsā tyaji' anye karabi pālana

(*Gītāvalī, Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, 3.3, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura*)

“You must be tolerant like a tree, and if somebody criticises you, do not give opposition to them, but rather in lieu of that you must take care of them. Only those who can be like this, can be qualified, can have the right to sing the songs, to chant the Holy Name.” That is Mahāprabhu’s conception. We sing it, but it is not only singing—we must *practise* it. Without practising we cannot become perfect. Gurudev told me one time: if somebody, even a *sannyāsī*, is not practising properly, they will fall down.

chāri varṇāśramī yadi kṛṣṇa nāhi bhaje
svakarma karileo se raurave paḍi maje

“Whatever *varṇa* (a priest, fighter, manager, or worker) or *āśrama* (a celibate, householder, renouncer of the household life, or monk) you may belong to, if you do not worship Kṛṣṇa but engage in your prescribed duties, you will have to fall into a terrible hell.”
(*Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 22.26*)

We must practise properly.

durlabha mānava-janma labhiyā saṁsāre
kṛṣṇa nā bhajinu—duḥkha kahiba kāhāre?
'saṁsāra' 'saṁsāra' ka're michhe gela kāla
lābha nā ha-ila kichhu ghaṭila jañjala

“I have got a very rare human life in this world, but I have not worshipped Lord Kṛṣṇa. Whom can I tell of my misery? Time has passed as I have been busy in my material life, and I have got nothing—only became burdened...”

(Kalyāṇ-kalpataru, 3.4, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

Why are we not getting taste?

**aparādha-phale mama chitta bhela vajra-sama
tuyā nāme nā labhe vikāra**

“As a result of my aparādhas, my heart has become as hard as a thunderbolt, and the feeling to chant Your Name does not arise in me.”

(Gītāvalī, Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, 6.1, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

If I have a fever and my mother cooks some tasty food for me, I will not get any taste for it because my mouth is bitter. So, the taste for the Holy Name will not come if I have some material desire in my heart:

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

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

“If you have material desires—if you want liberation, enjoyment, some mystic powers, and so on—then even if you practise all life, or life after life, *prema* (love, divine love) will not come. Nothing will come.”

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

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 8.18)

“If you ask for Kṛṣṇa, ‘I want Kṛṣṇa’, then Kṛṣṇa will come. If you ask Kṛṣṇa for something material, you will get that, but Kṛṣṇa will not come to you.” He will hide from you—if you want to satisfy your material desire, devotion will run away from you.

**jīvana-nirvāhe āne udvega nā dibe
para-upakāre nija-sukha pāsaribe**

“Live without causing anxiety to others, do good unto others without considering your own happiness.”
(*Gītāvalī, Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, 3.4, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur*)

“*Para-upakāre*” means giving benefit to others, and that benefit is not medicine, clothes, food, and so on. When you give others real benefit, they forget about their material desires. When Nṛsimhadev asked Prahlād Mahārāj, “What boon do you want to get?” Prahlād Mahārāj replied, “Please, remove from my heart this asking mood forever. I want this kind of boon from You.”

**nāhi māgi deha-sukha, vidya dhana, jana
nāhi māgi svarga, āra mokṣa nāhi māgi
nā kari prārthanā kona vibhūtira lāgi’**

“I do not pray to You for physical pleasure, for knowledge, wealth, or followers. I do not pray for heaven or salvation. I do not pray for any of this opulence.”
(*Gītāvalī, Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, 4.2-3, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur*)

“*Nija-sukha pāsaribe*”: do not disturb others for your own benefit, for your own purpose. Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur writes in ‘*Āmāra jīvana sadā pāpe rata*’ (*Śaraṇāgati, 5*):

“*Nija sukha lāgi’ pāpe nāhi ḍari*”: for my own happiness I am not afraid of anything. “*Dayā-hīna*”: I am not kind, I am cruel and selfish. “*Para-sukhe duḥkhī*”: I am unhappy if somebody is happy or successful. (If somebody becomes a temple manager, others are unhappy, “How many days has he been in the temple? I have been here for so many years, I am a disciple of a big guru, but I did not become the manager of the temple, and he did!” It is envy, jealousy.) “*Para-duḥkha sukha-kara*”: if somebody is sad, I am very happy. “*Aśeṣa kāmanā hṛdi mājhe mora*”: I have so many material desires. “*Krodhī, dambha-parāyaṇa*”: I think I have done

so much service, and I become angry, “I have served Gurudev for so many years, why cannot I be the president of the temple?” (It is material desires: “I will take initiation from you, but I want something in exchange.”) “*Nidrālasya hata sukārye virata akārye udyogī āmi*”: I always want to sleep, I am always lazy, and I do not do good things. “*Pratiṣṭhā lāgiyā śāṭhya-ācharana*”: I always do bad things for my own name and fame, my own establishment, *pratiṣṭhā* [sic]. “*E hena durjana sajjana-varjita*”: the *sajjan* avoid such a sinful person like me.

Who is my *sajjan* (my dearest benefactors)? Somebody can say, “Oh, that Mahārāj is not good because whenever I come to him he tells me to do some service. I will not go to him,” but:

gurur na sa syāt svajano na sa syāt
 pitā na sa syāj janānī na sā syāt
 daivaṁ na tat syān na patiś cha sa syān
 na mochayed yaḥ samupeta-mṛtyum

“It is not your guru, it is not your family, it is not your father, it is not your mother, it is not your gods, it is not your husband if that person cannot save you from the world of birth and death.”
 (Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, 5.5.18)

Śrīla Prabhupād once saw a *sahajiyā kīrtan* going on at some place, and the landlord of the place invited him to give lecture. When after four days Prabhupād decided to go back to Māyāpur, the landlord was surprised, “Why are you leaving? My program has not finished yet.”

“I did not come here to waste your rice.”

“I have been sending so much *prasādam* to you for four days—have you not taken it?...”

“I could not give any benefit to you, so why must I spoil, waste your rice?” explained Prabhupād. This is perfect.

Disciple's Mood and Guru's Power

Year 2012

There was a young boy of about seven years old called Satyakāṁ. He lived with his mother Jābāla, and one day he said to his mother,

“Mother, I want to be a *brahmachārī*. I want to go to Āchārya Gautam, a great bona fide Guru, and stay at his *gṛha* (house)... ”

“Yes, you can go.”

“But if I go to him, he will ask me about my father's name, about my *gotra* (caste). What should I say to him?”

“My dear son, I work as a maidservant in many places, and somehow I got you, I do not know who your father is... Tell the truth to your Guru.”

“All right, I will tell the truth.”

So, Satyakāṁ came to Āchārya Gautam and said, “Gurudev, please keep me. I would like to serve you—I would like to take initiation from you and stay with you as a *brahmachārī*.”

“You can stay, no problem. What is your caste, what is your father's name?”

“O Āchāryadev, I do not know my father's name. My mother told me she was working in many houses, and somehow she got me. She does not know what my caste is, I do not know it too.”

Gurudev became very pleased that he had told the truth, “You told the truth, so I will not wait—I will give you initiation right now.” He gave him the *brāhmaṇ* initiation.

Satyakām thought, “I must do some service—without service I will not stay here,” so he asked his Guru, “Gurudev, what is my service?” Āchārya Gautam had four hundred cows, so he sent him to the field to take care of them. That was his only service: he had to go alone into the open field and graze four hundred cows. Satyakām was very happy and promised his Gurudev, “I will come back when the number of the cows increases to one thousand.”

Gradually, the number of the cows reached one thousand, and Satyakām started his way back to the Guru’s house. On his way back, the demigod Vāyu, the Air, came in form of a cow (you know that all demigods stay within the body of a cow) and said, “I am Vāyu, the Air. I am going to give you some advice, *brahma-upadeś (brahma-jñān)*.” He gave him *ekpāda upadeś* and said that Agni, the Fire, would come and give him *dupāda upadeś*. The next day he walked with the cows the whole day and in the evening the Fire came in the form of another cow and gave him *dupāda upadeś*. After that, Suryadev, the Sun, came and gave him *tripāda upadeś*.

In this way, Satyakām came back to his Gurudev’s house, and when Gautam Goswāmī saw his disciple he could see that he had become very exalted—the number of the cows had increased and he spoke about the advice from the Sun, the Air, the Fire. He asked him, “Where did you get all this advice? You look so exalted, you have got so much *divyā-jñān*...”

“Prabhu, maybe you sent somebody and they gave some advice to me, I do not know, but I need Guru *upadeś*.”

Gautam Goswāmī gave him some advice and in the end made him the *āchārya*! Satyakām became a great Guru, and many *munis*, *ṛṣis* came to see him. A prostitute’s son, but he became a great Guru! Śrīla Prabhupād Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur told this story.

yei bhaje, sei baḍa, abhakta—hīna, chhāra
kṛṣṇa-bhajane nāhi jāti-kulādi-vichāra

“Anyone who worships Kṛṣṇa is great, it is a nondevotee who is worthless and abominable. There is no consideration of class, caste, and so forth, for those who have taken up service to Kṛṣṇa.”
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Antya-līlā, 4.67)

Satyakām spoke the truth, he was a sincere seeker, he had chastity, *satītvā*, and strongest faith. These are necessary. And first comes *asakti* (detachment from the material environment), because if you are attached to the material things, Hari-kathā will not enter your ears.

‘āsakti-rahita,’ ‘sambandha-sahita,’
viṣaya-samūha sakali ‘mādhava’

“When you become free from material attachment and establish relationship with the Lord, you will see that everything around you is Lord Mādhav Himself.”
(‘Vaiṣṇav ke?’ 12, by Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura)

Once the Guru of the demigods, Bṛhaspati, cursed Indra to get a pig’s body. After a while, Brahmā came to save him. Seeing Indra’s attachment, he killed all his piglets, but it only made Indra angry and more attached to his wife (a pig). Brahmā thought, “How can I do him good? How can I bring him benefit?” He tried again and again to give him some advice, but Indra only became angrier. Then Brahmā thought, “I will have to kill his wife.” Only after he had killed all Indra’s *āsakti*, attachment, did Indra begin to listen. When Hari-kathā entered his ears and he got the nectar, he again got his body and went back to Indraloka (*svarga*, heaven). Brahmā actually had to kill for that!

A genuine Guru wants to do good for his disciple.

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)

Narottam Dās Ṭhākur was the only disciple of Lokanāth Dās Goswāmī. Lokanāth Dās Goswāmī said, “I will not make any disciples,” and Narottam Dās Ṭhākur said, “Anyhow I must take Lokanāth Dās Goswāmī as my Guru.”

Lokanāth Dās Goswāmī used to pass stool in some place, and every day Narottam Dās Ṭhākur came to clean that place. When Lokanāth Dās Goswāmī noticed it, he wanted to know who was doing this service, and although he had said he would not take any disciples, he finally said, “There is no other way—I have to give initiation to him!” Then he initiated Narottam Dās Ṭhākur.

This is how we all know about Narottam Dās Ṭhākur—Lokanāth Dās Goswāmī used him for preaching. We can understand that the Guru does everything.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj did not go to the Western countries, but he sent his dear disciple, Śrīla Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, to preach Mahāprabhu’s words all over the world, and the whole world now knows him very well. We do not know much about Lokanāth Dās Goswāmī, but we know about his only disciple Narottam Dās Ṭhākur.

So, I have told you these two stories today—about Jābāla’s son Satyakām, and how Brahmā demolished Indra’s attachment. Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur Prabhupād gave very nice advice through these stories.

Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu

Year 2012

When Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī was about ten-eleven years old, he went to search for his Guru, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, and when he came to the house of Śachī Mātā, he finally met Him.

As soon as Jīva Goswāmī saw Him, tears streamed from his eyes and he fell on the ground, taking Nityānanda Prabhu's feet on his head. Nityānanda Prabhu, tall and strong, picked Jīva Goswāmī in his hands and started dancing with him!

Nityānanda Prabhu knew that he was a nephew of Rūpa and Sanātan (the son of their brother Anupam), that is why He was so happy to see that boy.

When his father had passed away, Jīva Goswāmī knew he had no burden left, so he wanted to go to Vṛndāvan and always asked Nityānanda Prabhu for permission to go there. (Although he was so young, he did not go there on his own, he kept on asking for permission to go.) Finally, Nityānanda Prabhu gave said to him, "Chaitanya Mahāprabhu has already given His permission—He personally gave this special place to all your family. All your family is already in Vṛndāvan, and your place is there too. Go there at once."

He started his journey. With both hands raised, he would sometimes chant "Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya" and sometimes "Rūpa Sanātan." He was a little boy, but he walked without stopping, chanting and thinking of Vṛndāvan, "When will I see Rādhā-Govinda? When will my heart and eyes find their fulfilment? When will I see the Pastimes of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa?"

He did not take anything with him—no food, no money. He did not think about the future, did not think what he would eat; he only kept walking, thinking about the Lord, about Kṛṣṇa, and some food automatically came to him. He thought of the Lord and never shared his sadness or feelings with anybody.

First he reached Mathurā—he saw Madhu-purī, the birth place of the Lord. After that, he went to bathe in the Yamunā, and from there he could see Vṛndāvan. Seeing Vṛndāvan ahead, tears came to his eyes.

When he entered Vṛndāvan, he was so happy. He immediately went to see Rūpa Goswāmī and Sanātan Goswāmī: he prayed to them and paid *daṇḍavat* at their feet. When he asked Sanātan Goswāmī for his order, Sanātan Goswāmī told him to serve Rūpa Goswāmī, and he told Rūpa Goswāmī, “Take this boy.” This is how Jīva Goswāmī started his service to Rūpa Goswāmī.

I have no power to tell you what kind of devotion to his Guru Jīva Goswāmī had. He always thought of the service to his Guru—his mind and body were always engaged in service. Jīva Goswāmī’s service cannot be compared to anyone’s service. Whatever order he got, he would place it on his head and do it all the time—his mind never went to any other place. He only did what he was told to do, and whatever he did, he would be so happy; it was always fruitful, always successful.

Gradually, he became a very big scholar. He was only about ten years old, but he wrote first *Harinām-amṛta-vyākaraṇ* and later so many other *grantha*, scriptures! He did not go to Oxford, he did not go to Cambridge. How is it possible? Only by mercy (he got direct mercy from Nityānanda Prabhu, then from Sanātan Goswāmī and Rūpa Goswāmī), and only through service—through continuous service.

He would sweep the Rādhā Dāmodar temple (our Vṛndāvan temple is right next to it), then wash it with the water that he

would bring from the Yamunā; then he would massage Rūpa Goswāmī's body with oil, bathe him; then he would cook, offer the *bhog*, do the *pūjā*, write the books, and so on. Sanātan Goswāmī cried seeing Jīva Goswāmī's renunciation, but at the same time both he and Rūpa Goswāmī were very happy with his service and character. Also, *Kṛṣṇa-prema* always came to his body.

When Rūpa Goswāmī and Sanātan Goswāmī left, Jīva Goswāmī always cried, rolling on the ground... He always thought of Rūpa and Sanātan and was very sad alone.

Once Rūpa Goswāmī came to him in a dream and said, "Do not be sad, do not cry. Do your service, preach. Do not worry, I will send somebody to help you." The next day Āchārya Śrīnivās came, and the day after Narottam Dās Ṭhākur. Jīva Goswāmī was very happy to get their association to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He talked to Āchārya Śrīnivās and Narottam Dās Ṭhākur about *Kṛṣṇa-līlā*, they read together, and he taught them everything—how to serve Rādhā-Govinda, how to preach...

(This discourse is based on 'Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhura Śochaka' composed by Śrīla Narahari Sarkār Ṭhākur)



Initiation into Chanting of the Holy Name

26 February 2012

The *śāstra* tell about the religion for different ages—Satya, Dvāpar, Tretā, Kali:

In Satya-yuga, people’s religion was meditation, *dhyan*. The lifespan was 100 000 years, and they practised meditation for 60-70 000 years.

In Tretā-yuga, the lifespan was 10 000 years and the religion was *yajña*, fire-sacrifice. For example, *aśvamedha yajña*—they put a horse in the fire; *narmedha yajña*—they sacrificed men; *rājasūya yajña*—they held grand ceremonies.

Dvāpar-yuga’s religion was *archan*, *pūjā*, and the lifespan was 1,000 years.

In Kali-yuga, the lifespan came down to 100-200 years, and Kṛṣṇa Himself thought, “The lifetime in this Kali-yuga is so short, how will they be rescued? They will be rescued from this kind of environment and reach My place by chanting the Holy Name.”

We are His children. “Loving search for the lost service”: He is searching for us, “How will this child come back from the illusory environment to our own place?” Only through the chanting of the Holy Name can these kinds of things be attained. Kṛṣṇa Himself appeared in the form of the Name (Kṛṣṇa’s Name, Beauty, Pastimes, Associates are nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa) and came as Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu to distribute this Holy Name, so only He and His associates can distribute it.

Gurudev keeps Kṛṣṇa's Name inside your heart, but it will come to your mouth, tongue—Kṛṣṇa Himself will dance there ('dance' means chanting). If you ask me to dance, I will need some level place. If there are holes and bumps—some place is high, some place is low—I cannot dance there. If you want to dance, you must level the place first. It is necessary to have the tongue—chant, chant, and take *prasādam*, then your tongue will be level and Kṛṣṇa Nām will dance on your tongue.

There are some rules and regulations for levelling the tongue—not to say bad things, not to talk so much about nonsense things that are not related to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, only chant the Holy Name, only preach: *Jīve dayā* (be kind to the souls), *Nāme ruchi* (relish the Name), and *Vaiṣṇav sevā* (serve Vaiṣṇavs). You must follow what your Gurudev or a Vaiṣṇav told you to do.

There are also obstacles to chanting the Holy Name: thirty-two kinds of *sevā-aparādh*, ten kinds of Nāma *aparādh*. There are also four types of bad habits where Kali stays in this age and that you must always avoid because they are very bad for spiritual life:

- 1) *dyūtaṁ*—gambling, playing cards, games, etc.;
- 2) *pāna*—intoxicants, drinking alcohol, smoking cigarettes, etc.;
- 3) *striya*—illegal sex;
- 4) *sūnā*—*jīva hiṁsā*, killing (eating fish, meat, etc.).

You must not eat fish, meat, eggs, and so on, but the food that is just vegetarian is also not for Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You must take *prasād*.

Monkeys also do not eat meat, cows eat grass, calves drink milk—they are all vegetarians, but do they get Kṛṣṇa consciousness? No.

Monkeys show so much renunciation, they go about naked, eat only fruit, leaves, but inside they have some material desire. In this world there are also many *sādhus*, many gurus—they dress as *sādhus*, show they are *sādhus*, but inside there is a material

desire. That is called *markaṭa-vairāgya*, monkey renunciation ('*marka'* means 'a monkey').

If you go to Gaṅgā Sāgar Melā, you can see there many *nāgā sannyaśīs*. They walk naked, have no attachment to anything, but they always have some material desire inside—they forcefully ask everyone for money. Everybody pays *danḍavat* to them, but what for? Monkeys also show they are renounced, but if you go with some banana, sweets, or fruit to offer it to the Deity, they forcefully take it from you—for their own enjoyment.

So, the main thing is not to just take vegetarian food: you must offer what you eat. If you like *siṅgārā* (samosa), buy and give it to the Deity, and after it is offered take the *prasād*.

Also, on the Ekādaśī *tithi*, Ekādaśī day, do not eat rice. Scriptures say that if you take rice on the Ekādaśī day, it is equal to taking cow's meat. You can make *alu dum*, boiled potato, have fruits, milk, paneer, some *subji*, etc. If you are hungry, you can eat five kilograms of boiled potato, it is not a problem. There is no such excuse as "I cannot do that, I cannot follow the rules, so I will not do it," or, "I cannot chant, so I will not chant." No.

This Holy Name has come through the *Guru-paramparā*. It comes first from Kṛṣṇa to Brahmā, from Brahmā to Nārad, from Nārad to Vyāsadev, from Vyāsadev to Madhva Āchārya. In this way it comes to Mādhavendra Purī, from Mādhavendra Purī to Īśvar Purī, and from Īśvar Purī to Mahāprabhu.

Mahāprabhu Himself took initiation from Īśvar Purī. He is the Lord, but He shows that even the Lord takes initiation. He came in the form of a human, so He showed the example to others.

In *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, Kṛṣṇa told Arjun to fight—Kṛṣṇa is the Guru, Arjun is a disciple, and Kṛṣṇa is teaching His disciple. At first Arjun refused but in the end he agreed and said, "I believe You!" It is necessary to have strongest faith. Gurudev also said

that chastity, *satitva*, is necessary, and chastity is very rare. Chastity means following your Guru. Gurudev gave an example also: suppose you are walking down a street and see a snake. You tell your Guru, “Gurudev, there is a snake! A snake!” but if your Guru says, “No, no, it is not a snake, it is a rope,” you must believe it—that is called chastity. You must believe what Gurudev says. This is how you should maintain your life.

Also [addressing a male initiate; does not apply to ladies], you should cut your hair short. Long hair is not necessary for your health. What is it necessary for? Nothing. If you cannot have a full shave, cannot shave bold, then keep your hair short. Kṛṣṇa will accept you—it is not necessary to grow hair to show anything to others. I am telling it to you intimately.

So, the Holy Name then comes to Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābāji Mahārāj, then to Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur, Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur, and then our Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Raksak Śrīdhār Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, who is the Founder-Āchārya of this Maṭh. In his lifetime he told to Gurudev, Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, “If anyone wants to take initiation, you will give it to them.” He got this Holy Name from his Guru, and I got this Holy Name from him. In his lifetime Gurudev said to me, “If somebody wants to take initiation, really wants to chant the Holy Name, you can initiate them.” So, in his lifetime, in 2008-2010, when Gurudev was not well, I also gave initiation.

First chant the Pañcha-tattva’s name. This big bead on top is called *sumeru*. Start your *mālā* from here:

śrī kṛṣṇa chaitanya prabhu nityānanda
śrī advaita gadādhara śrīvāsādi gaura bhakta-vṛnda

Chant the Pañcha-tattva’s name, ask them for mercy, pay obeisance to them—they have brought the Holy Name to this

abode, and without their mercy we cannot chant the Holy Name. Then start chanting from the first big bead of the *mālā*,

hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
 hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare

Chant like this bead by bead, from the big beads to the small beads, then turn the *mālā* and chant from the small beads to the big beads (without crossing the *sumeru* bead). Chant sixteen rounds or more every day.

Chant without offence and Kṛṣṇa will reveal in your heart, you will be successful in your spiritual life. If you do not get time, you must chant at least four rounds every day. If you talk much, gossip, and so on, and think you can chant only four rounds, that is not good. You are now in the illusory environment, and if you do not take the medicine, thinking, “Oh, I will take it later,” you will not come out. This is your medicine [His Divine Grace points at the *mālā* of the newly initiated devotee].



Come to Your Home

9 March 2012

It is my strong feeling that it is the mercy of Gurudev, the desire and the well-wishes of the devotees all over the world and all over India that this year's Gaura Pūrṇimā would be peaceful, and Gurudev has fulfilled the devotees' desire. Without you joining how can a festival be successful? You have joined, so the festival has become glorious.

pratyabda āsibe sabe guṇḍichā dekhibāre

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 1.48)

Mahāprabhu told the devotees who were going back after Ratha Yātrā, "Come every year to see Guṇḍichā."

So I hope that every year you will come to see Guru Mahārāj's *samādhi*, Gurudev's *samādhi*, visit the holy places, take the association of the devotees. I pray to you all that you come every year. You may think, "How will the money come?" but if you have a strong desire, Mahāprabhu will send you the money to come here.

We are one family—the family of Gurudev. In my previous family, all my relatives lived together with their sons, daughters in one house. I heard they still live like this, even though my brother is sixty, my cousin is fifty-five now, but they are still together, and for the last three hundred years they have been all gathering together every year to celebrate Durgā Pūjā.

Our family is also like this. We must protect our mission. Somebody may be doing something wrong, but Gurudev always

said to me, “When one door closes, another door opens.” So, we must continue no matter what. We must not see bad things: if somebody is doing something bad, we will take good from them and reject their bad side, otherwise, as Gurudev advised me, if you always think of someone’s bad quality, that bad quality will come to you.

I am very happy with you all, and I am telling you again: help Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh everywhere, preach properly, maintain your spiritual life properly as Gurudev advised, and I will be even happier with you.

You think, “This boat over there is going fast, this boat there looks good,” but it is necessary to have chastity. You have a good husband, but you think, “This other man is better than my husband,” and immediately go there. It is not right. Do you understand? It is not a good idea. Remember that. You must be chaste, must be clear—take Gurudev’s boat, and one day that boat will take you to Vṛndāvan. Believe it.

We must pray to our Guru, our Guru-varga, pray to our Gurudev, “So many people are going to Goloka Vṛndāvan, there is so much place there. If you can only keep me there as a blade of grass, I will be satisfied.”



The Meaning of Sahajiyā

23 December 2012

Last night and today we went to preach at the Santiniketan University. Every year they organise a fair for intellectual people (Poush Mela). Before we did not make programmes there, but this time there is a little progress this year and yesterday and today we had a large audience. About two hundred devotees came for *prasādam*. The house we went to was small, it accommodates not more than forty devotees, but there was a loudspeaker outside, so when I gave the lecture today it could be heard miles around.

Actually, it is hard to preach in that area because they are all educated people and brought up as *brahma-jñānī* (interested in the impersonal aspect of the Lord), followers of *śuṣka-jñān* (dry knowledge), *māyāvādī*—they believe that Kṛṣṇa has no form.

Many foreigners come to the Santiniketan University to learn Bengali and Sanskrit. They do not believe in reincarnation—they do not believe that a *jīva* soul always changes the body and that after death we are born again.

Many years ago I preached there and brought two families to Gurudev's lotus feet, and they have always been asking me since then to come there again for preaching, but the people there are all *māyāvādīs*, *nāstik*... Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura said that those who believe in existence of God but do not believe that God has a form, are equal to *nāstik* (atheist)—they actually do not believe in God. That is the kind of people who gather there.

So, I went to preach there. I gave a lecture there and initiated one person today. They were very happy to hear the lecture.

One old man asked me today about the meaning of *sahajiyā*. You know this song that we sing every day:

yaśomati-nandana vraja-vara-nāgara
gokula-rañjana kāna

“Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is known as Kān, is Yaśodā’s darling son,
Vraja’s paramour, and Gokula’s delight.”

vipina-purandara navīna nāgara-vara
vaṁśī-vadana suvāsā

“He is the king of Vraja’s forests and the best of young paramours.
He beautifully plays the flute.”

(Gītāvalī, Śrī-Nāma-kīrtan, 1.1-2, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur)

Who is called ‘*navīna nāgar*’? ‘*Nāgar*’ means ‘one who has more than one wife’; ‘*navīn*’ means ‘always new’. So, ‘*navīna nāgar*’ means ‘one who always takes a new girl.’ Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur writes this about Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa can do that, there is nothing wrong about that, but if *we* are going to do that—if we imitate what Kṛṣṇa does—then we become *sahajiyās*. *Sahajiyā* people always want to imitate, to practise Kṛṣṇa’s Pastimes (do what Kṛṣṇa did), Mahāprabhu’s Pastimes (do what Mahāprabhu did). That was my answer, and they were very happy to hear it.

I have told before also this story of A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swāmī Mahārāj Śrīla Prabhupād. Many boys would eat sweets and fruit without paying for it—they wanted to do what Kṛṣṇa was doing. They said, “Why not? Kṛṣṇa did that, so why cannot we do it?” Swāmī Mahārāj replied, “OK. Kṛṣṇa also lifted Govardhan Hill with His one little finger. Can *you* do that? If you can, then you can steal sweets.”

Question: We find in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and the Vaiṣṇav songs there are many preparations that pure devotees cook for Kṛṣṇa. If we cook those preparations, is it considered *sahajiyā* or not?

Cooking for Kṛṣṇa is not *sahajiyā*. We cook for service, for Kṛṣṇa, but we cannot do what Kṛṣṇa did for our own enjoyment. We cook to please Kṛṣṇa, to make Kṛṣṇa happy. It is not like you are going to do some nonsense and think you are making Kṛṣṇa happy.

At the same time, if you cook for your own happiness, for your own enjoyment, that is *sahajiyā*. If you use Kṛṣṇa's Name, use Gurudev's name saying, "Oh, I am cooking for Guru, Kṛṣṇa," but actually you cook and eat it yourself without offering it to Guru, Kṛṣṇa, then it is *sahajiyā*.

Question: *How can I cook without thinking about myself? It is very difficult...*

It is not difficult. Everything is for Kṛṣṇa, so cooking is for Kṛṣṇa too. There is nothing difficult about that. When you cook and offer it to Kṛṣṇa, you can immediately die after that, then you will not be able to take the food. You should think, "I want to cook something for Kṛṣṇa, but I do not know whether I will be alive or not—I can die at any moment..."

Question: *What is the difference between māyāvādīs and sahajiyās?*

Māyāvādīs are very dangerous—they are much more dangerous than *sahajiyās*. *Sahajiyās* believe that Kṛṣṇa exists, He plays, He has a form, and they want to be like Kṛṣṇa, but *māyāvādīs* do not even believe Kṛṣṇa has a form (*nirākār*), they are atheistic. That is the difference.



Pratiṣṭhā, Singing Songs and Doing Kīrtan

23 December 2012

Question: What is the difference between pratiṣṭhā and sahaiyā?

Pratiṣṭhā is different from *sahaiyā*. “I want to be a guru,” “I want to be a big boss,” “I want to be a temple manager,” “I want to be the controller,” “I want everybody to listen to me,” “I will kick them from the temple,” “I will manage everyone”—this is called *pratiṣṭhā*. There is also another kind of *pratiṣṭhā*: “*Vaiṣṇavī pratiṣṭhā tāte koro niṣṭhā*, firmly establish yourself as a servant of the Lord.”

If Gurudev gives you some declaration and some *pratiṣṭhā* comes, do not become proud. *Pratiṣṭhā* is always for Guru.

For example, when a garland comes to you, you should think, “*Jay Gurudev*.” If I get ten rupees *praṇāmī*, why do I get it? Because Gurudev gave me *sannyās*, Gurudev made me a Guru, that is why I am getting some donation, *praṇāmī*. Somebody pays *daṇḍavat* to me, but they do it because they think I took initiation from Gurudev, so I am a disciple, a devotee of Gurudev.

If you think that everything is for Guru, *pratiṣṭhā* will not attack you so much—*pratiṣṭhā* will not be able to disturb you. If, however, you think, “I am a great Vaiṣṇav, everybody must pay obeisance to me,” this is not right. You should think, “I became a disciple, that is why they pay obeisance to me,” “I am following my Gurudev, that is why they follow me,” “Whatever I get is for my Guru.”

Somebody may think, “Oh, I am the *pūjārī*, and without me, the temple cannot run,” this kind of thinking is also *pratiṣṭhā*—they do not know that Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Nityānanda Prabhu, Mahāprabhu do Their own service Themselves.

“*Sukhe duḥkhe sarvadāi sama*: happiness or unhappiness, it is all the same”—a devotee should be like this. We should think, “Whatever position comes to me, be it a manager or anything else, it does not matter. Somebody can also criticise me, say bad things about me behind my back, but they can say many things about me, no problem—I am actually worse than that.”

If you think like this in your mind, then you will always get happier and happier, you will always get energy for service and you will be happy to do the service. Everything will be peaceful every day—all problems will go away.

Where there is a thesis, sometimes an antithesis will come. When you do something big, some opposition can come, but that is not a problem: we must carry on, go forward.

Question: *What should be the attitude when playing the mṛdaṅga?*

What is the question? Playing the *mṛdaṅga* means always thinking about your Guru. You should always think of Kṛṣṇa, think about the song. When you play the *mṛdaṅga*, you must also sing the song. “*Kīrtana prabhāve smaraṇa haibe*”: when you are doing *kīrtan* you can practise remembering (‘*Vaiṣṇav Ke?*’, 19). When you are singing a song about Nityānanda Prabhu, you will remember Nityānanda Prabhu.

Question: *When we are singing, should we remember the meaning of the song or just sing without thinking of the meaning?*

Actually, we do not really sing songs—we do *kīrtan*. Singing a song and doing *kīrtan* is not the same. Most people sing songs and do not know their meaning, but if you know the meaning of

the song, you will get pleasure. *Kīrtan* means practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness. When you practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness, you get pleasure. So, if you know the meaning of the song, you will always get energy to do *kīrtan*, but if you just sing a song without thinking about its meaning, you will not get that energy and pleasure will not come.

Also, when somebody does not understand the meaning of the song, they start playing, making naughty, and disturbing while others are singing; but those who are doing the actual *kīrtan* get pleasure and always do *kīrtan*...

When one does Kṛṣṇa *kīrtan*, chants the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa's Name, Beauty, Pastimes are all there. Nityānanda's *kīrtan* is Nityānanda's Pastimes, Kṛṣṇa's *kīrtan* is Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes, Mahāprabhu's *kīrtan* is Mahāprabhu's Pastimes. Remembering is also one kind of practice.



Chastity and Service Attachment

24 February, 2013

A chair has four legs—if a chair has only one leg, it will fall down. Your Guru is like one leg of the chair; the other three legs will depend upon you. You have taken initiation, but you are not chanting properly, not practising properly, then you should understand that you will not be able to prosper, to increase your spiritual life. You may take the devotional seed, *bhakti-latā bij*, plant it in your heart, but if do not water it, the plant will not grow. “*Śravaṇ-kīrtan jal*”: chanting and practising is the water for that plant.

Some kind of disease may also come. For example, suppose there are many trees growing in some place, but if you see a tree cannot grow nicely because of the bushes, branches, and other *kuṭināṭi*, you must cut these unwanted bad elements, then the tree will grow. These bad elements are *kāma* (lust), *krodha* (anger), *moha* (illusion), *rūp*, *ras*, *gandha*, *śabda*, *sparśa* (enjoyment through form, taste, smell, sound, and touch). You must be careful.

You think you can chant, and you chant, but why then do you become tired? For example, if I walk for one kilometre, I feel very tired, but when I chant *kīrtan* and walk for three-five hours, I am not tired. This is the power of the Holy Name.

...You can do anything for the service to the Lord. There is an example of Dhanur Dās: his wife went to a bad man for the service to the Lord. Gurudev told me once, “You can even go to a prostitute’s house for service—to beg some money from

them. They sell and use their body for a bad selfish enjoyment to earn their living, but if you take some money from them and give it to Kṛṣṇa, that money becomes good.”

I remember one day I said to Gurudev, “Some brick renovation has been done around the pond behind the Kaikhali temple.”

“What will I do with the pond? Will you cultivate fish in it?”

“Gurudev, what will I do with the fish?”

“Sell it and use that money for the service of Rādhā Ramaṇasundar.”

Somebody will eat that fish, but the fish gives its life for some money, and the money comes to the temple. In this way we can give benefit to the fish because it will use its body for the service to the Lord.

Gurudev taught me many things using different examples. He always taught me what is chastity, what is sincerity. I remember he said to me, “Everybody is doing some service, but only few devotees have attachment to their service,” but this attachment should be there.

I was sad today. Some Bengali devotees came, said they were leaving. They quickly give some *praṇāmī* and leave, but, “When will Gurudev come to my home? When will I come to Gurudev again? When will I go to the Lord? When will I see Nityānanda Prabhu?”—that kind of mentality, that kind of desire is not coming to their hearts. That is my only sadness...

Once, I remember Gurudev called me to Kolkata. At that time I had a lot of work in Nabadwīp, but he said, “Come today, I want to talk to you.” He called me in the morning at three o’clock, and I caught the first train at 4:15 a.m. and came to him. He told me why he had called me, but after that he did not tell me to go, so I sat there. I took breakfast, then it was eight o’clock, nine, ten, eleven, twelve o’clock—I was still sitting and sitting.

Then Gurudev took *prasādam*... In the meantime I was getting annoyed, “I have so much work in Nabadwīp, but what can I do? Gurudev is not saying anything...” Finally, Gurudev smiled and said, “You are very busy in Nabadwīp at this time, but now I have tied you here! You feel bad, you are anxious and annoyed because there is so much work, but no, that is not service—that is *karma*! I am telling you, ‘Sit here and do nothing’—that is service!”

Another time, I remember Gurudev said to me, “Āchārya Mahārāj, how is your blood sugar?” I said the number for that day, and Gurudev said, “Do not eat sweet things and do not eat potato.” After a while, a lady came in, paid her obeisance to Gurudev, and gave him a packet (when Bengali ladies come, they pay obeisance and usually give some sweets, money, a garland). Gurudev opened the packet and offered me a sweet. I was about to take it when suddenly Gurudev said,

“Hey! I have just told you not to eat sugar, sweets!”

“You are giving me your *prasād*, I did not try to do it, *you* gave it to me!”

“I was testing you!”

Gurudev tells you to do this and tells you to do that, both are service, but you must do the service that is more preferable.



When One Feels Hopeless

30 April 2013

Question: *What will be your message for those devotees who feel hopeless in their practice? They feel they have some connection with the service of the Mission, but at the same time they feel somewhat hopeless because Maya is so strong and they feel they cannot give more energy...*

Yes, devotees sometimes may feel that, but Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur said that you think you have practised for so many years, but in a devotee's life there is no retirement—we must do service until death.

What is there to be hopeless about? Gurudev himself said, “If those who take initiation from me can until their death practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness properly, they will get real home—they will stay with me, where I am.” A few days before Gurudev left his body, he said, “Kṛṣṇa sent me here and my service is now finished. Very soon He will take me to another place for service.” But you do not have to wait for death—in this life, in this human body, you have got a good, bona fide Guru.

After Gurudev expired, Kali and Māyā have become much more powerful and stronger, I can see that. Gurudev told me, “You must finish the service I was not able to finish,” and I am trying to do it. So many obstacles are coming, but I am trying to do that and trying to attend to the devotees.

Sometimes devotees feel hopeless, they think *māyā*, the illusory environment, is very strong, even though they do so much service. We should understand that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme

Personality of Godhead, all universe exists for Him. We do some service here and think we have done so much, but actually one *jīva* soul's service is nothing—what can we do for Him? Because of our ego we think we have done and are doing so many things—that is why we become tired, we become hopeless.

The Lord Himself maintains this whole universe, and the whole universe exists for Him. What service can we do? We can do nothing. But why should we be hopeless because of that?

Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura said that in this world many people would not follow pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but you should not become hopeless. If you keep trying until your death and if you practise properly the main process for a practitioner's life—what Mahāprabhu taught Sanātan Goswāmī (*abhidheya-tattva*); what Prahlād Mahārāj, who was only five years old at that time, advised his father (*kīrtanam, smaraṇam, vandanam, dāsyam, sakhyam, ātma-nivedanam*—hearing, chanting, remembering, offering obeisance, rendering service as a servitor, as a friend, and self-submission); if you follow

**ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-saṅgo 'tha bhajana-kriyā
tato 'nartha-nivṛttiḥ...**

"In the beginning there is faith, then good association, then practising life. After that, the offences gradually go away..."

(Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhuḥ, 1.4.15)

and also "*jīve dayā, Nāme ruchi, Vaiṣṇava sevā,*" if you chant the Holy Name without offence and serve Vaiṣṇavs—then even if you are a householder you have nothing to worry about.

There is a reason why *māyā* attacks you—when you are weak, a disease can attack you. When *māyā* attacks you, you should not think it is *māyā*'s fault—it is your own fault. Why does *māyā* attack you? Because you are not following properly: you are not practising properly what is favourable to devotion, and you are

not rejecting properly what is unfavourable to devotion. That is why slowly, slowly, *māyā* is attacking us.

A tree can be blooming nicely, giving good flowers, but if some insect attacks it, the tree will slowly die. The same is true about us. *Māyā* attacks us, our mind disturbs us, takes us in a bad way, but we must follow the proper things—we must follow Gurudev’s advice, read Gurudev’s books.

What is the main problem, the main obstacles to devotion? *Atyāhāra*, eating too much outside food, having no attachment to *prasādam*. *Prayāscha*, collecting and keeping too much for your own enjoyment. *Prajalpa*, taking too much *grāmya-kathā*, talking nonsense and mixing with nondevotees (people who do not practise properly). *Chāñchalya*, the mind always disturbs and goes everywhere. These are the *chhaya-doṣ*, the six faults.

We must avoid these obstacles, but the problem is that we do not try to follow, we think, “Oh, what will happen if I do not follow?” and we forget everything immediately—it goes into one ear and comes out of the other. We do not follow properly—this is the main cause of all problems.

If you practise what Mahāprabhu told Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī, what Mahāprabhu told Sanātan Goswāmī, what Mahāprabhu told Rūpa Goswāmī; if you read every day, if you sing every day, remember every day, then I think, and I believe, that *māyā* will not attack you—*māyā* will run away from you.

If you read *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, the chapter about *abhidheya-tattva* (what Mahāprabhu taught Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī and Sanātan Goswāmī), if you practise singing songs in the morning and in the evening, I think *māyā* will not come and you will not be hopeless—you will actually get pleasure, pleasure, and more pleasure.

Firm and Fearless

24 June 2013

We are here today by the mercy of Gurudev, by the mercy of the devotees, and we are praying to all devotees that they practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness properly. Sometimes devotees face so many problems... When we go along the current it is not necessary to do much hard labour; but when the current is going against us, then we have to labour hard.

We must practise hard in our spiritual life. We are fallen souls, we have no quality or qualification to serve the devotees, to serve the Vaiṣṇavs, Gurudev, the Lord, but by the mercy of Gurudev and through our practising life we can become qualified for pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Kṛṣṇa is taking us home and He will clean us.

We are dirty after so many lives, so many years of being engaged in our own enjoyment, using the Lord—even in this world also, I have seen people using their Guru, using the Lord for their own purpose. It is not right. We are *jīva* souls: we are servants of the Lord and must serve Kṛṣṇa, but because of our ego, because of the illusory environment, we think we do everything, and we do not think that Kṛṣṇa does everything.

There is a reason why we do so many things, why we always make so many festivals. Just a few days ago we made the Deity installation festival in Siliguri, then we went to Ekachakra, and before that to Pānihāṭi for Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī's festival... Every time we make a festival we call devotees because we always want to present Gurudev's conception. We want to

present something to the devotees—in this world the *jīva* souls are suffering, and it is our duty to give them some relief. This is what ‘*jīve dayā*’ is; this is the main thing for us.

So many disturbances will come, but why will we be afraid? In our life, the only thing that is certain is death. One way or another, we will die, but when Kṛṣṇa protects us, Gurudev protects us, there is nothing to be afraid of.

When Prabhupād Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur was giving the last *sannyās* in his lifetime to Śrīpād Jājāvar Mahārāj, who was twenty-six years old at that time and was very afraid, he said, “Why are you afraid? You are going to surrender to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. You are doing something for *Him*, why are you afraid?”

Our duty is to serve the Lord, serve the Guru properly, and the Lord’s duty is to serve, protect His devotees. The Lord Himself said, “I will protect you.” A strongest faith is necessary—if there is a lack of faith, problems will come. Faith is always necessary: without faith we cannot make it.

We must do our service under the proper guidance, that is why we take shelter of a bona fide Guru—if we can follow properly his advice and do what he tells us to do, then we can easily be successful in our spiritual life. When you surrender, you will understand it...



Do Not Waste Your Time

24 June 2013

After eighty-four *lakhs* (8 400 000) of births you have got this human body, but if you do not practise under the proper guidance, you will have to again go to some other body. However, when you come to Gurudev and practise under his guidance, you should think that having finished your eighty-four *lakhs* of lives you do not have to return there again.

You should understand that no one will take away your enjoyment, your food—you will always get it. Now you are making opulent *prasād*, but a pig will be happy if you give it a bucket of stool, it will not take your opulent *prasād*. You are sleeping on a good cushioned bed with an AC, but how much sleep do you get? You always wake up, always anxious, but a dog sleeps very nicely, without a worry, on the street. When you were an elephant or a tiger, you were happy to stay in a forest—if, however, you take an elephant into an AC room, it will not be happy.

So, we have got that kind of happiness before, and we will get it in future too, that is not a question, but it is not the purpose of our life! All *jīva* souls control somebody else—one *jīva* soul controls another, the other one controls yet another, and it is going on like this everywhere, but in our spiritual life we must understand how we can come out of this situation.

We have come here but time is very short, life is very short—we can die at any moment. We must understand what we have got this human body for. You could sleep and eat before, and in

future also you will be able to, but now in this human body you have full consciousness. You actually have pure consciousness, but it is now covered by the illusory environment. You can easily understand it if you read *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*. Arjun refused to fight, but the Lord said (Bg, 7.14), “*Mām eva ye prapadyante*: only if you surrender to Me, can you overcome this kind of situation, this kind of illusory environment.” That is why it is necessary to live a practising life.

If you just offer some incense once a day in the evening, that is not practising. At the same time, I am not telling you that you must leave everything and go to a forest. Jagadānanda Paṇḍit said, “You think you will leave everything and go to a forest, but your stomach will also go with you.” If you go to a forest, you cannot leave your stomach behind, you will have to take it with you—you will still have to pick the fruit, pick some leaves from the trees, and do your cooking. You do not have to go to a jungle, do not have to leave your family life, but you must not have so much attachment to the material life—*āsakti-rahita*, remove attachment to the material life. If you can practise this, it will be good for you.



Practise and Believe

24 June 2013

You must be *asakti* (detached, have no material attachment). If you remove material desires from your heart, you will get great happiness. It is necessary to think about this, and that is why I am telling the devotees how to practise the *abhideya-tattva* (the main, most important things).

Sādhū-saṅga, śravaṇ, kīrtan. Śravaṇ and *kīrtan* are necessary—every morning, every evening, all the time. You can do *kīrtan* while eating, sleeping, working. Always think about Kṛṣṇa, about the Lord and connect whatever you do with Kṛṣṇa, with practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then it will become *abhideya-tattva*, practising life.

Whatever you cook, do not cook for yourself. If you cook for Kṛṣṇa, it will be service and it will be connected with the Lord, then it will be a full practising life. If you follow this, you will be happy all your life and it will not be necessary to go back to your previous *karma*. Try to understand it.

I always want to engage devotees in service, and I always think that they too should engage themselves properly.

Parikṣit Mahārāj said, “I have eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and so on, but what shall I do with it? If I use these five senses, *pañcam indriya* (*chakṣu, karṇa, nāsikā, jihvā, tvak*—eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin), only for Kṛṣṇa consciousness; if I use *man, buddhi, ahaṅkāra* (mind, intelligence, ego) for *Bhāgavatam*, for the Lord, then even though I have only seven days left, it will still be good for me.” Uddhav Mahārāj also asked Kṛṣṇa in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, “What

is this heavy head on my shoulders for?" You must make it light: if you pay obeisance to the Lord, to Guru, Vaiṣṇav, Bhagavān, your head will become light. Use everything—your hands, legs, head, nose, mouth, and so on—for the service to the Lord. It will be good for you, and it will be proper practising.

I have told it many times: who is your enemy? Your enemy is your mind.

aichhana āmāra mana phire yena andha-jana
supatha vipatha nāhi jāne

(‘*Ṭhākura Vaiṣṇava-gaṇa*’, 3, by Śrīla Narottam Dās Ṭhākur)

“The mind is always blind, it does not know which way to go.” If you get some intelligence, some good guidance, then you can control the mind and that guidance will take you in the good direction—towards Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

You think that you will get another life after death, and you postpone, “I will do it later,” but you have got time now—a moment after a moment, an hour after an hour, a day after a day, a month after a month, and then a whole year passes. We are finishing our time, and the time goes very quickly—we must realise what is necessary for our spiritual life.

We must practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness. *Bhakti-anukūl* (accept what is favourable to devotion), *utsāha* (have enthusiasm), *dhairya* (do not lose faith, persevere), *dr̥ḍha-viśvās* (keep the strongest faith)—it is necessary for our practising life to follow this.

It is also necessary to reject what is not in favour of devotion, avoid the obstacles in our spiritual life: *atyāhār* (eating too much), *prajalpa* (talking so many nonsense things), *janasaṅga* (taking bad association), *laulya* (bring greedy for material possessions). We want to have so many things for ourselves, we always think, “I want this, I want this, I want this.” Be satisfied with what you have got: “It is all right, everything happens by the will of Kṛṣṇa.”

If you think in this way, you will get full relief from that greed. Try to understand that it is necessary to follow this. It is the main preaching of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, of Gauḍīya Maṭh: simple living, high thinking, “back to God, back to home.”

We are not Indian, we are not Russian, we are not Pakistani, we are not Hindu, Christian, Buddhist, or Muslim. We are all *jīva* souls, we all came from the same place and must go back to our own home.

At present we are going from place to place with our bad *karma*. When we are a goat, we have a house; when we are a dog we have a house; when we are a human, we have a house—everybody has everything, but where are our own things, our own life, our own home? We must go to the Lord who controls everything. The problem is that we do not see it...

Suppose you are in Kolkata. You cannot see America from there and you think, “No, there is no such country as the USA,” but through Internet and television you can understand that there *is* America, and if you go to America, you can see there is such a country as the USA there. So, we think Kṛṣṇa does not exist, we cannot see Kṛṣṇa, but if you practise, if you come to this line, you can see and realise that Kṛṣṇa exists.

Kṛṣṇa said in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, “I am alone before *pralaya*, then I create Brahmā and tell him to create the whole world.” In this way, this world is running on the order of Lord Kṛṣṇa, day by day, year by year.

So, suppose you are here and think, “I am here in Kolkata, there are not any other countries,” but if you go to another country, you can see that other countries actually exist. So, you think there is no other world, but if you go to Śīva-loka, Brahmā-loka, Tal, Atal, Talātal, and so on, you can see that they do exist. If we practise, we will be able to believe it, but our problem is that if we do not see something we do not believe in it.

If you have proper faith, if you practise properly, you can easily understand that many worlds exist in this universe, and you can read in *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* that our religion is *jaiva-dharma* (religion of the soul). Kṛṣṇa creates everything in this world for His own pleasure, but we are using it for our own purpose. That is the problem: we use His property, His things for our own purpose, and then we scream and suffer. We must serve Kṛṣṇa, must realise that all property is His, and use it for His benefit. It is very important.

We offer food to Kṛṣṇa and it is necessary to believe that Kṛṣṇa takes it and also gives the food to His devotees and servitors for His service. He always protects His devotees. To believe this is called faith.

‘śraddhā’-sabde—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)

If you serve Kṛṣṇa, you can easily understand it yourself...

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj kī jay!



Floating On the Surface

30 June 2013

A holy place is not for enjoyment; a holy place is for service.

When Rāmānanda Rāy and Chaitanya Mahāprabhu were talking Kṛṣṇa-kathā, deeper and deeper levels came out. I am thinking also: who can understand Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, who can understand Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura? If you take the leaves of a sugar cane, what kind of taste will you get? But if you take the stem, as you condense it more and more you can taste juice, sugar, *khaṇḍa* (candy)—gradually everything will come.

We simply come and stay in Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj’s temple, Gurudev’s temple, but we do not know their conception. What did Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj make this temple for? You should know the conception. We float on the surface, following the desires that enter our mind—we do not go deep. We must understand what Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj made this temple for. It is necessary and very important to understand it.

Prabhupād Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura said that we did not come here to be carpenters. We can do what is necessary for maintenance, but not more than that. I remember when I started the charitable dispensary in Nabadwīp, I spent there much time. I went there every afternoon and managed the doctors, the patients, and everything else, but Gurudev said to me, “You did not come here to be a hospital manager. It is not your job, give it somebody else.” I immediately stopped doing it—the next day I gave charge to another person.

In one of his poems Śrīla Gurudev writes, “If Indra comes to give me his post in heaven, I will not accept it; I will not agree if even Brahmā offers me to take his place.”

You must understand what our conception is. We do not want to be very big or gorgeous, we do not want to be imitators—we want to have the real thing. To have the real thing you must understand our conception. Read Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj’s books, Gurudev’s books, then you will get some idea. I have told it many times: read when you get time.

Read the books, try to understand the conception. If you think you know everything, you will never know anything, and it is actually a big problem: it is ego. Ego eats everything, takes everything away—ultimately, it will take you to hell. Ego is the only problem. Somebody is so proud they have been a disciple for so many years, but they cannot understand anything. We must be careful: “pride comes before a fall.”

Devotional life means sacrifice, and sacrifice does not mean you must be renounced—renunciation is not necessary, only surrender is necessary. You must sacrifice for others—that is our life.



Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu

18 August 2013, 9 August 2003

Today is the disappearance day of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu and Śrīla Gaurī Dās Paṇḍit...

Rūpa Goswāmī and Sanātan Goswāmī were engaged to assist Mahāprabhu's Pastimes. Rūpa Goswāmī's former name was Dabir Khās, and Sanātan Goswāmī's—Sārkar Mallik. Their nephew, Anupam, was also with them. When Mahāprabhu first came to their area, the emperor Hussain Shah stopped Mahāprabhu's *kīrtan* (he could not understand who Mahāprabhu was at first). It was at that time that Rūpa and Sanātan went to meet with Him.

The meeting place was about a kilometre away from their house. When they saw Mahāprabhu, they fell at His feet with a blade of grass between their teeth ("*dante tṛṇa dhari*"', they showed their position was like that of a cow). During that meeting, Mahāprabhu said to them, "When I go to Vṛndāvan, you can come there too."

Rūpa Goswāmī was the finance minister of the king, and he made some accounts with mistakes so that the king would discharge him from his job. This is how he came to join Mahāprabhu.

Later, during his life in Vṛndāvan, Rūpa Goswāmī stayed in Rādhā Dāmodar temple (it is right next to our temple in Vṛndāvan), his *samādhi* is also there. This is the place where he did his service to Rādhā-Govinda.

(There are three main Deities in the Gauḍīya line: Govinda, Gopīnāth, and Madan Mohan. Rūpa Goswāmī did the service of Rādhā-Govinda, Sanātan Goswāmī did the service of Madan Mohan, and Madhu Paṇḍit did the service of Gopīnāth.)

When Rūpa Goswāmī and Sanātan Goswāmī came to Vṛndāvan, all places of Kṛṣṇa's and Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes had been lost, and they rediscovered all of them.

Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu wrote many well-known ślokas. For example,

anyābhilāṣitā 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)

It is a very beautiful śloka. He also composed *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhuḥ* and many other scriptures. Also *Chaitanya-charitāmṛta* describes Mahāprabhu's teachings to Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu, known as *Rūpa-śikhā*.

One day Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu was writing a śloka, and Mahāprabhu wanted to see what he was writing. Rūpa Goswāmī got shy and hid the paper somewhere, but Mahāprabhu found it. When Mahāprabhu read that śloka, He was surprised and told Svarūp Dāmodar and Rāy Rāmānanda, "How is it that this boy, Rūpa, knows everything?" Svarūp Dāmodar and Rāy Rāmānanda said, "Prabhu, it is only possible by Your mercy, no other way. You have given him so much mercy." At that time Mahāprabhu actually admitted it, "Yes, I have given so much mercy to him," but then He added, "It is not sufficient. You all together give your mercy to him!"

This is what we know about Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu. Mahāprabhu Himself made him the *āchārya*, the Rūpānuga Āchārya, and today is his disappearance day...

He is actually a *pārṣad*, associate, of Mahāprabhu. Before, in Dvāpar-yuga, he was an associate of Kṛṣṇa, and in this age Kṛṣṇa personally sent him to teach us, the fallen souls. On his disappearance day we can ask him for some mercy so that we can continue our service to the Lord...



Games of Māyā Devi

6 September 2013

People cannot change their character: “black will take no other hue.” Such is the nature, but we must always remember this *śloka* of Rūpa Goswāmī:

anyābhilāṣitā 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)

anya-abhilāṣa chhāḍi jñāna karma parihari
kāya mane kariba bhajana

“Serve the Lord with body and mind, giving up all other desires and the pursuit of material benefit and knowledge.”
(Śrī Prema-bhakti-chandrikā, 13, by Śrīla Narottam Dās Ṭhākur)

I can convert you within five minutes. What I am telling you are your things, the property of your heart, and it is what you want—but you must listen to me properly with your mind.

Māyā always searches for a chance to attack you, and if she gets an opportunity, you can be easily converted by the illusory environment, this is why it is said,

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, Vaiṣṇav.”

“There is no other way to conquer the illusory environment except by the mercy from the *sādhus*, Guru, Vaiṣṇavs.” That is our only hope. If we can surrender, serve them, and hear and follow their advice, it will be good for us, otherwise, *jñān*, *karma* will always come to us.

Mahāprabhu preached *jñāna-śūnya-bhakti*, devotion free from desires for material benefit or knowledge. Such *bhakti* is our life—not the *sakām bhakti* when you use the Lord for yourself. Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj used the expression, “*Śālagrām diye bādām bhaṅga*.” It means a *pūjārī* is offering some nuts to a Śālagrām-śilā, and while making the offering he becomes hungry and wants to eat the nuts, but as he has no teeth he shells the nuts with the Śālagrām-śilā, Girirāj. That is *sakām bhakti*—you are doing some service to the Lord, but you have some other desire. “*Anyābhilāṣitā śūnya*”: when we do service, other desires must be zero.

You heard this story from *Rāmāyaṇa* also. Rāmachandra made a circle around the house with His bow and told Sītā, “Do not go out of this circle, *māyā* is outside.” The Lord Himself told not to go outside because *māyā* could attack her, but she had some other desire. What kind of desire was it? When a beggar came up to the circle and asked her for something to eat, she thought, “It is not good to ignore a beggar.” She wanted to give something to him from within the circle, but the beggar said, “No, no, I cannot take it like this. You will have to come out, otherwise I will go away...” And she did that—she followed her mind and crossed the line. This is how she was kidnapped.

There is some line that you must not cross, although you will be tempted to cross it many times—you have heard that even big *sādhakas*, big *mahāpuruṣas* can follow *māyā*.

Somebody does service, and somebody is an obstacle to service. This happens all the time—it is games of Māyā Devī...

Śrī Lalitā Devī: Prema-Guru

12 September 2013

Without mercy of Lalitā Devī, we cannot think about Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Lalitā Devī is born in Uchagrām, near Varṣāṇā, and every day she meets with Śrīmatī Rādhikā. She always controls Rādhārāṇī: manages Her meeting with Kṛṣṇa, Her separation from Him, everything. That is why she is a Guru: Prema-Guru.

Lalitā always trains and gives instruction to Śrīmatī Rādhikā—how She should walk, how She should talk, and so on—and Rādhikā always follows her. Lalitā teaches Her in the mood of *vātsalya rasa*.

rādhā-mukunda-pada-sambhava-gharma-bindu-
nirmañchanopakaraṇī-kṛta-deha-lakṣām
uttuṅga-sauhṛda-viśeṣa-baśāt pragalbhām
devīm guṇaiḥ su-lalitām lalitām namāmi

“When Lalitā Devī finds a drop of perspiration at the feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda, she furiously engages herself to remove it. ‘How has it come there? We are circumambulating Them to see that not the least pain can enter this domain to trouble Them, but how, without our notice, has this perspiration(!) appeared?’ She wants to immediately take birth one lakh (100 000) times—with that force she comes to remove that drop of perspiration from the lotus feet of either of the Divine Couple.”

(Śrī Stavamālā, Śrī Lalitāṣṭakam, 1, by Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu)

Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī wrote *Śrī Lalitāṣṭakam*. It is a very nice poem, there he explained the glory of Lalitā Devī, and he himself is Rūpa Mañjarī, a friend of Lalitā.

Today is the appearance day of Lalitā Devī. If we do not remember Lalitā, how is it possible to get Kṛṣṇa?

Lalitā also arranges *viraha*, separation. Rādhikā has no wish to keep so much distance from Kṛṣṇa, but by the mercy of Lalitā, Rādhārāṇī does that, and Kṛṣṇa does that too, and when separation comes, it intensifies and increases what Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa feel. Lalitā Devī arranges that. She is the Guru of Prema.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said that of all places his favourite place was Uchagrām, it is Śrīla Gurudev's favourite place as well. Every year when we go to Vṛndāvan, we go there.

Without Gurudev's mercy we cannot think about this all.

rādhā-pada vinā kabhu kṛṣṇa nāhi mile
rādhāra dāsīra kṛṣṇa sarva-vede bale

“Without lotus feet of Rādhā, you can never meet Kṛṣṇa. All Vedas say that Kṛṣṇa is the property of Rādhā's maid-servants.”

(Gitāvalī, 'Rādhikā Charaṇa Pradma', 5, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Thākur)



Stuck

11 October 2013

Śrīla Prabhupād Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura told the following two stories:

Before, people used to travel a lot by boat. Once, some people set off in their boat in the evening and rowed the whole night, but in the morning they saw that the boat was still in the same place—they had forgotten to raise the anchor.

Similarly, when people do Narinām and make so many offences, only *Nāmābhās* can come, and through that *Nāmābhās* liberation can come, but not the actual result:

**bahu janma kare yadi śravaṇa, kīrtana
tabu ta' nā pāya kṛṣṇa-pade prema-dhana**

“You can engage in śravaṇ and kīrtan for many lifetimes but still not get the wealth of love to Kṛṣṇa’s feet.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 8.16)

The anchor must be raised, otherwise the boat will not move—our anchors are *rūp*, *ras*, *gandha*, *śabda*, *sparśa* (enjoyment through form, taste, smell, sound, and touch), *kanak*, *kāmiṇī*, *pratiṣṭhā* (desire for money, companions, respect).

The second story is this:

Once, a strong and healthy woodcutter came to a wood dealer and asked him for a job. They agreed on some monthly payment, and the dealer gave him a big axe.

On the first day the man cut eighteen trees; the next day he cut fifteen trees; the next day he cut twelve trees, and so on. Every

day he cut fewer trees. He was perplexed, “What is going on? I am spending the same amount of time and energy, doing the same hard labour, but every day I cut fewer and fewer trees...” Some intelligent man heard it and asked him, “How many days have you not sharpened this axe?” The woodcutter replied, “I only cut the trees, I have no time to sharpen the axe.”

The axe means ourselves—we must clean ourselves through *śravaṇ*, *kīrtan*, Hari-kathā, otherwise no matter how much we labour, the result will not come.

If you chant without following the guidance of your Guru, that chanting will be useless. You cannot become Haridās Ṭhākura just by external chanting on your *mālā* and doing nothing.

We must think about these things. We must try to understand what the Lord wants, what our Guru wants, then we will get benefit. Through *sādhū-saṅga* comes *sukṛti*, then service comes—*sukṛti* (devotional activities) and *puṇya* (good, or pious activities) are not the same...



Sāltāmāmi

25 October 2013

kṛṣṇa yadi chhuṭe bhakte bhukti mukti diyā
 kabhu bhakti nā dena rākhena lukāiyā
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 8.18)

“If you are doing some service and want remuneration for that (some money, wealth, a car, a house, etc.), you will get it, but you will not get *bhakti*.”

We do not know how many days we will be alive in this world, but we have at last got a human body and we must use this body for the service to the Lord. If you cannot use this body for the service to the Lord, your life becomes useless. I have told it a million times. If you use this body for the service to the Lord, you will always be *ānanda vighraha* (embodiment of happiness).

If, however, you keep on digging in the drain, you will always get bad smell—the stool will come. How much longer are you going to drink urine and eat stool? (These are Gurudev’s words. I did not bring these words from heaven—I am only taking the remnants of what Gurudev has chewed and giving it to you.)

I remember there was a saffron-clad devotee who did so much energetic service. From the beginning, my service has always been giving orders, whipping, “Do this, do that,” but that *brahmachārī* did service with his own hands, and I always admired him for that. Now his position has gone down. Why? Because of *māyā*, the illusory environment—he wanted to eat stool and drink urine...

I am using very heavy language today, but what I am saying is an example for everybody, not only that person.

When Mahāprabhu taught Chhoṭa Haridās a lesson, it was not only for Chhoṭa Haridās: Jagadānanda Paṇḍit said, “If you want to have love and affection for Mahāprabhu, you must remember Chhoṭa Haridās.”

It is easy to say this, but hard to do: it ultimately comes from *sukṛti*. There is *ajñāta-sukṛti*, then *jñāta-sukṛti*. If *sukṛti* increases more and more, everyone can become very big, but you should also not lose it—through your service you must get more *sukṛti* every day. You must earn your ‘wages’ (*sukṛti*) every day and increase your capital: if you lose your capital every day, you will eventually have a zero balance, and the next day it will be -1, then -2, then it will be lost for your life. You have got some *sukṛti*, that is good, but every day you must earn more through your service.

Bhagavān Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura said, “I am giving you now some advice, but you cannot understand it. When I am no more in this world, then you will remember it.” His words are very strong...



.....

Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj: “Sāltāmāmi means to calculate the debit and the credit for the whole year. It is necessary to keep our life’s sāltāmāmi—to keep account of what I am doing from morning to evening, and it is necessary to realise, ‘How much good and how much bad was there in the day that has passed?’ If we can do sāltāmāmi, then we will be more perfect.”

The Bond with the Guru

July/August 2014

Surrendered souls always follow their guru: they will not think what is right, what is wrong, what is correct or not correct; they do what their Guru told them to do—nothing else.

You did not follow that, however; you always follow your mind. I have told you many times, “Prabhu, this is not right...” and now some problem has come. Param Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj said, “I am responsible for my position. I cannot blame others,” but you do not follow that, you always follow your mind...

duṣṭa mana! tumi kisera vaiṣṇava?

“My dear mind, what kind of Vaiṣṇava are you?”

(‘Vaiṣṇava Ke?’ 1, by Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura)

**aichhana āmāra mana phire yena andha jana
supatha vipatha nāhi jāne**

(‘Ṭhākura Vaiṣṇava-gaṇa’, 3, by Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura)

“The mind is blind and naughty. It does not know what is good, and it always takes me in the bad way.” You have some intelligence, and you have a direct instruction from your Guru, that is sufficient for your spiritual life.

Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura wrote that we always do *parikramā* around this material universe—those who have material attachment, who think, “This is mine, this is yours,” always wander throughout the fourteen worlds. How is it then possible to reach our destination? He also gave the answer.

It is possible through good association. *Ātma*, the soul, is covered by *Māyā* with the illusory environment, but through good association the soul can become open, can become clean (*nirmal*).

‘āsakti-rahita,’ ‘sambandha-sahita,’
viṣaya-samūha sakali ‘mādhava’

(‘*Vaiṣṇav ke?*’ 12, by *Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākur*)

“If you can engage in service without material attachment (keeping disinterested nature), and seeing everything related to the Lord, you can get eternal service to Kṛṣṇa.”

If you always hear Hari-kathā, then automatically all kinds of sins will leave your heart. If you hear what *sādhus* tell you, what is expressed and exposed to you, and you start to serve, with love and affection, with *prīti*, with heart and soul, then first faith will come, then attachment, then love, and finally devotion will come. In this way everything will come.

If you are engaged in something that is not related to service, not related to the Lord, Guru, Vaiṣṇavs, it is *karma-kāṇḍa* or *jñāna-kāṇḍa*. Then you will keep coming and going, coming and going, eating so many bad things. That means you are born, you have got this body for nothing—you will again come and go. Those who think that this material world is nectar, *amṛta*, they will keep on taking birth and death. If you are thirsty for some material attachment, for some material things, you will never get relief from *karma*.

When you chant the Holy Name, some offence comes, but if you want to get relief from the offence while still doing that offence (even if you chant all the time), you will not become free from it. Making offences to the Holy Name is not chanting the Holy Name—these are different things. When you give up the offences, your relationship with your Guru will become very strong and then no offence can come to you. If, however, you have some *anartha*, material desire, and give priority to that, you

will not be able to get relief from the offences: you cannot remove an *anartha* by an *anartha*.

As I have just said, when there is no relation with the Lord, the Guru, your activities become *karma-kāṇḍa*, *jñāna-kāṇḍa*.

Question: *What is karma-kāṇḍa?*

Karma-kāṇḍa means what the outside people do: what has no relation with the Lord, eating outside, not taking *prasādam*, working outside for your own enjoyment, and so on.

Jñāna-kāṇḍa is what some *māyāvādī* groups do. Some may have a relation with the demigod, but not with the Lord—that is also *jñāna-kāṇḍa*. They think it is nectar... I have told many times: if you give a bucket of stool to a pig, it will be so happy, “Oh, I am taking nectar!” but if you give some paneer, some good things to the pig, it will not be happy. So, you take this “nectar” and do *parikramā*, rounding the material worlds, taking birth and death, birth and death, and eating so many bad things... and the life is wasted.

If you have a very strong relationship with the Guru, offences and undesirable things will gradually go away. If you have some material desire and do not want to remove it, but instead you want more and more, you will never get relief from that desire. This is what Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura Prabhupād said, and he expressed it very nicely.

If you do not open your door properly, how is it possible to come in? Please open your heart, give some space in your heart for the Lord to come!

Chanting the Holy Name (Narinām) and chanting the Holy Name with offences (Nāma *aparādh*) are not same thing. If you make some offence and chant the Holy Name, you will not get relief from that offence; but when you chant the Holy Name without offence you can get relief from the offence. There are two

ways: either you chant the Holy Name and make offences, or you chant the Holy Name and there is no offence. These two ways are not the same. If you chant the Holy Name and have a strong bond with your Guru—then the offences will automatically go away.



“You must think that you are a piece of small grass, even less than that—you must think you are worse, lower than a blade of grass; you must leave your ego and give honour to others.”

vṛkṣa-sama kṣamā-guṇa karabi sādhana

pratihimsā tyajī' anye karabi pālana

(Gitāvalī, Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, 3.3, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

“*Vṛkṣa-sama kṣamā-guṇa karabi sādhana*”: when we are cutting a tree's brunch, the tree is not saying anything, the tree always forgives our offence, and that same tree gives us shelter from the sun. We must have that kind of mentality, that kind of quality.

“*Pratihimsā tyajī' anye karabi pālana*”: if somebody is beating you, you should not beat them in return, but should give them love and affection.

A scientist called Newton said that every action has equal and opposite reaction, but we do not want to give the opposite reaction—it is not our duty to give it. Somebody may be jealous of you, no problem, you can give them some mercy, you can give them love and affection in return, but you must avoid giving them the opposite reaction. Somebody may beat you, but you should not beat them in return—do not do that, it is not good for the devotee's life.

Sometimes I tell this story also. A *sādhu* was sitting on the bank of the Ganges, chanting the Holy Name on his beads, when he saw a scorpion moving towards the Ganges. The *sādhu* knew the scorpion would die if it fell into the water, so he put his chanting beads aside and, continuing chanting with his mouth, picked that scorpion and kept it in a safe place, but the scorpion bit him—it did not understand that the *sādhu* was doing good for him.

When the *sādhu* was about to take his beads to continue chanting, the scorpion again started moving towards the Ganges.

The *sādhu* again kept the scorpion in a safe place, and it again bit him, but the *sādhu* did not mind it, “It does not know any better.”

A man was passing that place and saw this. He asked the *sādhu*, “What is the benefit of saving it? What is it to you if it dies?”

(Sometimes in Gurudev’s times also devotees fought with each other. I too have been beaten by other *brahmachārīs* many times. Once Gurudev tested me. He asked me, “He is hitting you, why are you not hitting him back?” I replied to Gurudev with a line from a poem that says that if a dog bites a man, the man cannot bite the dog, but Gurudev said, “It is also an offence. You think he is a dog, you treat him as a dog, but it is not a *sādhu*’s character. A *sādhu*’s character is tolerance; a *sādhu*’s character is to excuse, forgive the person. If a *sādhu* cannot forgive an offence, he is not a *sādhu*, not a Vaiṣṇav.”)

So, the *sādhu* replied to that man, “If the scorpion cannot change its character, why should I change my character?” A *sādhu*’s nature is to save the *jīva* souls. “If he does not change his character, why should I change my character?”—that is the main thing. You must know what a *sādhu*’s character is.

It is necessary to understand Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj’s lectures. If somebody loses their service, if somebody loses their faith, it is not others’ fault. Param Guru Mahārāj says we cannot blame others, I am responsible for my own position. If you lose your faith, if you lose your strength, your service, the problem is in you, not in the Guru. We must understand it.

jīvana-nirvāhe āne udvega nā dibe

para-upakāre nija sukha pāśaribe

(*Gītāvalī, Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, 3.4, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura*)

“Do not make others angry for your own interest, own self, own happiness.” Sometimes we are not happy with our service, we are not getting pleasure from our service, but we cannot harass and disrespect others because of that.

The other day, they did not give dal to the deer because there was much other food, but somebody became unhappy and, unable to control themselves, began shouting because of a small matter. They could have come to me and told me—I would have told to make the dal and the matter would have been finished, but that person is doing an action against that other person and the other person is giving reaction, so a problem comes, and the service is lost. Why should service be lost?

I came here many years ago, and I was alone. I have not seen my relatives for more than twenty-five years since I came here. Most of them have already died, and now there is a new generation, but I do not even know them—I did not see their birth, I did not see their wedding... I have also been beaten here many times, but I tolerated it, and I have got the result. Gurudev said that even a brother and a sister coming from the same home fight, but we all come from different backgrounds—our parents are not the same, our culture, education, everything is different, so some disagreement is natural.

Gurudev also said that when we cook, there are so many utensils—a big *subji* pot, a big rice pot, a big water pot, spoons, ladles, etc.—and when you cook they make some sound. We are like instruments here—Gurudev's instruments—sometimes a clash happens and some sound comes, but should we lose or give up our service because of this? Of course not!

We must understand this. If we think that we lose our service and it is somebody's fault—that is an offence, *sevā aparādh*. If we do so many things and the Guru is not happy, that is not service, that is *karma*—some reaction will come and we will lose our service.

“*Jīvana-nirvāhe āne udvega nā dibe*”: you should not make others angry. “*Para-upakāre nija-sukha pāśaribe*”: for others' benefit you must leave, you must give up your own happiness.

kṛṣṇa-adhiṣṭhān sarva-jīve jāni' sadā

karabi sammāna sabe ādare sarvadā

(*Gītāvalī, Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, 3.6, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur*)

“You must think that Kṛṣṇa exists within every *jīva* soul and give respect to everybody, to every *jīva* soul”—just as when driving a car you try to avoid running over animals.

dainya, dayā, anye māna, pratiṣṭhā varjana

chāri-guṇe guṇī hai' karaha kīrtana

(*Gītāvalī, Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, 3.7, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur*)

“You must be humble, give kindness and honour to others, avoid *pratiṣṭhā* (name and fame).”

bhaktivinoda kādi bale prabhu pāya

heno adhikāra kabe dibe he āmāya

(*Gītāvalī, Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, 3.8, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur*)

Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur says, “Prabhu, when will you give me the *adhikār* (the right) to chant the Holy Name? When these qualities come to me, I will be able to chant the Holy Name!”

Tomorrow is also a special day for Lord Śiva. Many Śiva devotees will come and give water and milk to Lord Śiva. I sent some devotees to preach to them. Lord Śiva also chants the Holy Name—if we worship Lord Śiva properly, he can give us *Kṛṣṇa-bhakti* (devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa).

All Vraja *gopīs* also worship the demigoddess Kātyāyanī, Durgā Devī, but what do they worship her for? They pray, “In our next life, we want to have Kṛṣṇa as our husband.” They worship Kātyāyanī like this, and Kṛṣṇa always fulfils their desire.

There was one girl, Kubjā, who could not walk straight, her face did not look good, but she wanted Kṛṣṇa to come to her house and stay with her for one night. Kṛṣṇa told her that it was not possible in Dvāpar-yuga, but He fulfilled her desire in

Kali-yuga: Kāśī Mīśra is the incarnation of Kubjā. When Śrīmān Chaitanya Mahāprabhu was in His Pastimes of *vipralambha* (“*dvādaśābda-bahni-garbha-vipralambha-śīlanam*: for the last twelve years of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu’s manifest pastimes He was deeply absorbed in union and separation”), He did that *līlā* in the house of Kāśī Mīśra in Purī.

Kṛṣṇa is always ready to fulfil any desire of His devotees. Devotees, however, never think so much about themselves. *Karma yogīs*, *karmīs* always ask for themselves, pursuing their own desire and interest, but devotees always think about Kṛṣṇa’s interest. Devotees do not think about their own enjoyment (they are *niṣkāma bhakta*). What did Prahlād Mahārāj ask for? He said, “Prabhu, give me this kind of boon—please remove any asking desire from my heart.”

Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur wrote a very good song ‘*Āmāra jīvana sadā pāpe rata*’ (*Śaraṇāgati*, 5.2). He says, “*Nija sukha lāgi*’ *pāpe nāhi ḍari*’”: for our own happiness we are not afraid to do sinful work; “*dayā-hīna*”: we are unkind, selfish; and “*svārtha-para*”: our own interest is above all for us.

What is there to be afraid of? Those who have surrendered themselves to the lotus feet of their Guru, are not afraid of death. We are soldiers of Gurudev, and soldiers are not afraid of death—soldiers always think about their country, and Gurudev’s soldiers always think about their Guru. Is it correct or not? Why be afraid? Tell me. Why should I leave my service?

“*Mārabi rākhabi yo ichchhā tohārā*”: you can kill me, you can save me, that is your matter. (*Śaraṇāgati*, 11.3) I am paying my full obeisance to you. My eyes, hands, legs, heart—everything is down, on the ground, I cannot see anything. “Gurudev, I am giving you a sword, and you can separate my head from my body.” What is there to be afraid of? Kṛṣṇa’s devotees are never afraid of anything.

Soldiers are not afraid, they go forward into the open fire! We are ready to die for our Guru. Some think, “No, I am afraid, I am not going to that country...” but it is not a surrendered soul. I am telling you this strongly: *this is not a surrendered soul’s character.* Those who love Gurudev, tolerate everything—any discomfort, any kind of opposition that can come through their service. When some problem comes, they continue their service—then Gurudev will love them too. If somebody thinks, “Oh, some problem has come, I am going to run away,” this is not a surrendered soul’s character.

Once Gurudev caught my hand and asked me, “So much problem will come to you for a few years—tell me, will you run away or will you stay? Promise me.” I said, “I promise you, I will never run away”...

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj kī jay!



Devotion Conquers—Ego Repels

9 August 2014

sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair
uktas tathā bhāvya 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)

Tomorrow is Balarām’s appearance day, it is necessary to make a festival: buy some paneer, sweets, yogurt at the market—tomorrow is a special day for our spiritual life, and you must offer special things for Baladev...

In Tretā-yuga, Rāma, who is the Lord Himself, wanted to serve Lakṣmaṇ, but He is older and Lakṣmaṇ is younger, so He could not do it properly because the younger will not take service from the older. In Dvāpar-yuga, Lakṣmaṇ becomes Balarām and He is elder than Kṛṣṇa, so Kṛṣṇa happily serves Balarām, and Balarām also happily serves Kṛṣṇa.

Balarām is Haladhara. ‘Haladhara’ means ‘a plough-bearer’. When cows are ploughing, you can see that *hala* there. Balarām always holds (*dhara*) a plough (*hala*), always protects Kṛṣṇa.

One time Balarām slapped Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa began to cry and complained to Mother Yaśodā, “Mother, Brother has slapped Me!” Mother Yaśodā showed anger. She called Balarām and asked Him, “Balarām, why did You beat Him?” You know what

Balarām did after that? Balarām grabbed Kṛṣṇa and, shaking Him, asked, “What do You think? Who loves You more—Your mother or Me? Who in this world loves You more? Why did You go to complain to Your mother? Tell me, who is giving You more love and affection—I or Your mother? Tell Me!” Mother Yaśodā was surprised to see this. Kṛṣṇa hugged Balarām and said, “Please forgive My offence. I complained to mother, it was My mistake. You love Me so much...”

Balarām always protects Kṛṣṇa, and They are always together, but one time Balarām did not go with Him. Mother Yaśodā told him not to go that today, so Balarām did not. That day *Kāliya-daman līlā* happened, and Kṛṣṇa had so much problem.

Although Balarām did not go with Kṛṣṇa that day, He did come later and protected everybody because everybody wanted to jump into that Kāliya Daha (lake Kāliya). They saw that Kṛṣṇa was floating on the surface as if dead, and the snake was holding Him tight.

All the Vraja *gopīs*, all the Vraja *sakhīs*, Mother Yaśodā, Nanda Mahārāj—everybody came and wanted to jump there, but Balarām checked them, “Wait, wait, you cannot jump there, you cannot go there!” At the same time He prayed to Kṛṣṇa, “Do not do this. You have to come out quickly,” then He chastised Him, “Why are You still floating? Come! Come! Everybody wants to jump into the lake—the water is poisonous, everybody is going to die! Come out!”

Kṛṣṇa wanted to show His *līlā*, His Pastimes, to everybody, so He was pretending to be dead and waiting for more people to come, that is why it took Him such a long time.

Mother Yaśodā also chastised Balarām, “Today You did not come with Him, that is why all this problem happened!” Then again Balarām hurried Kṛṣṇa, “Come! Come out, quickly!” Finally, when all Vraja *gopīs*, *sakhīs* came there, Kṛṣṇa expanded

Himself quickly. Kāliya-nāg, the snake, is limited, and Kṛṣṇa is unlimited, so Kṛṣṇa expanded Himself more and more and then jumped and placed His feet on the head of Kāliya-nāg!

Kāliya-nāg was about to die when all his wives came to Kṛṣṇa. We sing in the *kīrtan*,

**jaya dvija-patnī jaya nāga-kanyā-gaṇa
bhaktite yāhārā pāila govinda charaṇa**

“All glories to the wives of the proud Vedic brāhmaṇas. All glories to the wives of the Kāliya serpent. Through pure devotion they all obtained the lotus feet of Lord Govinda.”

(‘Jaya Rādhē Jaya Kṛṣṇa’, 8, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

His wives came and prayed to Kṛṣṇa, “Prabhu, You did right. Our husband has so much ego—no one can disturb him, no one can defeat him... You have demolished, finished his ego. We are very happy about that, but we are also begging You for one thing: we do not want to become widows. Please, do not kill him. The punishment You have given him is sufficient. We accept it, and we are also happy with that, but please do not kill him.” They prayed to Kṛṣṇa and got so much devotion, and through their devotion they got Kṛṣṇa’s mercy.

Kṛṣṇa replied, “All right, he will not die completely. I will fulfil your desire and you will not become widows.” He then said to Kāliya, “I will not kill you, but I have one condition: you cannot stay here because you are disturbing so many devotees, birds, cows—it is very difficult for everybody to stay here. You must go to Ramanakdvīp.”

Kāliya-nāg replied, “But how will I go there? I am afraid of Garuḍa—if I go there, he will eat me!”

“I have left My footprints on your head, and Garuḍa is My devotee—when you show him My footprints on your head, he will not touch you. You must go, this is my condition.”

In the end, Kāliya-nāg agreed and left Vṛndāvan for Ramaṅakdvīp. This is the *līlā* that happened there, at Kāliya Daha.

Also the pastime of Saubhari Muni happened at Kāliya Daha. Saubhari Muni was meditating in the waters of Kāliya lake when he saw some *kāma-līlā* of fish. His mind became disturbed. He was old, but having seen that marriage pastimes of the fish, his meditation broke and he came out of the water and wanted to get married.

In those days, kings gave an announcement that their daughters were fit for marriage and all the royal princes then came to the king. Whoever the girl garlanded at the ceremony, got married to her. This ceremony is called *svayamvara*, and that used to be the custom.

So, when Saubhari Muni came out of the water, King Mandhātā was holding such *svayamvara*. He had fifty daughters, and many princes had come to the king's palace. Through his meditation, Saubhari Muni became a young handsome man, and also came there. In the end, all fifty daughters of the king chose him—they gave fifty garlands to Saubhari Muni. So, he ended up with fifty wives.

Do you see how much *māyā* attacked him? We must always remember that. Saubhari Muni saw that pastime of fish and lost everything. He became a householder, and not just a householder—he suffered so much trouble with his family life (it is not easy to manage fifty wives)...

From this story, you can understand that we must be careful.

What is the meaning of *Kāliya-daman līlā*? '*Kāliya-daman*' means Kṛṣṇa has beaten some snake, but He did not just beat it—He demolished its ego... We all have so much ego, and we

must demolish it. Gurudev said: the sun is shining, but if there is a wall, the sun rays will not fall on the other side of the wall. Ego is also like that—because of our ego we cannot see things properly.

andhībhūta chakṣu yāra viṣaya dhūlite
ki rūpe se para-tattva pāibe dekhite

*“Our eyes are blinded by the dust of the illusory environment.
How can we then see the Absolute Truth?”*

We become blind through our ego and cannot see things properly. We think we know everything, we have understood everything, but that is the difficulty.

dainya, dayā, anye māna, pratiṣṭhā varjana
chāri-guṇe guṇī hai’ karaha kīrtana

*“Humility, mercy, being considerate to others, and giving up
pride are the four qualities needed to perform kīrtan.”*
(*Gītāvalī, Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, 3.7, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur*)

Four things are necessary: *dainyatā*, be humble; *dayā*, be kind to others; *anye māna*, give honour to others; and *pratiṣṭhā-varjana*, we do not want name and fame. (If somebody does not pay obeisance to me, what is the problem? It is not a problem for us!)

We can always follow the first three things, but Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur said that *pratiṣṭhā* is like the stool of a pig: “*pratiṣṭhā śukarer viṣṭhā*”. ‘*Śukar*’ means ‘a pig’, ‘*viṣṭhā*’ means ‘stool’. You can tolerate the stool of a human, but the stool of a pig has a very bad smell. *Pratiṣṭhā* is very dangerous. You can also see in our life: if somebody is getting *āchārya abhimān*, they must fall down. It is necessary to understand this matter.

Sudāmā Vipra was a poor *brāhmaṇ*, but he was a friend of Kṛṣṇa, and his quality was that he loved Kṛṣṇa very much. One day Kṛṣṇa called Sudāmā Vipra to Dvārakā. He was so afraid and

said to his wife, “Kṛṣṇa is calling me, but will He recognise me? I am Sudāmā, and He is Kṛṣṇa... At that time He was playing with the cows and I was also with Him, but will He recognise me now?” He was afraid, but when he came, Kṛṣṇa embraced him and forcibly seated him on His chair, “Sit here. Today this is your chair, and I am sitting lower. You are My guest, and I am the host. You came to My house, and it is My duty to serve you.” Kṛṣṇa massaged Sudāmā Vipra’s feet!

Through such Pastimes Kṛṣṇa and Mahāprabhu show us: through service we can conquer Gurudev’s heart—only through service.

Several days ago a man came to me. He is a disciple of Gurudev but does not really follow his conception. In Gurudev’s time, he disturbed Gurudev, and now he came to me saying, “I have been used in a bad way against you...” He spoke a lot and kept saying, “I can do this, I can do this.” I only listened and in the end quoted Gurudev, “*Nijer ḍhāk ni je peṭachho.*” It means “you are beating your own drum”: you are telling yourself what your good qualities are.

Gurudev said that when somebody is talking a lot, then there is something wrong—“empty vessel makes most noise.” If a jar is full of water, there is no sound; when it is empty, some sound will come. So, those who are empty say, “I am a very big person. I can do this,” “I am doing this,” “I have done this,” “I am doing so much!” Those who are doing something, they do it in the background and do not go to the front to tell who is doing it.

You can see after how many years I am coming to the front. Before, I never came to the front—I had always been doing everything in the background, and Gurudev knew who was doing it. Gurudev always praised me at all festivals—Gaura Pūrṇimā, his Vyāsa Pūjā, Param Guru Mahārāj’s Vyāsa Pūjā, and

so on. He praised me, but I did everything behind him, in the background. I did not tell anything in front of him.

Gurudev said, “Empty vessel makes most noise,” but he is always merciful—we have so many bad qualities, but he always tolerates us...

Gurudev also told me one thing, and you must remember it. When I said about somebody, “This is a bad person,” Gurudev replied, “Everyone can run the service with a good person, but the best person is the one who can run the service with a *bad* person!”

How merciful Balarām and Nityānanda Prabhu are—They are even more than the Lord!

Gurudev said about me, “I told that boy, ‘Go away from me! Get out!’ but he comes again. I am chastising him because I want to know how much love and affection he has for me. If I chastise him and he goes away, then I will know he cannot last—I will know that he does not love me, he only loves my property.” But I thought, “How could I run away? If I run away, who will maintain the temple? Who will make this program? Who will hold Gurudev’s mission?”

So, from time to time, Gurudev examined me, chastised me: sometimes he told me to get out, sometimes to go away. It happened many times. He would become angry, and I would go away for five-ten minutes, half an hour, maybe one hour, but every time I came back. He could chastise me in the afternoon, but after the evening *ārati* I would come again—I would pay obeisances, sit, and listen to his lecture. This is how he understood, “That boy is not going to leave me.”

Also, I never bargained with him: I came to serve my Guru, and I must do what my duty is, and, according to my capacity, I must try to do more and more. When Gurudev chastised me, I thought, “It is all right, he can chastise me, this is how I will

learn, this is how I will show him my love." I have seen many servitors in my life, and I think that this kind of mentality must be there.

Devotion, perfect devotion, is necessary. Emotion and devotion are very different. Gurudev said, "For yourself, you can shed so many tears—crying, crying, you can make a whole glass of water with your eyes; but can you give one drop of water from your eyes for me?" These are Gurudev's words, and I am keeping them in my heart...

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj kī jay!



Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī: Surrender and Practise Daily

Morning, 18 August 2014

Today is the appearance day of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and here in Nabadwīp we are making a big festival: hundreds of people have come.

yadā yadā hi dharmasya, glānir bhavati bhārata
abhyutthānam adharmasya, tadātmānam sṛjāmy aham
(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā, 4.7)

“When religion is being demolished and bad things are coming, Kṛṣṇa Himself appears.”

kṛṣṇera yateka khelā, sarvottama nara-lilā,
nara-vapu tāhāra svarūpa
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 21.101)

“Kṛṣṇa has so many Pastimes, but He chose the *nara-līlā*, the human body. He likes these Pastimes very much, and these Pastimes are so great.”

We are now in Kali-yuga, and Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s combined form appears in Kali-yuga as Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu and is distributing the Holy Name: *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare, Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*.

We are like rusty iron. We have spent so many years, so many births rusting—we forgot the Lord for so many births—but Kṛṣṇa Himself comes in the form of the Guru and teaches us who Kṛṣṇa is, who Mahāprabhu is, why we must worship

We do not know what and how to offer anything to Kṛṣṇa...

There are two kinds of devotees: *sakāma bhakta* (devotees with material desires) and *niṣkāma bhakta* (devotees without material desires). Kṛṣṇa Himself says:

kṛṣṇa yadi chhuṭe bhakte bhukti mukti diyā

kabhū bhakti nā dena rākhena lukāiyā

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 8.18)

“If you ask Me for something except devotion, I can give you these things—enjoyment, liberation, anything you want—but I will hide devotion from you. You will not get devotion.”

At the same time, Kṛṣṇa Himself also says (Cc, 2.22.38-39), “*Āmā bhaje, māge viṣaya-sukha...* Somebody worships Me and wants some material happiness. I will not give it to them! Instead, I will give them My lotus feet and they will forget all material desires.”

We must be *niṣkāma*: there is no other way for us, we must have no material desire, and we must not ask Kṛṣṇa for anything. Kṛṣṇa says, “If you think about Me, I will think about you, but if you think about yourself, I will not think about you.”

sarvasva tomāra charaṇe śāpiyā,

paḍechhi tomāra ghare

nijera poṣaṇa, kabhu nā bhāviba,

rahiba bhāvera bhare

(Śaraṇāgati, 19.1, 5, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur)

Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur writes in his song, “I will never think for myself; I will always think for You. Prabhu, if you can tie me to your bed, door, or gate—if you can keep me and treat me as a dog, I will be happy.”

This is how we must worship on this day. It is very important to understand this: fasting and celebrating Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī one day and the next day not practising, it is not right.

ye-dina gṛhe, bhajana dekhi,
gṛhete 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)

We must practise every day, we must worship every day, we must prepare food for Kṛṣṇa every day. Our practising life is not for one day, not for two days, not for one month only—whatever practice we do, we must do it every day. That is the main thing...



Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī: Path Back to Home

Evening, 18 August 2014

Today is a very auspicious day, and you are present today on this occasion. Kṛṣṇa's appearance is today at midnight.

Kṛṣṇa came to this world to rescue *sādhus* and demolish demons. In Kali-yuga also, the Lord appears to rescue all the demons but in another way—with love and affection. In Kali-yuga, Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa came to this world in the form of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and distributed the religion for the Age of Kali. Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's conception is

harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā

“Chanting the Holy Name, chanting the Holy Name, chanting the Holy Name—there is no other way, no other way, no other way in this Age of Kali.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 7.76)

Going door to door, He distributed the seed, the Holy Name, to all *jīva* souls as the religion for this Age of Kali.

Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur also told in his lecture that he wanted to engage everybody in the service to the Lord. Why do our Gurupādpadma and our Guru Mahārāj make centres and preach all over the world, in every corner? They want to use everybody in the service to the Lord.

Kṛṣṇa Himself said, “You are worshipping many demigods,

Mother Kali, Mother Durgā, or Śiva, and that *pūjā* automatically comes to Me, but your worship is not done properly, not with the proper rules and regulations.” Kṛṣṇa also says that those who say, “I am a devotee of Kṛṣṇa,” are not devotees of Kṛṣṇa; but those who are devotees of Kṛṣṇa’s devotees’ devotees, are devotees of Kṛṣṇa.

Another thing is that if you invite Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa will not come, but if you invite Mother Yaśodā or Nanda Mahārāj, they will bring Kṛṣṇa to you. So, you can understand easily that if you want to worship Kṛṣṇa directly, Kṛṣṇa will not come, but if you worship His devotee—Mother Yaśodā, Devakī, Baladev-tattva, Guru-tattva—then easily you can get mercy of Kṛṣṇa.

You should try to understand Kṛṣṇa’s Pastimes.

One of the Pastimes of Kṛṣṇa is when Mother Yaśodā wanted to tie Him with a rope. That rope was always two fingers too short: she joined more rope, but it was again two fingers too short, she again joined more rope, but it was again two fingers too short. Why was it always two fingers too short? One finger is the desire of the devotee (*bhakter cheṣṭā*), and the other finger is mercy of Kṛṣṇa. When both are there, then you will get full mercy of Kṛṣṇa. You will not get Kṛṣṇa directly without serving His devotees, but if you serve the devotees of Kṛṣṇa, then you can easily get mercy from Kṛṣṇa.

We sing today this song ‘*Deva bhavantam vande*’ (1),

man-mānasa-madhukaramarpayanijapada-pañkaja-makarande
deva bhavantam vande

“Oh Lord, I offer my respectful obeisances to You. May you place the bumblebee of my mind in the honey of Your lotus feet.”

...Just now we finished singing the songs—I have been singing for many hours this evening. Many devotees have come today, but we do not worship Kṛṣṇa for one day only.

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.”
(Śaraṅāgati, 31.6, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

You can make your house Goloka Vṛndāvan if you worship every day, if you serve Kṛṣṇa, do everything. Our life is very short, you know that. Param Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, said, “You will get a particular birth depending on the desire you have. If you have some material desire, you will get the kind of birth to satisfy that desire.”

Think about Kṛṣṇa and think how much affection the *gopīs* of Vraja, *sakhīs* of Vraja have for Kṛṣṇa—their hearts are full of Kṛṣṇa. They have given their minds, all their bodies, everything to Kṛṣṇa, to the Lord. How is it possible? Even Lakṣmī Devī, even Śiva, even Brahmā could not do that. *Gopīs* do not think about themselves, they think, “We can die if necessary.” Vraja *gopīs* are like soldiers—the suicide squad of Kṛṣṇa. You must remember this.

When Kṛṣṇa had a headache, He asked for some feet dust of His devotees. Nārada Muni could not get it—even Kṛṣṇa’s wives, Rukmiṇī, Satyabhāmā could not give it for Him because they thought, “If we give our feet dust to Kṛṣṇa, we will be committing a sin.” But Vraja *gopīs* do not think about themselves, they think, “It is for You, Kṛṣṇa. If Kṛṣṇa is sick, what is the use of us having legs—for whom? If we cannot use them for the service to the Lord, what are we keeping our legs for?”

We must offer everything—*indriya*, *chakṣu*, *karṇa*, *nāsikā*, *jihvā*, *tvak*, senses, eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin—to our Lord; we must use everything for the service to the Lord. Uddhava Mahārāj said, “What do you have a head on these shoulders for? It is only a burden! If you cannot bow down to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, bow

We have passed so many years, so many births, and now we are full of dust, we are full of rust, that is why Kṛṣṇa cannot attract us. To remove that rust, we must practise properly:

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)

If you practise properly like this, then gradually you can feel nourishment and get the result—you will get benefit through hearing Kṛṣṇa-kathā.

If you feel your mind and your heart do not want to hear Kṛṣṇa-kathā, then you must think that your *karma bandhan* has not finished yet: you are still bound by your *karma*. When you feel that you have some attraction to hear Kṛṣṇa-kathā, that your ears want to hear Hari-kathā, Kṛṣṇa-kathā, then you must think that something is coming, something is changing in you through that hearing and chanting (*śravaṇam, kīrtanam, and so on*).

‘sādhu-saṅga’, ‘sādhu-saṅga’—sarva-śāstre kaya
lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva-siddhi haya

“All the scriptures keep on saying, ‘Good association’, ‘good association.’ Only by good association can you get all perfection.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, 2.22.54)

sādhu-saṅge kṛṣṇa-nāma—ei mātra chāi
saṁsāra jinite āra kona vastu nāi

“I want only to chant the Name of Kṛṣṇa in the association of the sādhus—there is no other way to conquer saṁsāra.”

(Śrī Śrī Prema-vivarta, 6.13)

You can get benefit only through good association.

You have heard also this story about Rāmānuja Āchārya's disciple Dhanur Dās and his wife.

Every day Dhanur Dās and his wife went begging and cooked for the Lord whatever they collected. When some devotees came to their house, they distributed *prasādam* to them as well. When they went collecting, they did not go together: Dhanur Dās went to one village, and his wife went to another village.

In one of the villages, there was a bad man who always disturbed Dhanur Dās's wife. He always said to her, "Come stay at my house. You do not have to go begging—I will give you so many things. I will give you money, I will give you so much rice, dal, vegetables. I will give you anything you want!" She would just say, "OK, OK, some other day," and quickly go away.

One day Dhanur Dās's wife said to her husband, "Go begging alone today, I need to wash the clothes and do some other housework. I will do some service here today." Dhanur Dās went away, and after a while somebody knocked at the door. She was alone, so she thought, "Should I open the door or not? Maybe it is that bad man... I am alone, and he knows where my house is..." She was afraid, but when she finally opened the door, she saw, to her surprise, that her Gurudev was waiting there!

She gave Rāmānuja Āchārya an *āsan*, some seat, "Gurudev, please sit here. I am going to bring some *prasādam* for you..." There was nothing in the house and she did not know where she could get the *bhog*. She decided to go to the house of the man who had been disturbing her:

"You always call me, so I have come today. You promised to give me so many things—first give me what you can give."

"Please, wait. Sit down."

"No, no, my Guru is waiting there. I told him to wait while I bring *prasādam*. I have no time to wait."

He gave her so many bags—rice, dal, etc.

“How will I carry all this alone? Come with me, help me.”

They came to the house, and she said to him, “Please stay here with my Guru today and hear some Hari-kathā, Kṛṣṇa-kathā. I am going to cook for everybody.”

He sat in front of her Guru, heard some Hari-kathā while she cooked and offered the *bhog*. After the man took *prasādam*, his mind became sane—he became a good man!

Do you see? In good association, your mind can change completely, that is why it is necessary to always keep good association:

‘sādhu-saṅga’, ‘sādhu-saṅga’—sarva-śāstre kaya
lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva-siddhi haya
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, 2.22.54)

“If even for one moment you can get good association, you will get a real benefit from it.”

You must understand from this story that for Guru *sevā* you can do anything. Dhanur Dās’s wife took the risk for the service to her Guru. “*Mārabi rākhabi yo ichchhā tohārā*: Gurudev, you can kill me, or you can protect me—only you can decide that.” (Śaraṅāgati, 11) Those who depend upon Kṛṣṇa, who are surrendered souls, have no fear: they know only Kṛṣṇa can kill.

īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sach-chid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ
anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam

“Kṛṣṇa, who is known as Govinda, is the supreme controller. He has an eternal, blissful, spiritual body. He is the origin of all. He has no other origin, for He is the prime cause of all causes.”
(Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā, 5.1)

Dhanur Dās’s wife depended upon her Guru, she was a surrendered soul, so she did not hesitate: she went to that man’s

house for the service to her Guru. If you do something wrong for your Guru's service, it is not a problem; but when *we* are doing wrong, we are committing an offence for our own enjoyment—that is a problem.

Once Mahāprabhu fell asleep in the doorway, and Govinda, His servant, had to cross over His body to enter the room. He did not hesitate: "I am going inside for the service to my Mahāprabhu," but he also decided, "I will not come out because I do not want to cross Mahāprabhu's body for my own rest, to take *prasādam*, no. I can cross Him only for His service."

Question: *We have about a hundred people assembled here, is there any message you could give to them?*

I can only tell them the message that Mahāprabhu has given in this Age of Kali, and you can judge for yourself.

Mahāprabhu went door to door, urging, "This is not your house, this is not your address! I have come to take you home!"

The Lord Himself comes in the form of Guru and tells us, "This is not your address. Come to your house. Come back to God, back to home! This is not your real home. Your real house is where you came from—you must go *there*."

You always think about heaven and hell, but it is temporary. Even Indra, the king of heaven, got a pig's body by the curse of his Guru—twelve years later Brahmā had to rescue him from that hellish situation. Even Indra had to get a pig's body.

When we were pigs we ate so much stool, when we were elephants we ate so many banana trees, but our hunger was not satisfied. Still we are taking rice, dal, chapati, but our hunger will not finish, there will always be some material desire—but if you surrender to Kṛṣṇa, to His devotee, and if you worship Kṛṣṇa, if you chant the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa, you will get real benefit, you can go to your real home.

You think, “I was born in Mauritius.” I think, “I was born in India.” Somebody else is from Nepal, America, London, but we all come from the same house. Loving search for the lost servant: you are searching for Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa is also searching for us, His lost children. By worshipping Him, by chanting His Holy Name, we can meet Him and live in our real home together.

“Back to God, back to home...” Heaven and hell are temporary. If you do some auspicious work, you go to heaven, if you do some bad work, you go to hell, but it is temporary—when that work’s result is finished, you have to come back from there. Do you understand? It is temporary. *Bhāgavatam* told it, *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* also told it.

Where is our real home? Our real home is Goloka Vṛndāvan, this is where we came from. Although we are *jīva* souls (spiritual souls), we keep changing our bodies according to our material desire, our *karma*. All these bodies are temporary, but what is our real benefit? Chant the Holy Name and you will get the real benefit—you will go back to Lord Kṛṣṇa, to your real home. This is what is called “Go Back to Godhead.”

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj kī jay!

Jay Janmāṣṭamī vrata kī jay!

Nitāi Gaur premānande Haribol.



How to See the Guru (1): Mercy

Śrī Vyāsa Pūjā Day, 25 September 2014

Today I have got an opportunity to serve the devotees, *brahmachārīs*, *sannyāsīs*—devotees have come here today to give some mercy to me. Actually, every year when they come on this day I get some energy—I get one more year of my lifetime, and I get inspiration to serve the devotees more and more.

What shall I say to you? Actually, I do not know what I am going to say to you because it is Gurudev who is speaking to you through me.

When Śrīmān Chaitanya Mahāprabhu was telling the *sādhya-sādhana-tattva* to Sanātan Goswāmī, He said to him the same, “You are hearing Kṛṣṇa-kathā, but it is Kṛṣṇa Himself who is speaking to you through Me.”

Who knows Guru-tattva? It is not a simple matter to understand. Guru is very powerful. I am a fallen soul, I do not have any power, any quality or qualification, but my Guru has much power, that is why I can tell you something, I can spend time with you, I can serve you—it is coming from my Guru.

When Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya was debating with Śrī Gopīnāth Āchārya, he said, “Mahāprabhu is not an *avatār* (incarnation of the Lord).”

Gopīnāth Āchārya did not agree, “Yes, He is an *avatār*—He is the Lord Himself.”

“I cannot believe that. It is said in the *śāstra* that in the Age of Kali there is no *avatār*, and that is why His Name is also Triyuga. So, no, there is no *avatār* in Kali-yuga.”

“You say you know the *śāstra*, but have you read, have you studied *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*? Have you read *Śrī Mahābhārata*? In both of them it is written that there is an *avatār* in Kali-yuga.”

“Go now and take *prasād*. We shall discuss it later.” Soon they continued their debate:

“You are saying that I do not know the *śāstra* (scriptures) because I said there was no *avatār* in Kali-yuga, and you say there is an *avatār* in Kali-yuga, so you think you know all *śāstra*!”

“You have intelligence, you have brain, but with that intelligence, with that brain you cannot understand Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. If you have mercy, if you have heart, and if you think through your heart, if you surrender, then you can understand who Chaitanya Mahāprabhu is. Because you have no mercy you cannot understand it, but I have some mercy, that is why I understand He is the Lord Himself. This is your answer.”

Guru is always powerful, and his power comes from Kṛṣṇa, but we do not know it—simple-hearted, we are always cheated by the bogus gurus of the guru business. We do not search, we do not see where that guru comes from, where the main root, the *Guru-paramparā* is, but you must find it out, and it must be clear.

When you are going to buy some gold to make an ornament, you must first find out where that gold is coming from, whether the gold is pure or imitation. You cannot see where the Ganges water is judging by the pot—if you have a golden pot, there may not be Ganges water inside, but there can be Ganges water inside a clay pot. It is necessary to understand these things.

Who is able to see the Guru? Those who have mercy from the Guru can see the Guru.

Suppose there is a pure, *satī* (chaste) lady. She may talk to everybody, but she does not give her love and herself to other men—she only gives that to her husband. It is the same with *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*: who does *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* give itself to?

Many people translate it, many people give lecture about *Bhāgavatam*, but whom is *Bhāgavatam* going to give pure things to? To a pure devotee.

You may have read in *Sri Guru and His Grace* that when Śrīdhara Swāmī wrote his *ṭikā*, commentary, Śaṅkar *sampradāya* did not want to follow it, and there was some debate. In the end, they said, “We will follow Śrīdhara Swāmī’s *ṭikā* if Śivji Mahārāj tells us to do so.” So, they put Śrīdhara Swāmī’s commentary in a Śiva temple. When they took the book out, it was written there, “*Ahaṁ vetti, Śuka vetti, Vyāsa vetti nā vetti vā.*” Bhagavān Mahādev said, “I know, Vyāsadev’s son and disciple Śukadev knows, but he who wrote, who composed *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*—Śrī Vyāsadev—he may or may not know.”

How should a disciple see their Guru? Kṛṣṇa’s infinite power comes through the Guru: “*Āchāryaṁ māṁ vijānīyān*, see the Guru as nondifferent from Myself.” (*Bhag.*, 11.17.27) The Guru is not only a *mahā-bhāgavata*, a great devotee—a disciple will see their Guru as nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa.

Sometimes in the absence of the Guru some problem may come—some godbrothers may say, “Oh, your Gurudev is my junior. I am his godbrother.” It is not good to say this to the Guru’s disciples. The Guru’s godbrother can slap the Guru, that is not a problem, but he should not criticise or underestimate the Guru in front of the Guru’s disciples, otherwise both of them will fall down. *Akalyāṇ haya*: it brings inauspiciousness.

There may be some distance between the present Āchārya and his godbrothers, sometimes some contradiction may come, but we must understand that if the Āchārya does something wrong, his godbrother can even slap him, but in front of the Āchārya’s disciples his godbrothers must give respect, must glorify him. It is necessary, otherwise problems will come to the mission. If you try to understand it, you can understand it easily.

When the Pāṇḍavas were trying to avoid the war, Kṛṣṇa brought a peace proposal (*śānti prastāv*) to the Kaurav's party, but Duryodhan had another plan, "If we can tie Kṛṣṇa with a rope and arrest Him, the Pāṇḍavs will all become very sad and die of heart failure. Then the war will not be necessary." It was their foolishness. When Kṛṣṇa came there, Duryodhan ordered Duḥśāsan to tie Kṛṣṇa. Duḥśāsan was about to do so when Sātyaki came forth and wanted to slay him with his big sword, but at that time Kṛṣṇa showed His *viśva-rūpa* (His universal form). King Dhṛtarāṣṭra was blind, but he could hear the noise and that something was happening. He was told that Kṛṣṇa was showing His *viśva-rūpa*, and the king prayed, "I am blind—how can I see You?... Prabhu, please give me some mercy. Remove my blindness so that I can see You." Kṛṣṇa said, "It is not necessary to remove your blindness. You can see Me." Even a blind man can see the form of Kṛṣṇa!

So, we can understand from this how it is possible to see Kṛṣṇa: the power to see Kṛṣṇa comes from Kṛṣṇa. In the same way, the power to see the Guru comes from the Guru himself.

Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur told one story: a man was born in a dark place, and somebody asked him,

"Do you want to see the sun?"

"Yes, I do."

Before he went to see the sun, he took a kerosene lamp. Seeing it, the other man said,

"If you want to see the sun, it is not necessary to take anything."

"Are you a fool? If you want to see anything, you have to take a lamp." (He does not know better—he has been living in a dark place all his life...)

"If you want to see the sun, no light is necessary; by the radiance of the sun you can see the sun."

So, if you want to see your Guru, your Guru's form, you can see him by his mercy, and you must understand that chastity is necessary—chastity is above all.

Once Viṣṇupriyā, Śāchī Mātā and many other devotees were all sitting together in the house, when suddenly Nityānanda Prabhu came in stark naked. Mahāprabhu immediately put a cloth on Nityānanda Prabhu, and seeing that something bad could enter some devotees' minds (or some bad comment could come and they could be offenders to Nityānanda Prabhu's lotus feet), Mahāprabhu asked Nityānanda Prabhu for His *kaupīn*, a piece of cloth. At first Nityānanda Prabhu did not want to give it, but then He agreed, and Mahāprabhu tore the *kaupīn* into small pieces and distributed the pieces to all the devotees, saying, "Make a *kavach*, *māduli*, and wear it on your neck. If you wear it, all your senses will be controlled." This is how Mahāprabhu protected the devotees.

Nityānanda Prabhu is the Ādi Guru. Mahāprabhu said to Nityānanda Prabhu, "Go to Bengal, preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness there," but Nityānanda Prabhu did not preach Kṛṣṇa-kathā. What did He preach? He preached, "*Bhaja Gaurāṅga, laha Gaurāṅga, kaha Gaurāṅger Nām re!* I will be sold to you if you chant Gaurāṅga's Name!"

We must understand what the main things are. Gurudev is powerful, his mantra is powerful, everything is powerful, but there must come attachment to the Guru. Everybody does some service, but only those who do service with heart and soul can get mercy from their Guru.

Jaya Śrīla Guru Mahārāj kī jay.



How to See the Guru (2): Chastity

Śrī Vyāsa Pūjā Day, 25 September 2014

Chastity is the main thing.

Dronāchārya was the *astra* guru (the teacher of weapons) of the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas. Once he decided to test his disciples. He put up a stuffed bird on a tree and asked his disciples to take aim. He tested everyone—Yudhiṣṭhir Mahārāj and other great archers were there—but one after another, they failed:

“Can you see the bird?”

“Yes, I can see the bird.”

“What else can you see?”

“I can see its head, legs.”

“Anything else?”

“Yes, I can also see the tree and you all.”

Everybody failed. Finally, Arjun’s turn came. Dronāchārya asked him, “What can you see?”

“I only see the eye of the bird.”

“Can you see anything else?”

“No, nothing else.”

“Can you see the tree?”

“No, only the eye of the bird.”

“Yes, you are perfect, you can be successful!”

You must take perfect aim, give all power to one destination, one target—that kind of attachment is necessary.

Nārada Muni asked Vraja *gopīs*, “You are giving your feet dust to Kṛṣṇa, do you know what result you will get?” All Vraja *gopīs*

replied, “Yes, we know. We will be in hell life after life, but we have no problem with that as long as Kṛṣṇa is happy.”

Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj says that you can even leave your Guru if he is not giving you proper instruction or is engaging you for a wrong purpose. For the sake of his ideal, Bharat Mahārāj left his mother, Prahlād Mahārāj left his father, Bali Mahārāj rejected his Gurudev’s order, Khatvanga Mahārāj left all demigods, and *yajñā patnīs* (wives of the *brāhmaṇs*) left their husbands for Kṛṣṇa. That kind of attachment is necessary to have for your Guru, for Kṛṣṇa.

yuvatinām yathā yūni yūnām cha yuvatau yathā
mano ‘bhiramate tad van mano ‘bhiramatām tvayi
(*Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhuḥ*, 1.2.151)

Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī said, “I want the kind of attachment to Kṛṣṇa that a boy and a girl can have for each other.”

We can see Rāmānuja Āchārya’s example also:

When he heard there was a big Guru in Alwar (South India), he came to him and asked, “I heard that you know a mantra that can give liberation. I want to get this mantra.”

“I can give you this mantra, but there is one condition: you cannot give it to anybody.”

Rāmānuja Āchārya agreed and took the mantra from him.

People found out about it, and a crowd surrounded him, “You have got that mantra, and if you give it to us, we too can get liberation.” Rāmānuja Āchārya gave that mantra to all the people who were present there.

When his Guru saw this, he became angry, “You did not respect, did not follow your Guru’s order! Do you know what is going to happen to you now?” Rāmānuja Āchārya replied, “Yes, I can go to hell, but your mantra is very powerful and can give liberation to the devotees. Even if I go to hell, I have no problem, because it will give benefit to others.”

It is necessary to understand who the Guru is and what a disciple should be like. In this Age of Kali so many people can give so many mantras, but where does that mantra come from? Somebody bogus from the guru business pretends to be a guru and can give you a mantra, but what is the *Guru-paramparā* (disciplic succession) of that guru? There is a difference between mantras. Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj gave the following analogy: homeopathic globules with the medicine and without the medicine look the same, but those with the medicine will work and can remove the disease, but those without the medicine will not work. It is necessary to understand where the mantra and the guru come from.

I have said many things today... I started in the morning at seven and now it is six o'clock in the evening, and I have not finished yet—it is an eleven hours' class today. I only came to my room for fifteen minutes to take *prasādam*...

Question: *What can we do to have that kind of energy?*

This energy will come from Gurudev. You must remember what Sanātan Goswāmī was told: power descends.

Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī Prabhu said, "I do not want Kṛṣṇa without Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. I only want Kṛṣṇa with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī." This is why Mirābai is not in our *paramparā*: she became crazy about Kṛṣṇa, but did not have attachment to the devotees of Kṛṣṇa, to service.

That energy will come from the Ādi Guru (the Original Guru), and the Ādi Guru is Nityānanda Prabhu. How will Nityānanda Prabhu's mercy come? Through *dhām sevā*, through *Gaurāṅga-bhakter sevā* (serving the holy place and serving the devotees of Gaurāṅga). You must become crazy about Nityānanda Prabhu, then you will get that kind of energy.

Question: *How can we become crazy about Nityānanda Prabhu?*

“Chaitanyer bātul ke rākhite pāre?” It was said about Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī: “No one can stop you if you become crazy about Chaitanya.” (Cc, 3.6.41) In the same way, no one can stop those who become crazy about Nityānanda Prabhu.

When Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya debated with Gopīnāth Āchārya, he asked, “How is it possible that you see Mahāprabhu as the Lord and I do not?” Gopīnāth Āchārya explained that it was possible by the mercy. The mercy, the energy comes directly from the Guru. It is called power transmission. When that power comes, more and more devotion will come to you, and you will feel humbler and humbler.

ṭṛṇādhika hīna kabe nije māni
sahiṣṇutā-guṇa hṛdayete āni’

“When will I feel that I am lower than a blade of grass, when will I bring the quality of tolerance into my heart?”
(Śaraṇāgati, ‘Kabe habe bala?’, 1, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

When more devotion comes, you will become humbler and more tolerant, and also more dedication will come. Sincerity and dedication are very important—first sincerity, then dedication. Full dedication means that if you want to leave your service, service will not want to leave you—that kind of ‘curse’ will come.

...Many devotees came here today from Māyāpur and all over Bengal. I have got a chance to serve everybody, and I am getting one more year to live, getting energy to serve my Guru for one more year. It is Gurudev’s mercy, but actually everything can change, that is why we must make every step very carefully. We all the time make so many offences, do so many things wrong, but we must always try to avoid Vaiṣṇav *aparādh*. It is necessary for our spiritual life. Do you have any other questions?

Question: *We are very happy to hear Kṛṣṇa-kathā from you...*

When somebody has attachment to Kṛṣṇa-kathā, then we must think that their material attachment is being removed. Attachment to Kṛṣṇa-kathā, desire to hear Kṛṣṇa-kathā is good.

You should understand you are studying in a transcendental university. When you study in a mundane university, school, or college, if you are a good student, you will make new friends every year and leave the friends who fail in their studies. In the same way, you must make friends with higher, senior devotees. Be careful who you associate with.

Every day Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī Prabhu took buttermilk in a leaf pot from Rādhā Kuṇḍa, but when one day he was given a pot from another place, from Sūrya Kuṇḍa, he threw away that pot with milk because he did not want to mix, did not want to get any association of the competitors of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

Once a devotee asked Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj a question. That devotee took the first initiation from Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura and the second initiation from his disciple, and he asked Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj what his relation with Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura and his second initiation Guru should be—what the relationship with the Āchārya and with his successor should be like. Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj said that when Kṛṣṇa came to an assembly, different devotees saw Kṛṣṇa in different ways. Similarly, disciples will see their Guru in one way, and the godbrothers of the Guru will see the Guru in another way.

Also, in Dvāpara-yuga, Balarām played with Kṛṣṇa as a cowherd boy, but when Balarām becomes Nityānanda Prabhu and gives Mahāprabhu's conception to others, He is higher—Nityānanda is much more powerful.

You heard also about the dream of Śachī Mātā. She saw Kṛṣṇa and Balarām sitting on her altar, and Nityānanda Prabhu was

chastising Balarām and Kṛṣṇa, “Come down from the altar! This place is not Yours—it is Gaurāṅga’s place! It is not Dvāpar-yuga any more, it is Kali-yuga, so You must come down!” We must understand the meaning of that dream...

Āchārya should also take care not to let some distance come between his godbrothers and himself because of his disciples. This is what Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj said. You must understand that if any godbrothers of the Āchārya get some disrespect from the disciples of that Āchārya, that is not good for the Āchārya himself...



Good Association

2 October 2014

Question: *In the song 'Āmāra jīvana', it says 'para-sukhe duḥkhī', that we feel happy when we see others suffering. How can we remove that feeling?*

Good feelings, including this feeling, will come through good association. *Para-sukhe sukhī, para-duḥkhe duḥkhī*—when somebody is happy, you will be happy, when somebody is sad, you will also feel sad—this feeling will come to your heart through good association. Ultimately, it is also the mercy from great Vaiṣṇavs. This is how it comes.

Question: *How can we recognise what is good association?*

It is easy. Through good association your service mood, your service desire will increase more and more. You can examine yourself and realise, “Is your service increasing or decreasing? Are you increasing your Kṛṣṇa consciousness, your practising life, or decreasing?”

Suppose you study in some grade. When you pass the exams at the end, you will go to a higher grade and there you will get new friends. You will lose the previous friends who have failed the exam and make friends with those who are going to a higher grade. In the same way, you may lose your friend if he or she fails in Kṛṣṇa consciousness at some stage, but you must always increase your spiritual life, and you will get new friends in your spiritual life.

So, you can easily understand yourself whether you have good association or bad association: are your material desires becoming stronger and increasing, or is your spiritual success, spiritual matters, service mood becoming stronger and increasing?

You cannot recognise *vaiṣṇavatā* (Vaiṣṇav's qualities) by the clothes. Sometimes you see somebody wearing saffron clothes and think, "Oh, he is a great Vaiṣṇav!" It is not so.

Many years ago, when I just joined Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, one saffron-clad *brahmachārī* told me, "Why did you come here? You are young, why are you not looking after your parents? You can get a job and work outside, you can have a family life!" He gave me such advice in the temple, and I thought, "He is bad association." After that, whenever I saw him, I kept some distance from him. I never showed my face to him, and at the *prasādam* time I did not sit close to him. So, you can understand who gives you good advice, who gives you Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and who speaks *grāmya-kathā*. Keep some distance from those who talk like this.

Question: *How can we become attached to service?*

Service attachment comes through service. If you serve and serve the whole day, and do more and more service, then service attachment will come. Also the mercy of the Guru is necessary. When through service we do more and more service, service attachment will come automatically.

Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu served twenty-two and a half hours a day. He spent one hour and thirty minutes only on taking bath, resting, taking *prasādam*—*only one and a half hours!* He used the rest of the time, twenty-two and a half hours, for the service to his Guru.

If you have that kind of desire to serve the Vaiṣṇavs, to serve the Guru, then automatically you can be successful in your

spiritual life and Kṛṣṇa will fulfil your desire, but first of all faith is necessary.

**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)

If you always have this kind of śaraṇāgati, surrender, then one day Kṛṣṇa will fulfil your desire.



Practical Questions

2 October 2014

We should always be careful. We may want something, but we must understand what *the Guru* wants, and if Gurudev does not want something, we should not do that.

I always say: if you want to be big, if you want to be bigger than others, it is not devotion, it is not *vaiṣṇavatā* (quality of a devotee). When somebody does wrong, it gives me pain, but what can I do? Now I am always praying, as Bhakti Vinod Thākur said,

ṭṛṇādḥika hīna kabe nije māni
sahiṣṇutā-guṇa ḥṛdayete āni'

"When will I feel that I am lower than a blade of grass, when will I bring the quality of tolerance into my heart?"

(Śaraṇāgati, 'Kabe habe bala?', 1, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Thākur)

Kṛṣṇa and Mahāprabhu tolerate so much, and I must tolerate too.... Do you have any questions?

Question: *What should be our relationship with the non-devotees?*

Give them respect, even to a non-devotee. Actually, why do you see them as a non-devotee? *"Sarva jīva sama darśan:* see all souls as equal." They are *jīva* souls, and we must rescue, must give nourishment to them.

They are also born for the service to the Lord, but because they are attacked by the illusory environment (*māyā*) they lost their consciousness. We should fight against *māyā*, not against

Question: *We know the instruction of the Guru, but still we cannot act properly. Why is it like this?*

Because of the disease. We are sick, and we must take treatment, take the medicine.

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)

Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī wrote in *Chaitanya-charitāmṛta* that we are practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but we do not get real love and affection, real *prem*, because we have a disease—material desires, attachments, desire for liberation, and so on.

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

“If a devotee wants liberation or material enjoyment, Kṛṣṇa immediately gives it, but He keeps pure devotion hidden.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 8.18)

If externally we do some service, some work, but internally have material desires, some other things, these things inside will grow and one day we will see that we can be ousted from this line—we can fall down and leave this line because of the material desires inside us. We may keep these desires inside and not show them at first, but it is *supta* (dormant), like a dormant fire inside the ash. It will slowly, slowly grow and eventually come out. That is why you can see many *sannyāsīs*, many *yogīs* fall down. Saubhari Muni was a big *yogī*, but he lost his consciousness, lost his everything—he got his fifty wives, five thousand sons, and so on. That was his story.

Question: *How can we develop strong faith when we are not in the devotees' association, but in the material environment?*

You can see the example of mustard oil and water—if you want to mix them, they will not mix properly. If we go to the material environment, we will not adopt that. We go to the materialistic people to bring them Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but we will not take their association. Do you understand? We will do *sādhū-saṅga*—we will take good association, the association of a *sādhū*, a senior Vaiṣṇav. We go to the material world to preach. Just as Bhakti Hṛdaya Bon Mahārāj once went to collect some money to the prostitutes' quarter—he went there not for his own enjoyment or for their association, he went there to collect for Śrīla Prabhupād.

We can mix with the materialistic people—our *sannyāsīs*, *brahmachārīs* go to householder people and many materialistic people—but we will not do *saṅga* with them, we will not associate with them. We will teach them Mahāprabhu's conception, Gurudev's conception, and they will learn. We will bring something to them, not take association from them. For example, when we go to the market, we ask the shopkeeper the price, give them the money, say one-two words only and go, but we do not associate with them.

Question: *How can we connect the work we are doing with Kṛṣṇa and always remember Kṛṣṇa?*

To have connection with Kṛṣṇa, you must come through a channel and always serve the devotees through that channel—if you come often to the temple, hear the class, you will automatically get this connection.

You already have some *sukṛti* and have got association of the devotees, so gradually you can get connection with Kṛṣṇa. Everybody understands that we get connection with the Lord

through the Guru, through the Guru's devotees, through Kṛṣṇa's devotees: Guru, Vaiṣṇav, then Bhagavān.

Kṛṣṇa Himself said, "If somebody has left their property, their wife, their children, their relatives, their everything for Me, how can I leave them? I am always with them." Vraja *gopīs* left everything—their shame, honour, respect—for Kṛṣṇa, so Kṛṣṇa is always with them.

You know the story of Ambariṣ Mahārāj, how Kṛṣṇa always protected him. When Durvasa Muni made an offence to Ambarish Mahārāj, a Vaiṣṇav, Kṛṣṇa could not tolerate it and sent His Sudarśan *chakra* after Durvasa Muni. Kṛṣṇa cannot tolerate *maryādā-laṅghan* (showing disrespect, breaking the rules of proper conduct). In other words, if you dishonour Vaiṣṇavs, Kṛṣṇa cannot tolerate it. "*Vaiṣṇaver hṛdaye Govinda viśrām*: Govinda always rests in the heart of a Vaiṣṇav" ...



See the Guru with Your Heart

2 October 2014

It is very nice that many devotees have come today, I am happy to see you all. Kṛṣṇa is arranging and gathering you all, and I am very happy that you are getting energy to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the fallen souls, it is very important. You are giving so much life to the devotees.

Actually, the Lord gave you some property, like *chakṣu*, *karṇa*, *nāsikā*, *jihvā*, *tvak* (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin)—the Lord gave us everything, and we must use that property for the service to the Lord, which means preaching. You are doing that, and therefore you can see the result—so many people have come to hear Kṛṣṇa-kathā. You too are getting purified—there is some dirt, and you are getting purified in this way.

You are serving my Guru, you are following Gurudev's instruction, and you should think that I am always with you. I am always your friend, your well-wisher, everything, and I am always thinking of you. Kṛṣṇa is very busy with so many things, and it is the Guru's duty to always think for the good of his disciples, devotees, and well-wishers. If a disciple can fully surrender to his Guru, then the Guru always thinks about the prosperity, success, and benefit of the disciple.

You must observe, see your Guru with your *divyā chakṣu*, with the eyes of your heart, then you can realise what the Guru's position is, what the Guru can give you. You can observe your Guru with your internal eyes—you will not be able to recognise him properly with your brain, with your knowledge or education.

Only through your heart, through your love and affection can you realise your Guru.

Śrī Gopīnāth Āchārya could observe, could realise through his heart who Mahāprabhu is because he has mercy, but Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya did not have that mercy, so he could not recognise who Chaitanya Mahāprabhu is. You too can realise, observe your Guru through your heart—not through your education or intelligence.

When somebody, with full energy and enthusiasm, is trying heart and soul for the Lord, for Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa will always care for them. Actually, it is said in the *śāstra* (scriptures) that if you care for the devotees, if you serve the devotees of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, you will get mercy from Nityānanda Prabhu. I know you are doing that, so you will be easily successful in your spiritual life.

You must, however, be always careful not to make Vaiṣṇav *aparādh*. Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, the Lord Himself, says that we are making many offences, and only the Vaiṣṇavs, only the mercy from the Vaiṣṇavs can remove our offences, but if you make offence to great Vaiṣṇavs, no one can remove that offence. We must be careful and must always avoid Vaiṣṇav *aparādh*.

Question: *How can we have attachment to the Guru?*

Through practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Through following Gurudev's instruction. Gurudev can see everything: follow Gurudev's instruction with sincerity, humility, and dedication. If you have humility, sincerity, and dedication, then automatically you can become attached to your Guru.

Lokanāth Goswāmī promised that he would not take any disciples, but Narottam Dās Ṭhākur wanted to take initiation from him so much that he did the lowest service—he cleaned the place where his Guru passed stool. Despite his promise,

Lokanāth Goswāmī was bound to give him initiation. So, if you have this strongest desire, *sudṛḍha śraddhā* (unflinching faith) to serve your Guru, you will get attachment to your Guru easily.

My Gurudev told me, “If you serve Vaiṣṇavs, if serve the devotees of the Lord, then Kṛṣṇa will come to serve you.” That is why Mīrābai is not in our *Guru-paramparā* and we do not accept her conception: she is always crazy for Kṛṣṇa, but she does not serve the devotees of Kṛṣṇa, she actually always avoids serving the devotees of Kṛṣṇa.

We must understand that Kṛṣṇa is infinite, and it is impossible for us, the finite, to serve the infinite. You can see in *Sri Guru and His Grace*, the book by Param Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Raksak Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, that although Dhṛtarāṣṭra was blind, he could see Kṛṣṇa’s *viśva-rūpa* (universal form). Kṛṣṇa gave him His mercy, and with his blind eyes Dhṛtarāṣṭra could see Kṛṣṇa: the king prayed to Kṛṣṇa to remove his blindness, but Kṛṣṇa told him it was not necessary to remove his blindness, he could see the form of Lord Kṛṣṇa despite being blind.

Anyone can give you a mantra, but you must find out where that mantra is coming from, who the guru is and where the root, the *Guru-paramparā*, is. It is necessary, otherwise anybody can give you a mantra, but you do not know whether that mantra will not work or not.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj gave an example of homeopathic medicine. There are two kinds of globules: with and without the medicine. They are different: if you take the globule without the medicine, it will not work; and if you take the one with the medicine, it will work. Both globules looks the same, and the mantras look the same—but only the mantra that is coming from the original guru will work. Otherwise, we are simple-hearted people and anybody can cheat us easily if we go to a not proper guru and a not proper *Guru-paramparā*.

We must also understand the example of Eklavya. Eklavya was a disciple of Dronāchārya. When his Guru asked him for *Guru-daksina* (*Guru-praṇāmī*), Eklavya cut his finger. It was not devotion—he wanted to learn more and become greater than his Guru. Dronāchārya did not give him so much power, and in the end Eklavya went against his Guru and fell down.

Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur said, “If you want to be bigger than a Vaiṣṇav, or you want to be a great Vaiṣṇav, that is not devotion.” You must always remember and keep it in your heart that we get honour, we get respect, name, and fame, but how do we get it? We get it for our Guru, it belongs to our Guru. We got all this—name, fame, etc.—for our Guru, and if we do not use it for the service to the Guru, that is a big problem. If we use it for our own purpose, it is the main offence, and because of that we can easily fall down.

Why was Arjun the best disciple of Dronāchārya? Because he did what his Guru told him. When Dronāchārya was testing all his disciple (Yudhiṣṭhir, Bhīma and others), everybody saw many other things, but Arjun followed him properly and saw only the aim. He carefully listened with his mind and heart to what his Guru told him and followed that instruction, direction, properly. It is necessary to follow carefully what the Guru tells you: Arjun did that, and Dronāchārya said that he was his best disciple.

You can realise, observe your Guru through your heart—through your heart and soul.

Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur gave one more example. If you call a man who was born in a dark place to see the sun, he will bring a kerosene lamp to see the sun. You can tell the man it is not necessary to take it to see the sun, but he will not believe it. He thinks, “I am not foolish. If you want to see anything, it is necessary to take a kerosene lamp.” At first

he cannot understand that if you want to see the sun, your light is not necessary, you can see the sun through its own light, but when he saw the sun, he understood it. It is the same with the Guru: you can see the Guru through the Guru's own mercy—if you have mercy from the Guru, you can observe your Guru.



Your Well-Wishers

5 October 2014

Question: I would like to introduce my friend to you...

I am very happy to meet you.

A devotee always engages the *jīva* souls in the service to Kṛṣṇa, in the service to the Guru—such is a devotee’s nature. A drunkard engages others in drinking whisky, alcohol, in bad things; but a devotee always engages the *jīva* soul in the service to the Lord. A devotee always wants good for others.

Kṛṣṇa is always very busy, He has so many things to do, and it is the duty of the Guru and Vaiṣṇavs to always care for the *jīva* souls, for the fallen souls. They always think about the good of others and teach others how to adjust properly, how to behave properly, how to follow the proper etiquette, how to learn humility, sincerity, dedication.

If you can get and keep good association, you will be much benefited and you can be successful. You have got a human body, and this body is not only for eating, sleeping, and enjoying—you must use this body for the service to the Lord. You have a very heavy head on your shoulders, but if you bow your head to the Lord’s lotus feet, to Vaiṣṇavs’ lotus feet, then it will become light. We have five properties—*chakṣu*, *karna*, *nāsikā*, *jihvā*, *tvak* (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin)—but we must use them for the service to the Lord.

Do you have any questions?

Question: *I heard that without mercy of the Guru we cannot attain the mercy of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. How can we attain Śrīla Gurudev's mercy?*

We will get Gurudev's mercy through service to the Guru and Vaiṣṇavs. Service means association with the great Vaiṣṇavs. Also, your aim should be one-pointed, "I will fulfil my Gurudev's desire. I will follow whatever Gurudev tells me to do. Do or die."

If Gurudev says that the sun rises in the West, we must believe it. The Guru must not be questioned. If you have this kind of surrender, this kind of *ānugatya*, this kind of feelings, then you can get mercy easily.

Gurudev is always merciful, he is ready to give his mercy, but the problem is in our ego: because we think we know everything we cannot accept his mercy. Everything is all right, but we must be a good receiver—that is the main obstacle.



Make a Temple in Your Heart

16 November 2014

Devotees have recently returned from Vṛndāvan *parikramā*. They visited many places, and everything went happily and smoothly.

Before, Gurudev would take Guru Mahārāj and the pilgrims to many places, and after Guru Mahārāj's time, when Gurudev went to foreign countries, we continued doing the tours every year. Now too, after Gurudev's disappearance, by the mercy of the Guru, Vaiṣṇav, Bhagavān, we are still continuing these *parikramās* every year.

Parikramās are only for preaching: we take people to various places, tell them about the Pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī, about the Pastimes of Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga Gāndharvā Govinda Sundar, the Pastimes of Girirāj Govardhan. In this way we do Vṛndāvan *parikramā* every year and our preaching movement is going on everywhere...

Question: *Today we are making an event downtown and we are going to distribute prasād to the people...*

That is good, but it will be even better if you distribute Kṛṣṇa-kathā, Govinda-kathā, Guru-kathā, Gaura-kathā to the people—then they will be more benefited. You can distribute *prasādam* and they will get a little benefit, but if you distribute Kṛṣṇa-kathā, Gaura-kathā, Govinda-kathā, that will bring more benefit to them: if they hear Kṛṣṇa-kathā, get some *sādhu-saṅga*, they will

get relief from birth and death. It is necessary to distribute Kṛṣṇa-kathā and clean their hearts—make a temple in their hearts! You can distribute *prasādam*, but if along with the *prasādam* they chant the Holy Name, hear some Kṛṣṇa-kathā, that will be good.

Question: *A devotee is passing a difficult situation in her life and asking what she should do. Even knowing the scriptures' advice, she still finds herself in a difficult situation...*

She must remember Parikṣit Mahārāj. He got a notice that he had to leave his body within seven days, so how much difficulty did *he* have to go through? I think she is not facing this kind of problem.

We are all suffering, but we can get relief through service to the Lord, through full surrender to Him—this is the only way to get relief. Why are we suffering? Because we forget Kṛṣṇa, we forget our Guru. We think we can maintain ourselves, but it is our ego. We want to enjoy everything, want to taste everything, but we are not the proprietors. Kṛṣṇa is the proprietor. You must think in this way, then you will get relief from everything.

Question: *What is the best line of behaviour when we have some difficulties in the dealings with the devotees?*

ṭṛṇādhika hīna dīna akiñchana chhāra
 āpane mānabi sadā chhāḍi' ahañkāra
 vṛkṣa-sama kṣamā-guṇa karabi sādhana
 pratihimsā tyaji' anye karabi pālana

“Give up your false ego, always consider yourself lower than grass, poor, needy, and mean. Practise tolerance like a tree. Do not ill-treat others, nurture them instead.”

(Gītāvalī, Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, 3.2-3, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

You must be humble, tolerant, and give honour to others. If somebody chastises you or uses bad language, you are not to do

the same in return. Give honour to others and leave your ego. If you are cutting a branch of a tree, the trees gives you shadow, and you must be like this too.

dainya, dayā, anye māna, pratiṣṭhā varjana
chāri-guṇe guṇī hai' karaha kīrtana

"Humility, mercy, being considerate to others, and giving up pride are the four qualities needed to perform kīrtan."

(Gītāvalī, Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, 3.7, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur)

Who is the perfect person to chant the Holy Name? Those who are kind, not cruel, who do not care for their own self-interest, and who always give their life to others. You must give shelter to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Gurudev within your heart, and you can understand how wide you must open your heart to do that...

"Para-upakāre nija-sukha pāsaribe" means you must throw your own happiness, your own life into the Ganges for others' benefit. Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur wrote this.

Do not be selfish. *Svārtha-para* (selfishness), *pratihimsā* (somebody chastises you and treats you bad, and you show the same behaviour towards them)—this is not the religion of Mahāprabhu. If you are humble and make sacrifice for the sake of others, then you can harmonise everything. If, however, you are selfish, cruel, and angry, you will never harmonise with anybody. Be humble, tolerant, and give honour to others, in this way you can harmonise with everything.

Question: *We do in many devotional activities, but how can we know these activities are sevā?*

You can always understand it—if it pleases your Guru, then it is *sevā*; if it does not please your Guru, it is *karma*. *Sevā* and *karma* look the same, but if you do *karma*, reaction will come, and if you do *sevā*, there is no reaction.

Question: *How can we develop devotion despite so many difficulties in the environment?*

Through practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness: *śravaṇam, kīrtanam, sādhu-saṅga, Nāma saṅkīrtan.*

It is said in *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta* (2.8.196), “‘Sādhya-vastu’ ‘sādhana’ vinā keha nāhi pāya: no one can develop their practising life without practising.” Always practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness: practise what is favourable to devotion and reject what is unfavourable to devotion.

Question: *You have given us so much... how can we please you?*

Follow Gurudev’s instruction and serve my Guru, and you will make me very happy.

Jay Om Viṣṇupād Jagad-Guru Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj kī jay!



Practice Makes Happy

22 November 2014

By the mercy of Gurudev you are all happy. You chant the Holy Name, always remember Kṛṣṇa, remember Gurudev, always practise properly and engage yourself in the service to the Lord, so Kṛṣṇa always makes you happy, Kṛṣṇa is always with you, Gurudev is always with you.

We can only proceed in our spiritual life by the mercy of the Guru, by the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavs. Whenever we do some service, if we always remember our Guru, Vaiṣṇavs, and Bhagavān, then we can happily practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness, proceed in our spiritual life, and no bondage will come.

You may have some bad things inside, like anger or ego, but if you get the mercy of the Guru, of the Vaiṣṇavs, everything bad will be removed from you. There is so much bondage—*kāma*, *krodha*, *lobha*, and so on—but it cannot touch those who have got the mercy of the Guru and Vaiṣṇavs. Sometimes some bondage, some problem may come in our spiritual life, but it is Kṛṣṇa testing us: how much love and affection do we have for our Guru, for the Lord? How much attachment do we have to Kṛṣṇa and to our service?

It also depends on the devotee and the quality of the devotee—those who have the strongest faith, get the strongest devotion; those who have little faith, get little devotion. Gurudev says that you cannot hope to get 50% because you did not give 50%, but if you give 50%, you will get 50%.

We only have a very short time—as it is there is not enough time to serve Kṛṣṇa, serve the Guru, and the problem is that *māyā* takes our time for herself, for the service to herself. We must be careful—if *māyā* takes our time, we will not get the proper time to chant the Holy Name and serve our Guru.

Question: *In the book Golden Staircase, Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj speaks about intuition. What is intuition in the context of Vaiṣṇavism?*

Intuition is *anubūti*, it means ‘some feeling’. That kind of feeling comes and inspires you to take initiation, or takes you to your Guru. That kind of feeling should come automatically by the mercy of the Guru—if you have an open heart, if you are simple-hearted, these feelings come automatically.

Question: *What should we think about to be able to practise properly when we are separated from the association of the devotees?*

You can remember the Lord and your Guru through their pastimes, activities, instruction, and so on. When Vraja *gopīs* were separated from Kṛṣṇa, they always remembered Kṛṣṇa’s Pastimes. Uddhava Mahārāj also remembered Kṛṣṇa’s Pastimes—when he heard from the *gopīs*, from the trees of Vṛndāvan about Kṛṣṇa, he wanted to become a tree to always hear Kṛṣṇa-kathā.

In separation, remember the Lord’s Pastimes and you can easily understand everything and be happy with that.

Question: *Should we think the difficulties in our spiritual life come from Kṛṣṇa, from māyā, or from somewhere else?*

Actually, Kṛṣṇa created *māyā*, so everything comes from Kṛṣṇa, and He also gave the solution, the *siddhānta*, and if we follow it, we can overcome *māyā*, we can overcome all problems...

Other Preachers: No Free Mixing

22 November 2014

Question: *Gurudev, will you be happy if your disciples go to take some instruction from other Vaiṣṇav missions outside Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh?*

Actually, we belong to Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj's temple—we do not mix with so many people.

Once in Gurudev's times, a *sannyāsī* from another mission wanted to make a programme in here Nabadwīp on behalf of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, and Gurudev was very upset. He said, "We will not allow anybody to have any *sahajiyā kīrtan* here."

You heard about Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī Prabhu. He was fanatic about Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Every day a *bābājī* would bring him some buttermilk in a leaf bowl from Rādhā Kuṇḍa, but one day he could not bring the bowl from Rādhā Kuṇḍa, so instead he brought it from another *kuṇḍa* that was nearby, Sūrya Kuṇḍa. Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī asked, "Where did you get this *donā* (bowl)? It is not from Rādhā Kuṇḍa." The *bābājī* said that it was from Sūrya Kuṇḍa, a place near Chandrāvalī's house. When Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī heard it, he threw that *donā* with the buttermilk away. Do you understand?

Our mission is like that. We do not like our disciples to go everywhere. Even Chaitanya Mahāprabhu does not like it. One day He mentioned everybody's name, but He did not mention Mukunda's name, because Mukunda went everywhere. Also,

ṭṛṇādhika hīna, dīna, akiñchana chhāra
 āpane mānabi sadā chhāḍī' ahankāra

"Give up your false ego, and always consider yourself lower than grass, poor, needy, and mean."

vṛkṣa-sama kṣamā-guṇa karabi sādhana
 pratihimsā tyaji' anye karabi pālana

"Practise tolerance like a tree. Do not ill-treat others, instead nurture them."

jīvana-nirvahe ane udvega na dibe
 para-upakare nija-sukha pasaribe

"Do not trouble others for your own upkeep, and forget your own happiness in the course of helping others."

(Gītāvalī, Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, 3.2-4, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

We must be humble, tolerant and give honour to others. "Āpane mānabi chhāḍī ahankār": You must leave your ego and give respect to everybody. "Vṛkṣa-sama kṣamā-guṇa": if somebody insults you, you must forgive them; if somebody says something bad to you, you must embrace them. When somebody is cutting a branch of a tree, the tree still gives them shadow, so if somebody is beating you, you will embrace them. You must have this kind of quality, then you can think that you can become a servant of a Vaiṣṇav—not a Vaiṣṇav, you can be a *servant* of a Vaiṣṇav.

Question: *What is the most important quality for a disciple?*

A disciple's most important quality is to follow their Guru's instruction...

Proceed Smoothly

23 November 2014

sādhu-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)

These are the main things.

sādhu-saṅge kṛṣṇa-nāma—ei mātra chāi
saṁsāra jinite āra kona vastu nāi

“I want only to chant the Name of Kṛṣṇa in the association of the sādhus—there is no other way to conquer saṁsāra.”

(Śrī Śrī Prema-vivarta, 6.13)

By the mercy of Gurudev, the devotees are very happy because they are practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and everything goes smooth because śravaṇ and kīrtan go on regularly.

If we practise properly, we will be very happy. In our life, so much bondage, so many bad things and obstacles for Kṛṣṇa consciousness will come, but if we get mercy from the Guru and Vaiṣṇavs, that kind of bondage will not be able to do anything—we will be able to overcome it. For example, anger and ego are obstacles for our spiritual life, but if we get good association, the association of great sādhus, these kinds of bad elements will be removed from our heart.

Proper guidance, proper instruction are necessary for us because we are simple-hearted and can be cheated any time by bogus *sādhus* and other cheaters. We must be always careful: when we see somebody wearing saffron colour, we think they are a *mahā-bhāgavat*, a great *bhāgavat*, but it is not so. We cannot recognise with these mundane eyes who is a *sādhu*. Only by the mercy of Gurudev, by the mercy of great Vaiṣṇavs, can we recognise a *sādhu*, otherwise not.

We must practise and think properly, then we can focus on the main way and recognise the Guru, Vaiṣṇavs, Bhagavān, otherwise we cannot understand them properly.

Our beloved Gurudev's appearance day is coming soon—we are going to see his festival, his appearance day, celebrated... We must celebrate it in the proper way, because Gurudev did not leave us here only for eating, sleeping, and to just maintain the body—he left us for preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We must complete what he had not completed. So, everybody should come together to glorify and preach about our Guru, to please our Guru. A disciple's main duty and service is to please their Guru.

Try to always serve Gurudev, always keep connection with Gurudev, and always remember him and his pastimes, then everything will go smooth.

Devotee: We try our best to make daily programmes. Unfortunately, some devotees could not come today...

No problem. You can make programmes, and Saturday is good for a larger programme.

sādhu-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)

ye-dina gr̥he, bhajana dekhi,
gr̥hete goloka bhāya

(Śaraṇāgati, 31.6, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

“On the days when there is practising in the house, it becomes non-different from Goloka Vṛndāvan...”

Devotee: We would like to show you the altar...

Good, very nice. “Śraddhāya śrī-mūrti sevana”: everybody can serve in different ways, Kṛṣṇa will be very happy, but it is necessary to serve the Deity with full faith.

Mukunda had a ten-year-old son called Raghunandan, and one time he asked his son, “Your mother and I are going out, offer the *bhog* to the Deities.” The boy offered the *bhog*, the Deity took everything. When his parents came back and wanted to take *prasādam*, Raghunandan said, “You must have cooked a little bit less today because the Deity has taken it all.” They did not believe it, and in the afternoon Raghunandan’s mother told him to make an offering again so that they could see themselves how the Deity would take it. Raghunandan again gave the offering and chastised the Deity, “You must take it, otherwise my parents will not believe me!” The Deity took half of the sweets. Seeing it, Mukunda and his wife were astonished, “How is it possible?”

We do not believe it—we think the Deity is made of wood, made of steel—but the Deity is non-different from Kṛṣṇa...

Success, Attachment, Fearlessness

2 December 2014

Māyā Devī always takes our time to engage us for herself. Success in spiritual life depends upon the devotee—how many percent can you give to your Guru, to the Lord? If you can give only 50%, you cannot hope to get more than 50% from Kṛṣṇa—if you give 50%, you will get 50%, not more than that. Life is like that...

Our devotional activities must be in favour of the Lord, in favour of Gurudev. That is the main thing. Whatever we do, it *must* be always in favour of devotion, then you can succeed in your spiritual life; otherwise you may try, and try, and try, but you will not succeed.

“Ātmedriya-vāñchā Kṛṣṇera sukhe, Kṛṣṇera prīte bhoga tyāga: give up enjoying your senses for the sake of Kṛṣṇa’s happiness, our of love for Kṛṣṇā.” We have no right to engage or use this property (senses, mind, etc.) for ourselves. Actually, we have no right to either exploit or renounce it (*bhoger adhikār nāi, tyāger adhikār nāi*), but you can do anything for the happiness of the Lord, for the happiness of your Guru.

Indian prime-minister now wants to stop the family tradition of inheriting governmental posts. India has been running with the family tradition for the past sixty years: if you are the prime-minister, your son will be the next prime-minister, and after that your grandson will be the prime-minister. Our line is not like that. We are not *sahajiyā*—we follow Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī’s conception. *Sahajiyā* gurus say that if somebody is a guru, their

son will be the next guru, and then their grandson will be the guru—the power is inherited by their own family. We cannot do that.

I was surprised to see how much attachment Gurudev had to the Lord, to the Guru, to Kṛṣṇa, and how renounced he was from his family. Three days before his disappearance, Gurudev asked me,

“Do you remember that the Govardhan land is my name?”

“Yes, I remember.”

“Are you foolish? Why are you not handing that land over to the Maṭh? Why are you not making the papers?”

I quickly prepared the papers and he signed them; otherwise, if this land had remained in his own name, then even though he was a *sannyāsī*, his family could have made some problem.

From this example, we can understand how much attachment Gurudev has to his temple, to the service to his Guru, and how detached he is from his family members.

**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)

We must keep the faith that Kṛṣṇa will maintain, Kṛṣṇa will protect us. When attachment to service, attachment to Kṛṣṇa comes, day by day you will get more and more joy, more and more pleasure.

It is very close now to Gurudev’s appearance day. Everybody is saying, “Gurudev, Gurudev,” but how many percent are following Gurudev’s instruction?

Gurudev’s last word was, “Do not see his fault, love him.” I do not know how many percent of the devotees follow Gurudev’s

instruction. What Gurudev told me (“Look after my temple, my Deities, and the devotees”), I do that. I did not run away.

Gurudev also told me one *abhay vāñī* (encouragement, *lit.* ‘a message that makes one fearless’), “Do not be hopeless—when one door closes, another door opens...”



Fulfilment of Life

3 December 2014

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

“Know that, in essence, life is temporary and filled with all sorts of danger. Carefully take shelter of the Name and do your work.”

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.”

(Gītavali, Aruṇodaya kīrtan, 1.3, 2.2, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

We do not understand the value of this life. *Āhāra, nidrā, bhay, maithuna* (eating, sleeping, defending, mating)—in any life we can get it. It is said in the scriptures that in any life we will get mother, father, and friends—even a dog has a father and a mother—but it is not in any life that you can get a Guru, not in any life you can engage yourself in *Hari-kīrtan*, not in any life you will get Bhagavān. Therefore,

durlabha mānava-janma labhiyā saṁsāre
kṛṣṇa nā bhajinu—duḥkha kahiba kāhāre?

“I have got a very rare human life in this world, but I have not worshipped Lord Kṛṣṇa. Whom can I tell of my misery?”

(Kalyāṇ-kalpataru, 3.2.4, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

We have got a rare life, but if we do not serve our Guru, this life is nothing; it is wasted in vain.

Once, when Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur was in Benares, Kāśī, and went to bathe in the Ganges, he saw many people coming to a man with a long beard and hair. People asked him for medicine or to help solve some family problems. The man did not say anything. Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur watched him for some time and then asked somebody why that man did not speak. Somebody explained to him, “He is a *maunī bābā*—he has not spoken for more than twenty years.” Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur was disappointed, “O Kṛṣṇa, You have given him a good mouth, a good tongue for speaking, but he does not speak. What will become of him next life?”

What is this mouth for? This mouth is not for talking nonsense or gossiping; this mouth is for preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness. What are these hands for? To do service for the Lord. What are these eyes for? To get the *darśan* of the Lord’s *vigraha* (Deity). What are these legs for? To do *parikramā* around the holy *dhām*. (Even those who cannot go to the holy places, they must do *parikramā* around Tulasī Devī at their home—if you do *parikramā* around Tulasī Devī, you get the same result as when you do *parikramā* around Vṛndāvan.) As you sow, so you reap.

Uddhav Mahārāj said, “Why is our head so heavy? How to make it light? If you pay obeisance to the Lord, to your Guru, to the Vaiṣṇavs, then your head will be light.”

You must understand that Gurudev always protects 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)

Our mind goes everywhere, and we do not have any power, but our Guru is very powerful, he can do anything, but we cannot understand it. Even Brahmā said, “I do not know so much about Kṛṣṇa. Somebody may say, ‘I know Kṛṣṇa,’ but I know that I do not know Him.”

What did Śivjī Mahārāj say? When there was a debate between the Śāṅkar Āchārya *sampradāya* and the Vaiṣṇav Śrī *sampradāya*, the Śāṅkar Āchārya *sampradāya* said, “We do not follow Śrīdhara Swāmī’s *ṭīkā* (commentary). We will follow it only if Śivjī Mahārāj tells us to.” They put the book in a temple of Śiva, and when they took it out, Śivjī Mahārāj pronounced, “*Aham vetti, Śuka vetti, Vyāsa vetti na vetti va*. I know it, Śukadeva Goswāmī, the son of Vyāsadeva, knows it, but Vyāsadeva himself, who composed *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, may not know it.”

Kṛṣṇa Himself may or may not know, but His associates know everything—the Lord resides in the hearts of His devotees.

Once, Rāmānuja Āchārya heard there was a Guru who had a mantra that could liberate anyone. He went to that Guru and asked him,

“Prabhu, I want to be your disciple. Can you give me the mantra that can give liberation?”

“Yes, I can give you that mantra, but there is one condition. You cannot give that mantra to anyone.”

Rāmānuja Āchārya agreed, but after he took initiation many people surrounded him, “Oh, we know you have got that mantra... Please give that mantra to us! We too want to be liberated.” Rāmānuja Āchārya gave that mantra to everyone, and his guru became angry, “You promised me not to give that mantra to anyone, but now you are giving it to everyone! Why are you doing this? Do you know what is going to happen to you?”

“Yes, Gurudev, I know. I will go to hell; but your mantra is so powerful, it can rescue anyone from hell—it can give liberation.”

Who is your real friend in this world? Your father? Your mother? Your friends?

gurur na sa syāt svajano na sa syāt
 pitā na sa syāj janani na sā syāt
 daivaṁ na tat syān na patiś cha sa syān
 na mochayed yaḥ samupeta-mṛtyum

“It is not your guru, it is not your family, it is not your father, it is not your mother, it is not your gods, it is not your husband if that person cannot save you from the world of birth and death.”
 (Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, 5.5.18)

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam said, “Those who do not help me in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are not my relatives—if somebody does not help me in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they are not my father, they are not my mother, they are not my husband, not my wife, they are not my Guru.” These are very strong words.

Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur said in his lecture, “Many *sannyāsīs*, gurus will come in this world. Some will give cloth, some will give medicine, and so on. When a *sannyāsī* gives material benefit, people think, ‘Oh, this guru is very nice. He is the best guru!’ but those who give advice, give spiritual knowledge, who rescue and engage in the service to Kṛṣṇa, are considered not good, ‘Whenever I go to him, he tells me to do this, to do that. He is not good.’”

Those who cannot rescue you from material death, are not your Guru. If you take initiation but that Guru does not engage you in spiritual activities, you can leave that Guru, no problem. You should accept as your Guru somebody who engages you in service, in spiritual activities. This is very important to understand.

Laziness

3 December 2014

We have no enemy other than ourselves. If you do not bring benefit to yourself, no one else can do it for you.

‘Time and tide wait for none’. Time is passing—do not wait! If we are not engaging ourselves in service, we become “*nidrālasya-hata sukārye virata, akārye udyogī āmi*” (Śaraṇāgati, 5.4): always sleepy, lazy, and happy to do bad things.

pratiṣṭhā lāgiyā śāṭhya-ācharaṇa
lobha-hata sadā kāmī
e hena durjana sajjana-varjita
aparādhī nirantara

“For my own name and fame I behave hypocratically. I am wasted by greed, always want something for myself. A sinner like me is shunned by the devotees. I am a constant offender.”
(Śaraṇāgati, 5.4-5, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

There is a saying “an idle mind is devil’s workshop”. You are science people—tell me, is it correct or not? If you do not do anything, bad thoughts will always come to your mind, but when you make yourself busy you cannot think of bad things. It is simple words, it is not even a spiritual matter.

Something is better than nothing—*do* something. How many days will you be alive in this world? Time is very short.

uṭhare uṭhare bhāi āra ta samaya nāi
‘kṛṣṇa bhaja’ bale uchchaiṣvare

Pure Line: Disciples, Quarrels, and Prasādam

4 December 2014

Some gurus give initiation out of affection, some gurus give initiation out of greed, but both such gurus and their disciples are going to hell. A guru always thinks about their disciple's spiritual matter, but some gurus make disciples thinking, "The disciple will serve me because I am the guru." When this *guru-abhimān*, *āchārya-abhimān* comes, it is very bad.

It is written in *Hari-bhakti-vilās* (verses 2.5 and 1.62):

snehādvā lobhato bāpi yo gṛhñiyād-dīkṣayā
tasmin gurau saśiṣyetu devatāśāpa āpatet

"Both the guru who gives initiation out of affection or greed and their disciple get a curse from the demigods and go to hell."

yo vakti nyāya-rahitam-nyāyena śṛṇoti yaḥ
tābubhau narakam̐ ghoram̐ vrajataḥ kālamakṣayam̐

"If one is an *āchārya* and does not give class and do *kīrtan* according to the scriptures, but instead does what goes against the scriptures, both the speaker and the listener will go to hell."

vṛkṣa-sama kṣamā-guṇa karabi sādhana
pratihimsā tyajī' anye karabi pālana

"Practise tolerance like that of a tree. Stop ill-treating others, instead nurture them."

(*Gītāvalī*, Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, 3.3, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

Somebody can give *gālagāl* (chastisement) to me, but I cannot give *gālagāl* to them—somebody can use bad language for me, but I cannot use bad language for them because it is not Vaiṣṇavism to do so.

**jīvana-nirvahe ane udvega na dibe
para-upakare nija-sukha pasaribe**

“Do not trouble others for your own upkeep, and forget your own happiness in the course of helping others.”

(Gītāvalī, Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, 3.4, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur)

“For my own happiness and enjoyment I will not give any anxiety to others. I will not be the cause of anxiety for anyone. For others’ benefit, I must renounce, must throw my own happiness and everything into the Ganges.”

“Pratihinsā tyaji’ anye karabi pālana”: do not ill-treat others, nurture them.

There was one Vāsudev Vipra who had leprosy. You say, “I am tolerating so much,” but how much Vāsudev Vipra tolerated! When insects fell out of his sores, he would pick them up and put them back inside the sores, thinking, “Oh, it is very hungry! It is happy and satisfied here.”

...It is Param Guru Mahārāj’s advice: when you serve *prasādam* to the devotees, you must be like a mother. When a mother feeds her baby, she feeds it from the spoon, with a handkerchief, with so much care. I am not telling you to serve *prasādam* with a spoon and a handkerchief, it is not necessary, but I am watching how they serve *prasādam* and I see there is no love and affection...

We are always taking but not giving, that is the problem. A *sādhū* is now a ‘*Kali-yuga brāhmaṇ*’—always takes but does not give. It is necessary for our spiritual life to give nourishment to others. Somebody can use bad language, but we will not do that

in return, it is not our religion. We joined the Kṛṣṇa consciousness line, and our line must be very pure—we will be most humble, most tolerant, and give all honour to others. It is very important. When you cut a branch of a tree, the tree does not say anything, it gives shelter to you in return—when you are in the sun and feel hot, that tree gives you shadow. We must also think like that and be like that.



I have offered everything at Your feet and taken shelter in Your home. Please consider that You are my Master and I am Your dog.

(Śaraṇāgati, 19.1, by Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)

This is very important.

If we follow regularly and attentively the advice and the practising mood that Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, that Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, that Śrīla Gurudev gave us, then no matter what obstacles may come, it will not be able to do anything to us. Gurudev said that it does not matter where you live—even if you live in a hospital, it is not a problem as long as you maintain your spiritual life properly.

Gurudev also told that to manage a temple it is not necessary to be a great devotee. A temple manager must be a gentleman: when devotees come, the manager must give some *prasādam*, give some sweet talks and have a sweet behaviour. That is sufficient. It is not necessary to be a very big scholar, or to be Rūpa Goswāmī or Sanātan Goswāmī—it is sufficient to be a gentleman...



Service: Proof of Love

6 December 2014

You are celebrating Gurudev’s appearance day and I am very happy with that. Actually, Gurudev has left us here to finish his job—we must finish whatever service he could not finish. He preached Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world, and we must give nourishment to that.

Every year we make this festival together, and we must promise on this day: Gurudev is giving us life for one more year, and for one more year we will engage ourselves in service to the Guru. It is very important.

Gurudev said, “You can stay anywhere, but maintain your spiritual life properly.” That is his advice and his practising mood, and we must follow this properly. By service we can prove how much attachment, how much love and affection we have for our Guru. That is why every year we make Gurudev’s appearance and disappearance festivals, Guru Mahārāj’s festivals, and so on.

Our preaching movement is increasing by Gurudev’s mercy, and we continue, by the mercy of Gurudev, protecting Gurudev’s devotees, mission, and Deities.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj had waited to give Gurudev the chair of the Āchārya for thirty years, and that is why Gurudev could not leave his service although so many obstacles and problems came in his time. He suffered so much. After Gurudev’s disappearance I am also suffering much, so many obstacles have come in our spiritual life—but we will not run away from our service, we must continue our service.

We make preaching centres and temples, *āśrams* in every corner of West Bengal, every corner of India, and we are very fortunate that we have got this kind of a bona fide Guru. Gurudev kept us, gave us love and affection, but we are doing so much wrong: Gurudev tolerates so much for us. He has left us behind and engaged us in the service to his Guru, and in his absence we must continue this service until death—that is our promise, our intention, and determination.

Question: *Śrīla Guru Mahārāj says the real Holy Name cannot be pronounced by our mouth, only the soul can utter the pure Holy Name.*

Yes, when we chant, *Nāmābhās* or *Nāma aparādh* comes, but if through *sādhu-saṅga*, good association, you chant the pure Holy Name even once, that is sufficient. “*Nāma akṣara bāhirāya baṭe tabu Nāme kabhu naya*” (*Pv*, 7.1): we pronounce the letters, but the pure Holy Name is rare.

eka bāra kṛṣṇa-nāme yata pāpa hāre
pātakīra sādhya nāhi tata pāpa kare

“One Holy Name can remove more offence than a sinner can even conceive of making.”

If the real Holy Name comes once, all offences will be removed from the heart. We chant all day and night, but it is not the pure Name—some *Nāmābhās*, *Nāma aparādh*.

“*Sevon mukhe kahe Kṛṣṇa Nāma*”: if you keep good association and a service mood, then if, for example, you cook or do some other service using your instruments (your hands, senses, mind, etc.) and chant the Holy Name, that time pure Holy Name can come.

What was the rest of your question?

Question: *How to harmonise that we are chanting Nāmābhās, Nāma-aparādh...*

It is not necessary for you to think about it.

ki śayane, ki bhojane, kibā jāgaraṇe
aharniśa chinta kṛṣṇa, balaha vadane

“Whether you are sleeping, eating, or resting, always chant the Name of Kṛṣṇa.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata, Madhya-khaṇḍa, 28.28)

Do your duty and chant the Holy Name when you do your service, and also Gurudev told that when you get some time you must chant on the chanting beads, minimum four rounds, or sixteen rounds. Follow Gurudev’s order, and do not think what result is coming or whether Nāma *aparādh* or *Nāmābhās* is coming—that is not your department.

In his last days, in 1986-1987, Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj did not chant on his beads—he would always chant, “*Nitāi Gaur Haribol, Nitāi Gaur Haribol.*” Once his servitor asked him, “Mahārāj, should I give you your chanting beads to chant the Holy Name?” Śrīla Guru Mahārāj replied, “You can give those chanting beads to Govinda Mahārāj.” He only chanted, “*Nitāi Gaur Haribol*” ...

Do you have any other questions?

Question: *What is your favourite place to be in?*

Actually, Gurudev told me to stay in Nabadwīp, so I have no say in what my favourite place is. I must follow what Gurudev said. Even if I had a favourite place, I could not go there because I must follow the order Gurudev gave me—I cannot follow my mind, otherwise it will be enjoyment, and I did not come here for enjoyment.

For seven years after I joined the mission, I did not spend one night outside Nabadwīp. Even when I went to Kolkata to meet with Gurudev, I would leave in the morning and come back at night time—sometimes after dinner I would take the car

and come back from Dum Dum Park the same day. Sometimes I would leave Kolkata at ten o'clock at night and come to Nabadwīp at one o'clock in the morning. Later, Gurudev sent me for preaching to villages and I had to spend a night or sometimes three-five nights outside Nabadwīp. When I went to the foreign countries for preaching, I also could not come to Nabadwīp the same day and had to stay outside...

Question: If we somehow forget everything, what is one thing that Gurudev teaches us that we should remember and hold on to?

When you are going to die, the last what you must remember is your Guru, then no problem will come. The last thing you do before you die must be remembering your Guru.

...You are having regular programmes, and you are doing very well. Regular programmes are necessary, it means sincerity, *niṣṭhā*: whatever you do, do it every day, regularly. It will be good.

There are nine kinds of devotional practices (*śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*, etc.—the *nava-vidha bhakti*),

sādhu-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 do Nāma *saṅkīrtan* without offence, you will get the wealth of Kṛṣṇa—*Kṛṣṇa prema-dhan*.

Love for Guru: Service and Commitment

7 December 2014

Today is a very auspicious day. Tomorrow is our beloved Gurudev’s appearance day, and today is the *adhivās* day. We are very busy here arranging the festival.

We are fortunate that every year this day comes in our life. Every year we wait for this day to come, and we must make a commitment. We are arranging the celebration of Gurudev’s festival and getting more and more enthusiasm and energy for the service to Gurudev’s mission. What Gurudev has given us is inconceivable—if you take it properly and follow his instruction, his advice, then there will be no obstacle in your spiritual life.

Many obstacles will come, but it will all be removed from our way by the mercy of Gurudev, because Gurudev is always with us. Even if we forget everything but if we remember our Guru, then everything will be harmonised and everything will be all right by the mercy of Gurudev.

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)

Our duty is not to just take initiation. Taking initiation is a formality—if we take initiation and do not follow Gurudev’s

instructions, do not serve Gurudev, what is the use of such initiation? Nothing. It is like you go to a doctor but do not follow the doctor's prescription, do not take the medicine he prescribes.

We are always busy with our own interest, with our own enjoyment, but we must understand: who do we love more, our Guru or ourselves? That is the main thing. We must realise it for ourselves in our heart. If we love our Guru more, then we must serve more—we must give more time for our Guru.

We did not come to Gurudev's lotus feet for our own enjoyment—we came to serve our Guru, serve our Gurudev's mission. This should be our thinking. If we cannot use ourselves properly for the service to our Guru, then this life, this human body is nothing—it is a waste. What did we then come for? We have got so many instruments—legs, hands, mouth, etc.—and we must use them. We must think that we have got all these instruments for service to the Guru, Vaiṣṇavs, and the Guru's mission.

Our Gurudev gives us so much, but how much can we give to our Guru? We always take from our Guru—we take more than we give, but it is not a disciple's duty. A disciple's duty is to always give to their Guru, not to take. Serve heart and soul. Gurudev said, "How much my Guru Mahārāj is giving me! He had waited for me for thirty years to give charge of this temple. I had been always swimming in *māyā*, but he took me out and gave that kind of service." Gurudev said this about his Guru Mahārāj. So, we must follow Gurudev's instruction for our own spiritual benefit.

When Gurudev was going to leave his body, he specifically said to me at that time, "You go door to door, house to house to bring people to the temple, and I have gone to foreign countries many times for many years, but how many people follow Kṛṣṇa consciousness? How many people come to our proper line and

do service? How many percent of the people can surrender properly? Nobody—only a few.”

As Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj writes in his books, there is emotion and there is devotion. When we first join the temple, we think, “Oh, they have so much devotion!” Sometimes somebody cries so much for Kṛṣṇa, for Guru, but it is not proper devotion—it is emotion.

You can read in *Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata*, sixteenth chapter of Ādi-khaṇḍa, about Śrīla Haridās Ṭhākura. He would chant and experience so much ecstasy—he would cry and roll on the ground. Seeing it, one *brāhmaṇ* thought, “This Haridās Ṭhākura has so many followers because he behaves like this. If I do the same, then all people will respect and follow me too.” It was a *ḍhaṅga vipra brāhmaṇ* (a pretender, imitator). He copied Haridās Ṭhākura’s behaviour, and Anantadeva came within his body and beat him so much that he ran away.

We must think about it: are we a *sādhu* or do we just wear the dress of a *sādhu*? Have we become a Vaiṣṇava or do we only wear the dress of a Vaiṣṇava? Do we practise properly or do we pretend and show false renunciation? We must ask ourselves.

Do you have any *pregunta* (questions)?

Question: *What is the real love for Śrī Guru?*

Real love for Śrī Guru is following Śrī Guru’s instruction.

I remember soon after I joined the temple, I was arranging a big festival for Gurudev’s appearance day. It was 1993. Before that they made an invitation, but they did not write “Guru Pūjā Mahāmahotsava” (*lit.* a grant festival of worshipping the Guru), they wrote “Āchārya Abhivandan Mahāmahotsava” (*lit.* “a grand festival in honour of the Āchārya”) I started printing “Vyāsa Pūjā Mahāmahotsava,” and Gurudev was very happy. When I showed him the invitation for his Vyāsa Pūjā, he asked who had printed

it, and I said I did. There was some mistake in the invitation, and Gurudev said, “My godbrothers can spit into my mouth, but you are my disciple, so you must write correctly.” He showed me how to correct it, but he was happy. Mistakes are inevitable, they will come, but I was trying to establish him, establish his service, and he was happy with me.

After that, for the Vyāsa Pūjā of the following year, 1994, I decorated his house, Āchārya Bhavan, with lights and other things. When some of his godbrothers saw so much decoration, they complained to Gurudev that I was spending too much money. Gurudev said to me, “Why are you putting lights on my house? Why do you not paint my house black instead?” He chastised me, but it was love and affection—I knew he liked what I had done. In this way I conquered Gurudev’s heart—it did not happen over one day.

When I just joined, Gurudev told me, “You must not leave Nabadwīp for even one night.” Sometimes Gurudev called me to Kolkata, and I would go in the morning and after taking dinner in the evening I returned to Nabadwīp at ten o’clock. Gurudev asked me, “Why are you going so late at night?” I said, “Gurudev, you told me not to leave Nabadwīp for even one night.”

If Gurudev tells you something, you must follow it, then Gurudev will rely on you, then there will be love and affection. Gurudev has so much burden, so many things to take care of: if he gives you some responsibility, and you follow that, you take care of that responsibility, then you will take some of the burden from him. That is the main thing—to serve your Guru.



Gurudev: His Example and Teachings

8 December 2014

Today is the most auspicious day of our life—Gurudev’s appearance day. We celebrated it today in a very gorgeous way, and many hundreds of people came to Nabadvīp for the festival. The festival was very big.

Gurudev conquered the whole world with his love and affection. Many people throughout the world do not know English language or cannot fully understand it, but they understood Gurudev through their heart.

When Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj gave *sannyās* to Gurudev, he gave him the name Bhakti Sundar Govinda. Gurudev asked him, “Why did you give me the name ‘Govinda’? It is a name of the Lord and a very common name.” Guru Mahārāj explained to him, “My Deity is Govinda and my *kuṇḍa* is Govinda, so the name of my pure devotee will also be Govinda.” He transferred Govinda and whatever was in his heart to the heart of Gurudev.

Gurudev is nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa Himself came as a Guru from Goloka Vṛndāvan. Gurudev appeared in a family, but he teaches us just as Mahāprabhu does when He comes in this world.

One time, Gurudev told me, a municipal officer, a *brāhmaṇ*, came here to measure the kitchen area, and he wanted to enter the kitchen wearing his shoes. Gurudev objected, “You can

take the measurements from outside. This is Govinda's kitchen, Mahāprabhu's kitchen, Kṛṣṇa's kitchen, and you cannot go inside, especially with your shoes on. This is not the culture." When Gurudev saw that man still wanted to enter the kitchen forcefully, he said, "If you try to go there, I will cut off your leg." The man became very angry and went to Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj to complain, "You kept a boy there, and that boy wants to cut off my leg!" Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj asked him what he wanted to do, and when the man explained it, Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj said, "Yes, what he wants to do is right."

It shows that from the very beginning Gurudev had no fear, and he protected his Gurudev's temple properly. Gurudev told me that there were many problems.

Śrīvās Paṇḍit made Vyāsa Pūjā festival of Mahāprabhu in his house, Śrīvās Aṅgan, and in 1993 I also started Vyāsa Pūjā *mahā-mahotsav* of Gurudev. Before, they wrote in the invitation cards 'Āchārya Abhivandan'—they did not write 'Vyāsa Pūjā'. I thought at that time that there were so many Gurus, and their disciples celebrated Vyāsa Pūjā of their Gurus, then why would my Guru not have Vyāsa Pūjā? That is how the Vyāsa Pūjā celebration started.

Later, for the Vyāsa Pūjā 1994 I made some decoration with lights and other things, and some of Gurudev's godbrothers went to Gurudev to complain, "That boy is new here, but he is spending so much money!" Gurudev called me and asked, "Why are you making these lights on my house? Why are you painting my house? Why do you not just paint my house black?" Gurudev showed he was sad, but actually he was extremely happy with what I was doing for that day. He was sad that his godbrothers were complaining. Gurudev told me, "My godbrothers may spit in my face, no problem, but you must do your job." You can see how much Gurudev tolerated and what his desire was.

I still think that Gurudev is always there behind us. Yesterday one of my disciples asked me, “How can I make you happy? What kind of service can I do?” I said, “If you serve my Guru, I will be happy.” That is my happiness; that is the main things.

Once Gurudev told one of his Western devotees, “Your service is to sit in front of me.” The devotee sat there, only listening to Hari-kathā, and Gurudev told everybody else to do some service. After four-five days he thought, “Gurudev told everybody to do some service, but I am only sitting, listening and doing nothing. Maybe I should go to the *ārati* and *kīrtans*, do some service, maybe Gurudev will be happier.” He started doing something else, and, busy with some other service, he did not come to see Gurudev for three-four days. Gurudev asked him politely, “Prabhu, have I done anything wrong? Why are you not coming to me anymore?” The devotee began to cry. This is what Gurudev’s love and affection was like.

Another time, I was sitting in the office, in the Centenary building, and I heard the sound of Gurudev’s car going out. I immediately left everything and came out—I did not even close the office. I paid *danḍavat*, and Gurudev told the driver to stop the car, and asked me, “Will you go with me?”

“Where?”

“You are asking, ‘Where?’—you have no chastity! If your Gurudev goes to hell, you must go with him.” That is the main thing—there should be no question, and that kind of chastity is necessary. Gurudev taught us so many things.

Gurudev said that he tolerated so much. He told, “Everyone wants to be a guru, but I know this Āchārya chair has so many big problems, it is very austere, that is why I did not want to take it.” For thirty years Guru Mahārāj had wanted to give that chair to Gurudev, but Gurudev was waiting: he knew how dangerous this chair was. Finally, Guru Mahārāj said that if Gurudev did

not take the chair, he would give the Deities to his godbrother and break the temple. Then Gurudev took Guru Mahārāj's burden.

That is why Gurudev kept us also. Our duty is not only to take initiation and that is it—we have a duty, we must serve our Guru.

Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur said, “So many people accepted me as their Guru, but I do not accept them as my disciples—I see them as my Guru.” These are very authentic things. When anybody paid obeisance to Prabhupād, he would say, “*Dāso 'smi*, I am your servant.”

This is how Gurudev shows us how to conquer the Guru's heart: he is an example of it. He does not hide it, he openly tells about it. Once he said in a public meeting, “Everybody knows that I am a very naughty boy and I had no hope to come back again to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but my Gurudev is very powerful.”

Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur told about Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur, “I could not recognise who Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur was; all I can say is that those who took shelter of Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur's lotus feet are very fortunate.” I also can say, “I could not recognise my Guru, but I can say now that those who took initiation from Gurudev, who took shelter of my Gurudev's lotus feet, are very fortunate.”

Do you have any questions?

Question: *When will you come to London?...*

I am always with you all, at all times. You many not see it, but if you look with your heart, you will be able to see it. Gopīnāth Āchārya said, “You cannot recognise Mahāprabhu with your brain, knowledge, or education, but you can recognise Him with your heart.” I may be in India physically, but I am always with the devotees—mind, heart, and soul. When Gurudev gives his mercy and a chance to go out of India, I will definitely come.

All devotees are a family, and Gurudev also loved us as his own family. If we can stay in Gurudev’s boat, then we can go where the boat will go. Yet, we are simple-hearted and we are always cheated by bogus gurus. That is our problem. There are so many gurus in this world—*karmī guru, jñāni guru, yogī guru...*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj said, “Instead of serving your Guru, you are using your Guru.” That is very important to understand. We must not use our Guru for our own purpose, own benefit. Gurudev said, “We have got some time for the service to the Lord, but Māyā Devī is taking our time for her own service.” If we remember Gurudev’s lecture, Gurudev’s instruction, Gurudev’s words, and practise properly, then we can get some small room in Gurudev’s place and continue our service. Service mood is necessary.

We are chanting, chanting, but we do not get the result. Gurudev also said, “Bad words and criticism of Vaiṣṇavs will not come to the mouth that chants the Holy Name,” but we are not getting the result because instead of the Holy Name, *Nāma aparādh* always comes.

Once Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu came to Jagannāth Mīśra’s house naked. Mahāprabhu immediately gave some cloth to Him, but at that time Śachī Mātā, Viṣṇupriyā and many other devotees were there, and Mahāprabhu knew they could think something bad about Nityānanda Prabhu. He thought of a solution—He asked Nityānanda Prabhu for a piece of His cloth:

“Prabhu, can You give Me a piece of Your cloth?”

“What are You going to do with it?”

“Please, give it to Me, I need it for something.”

Nityānanda Prabhu gave some cloth to Mahāprabhu, and Mahāprabhu tore it into small pieces and distributed them to all the devotees with the words, “Make a *kavach* with this cloth and wear it on your neck like Tulasi.” Mahāprabhu knew if some

devotees thought bad about Nityānanda Prabhu they would go to hell, that is why He protected them.

Without mercy of Nityānanda Prabhu, you will not get mercy of Mahāprabhu. The question is how can we get mercy of Nityānanda Prabhu—by serving Mahāprabhu’s devotees.



New Year Message

*Addressing the devotees worldwide,
31 December 2014*

*Jay Om Viṣṇupād Jagad-Guru Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda
Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj kī jay!*

This year, 2014, is finished... Actually, day by day, time is going quickly, but one more year is coming again. We have so many hopes, we want to do some service, but we do not know whether we will be alive for that one year, whether we can serve Gurudev—but we have faith that if we are doing some service for Guru, Vaiṣṇavs, then Kṛṣṇa will always keep us, save us.

So, I am telling all the devotees today: you have been doing service this year, and next year you must do more and more—engage yourself in service to Gurudev.

We must engage in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and practise more—it is necessary to follow, practise, and preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness more. That is why I am telling the devotees: next year, with a good heart and in good health continue your service to Gurudev.

Jaya Śrīla Guru Mahārāj kī jay!





Appendix

Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh Book List

Books by Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

- *Affectionate Guidance*
- *Bhagavat Darshan*
- *Dignity of the Divine Servitor*
- *Divine Guidance*
- *DivineMessage for the Devotees*
- *Golden Reflections*
- *In Search of the Original Source*
- *Religion of the Heart*
- *Revealed Truth*
- *The Benedictine Tree of Divine Aspiration*
- *The Divine Servitor*
- *The Nectarean Glories of Sri Nityananda Prabhu*

Books by Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

- *Absolute Harmony*
- *Awakening to the Absolute*
- *Centenary Anthology*
- *Divine Aspiration*
- *Golden Staircase*
- *Heart and Halo*
- *Home Comfort*
- *Holy Engagement*
- *Inner Fulfilment*
- *Loving Search for the Lost Servant*
- *Ocean of Nectar*
- *Sermons of the Guardian of Devotion (Vol. I-IV)*
- *Sri Guru and His Grace*
- *Srimad Bhagavad-gita: The Hidden Treasure of the Sweet Absolute*

- *Sri Sri Prapanna-jivanamritam*
- *Subjective Evolution of Consciousness*
- *The Guardian of Devotion*
- *The Golden Volcano of Divine Love*
- *The Search for Sri Krishna, Reality the Beautiful*

Other books

- *Śaraṇāgati*
- *Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā*
- *Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu: His Life and Precepts*
- *Śrī Nabadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Śrī Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*
- *Śrī Śrī Prema-vivarta*
- *The Bhāgavat: Its Philosophy, Its Ethics, and Its Theology*

More books are available in Bengali, Hindi, Spanish, Turkish, Italian, Russian, Filipino, and other languages. Should you like to purchase the books from Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, please visit our affiliated centres or the online bookstore at gaudiyadarshan.com.



Temples and Preaching Centres of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh

(For a complete list please visit: scsmathinternational.com)

— : INDIA : —

Nabadwip (Headquarters)

Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math
Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math
Road, Kolerganj,
West Bengal, Pin 741302.
☎ +91 9775178546.

Ekachakra

Sree Chaitanya Saraswata
Krishnanushilana Sangha,
Garbhabas (Ekachakra Dham),
Birchandrapur, Birbhum,
West Bengal, Pin 731245
☎ +91 9836051708

Kolkata

Sree Chaitanya Saraswata
Krishnanushilana Sangha,
487 & 491 Dum Dum Park
(Op. Tank 3)
West Bengal, Pin 700055
☎ +91 9007839853

Hapaniya

Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Ashram,
Village of Hapaniya,
Burdwan, West Bengal

Bamunpara

Sri Chaitanya Sridhar Govinda Seva
Ashram, Village of Bamunpara,
Khanpur, Burdwan, West Bengal

Puri

Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math,
Bidhava Ashram Road,
Gaurbat Sahi, Bidhavashram,
Odisha, Pin 752001
☎ +91 9937479070

Govardhan

Srila Sridhar Swami Seva Ashram,
Dasbisa, Govardhan, Mathura,
Uttar Pradesh, Pin 281502
☎ +91 9810309511

Vrindavan

Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math & Mission,
113 Seva Kunja,
Vrindavan, Mathura,
Uttar Pradesh, Pin 281121
☎ +91 9761876054

Siliguri

Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math,
Hayder Para, New Pal Para,
155 Netaji Sarani, Siliguri,
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☎ +91 9748906907

New Delhi

Sri Sridhar Govinda Sundar Bhakti Yoga
Center, Rajguru Marg,
Tilak Street, UP, Pin 110055
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Ganga Sagar

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Kalna

Sri Sridhar Swami Bhakti Yoga
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• *Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Seva Ashram*, 269 E. Saint James St. San Jose, CA, 95112
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*“We are always busy with our own interest,
with our own enjoyment, but we must understand
who do we love more: our Guru or ourselves?
We must realise it for ourselves in our heart.
If we love our Guru more, then we must serve
more — we must give more time for our Guru.”*

(Śrīla Bhakti Nirmal Ācārya Mahārāj)