

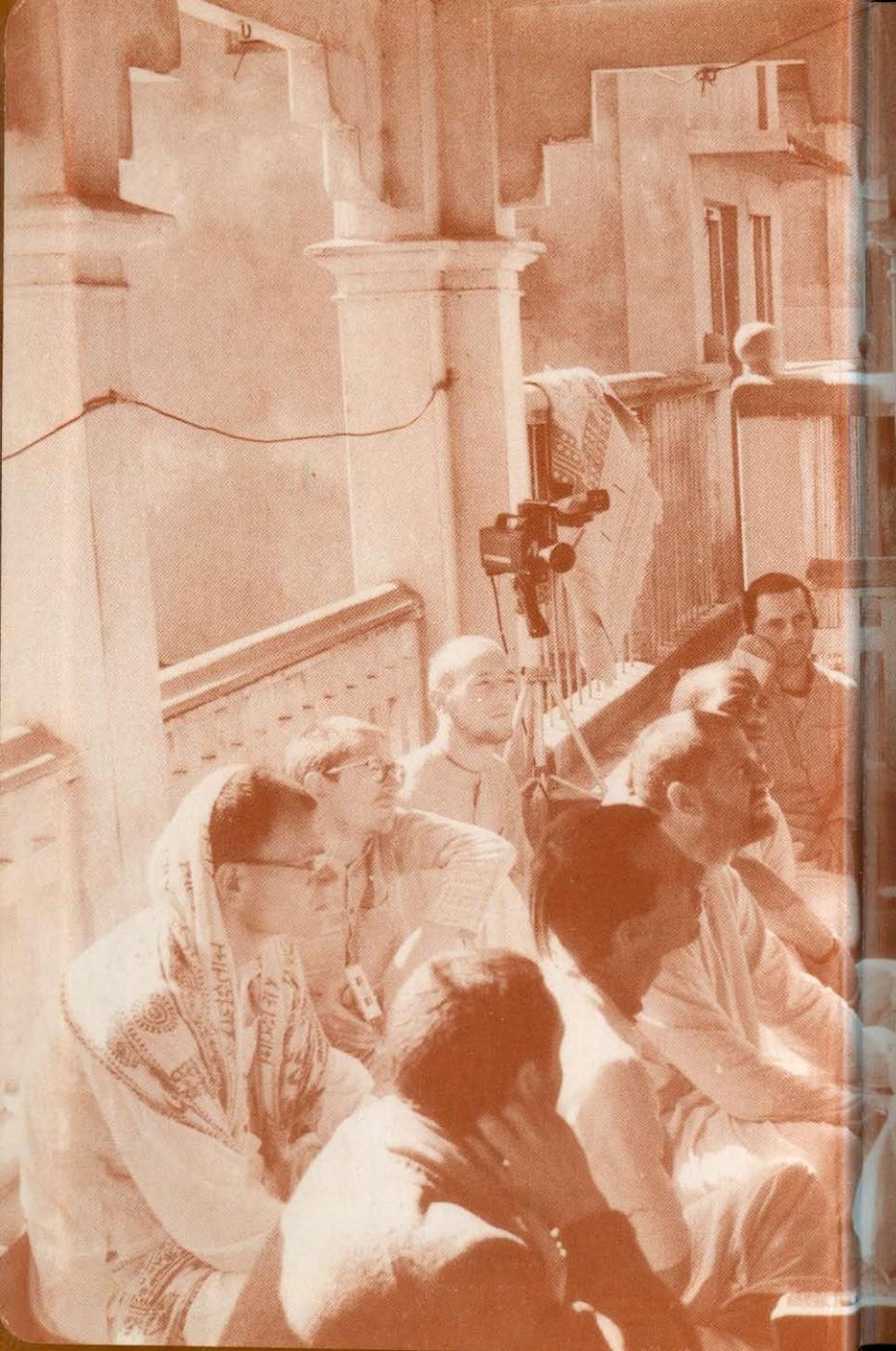
Sermons
of the
Guardian of Devotion

VOLUME ONE



Srila R.R. Sridhardev-Goswami

Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math
Nabadwip Dham



*All Glory to the Divine Master and the
Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya*

Bhakti Rakshak

Divya Vani



Sermons

of the

Guardian of Devotion

*Sri Bhakti Rakshak
Divya Vani*

Volume One

Sermons
*of the
Guardian of Devotion*

Compiled from eclectic discourses by
His Divine Grace

Śrila Bhakti Raksaka Śridhara Deva Goswāmī Mahārāja

Collected and Edited on the Divine Instructions of
His Holiness Swāmī B.S. Govinda
President-Ācāryya of the
SRI CHAITANYA SARASWAT MATH

SRI CHAITANYA SARASWAT MATH

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*A current listing of this and other publications by the Author
is available on request from the Secretary of the August Assembly.*

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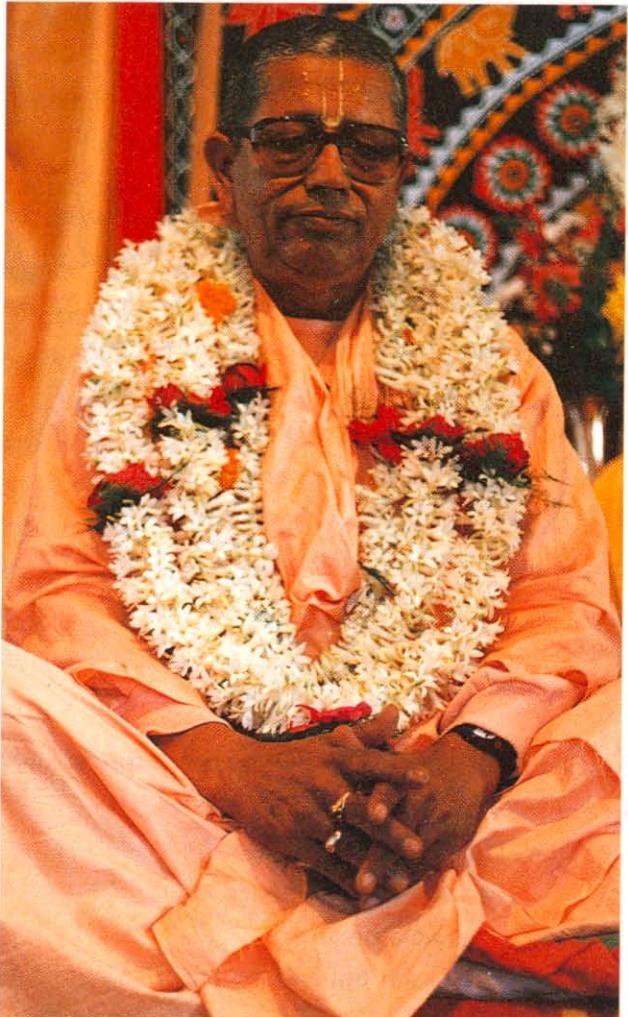
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Dedication

This, the first volume of an intended series of publications of "Sermons," is dedicated to the immense spirit of unrivalled dedication to *Guru-sevā* excited in we disciples by Srila Guru Mahārāja, the author of the worshipful, energetic conceptions contained herein

O to bethink His wondrous darśans heretofore unknown;
 Beseeching Eternal Truths dispensed
 from His philosopher's throne
 — a lovely old wooden chair.
 How could we have dreamed
 of such unheralded heights?
 Simply a perch at His Divine-feet could relegate all cares
 — O Pray Thee bless us we may serve Him e'er . . .



His Holiness Swāmī B.S. Govinda

President-Ācāryya of the
SRI CHAITANYA SARASWAT MATH

All Glories to Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga

Declaration of the Spiritual Succession of Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math

by

His Divine Grace
Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śridhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj
Founder-Ācāryya of the Math
(Gaura-pūrṇimā, 26th March, 1986)

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

Those who have any regard for me should give

this respect and position to Govinda Mahārāj as my successor. As much as you have faith in my sincerity, then with all sincerity I believe that he has got the capacity of rendering service in this way. With this I transfer these beads and from now he will initiate on my behalf as *Rtvik*. The *Rtvik* system is already involved both here and also in the foreign land. The *Rtvik* is the representative. So if you want to take from me, and you take by his hands, then it will be as well and as good as taking from me.

In the Mahāmaṇḍala, Sāgar Mahārāj and many others are also *Rtvik* of Swāmī Mahārāj and also myself. They may do so, but in this *Māṭh* and in any *Māṭh* under this *Māṭh*, he will be the representative. If anyone cannot accept this, he may leave the *Māṭh* rather than stay here and disturb the peace of the *Māṭh*. With all my sincerity and good feelings to Guru-Gaurāṅga, to the Vaiṣṇavas and the Ācāryyas, Mahāprabhu, Pañca Tattva, Rādhā Govinda and Their *Pāṛṣadas*, with all my sincere prayers to Them, henceforth he will represent me in this affair beginning from today's function.

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

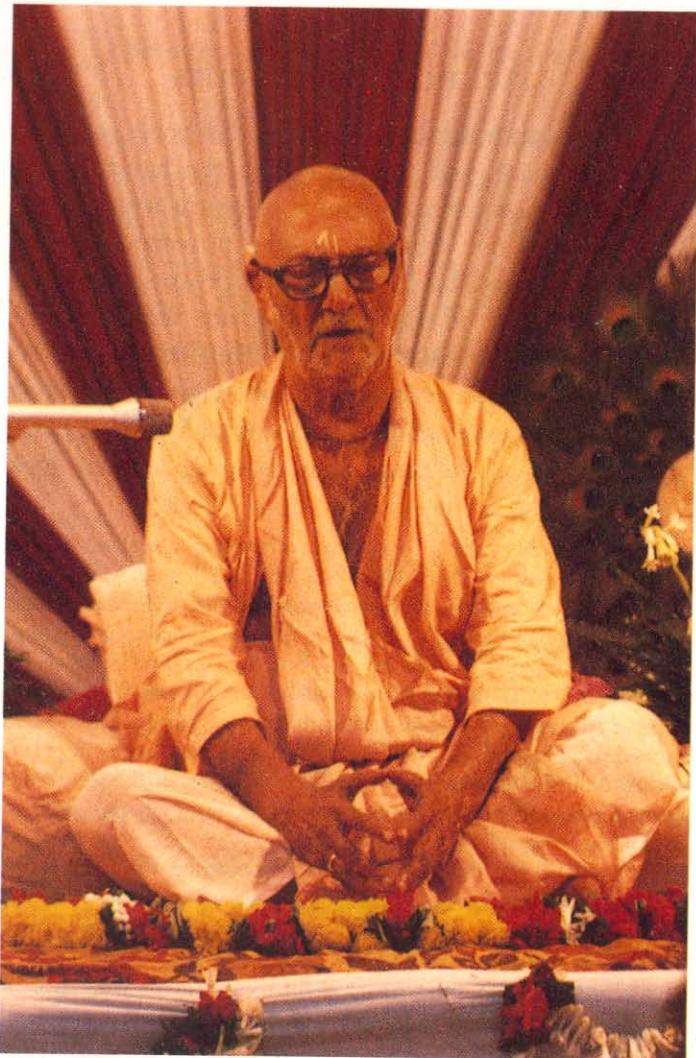
Acknowledgements

The wondrous tales of how the books of Śrila Śrīdhar Mahārāj find their way into the hands of the most needy is a constant source of nourishment to us. This present book certainly will be no exception, but one caution need be lodged: if the prospective seller, lender or donor of the book does not urge you, the reader, to visit the Author's Holy Place of *bhajana*, Śri Chaitanya Sāraswat Māṭh in Nabadwīp Dhām, West Bengal, then kindly and swiftly by-pass him and make your way to where these wondrous conceptions took their birth and form—in that Holy Abode.

In the present volume, recognition of the superexcellent editing performed by Swāmī B. A. Sāgar Mahārāj and Śrimān Mahānanda Brahmacāri are in order, and we equally admire the superb effort of the Malaysian devotees headed by Śrimān Rāmatanuja Prabhu, Śrimān Tribhuvanātha Prabhu and Śrimān Aprākṛta Prabhu, for the finances to print the present volume. Additional funds from Śrimān Aditinandan Prabhu and Śrimān Jaya Nṛsiṁha Prabhu also proved most helpful. As well, the constant support given our publications the last ten years by Mr. Rupo Chugani of Singapore has been of unique significance in bringing Śrila Guru Mahārāj's writings to the entire world.

In London, the mammoth task of typesetting the manuscript was undertaken. To the London devotees who helped with the proofing and editing, may Śrila Govinda Mahārāj's blessings shower down upon them and all others who contributed to this publication.

DGBP



His Divine Grace
Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva Gosvāmī Maḥārāja

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

FOREWORD

We are insignificant souls attempting to fly across the infinite sky, like fledglings with so much desire but practically no capacity. Seeing the great valiant devotees like Garuḍa effortlessly soaring over forests, mountains, rivers, seas and oceans, we may realise that we are but neophytes—fledglings of finite capacity. Nonetheless, ought we not feel the desire to fly? Furthermore, who, however great a personality he may be, has ever been or ever will be able to cross the ocean of the boundless glories of the Supreme Lord? Thākura Śrī Vṛndāvana Dāsa, the Vyāsa of Śrī Caitanya-līlā, has openly stated:

*“lāg bali’ cali’ yāya sindhu taribāre
yaśera sindhu na deya kūla, adhika adhika bāde”*

(Śrī Caitanya-Bhāgavata Ādi 1.71)

“(Even) the unlimitedly powerful Śrī Balarāma (Śrī Anantadeva) tries to cross the ocean of the Lord’s glories (attempting to sing all the glories of the Lord using His

thousands of mouths), but He never reaches the shore. Rather, that ocean expands more and more." Thus, we can see no reason for a fledgling to feel ashamed of his limited capacity; what, then, is his defect in trying to fly?

In the present day and age, the entire universe exalts in the vibration of the divine ecstatic wave of the wealth of pure *Hari-Kathāmṛta*, the nectarine tidings of the Supreme Lord, that continuously flow from the holy personage of our Supremely Worshipful Divine Master, Universal Preceptor Oṁ Viṣṇupāda Śrīla Bhakti Rāksak Śrīdhāra Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj. He is the King of kings of the *Tridaṇḍi Sannyāsis*, and his pious pure devotees who have had the fortune of imbibing from him their heart of heart's love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's devotion, carry with reverence the triumphant victory flag of *param vijayate Śri-Kṛṣṇa-saṅkirttanam*—the supreme victory of the congregational chanting of the holy names, as preached by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself personified as Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda. This mission is the treasured life and soul of Śrīla Śrīdhāra Mahārāj's Eternally Worshipful Lord and Master, Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. By this method of the grand congregational chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa Mahāmantra, the devotees in the noble humility of devotion carry and distribute their wares from door to door. They bring

the divine message that expands the mellows of love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Sweet Absolute. And the only payment they ask for in exchange for their 'merchandise' is the simplest sincere faith, however meagre it may be.

From our Divine Master's holy talks, as recorded from his recent conversations with his learned Eastern and Western devotees (until last year when he departed from this earthly plane), some drops of the nectar of his revealed conclusive truths par excellence (*su-siddhānta*) have been carefully preserved in their natural unparalleled beauty and compiled herein as *Śrī Bhakti Rāksaka Divya-vāṇi*— "Sermons of the Guardian of Devotion."

From forty centres throughout the world, utilising many approved methods and in numerous languages—via video/audio tapes and books, the spiritual practices and precepts of His Divine Grace are being fearlessly preached by the souls surrendered unto his lotus feet which are the abode of all courage. At the present time, only his benedictine grace is the universal dispensation to break the perpetual slumber of the souls sleeping in the lap of illusion—sanctifying and blessing them by establishing their intrinsic spiritual identities and awaking their God-realisation. Blessed with blooming hearts, they now constantly chant the unending glories of the Supreme Saviour of the fallen, the Primeval Origin

of all incarnations of Godhead, Śrī Śacīnandana Gaurahari.

As in the divine language of Śrī Prabodhānanda Saraswatipāda:

*kaivalyāṁ narakāyate tridaśapūrākāśa-puṣpāyate
durddāntendriya-kāla-sarpa-paṭalī protkhāta-damṣṭrāyate
viśvāṁ pūrṇa-sukhāyate vidhi-mahendrādiś ca kiṭāyate
yat kārunya-kaṭākṣa-vaibhavatāṁ tam gauram eva stumah*

(Śrī Caitanyacandrāṁṛta 5)

"The yogis' most worshippable goal of merging with the Absolute appears as hell; the religious sense-pleasure-seekers' sought-after reward of entrance to heaven is seen as an imaginary insignificant flower in the sky; the senses, which are indomitable for the whimsical sense-enjoyers, appear as a defanged black cobra; the entire universe is perceived as the embodiment of the ecstasy of Kṛṣṇa; and even the exalted post of Lord Brahmā, Lord Indra, etc., fervently sought after by the most elevated of the demigods, is seen as comparable to the position of an insect—for those devotees who have been blessed with the supreme fortune of receiving the merciful glance of the Supreme Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Ever do I sing the infinite glories of that Supreme Lord Śrī Gaurasundara."

Conditioned souls as we are, it is an honest fact that we have nothing to boast about. Yet, when we feel we are bereft, we are reminded of this poetic line, and we realise that our true wealth really is—

"guru-gaurave garvita dhanya morā"

"Blessed are we in Śrī Gurudeva's bounty;
His divine treasure is our pride and glory."

With this conception, all our hopes, our prospects, our honour, our good name—everything will become as brilliant as the early morning sun ("guru-gaṇa-śire punah śobha pāya śata-guṇa—All desirable objects, when offered to our Gurus, become glorified one hundredfold, as Their crown-jewels."). In the presence of the self-effulgent sun we can never feel ourselves to be destitute.

In conclusion, while admitting the probability of flaws in our rendering, I would consider it well to petition the good readers by quoting these illustrative verses of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura—

*"śrī-guru-carāṇa-kṛpā sāmarthyā labhiyā
e-hena apūrvva vṛkṣa dilāma āniyā
tāniyā ānite vṛkṣa e karkaśa mana
nāśila ihāra śobhā śuna sādhujana"*

*tomrā sakale hao e vṛkṣera mālī¹
 śraddhā-vāri diyā punaḥ kara rūpaśāli
 phalibe kalyāṇa-phala—yugala-sevana
 kariba sakale mili' tāhā āśvādana"*

By the grace of Śrī Guru's lotus feet,
 I gained the ability
 To bring you this beautiful tree, so sweet,
 Of wish-fulfilling capacity.

O devotees, please hear me:
 By dragging to this world that tree,
 My harsh mind has taken away
 Some beauty and grace that she did display.

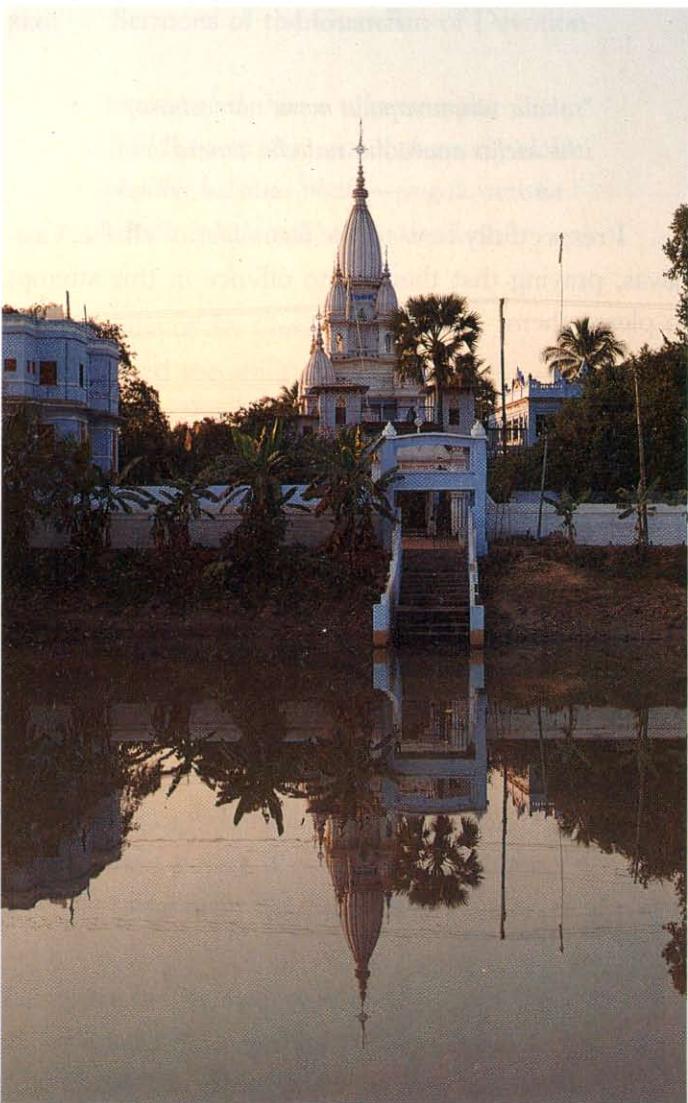
But you, O devotees, are the attendants of her garden,
 Who supply her sustenance and loving cultivation;
 By the sweet waters of your devotional heart,
 To once again her full beauty impart.

Being pleased by such tender care,
 Benedictine fruits she will graciously bear:
 The Divine Couple's service in pure devotion;
 Together we'll taste in holy association.

*"sakala vaiṣṇavapade mora namaskāra,
 ithe kichu aparādha nahuka āmāra"*

I respectfully bow to the lotus feet of all the Vaiṣṇavas, praying that there is no offence in this attempt to please them.

Most humbly,
 Swāmi Bhakti Sundar Govinda
 Śrī Gaura-Pūrṇimā, 1989



Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math

INTRODUCTION

Here in Koladvipa, Navadvipa, we find a happy place where the Absolute is the most generous in His benevolence. When the Absolute is distributing Himself, He becomes Śrī Caitanyadeva. And that Śrī Caitanya-deva in the highest stage of His mercy is found here in Koladvipa.

*kuliyā-grāmete āsi' śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya
hena nāhi, yā 're prabhu nā karilā dhanya*

(C. Bhā: Antya 3.541)

At Koladvipa—the Govarddhana Hill of Vrndāvana, concealed in Śrī Navadvipa Dhāma—the Most Generous Absolute expressed Himself in His maximum generosity. Without considering any crime, He absolved whoever He found. He accepted them all. After *sannyāsa*, when He returned to Bengal with the intention of going to Vrndāvana, He showed His most generous and dignified temperament at that time. He recruited the sinners of the world. Anyone who came to Him received the highest mercy. This is the speciality of this place. By 'place' we should not think of a mere geographical location. Of

course, it has such a location, but really this is where the Most Generous Absolute gave Himself to the worst sinners. Here, even the most fallen souls receive the grace of the Lord.

Our highest necessity is distributed from here, Navadvīpa Dhāma; here is the key to the highest and sweetest mood within our heart. The key to enter into the conception of our sweetest home is given from here. Here is the key to that world of faith, *śraddhā*, that world of love. If I can know my real prospect in life, I shall find that the key to my sweetest home is here. I am wandering in the jungle of an unsafe position, where I may be devoured at any moment. My so-called ego, my conception of my own self, is not eternal; it may be attacked and destroyed at any time. But the key is here, for my real life and my real home. This has been given to us by the spiritual experts.

God the father, God the son, and God the consort—we can know Him in different ways, and such truths are revealed here in Navadvīpa Dhāma. In the conception of God as father, we are what we are and He is supplying our food, home, and necessities in this plane. But if we truly approach Him, neglecting our wealth and achievements in this world to make a genuine heart's approach—not merely a formal approach—an

exclusive approach—we shall discover what He is, as He is, and not as He is needed by us in our fallen stage. We are faulty. Our feeling of necessity is also imperfect, and thus our prayer is faulty. But He came to give us what is best from the standpoint of His will, and that is distributed from here. "Take Me, accept Me, I am your most innate and intimate friend. You have no friend like Me. I am guardian, friend, and everything to you. Come to Me."

...the command, and whether He will descend to this plane or not depend on His whim. There is no material substance—He moves according to His own will. He may come down or He may not, at His whim. He is free. We can only increase our earnestness in His presence. Although the potency and the purpose are inseparably connected, we must generally know ourselves to be of the marginal potency.

...He is everywhere—He is nowhere, everything is within Him—nothing is in Him. Such is His peculiar and mystic position (Bg 9.4,5,6). Thus, our duty is to try to serve Him. We should not put much emphasis on finding Him either by mind, by body, or even by intellect. He is everywhere, and He is nowhere, in a flash He may show. Yes, I am here—yes, when we are

Chapter One

Homeward Journey

Any experience about the Lord must come from upper to lower. It does not depend on us. We can only increase the intensity of our hankering, of our serving attitude (*sevonmukhatā*), and whether He will descend to this plane or not depends on His whim. *There* is transcendental substance—He moves according to His sweet will. He may come down or He may not, at His whim. He is free. We can only increase our earnestness for His presence. Although the potency and the potent are inseparably connected, we must generally know ourselves to be of the marginal potency.

He is everywhere—He is nowhere; everything is within Him—nothing is in Him. Such is His peculiar and mystic position (*Bg.* 9.4,5,6). Thus, our duty is to try to serve Him. We should not put much emphasis on 'feeling' Him either by mind, by body, or even by intelligence. He is everywhere, and He is nowhere: in a flash He may show, "Yes, I am here"; yet, when we are

earnestly searching for Him, He may be nowhere to be found. His nature is independent. We can search, but we cannot say that we shall find Him.

Āśliṣya vā pāda-ratāṁ pīnaṣṭu mām, adarśanān marmma-hatāṁ karotu vā: our duty is to devote ourselves

He can only be served through His devotees cent-per-cent and most intensely for Him. We are only to serve Him. And service does not mean that we must necessarily come into direct contact with Him. Remote

service is also service; through His devotee it becomes tangible. We should try to serve Him through His devotees, without expectation of any reward. We should have no desire except to serve, even without expecting to see Him once, to have His *darśana*. We shall only want to be utilised by Him. The little energy we have must be '*Real devotion*' utilised for His cause. We are His *po-*
is unconditional tency, and we should prove that we belong to Him. Mahāprabhu says, "He may embrace me or reject me, or He may even be indifferent towards me. Whatever He likes, He may do, but I have no alternative but to serve Him." We must adopt such an exclusive and unconditional attitude. Not that, "If He doesn't want to reciprocate according to my will, I won't like to approach Him; so I shall join the atheists or the *māyāvādis*. If You don't come forward to satisfy me, then I shall

seek my own way—I don't want You!" If there is any tinge of such an attitude, we are far, far away.

Yathā tathā vā vidadhātu lampāṭo, mat-prāṇa-nāthas tu sa eva nāparah. "We have no alternative but to serve You." To search means to serve: "I want to be utilised for His cause. However petty the service may be, nothing is petty when in His connection, the least connection, even from far away. He need not please me, even by giving His *darśana* in a lightning way. Everything depends on His will."

Unconditional offering unto Him shows faith of the highest type. If our offering is conditional, we shall have to remain far from Him. The characteristic of the highest faith is absolutely unconditional: "I am only to be satisfied with just the chance to serve Him from afar, through some medium; or many mediums, not only one. *Dāsa-dāsa-dāsānudāsatvam*—servant of the servant of the servant of the servant . . . I have His connection from afar, and my energy passes through the devotees, towards Him, towards the centre of fulfillment. Whatever my position may be, I want my connection with the greatest fulfillment of the whole world!" Everyone is searching for such fulfillment of all their innermost necessities.

Sarvā-dharmmān parityajya, mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja (Bg. 18.66): the search for Him eliminates all other duties. A true devotee thinks, "There is no obligation to anyone except one, and He is my Lord, Kṛṣṇa." And His most laudable and greatest servitors are those who are in contact with His greatest agent. Not His direct contact, but contact with the greatest agent of His service will constitute the safer and higher relationship of *ananya-bhajana*, exclusive service eliminating all else.

No trace of exploitation should be traced in us. We should not run after any type of enjoyment including

Be fully purged of the enjoying spirit even the enjoyment of 'God-association.'

We must be fully purged of the enjoying spirit. If a trace of enjoyment remains in us, we shall have to remain in one of the planes of this *brahmāṇḍa*, this universe, such as Bhūr-, Bhuvān-, Svar-, Mahar-, Janar-, Tapar-, and Satya-loka. And if any tinge

To be a member of the infinite world of renunciation or retiring spirit is in us, we will not be allowed to enter into the world of infinity, Vaikunṭha. *Kunṭha* means 'limitation,' and Vaikunṭha means the unlimited world. We want to be a member of the infinite world. 'Finite' only refers to the attempt of our *separate interest* to measure the infinite, and thereby, we conceive of finite. When our ego wants to measure a portion of the infinite,

considering, "This is my kingdom, that is my friend's kingdom, etc., " then whatever we see with our *separate interest* is *māyā*—misconception and misunderstanding in the infinite. All such things must be dissolved. And the attitude of retirement, "If I can't enjoy, I shall stop work; I shall go on strike"—that type of reactionary mentality must also be abandoned.

Then, we shall be face to face with the positive side only. What is the positive side? It is the wave from the centre, *līlā*, the play of the Absolute.

That wave is fulfilling the desire of the Supreme Lord, and we will be face to face with that. If the tendency for *separate interest* or reactionary retirement remains in us, we cannot have a touch of that eternal flow to satisfy the Absolute. When we are free from these two kinds of whims, we can come into connection with the eternal flow where all points, everywhere, are active to satisfy the centre. Such a plane is not dry; it is happy, constructive, and nourishing, and that, we shall be able to feel. Only a small touch of it will make us understand that we do not want a particle of anything else. This is our homeward journey, and any other want or demand will keep us in a foreign country filled with death, disease, infirmity, rebirth—all these troubles. These troubles all

... all points,
everywhere,
are active to
satisfy the centre

occur because of misconception and identification of the soul with mortal things.

भुक्ति-मुक्ति-सृहा यावत् पिशाची हृदि वर्तते ।

तावद्भक्तिसुखस्यात्र कथमभ्युदयो भवेत् ॥

(सिन्धु, पूर्व २/२२)

*bhukti-mukti-spṛhā yāvat
piśācī hṛdi varttate
tāvad bhakti-sukhasyātra
katham abhyudayo bhavet*

(B.r.s. Pūrvva, 2.22)

"How can the joy of holy devotion appear in the heart as long as it is haunted by the ghosts of desire for exploitation and renunciation?"

These two ideas of renunciation and enjoyment are foreign to us. They possess us, like ghosts. They have taken possession of our ego and are playing with it. We are prey in their mischievous hands, and we must escape from such a conspiracy of *māyā*. We must be free—free members of the infinite world where the noble flow of dedication flourishes. No limited aspiration exists there; a current of wholesale dedication flows towards the centre and all concerned. And that is our home, the soil

where we can live eternally. There, all are individuals, and there is no death, no birth, no infirmity and no disease. Our inner self will emerge and mingle with the residents of that land.

Our own experience should not be easily relied upon, such as thinking, "This is God, this is my conception—I have a touch of God." There was a *Bābājī* who was thought by many to be a great devotee. Whenever he took the name, he shed incessant tears. Liquid also oozed from his nose, and he was seen to be in some

Real Devotion
—*a very, very rare achievement.*

abnormal meditating position. On either side of him his attendants would be constantly cleansing his tears and face with napkins, as he madly chanted the name. Some atheistic persons considered that he was displaying religious fanaticism, while common people who had some simple faith in God estimated him to be a very high-class devotee. But our Guru Mahārāja, Śrila Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswāmī Thākura Prabhupāda, rejected him and his antics as devoid of proper God conception.

अथ निःसत्त्वः—

निसर्गपिच्छिलस्वान्ते तदभ्यासपरेऽपि च ।

सत्त्वाभासं विनापि स्युः काष्यश्रुपुलकादयः ॥

(सिन्धु, दक्षिण ३/८९)

atha nihsattvāḥ—

*nisarga-picchila-svānte, tad abhyāsa-pare 'pi ca
sattvābhāsam vināpi syuh, kvāpy aśru-pulakādayah*

(B.r.s. Dakṣina, 3.89)

"Whenever shedding tears, horripilation, etc., are seen in persons whose hearts are soft externally and hard internally, and who are habituated to crying, rapture, etc., even though they do not possess a semblance of divine emotion—such an imitative sentiment should be known as totally unsubstantial and lifeless."

Mental imitation of devotion is possible, even without a tinge of pure devotion. In a drama also we may find a man who is fully drunk playing the part of a devotee, shedding tears and dancing madly as if he is a great devotee. By practising, one can acquire that mental condition of shedding tears, and one can show many feats as though he were a real devotee. Merely the display of some peculiar external characteristics does not prove the presence of pure devotion. Real devotion is *sudurlabhaḥ*—a very, very rare achievement.

When we can neglect the proposal of emancipation, we might think that we possess a speck of real devotion. In the face of devotion, emancipation is belittled as very lowly (*mokṣa-laghutā-kṛt*, B.r.s. *Pūrvva*, 1.14). Yet,

devotion is so rarely to be found, we may not expect that we have attained it (*sudurlabhaḥ*, ibid.). In one word, when we say that we have some

*When we feel
bereft . . . that is
sober and healthy*

devotion, we are not in devotion. Rather, when we can feel that we have nothing, although we have no aspiration for any other thing, at that point we may be making some progress. We do genuinely want something, although we can't clearly understand what; but we appreciate the devotees and the divine scriptures of devotion. When our appreciation is on that side, yet we feel we are bereft, that is a sober and healthy position. So vacant. We ought to remember that although we are negative, infinitesimal parts, we have come forward for a relationship with the Infinite, the Absolute. What price should we be prepared to pay for that? What form does that price take? We ought not to purchase such a thing very cheaply. To serve the devotees will be

*Devotion's
priceless
value*

tangible, and to continue with the devotional practices and programme that has been recommended by the scriptures and saints is most important. To go on—that in itself should be our reward. We are reading about Him, we are serving the saints and hearing their words. This is an engagement in itself. If we are thus satisfied, we have something that must not be underestimated.

There is a great value in having the company of the saints and the scriptures, without mixing with the robbery of this material world.

'Every part of my being cries for the corresponding part of Him'

What is present here at this moment becomes nothing at the next. We are not of this world full of treachery. We are disgusted with the treacherous aspect of the world that charms us and engages us in a treacherous soil. Now something—next moment, nothing. We must give that up and try for something substantial: *sat, cit, ānandam*—eternal existence, uncontaminated consciousness, and finally, the fulfillment of all our inner necessities—the corresponding engagement of the whole of our existence.

Prati aṅga lāgi kānde, prati aṅga mora—“Every part of my being cries for the corresponding part of Him.” (Jñāna Dāsa.) And Kṛṣṇa says, “Only I can give you complete fulfillment, so come to Me and give up everything else”:

सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं व्रज ।
अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥
(गीता १८/६६)

*sarva-dharmān parityajya, mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
aham tvāṁ sarva-pāpebhyo, mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucāḥ*

(Bg. 18.66)

“I shall accept the reaction you have earned in the relativity of this mortal world—I shall clear your debt! You need only come to My feet.” If we are charmed by this universal call of the Lord and we try to abide by it, then that is sufficient. If we are answering that absolute call to our best ability, Kṛṣṇa assures us: “I shall free you of your burden; you simply come to Me. Give up all your duties.” Faith in this call, and acting on the basis of such faith is a great thing in us. We should try to follow this according to our best capacity, and this is possible only in the company of the exclusive devotees of the Lord.

We shall relish being in the company of His devotees. We have found children of the same soil—we are meeting our home associates. If our internal satisfaction is of that type, we are holding something of a safe position. We want to recognise our home, but we are now travelling in a foreign land. We should try to find the inner feeling of our hearts, without wanting some miracle.

We are but tiny souls and many things may be miraculous to us. Yogis and mystic persons can show many miracles and captivate us. It is easy to capture a tiny soul by miracles. There are many powerful miracle-

*Acting on the basis
of Faith—in the
association of His
exclusive devotees*

men in the world. Let God save us from their hands! We must not allow ourselves to be the prey of so many miracles; may that charm leave us, once and for all.

যদি করিবে কৃষ্ণনাম সাধুসঙ্গ কর ।
ভুক্তি-মুক্তি-সিদ্ধি-বাঞ্ছা দূরে পরিহর ॥

(প্রেমবিবর্ত)

yadi karibe kṛṣṇa-nāma sādhu-saṅga kara
bhukti-mukti-siddhi-vāñchā dūre parihara

(Prema-vivartta)

"If you are going to chant the holy name, keep the association of the pure devotee and totally abandon all your desires for enjoyment, liberation, yogic perfections or miracles."

May all these alternative prospects—exploitation, renunciation, miracles—retire forever. We want only the Lord of our heart, who can award the deepest satisfaction. All the atoms of our innermost constitution have their corresponding engagement with Him, and that too, is of the highest quality. This proposal is given by the Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava school under the direction of Śrī Caitanyaadeva and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu.

In the Vṛndāvana proposal, the Infinite is in the

nearest position with the finite: *aprākṛta*. *Aprākṛta* is where the Infinite has come nearest to the finite, as though one of them. When He is so close, so near, no one can easily recognise whether He is infinite or not.

*Try your fortune,
however negli-
gible it may be*

Mahāprabhu has suggested to us, "Try for the chance for your fortune in Vṛndāvana. There is such a wonderful process: Nanda and Yaśodā (Kṛṣṇa's father and mother) have captured the Absolute and He is crawling in their compound (*aham iha nandam vande yasyālinde param brahma*). Try to secure a position there, however negligible it may be. Try your fortune." So, we are in search of such a fortune where all other proposals are eliminated.

कम् प्रति कथयितुमीशे सम्प्रति को वा प्रतीतिमायातु ।
गोपतितनयाकुञ्जे गोपवधूटीवितं ब्रह्म ॥

(पद्यावली ९८)

kam prati kathayitum iše
samprati ko vā pratītīm āyātu
go-pati-tanayā-kuñje
gopa-vadhūṭi-vitam brahma

(Padyāvalī, 98)

"To whom can I tell it, and whoever will believe

it, that the Supreme Absolute, Param Brahman, the Paramour of the damsels of Vraja, is enjoying in the groves on the banks of the Yamunā?"

It is inconceivable that the Brahman, the greatest, the Absolute, has come to search for the least love of the cowherd damsels of the *Gopi* class. He has approached in such a near and close way, and in such an ordinary, rural style. Try your fortune there.

We are out to do just that, under the guidance of Śrī Caitanyaadeva, who is understood to be the combination of the positive and negative aspects of the Absolute. The positive is busy distributing Himself to others. Mahāprabhu is that infinitely and inconceivably generous aspect of the Supreme.

We must not search for any sentiment in ourselves, divine or otherwise. Once, one disciple was engaged in the service of his Guru, when a messenger from Vaikuṇṭha came to fetch that disciple, saying, "The Lord is satisfied with your service to your Gurudeva and he is calling for you, so please come."

The disciple replied, "No, no, I have no time to attend to your call of Vaikuṇṭha; I am very busy in the service of my Gurudeva."

This should be our attitude. "I have my engagement

*Exclusive
preference for
service to Śri
Guru*

under the guidance of the Vaiṣṇavas here; I don't like to be disturbed from this position."

सख्याय ते मम नमोऽस्तु नमोऽस्तु नित्यम्।

दास्याय ते मम रसोऽस्तु रसोऽस्तु सत्यम्॥

*sakhyāya te mama namo 'stu namo 'stu nityam
dāsyāya te mama raso 'stu raso 'stu satyam*

Śrila Raghunātha Dāsa Goswāmī, the greatest exponent of the faith of servitude to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, *Rādhā-dāsyam*, says, "I won't allow myself to become fascinated by the proposal of the higher level service as a friend, *sakhya*. Rather, I shall tend always to do the lower service, *dāsy*, the service of the servant. I shall not consider myself to be a high-class servitor and I shall always tend to go towards the lower class of service. But He may forcibly take me to a higher service—"No, you are no longer to serve there; now you must serve in this higher category."

*A safe and
entirely whole-
some position*

"But I consider that I am not fit for that confidential service, my Lord. You may engage the higher servitors in Your confidential group, while I may serve in the lower level."

That sort of tendency is safe for us. We should always be tending towards the lower service; and it is

The tendency of the servant will always be toward the lower service

His business to forcibly take us up to a higher group, should He wish: "No, you are qualified to render such ser-

vice, and you should no longer remain in the lower group." But the tendency of the servitor will always be toward the lower service—*dāsyāya te mama raso 'stu*: "I would like to be engaged in service as a servant, not as a friend." That should be the normal

We should search out this reality, this pristine substance within us

tendency of a devotee. With such a mood, he is safe. Even in that world, he should have no ambition except to be the servant of the servant of the

servant . . . Hearing of such things from the devotees and from the scriptures, we may think such a conception to be exaggeration; but it is the reality, and we should search out this pristine substance within us. This is a safe and wholesome position.

Chapter Two

The Direction to Your Wealth

Śrī Caitanyadeva is both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa combined. He is Kṛṣṇa in the mood of Rādhā, searching for Himself. He is both the positive and the negative aspects of the Absolute combined. The Śāṅkara school and other impersonalists claim that when the positive and negative combine, the result is a kind of equilibrium. But according to the Vaiṣṇava philosophy, the combination is dynamic. His nature becomes that of searching for Himself—searching for His own positive self, in the mood of the negative. In that search, He distributes Himself to others. The negative attracts the positive, and the positive is thus distributed to the public. This is the essence of Śrī Caitanyadeva. The intimate associates of the Lord have revealed such a conception, and we shall be able to conceive it according to the intensity and degree of our faith.

Instruments to measure the infinite

Faith is the only instrument for the finite to measure the infinite. To survey the infinite, all other methods are futile. Faith is the most spacious substance within us.

It can cover a long, long distance. In the infinite, what faith can we have in faith? We fear blind faith. Yet, in the infinite, the impossible becomes possible. Everything is possible, but only faith has the possibility of connecting us with the infinite, while all other methods are useless.

Sraddhā, faith, can go a long distance. And we shall be able to feel and conceive that faith is not merely imaginary. It has its tangible position, a most efficient position within us. When we can disconnect from all phases of perceptual experience, we can live in faith alone. When all the wealth of our experience deceives us and makes treachery with us, our faith will save us.

The whole world of our experience will vanish one day, with the final wholesale dissolution (*janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhī-duḥkha-doṣānudarśanam*, Bg. 13.9), but faith will remain, faithfully attending us. That is the innate thing with our soul. And with the wholesale dissolution of our body, mind, and senses, the whole world of our experience will go where? No one knows. The sun, the moon, the ether, the air—everything will vanish in wholesale dissolution. Only faith will live, even at that stage. Faith is eternal substance within us, and we are told that with the favourable circumstances of faith we can go back to God, back to home. Back to home sweet

When our experience deceives us, faith will save us

home! Such highest prospect is given to us who are in this world of mortality, which is a burial ground and cremation ground. Here, everything is bound to be buried.

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
All that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Awaits alike the inevitable hour;
The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

—Gray's Elegy

This is the world of experience—everything leads but to the grave. But faith is not treacherous. It will remain within, with the soul, and grant hope, prospect, and sustenance. And what kind of sustenance? Home comfort. Back to God, back to home. When there is the proposal of such an alternative, who would be such a fool to run after the experiences of this 'civilized' atomic world? Experience and science are all the jaws of death.

Faith is nothing vague.

या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।
यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यते मुनेः ॥

(गीता २/६९)

*yā niśā sarvva-bhūtānām, tasyām jāgartti samyami
yasyām jāgrati bhūtāni, sā niśā paśyato muneḥ*

(Bg. 2.69)

Some persons are awake in the world of experience. Their day is the world of experience and their night is the soul's world, God's world. And another class of men are wakeful in the soul's world and are sleeping in this world of experience. This world is darkness to them, and they are quite awake in the world of faith. They find that the world of faith is a permanent world.

Everything may vanish but faith stands forever

The soul, however tiny, has a substantial position in eternity; it is an eternal factor in that world of faith. There, we shall find: "Whatever I see is eternal. Nothing will be effaced at any time. I am a member of the world of reality, and through faith I can reach such a subtle plane that never dies or changes. There is such a subtle, higher plane, and my soul is a member of that plane. The soul is wakeful there and is asleep in this world of experience, having no connection with it. And the man of the world of experience with flesh and blood, he is wakeful here, whereas that real world—the soul world—is like dark night to him."

In our present condition it may seem almost non-existent, but such a plane is the substantial eternal

reality. Its existence supersedes all. All may vanish, but faith stands forever. Faith is the particular potency of Śrimati Rādhārāṇī.

সুখ-রূপ কৃষ্ণ করে সুখ আশ্বাদন।

ভক্তগণে সুখ দিতে 'হ্লাদিনী'—কারণ ॥

(চৈঃ চঃ মধ্য ৪/১৫৮)

*sukha-rūpa kṛṣṇa kare sukha āsvādana
bhakta-gane sukha dite 'hlādini'—kāraṇa*

(C.c. Madhya 8.158)

Ecstasy personified is Kṛṣṇa Himself, and He feels, tastes and enjoys Himself; but only *The halo of Śrimati Rādhārāṇī* through faith is it possible to transmit and distribute that ecstasy and joy to others. Faith is the very nature of the *hlādini-śakti*, the ecstasy potency, which is represented in full by Śrimati Rādhārāṇī. It can transmit total Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the devotees outside. Faith is the halo of Śrimati Rādhārāṇī, by the light of which others may understand Kṛṣṇa. When the negative combines with the positive, realisation of Their function is distributed to all other negative parts. The central, 'mother' negative can expand and transmit such faith and joy. Śraddhā, faith, is a special substance about

which we must enquire. It is not merely abstract.

We are wakeful in this material world, but there are others who are completely awake in that plane of faith, while this world of matter, this tangible world of enjoyment and exploitation, is under-disturb His ground to them; it is far, far away from Sweet Will their conception. They are deeply engaged in the world of service, through *śraddhā*, faith (*yā niśā sarvā-bhūtānāṁ tasyāṁ jāgaritti samyamī*).

To them, even to see Kṛṣṇa is a type of enjoyment. They think, "No, we won't disturb His sweet will; whenever He likes to, He may call for us, and then we shall have a chance to see Him—otherwise not." If for my personal satisfaction I desire to see Kṛṣṇa, "O Kṛṣṇa, come and stand before me so that I can see You and satisfy my eyes or inner hankering," this is a kind of imposition by our exploiting nature. A devotee does not want this. Actual devotees do not allow these thoughts to enter their minds, but they maintain the mood, "Whenever He wishes to, He will call for me, and then I shall have a chance to see Him."

Mādhavendra Puri maintained his body by eating only what automatically came to him without begging from others; otherwise, he would fast. One day Kṛṣṇa Himself came and supplied some food and He asked,

"Why, Puri, don't you go and beg for food? Why do you act in this way, sometimes fasting?"

Hearing of this incident, we may think that Mādhavendra Puri was greatly fortunate—Kṛṣṇa Himself came and supplied food to him. But we find higher devotion in Śrila Sanātana Goswāmī.

When Śrimatī Rādhārāṇī came and supplied food-stuffs to Śrila Rūpa Goswāmī for cooking *paramānna*, milk-rice, Śrila Sanātana Goswāmī was very disturbed at heart.

"What is this Rūpa? Did you aspire after something for me?"

"Yes, I did, my lord, my Gurudeva. I thought that if I could obtain some milk and rice I would be able to prepare some *paramānna* which is very dear to you. Then I would invite you to take that *prasāda*."

"Oh, you have done a great wrong! This is so tasteful, I have never found such tasteful things in this world. Therefore, it must have some extraordinary origin. Who gave you the necessary ingredients you wanted for this preparation?"

Śrila Rūpa Goswāmī replied, "A girl came and gave it to me in the name of her family guardians."

Śrila Sanātana Goswāmī wanted to know who the girl was, but she was nowhere to be found in the nearby

*The height of
devotion found
in the Goswāmis*

village. Sanātana Goswāmī could understand that Śrīmatī Rādhārānī Herself had come and supplied those ingredients.

"We are searching after Her in order to serve Her, and She came and served us? What is this? Just the

In the higher type of devotion, it is undesirable—even unthinkable, that Kṛṣṇa will come to serve us; this is considered a great misfortune

opposite! My dear brother, what have you done? You wanted something for me and that was supplied by Her? We want Her so that we may serve Her, but She came and served us, and went away. This is

a great misfortune." He was greatly dissatisfied and left that place with these thoughts.

Rūpa Goswāmī could not take that *prasādam*. He thought, "I invited my Guru Śrīla Sanātana Goswāmī in order to serve and satisfy him, but quite the opposite result came. He has left dissatisfied." He ran after Sanātana Goswāmī to try and satisfy him.

So, we see that Kṛṣṇa Himself brought foodstuffs to Mādhavendra Puri, and that may be considered a very great fortune; yet, in this instance with Śrīla Rūpa and Śrīla Sanātana Goswāmī, a similar event occurred but was considered a grave misfortune. In the higher type of devotion there is never any desire that Kṛṣṇa or

We must be attentive to the conception of our Master

His Associates will come to serve and supply us, or that He will show Himself to us. To impose our whim on Him is not actual service. Whatever He likes to do He may do. And whatever may be necessary from us, we shall consider ourselves fortunate if we are given the chance to supply it. Exhaustively eliminating all our desires in the extreme, we are to place ourselves fully at the disposal of the command of the Supreme Lord, who is never to carry out any order or wish of ours.

By nature, He is eager to supply everything to His devotees (*yoga-kṣemam vahāmy aham*; Bg. 9.22). But the higher devotees do not like that Kṛṣṇa will supply them with anything, or that He will render service to them. Such is the purity of their devotion. Through their faith, they think, "He is my Lord. I don't want to have His *darśana* merely to satisfy my lower faculty of perceiving that 'He exists.'" To consider, "If I can see Him, I shall be satisfied that He exists," is a very low standard of faith. We have no capacity to see Him. To make Him our object, keeping ourselves the subject, is a low standard of faith. But higher, intense faith fully proves that He is; that wonderful cause of everything—He is present.

We are to place ourselves fully at the disposal of His Command

The faith of the higher devotees

A certain section claims, like the philosopher Cārvāka, that, "No, no, there is no God or higher substance. Whatever we see on the surface is everything." But deeper faith says that the cause is He from whom everything emanates, He by whom everything is maintained, and He into whom everything finally enters:

यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते, येन जातानि, यत् प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति,
तद् विजिज्ञासस्व, तदेव ब्रह्म।
(तैत्तिरीय ३/१/१)

*yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante, yena jātāni,
yat prayanty abhisamvishanti, tad vijīñāsasva,
tad eva brahma*

(Taittiriya Upanisad, 3.1.1)

Merely the effect is not everything, but the cause has its existence. And what is the nature of the cause? Some identify Him as Brahman, some as Paramātman, and some as Bhagavān. God is the destiner and designer of everything—He has created everything, and He is controlling everything. Everything is automatically existing with Him, as a particular potency of His.

Give up everything; try only to have faith, and everything will be found. Everything is there (*sakala*

chādiyā bhāi, śraddhādevira guṇa gāi). Do not demand for any proof, because that is meanness. To search after proof as to whether He 'is' or 'is not' is meanness. With deep faith, automatically it is known, "Yes, He is."

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वज्ञ मयि पश्यति ।
तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥

(गीता ६/३०)

*yo mām paśyati sarvatra, sarvāñ ca mayi paśyati
tasyāham na prāṇaśyāmi, sa ca me na prāṇaśyati*

(Bg. 6.30)

"For one who sees Me in everything and everything in Me, I do not remain unseen and he also is not unnoticed by Me: he never sways in his thought of Me."

Everything is in Him, and He is also everywhere. This is the characteristic of He for whom we are searching.

Oṁkāra, the monosyllable *Oṁ*, is the seed of theism. *Oṁ* means "Yes." Always, wherever we cast our glance to search, in one word the answer is yes. "Yes, what you are searching for, is. You are searching for happiness, pleasure, joy, fulfill-

"*Oṁ*" means a big "Yes"—what you are searching for really does exist

ment. You are in want, and in one word,—‘yes,’ fulfillment is there.”

Om takes the form of *Gāyatrī*, then *Veda* and *Vedānta Sūtra*; then it takes the shape of *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* and the *līlā*, the divine pastimes, of the Lord. After they had the opportunity of participating in the *Rāsa-līlā* of Kṛṣṇa, the Śruti, the *Upaniṣads*, remarked, “Oh, we could not conceive this much. We could not inform the public about *rasa*, ecstasy, of such a high type. *Raso vai saḥ*—He is *rasa, ānandam*, ecstasy. It plays in such a way? We could not understand so much, and we could not give it out to the public. So, our Lord, we beg Your forgiveness. In the full play of your joyous pastimes, the magnitude of Your ecstatic nature is inconceivable. Please forgive us, we failed to reveal to the public that the highest joy is of such fulfillment in the extreme; so much so, that *kāma*, lustiness, the most nasty thing in the mortal world, is found here to be the most beautiful, and of the highest type of charm. Even the union of men and women, which is normally to be hated and rejected—we find that this ecstatic joy includes even that. We could not understand, our Lord. Rather, the conception we presented is dry in comparison to this joyous life.”

Intimacy which even the Vedas could not give to the public

Thus, we should be careful to appreciate genuine faith. We should approach the devotees for faith. They are like many pillars of faith. We are told that electricity can flow everywhere, but practically, we must be connected with the dynamo. Dynamos can show electrical power, and similarly, there are many devotees, past and present, in whom we can find real Godliness. They stand like pillars of faith, in their dealings and example. If we approach Christ, his ideal and sacrifice will encourage faith in us. If we examine the history of Prahlāda, we will come to understand what a great devotee he is. Our hearts will become filled to the brim: “Here is faith—here is the presence of the Almighty.”

When we pay heed to the devotees, with their help we are raised to a particularly high standard of faith. We are in a safe position when we turn our attention towards the devotees. They are like so many pillars standing and proving His presence. Summarily neglecting the enjoyable objects of this world, they stand with their heads erect, proving and declaring their experience of the Supreme Entity.

Faith in the devotees, the Vaiṣṇavas, grants us the most substantial help. Such a position is not flickering,

Faith in the devotees grants us the most substantial help

but firm. One who has faith in the Vaiṣṇavas achieves *The devotees are above even śāstra, the scriptures* devotion of a tangible character. Otherwise, with only abstract faith in the Lord, without faith in the devotees, we are but beginners, in the stage of *kaniṣṭha-adhikāra*. This is an unreliable platform. Our devotion reaches a reliable standard when we can find devotion in the devotees, and recognise their importance. The devotees are above even *śāstra*, the scriptures. The tangible stage when our real faith in them develops is the middle stage, *madhyama-adhikāra*. In that stage, the opposition of the non-devotees may sometimes seem to partially hide the Lord in our consciousness, like an eclipse.

But these barriers within are dissolved when direct contact with the Supreme awakens. In the highest stage, *uttama-adhikāra*, one can trace the Supreme Entity everywhere and in every movement (*yo māṁ paśyati sarvatra*, *Bg. 6.30*; *sarva-bhuteṣu yaḥ paśyed bhagavad-bhāvam ātmanah*, *Bhā: 11.2.45*). It is His will, He is there, in His *līlā*. He may play hide and seek with His devotees. Sometimes He may be clearly visible to them, sometimes He may hide, and the devotees cry, "Oh, where are You, my Lord? I don't feel Your presence, I can't see You. How can I stand? How can I lead my life? Without You, I can't live. You are so charming and so joyous and the

giver of so much fulfillment; I can't live without Your relationship." In this way, they begin to wail and cry.

Everything is dependent upon Him alone. If we attempt to trace the cause of everything, we will find that the cause is something which in turn has its cause which also has its cause, and so on. But when we find His personal beauty and charm, we will realise, "Yes, this is the final objective that we and the whole world are searching for." There is a Bengali song—

"O mountain, O Himālayas, O Alps, O Sumeru, what are you searching for, with your head erect? Have you seen the creator of this world, *When love awakens*, and have you attained the fulfillment *the function of* of your life? Have you seen Him?" In *the brain retires* this way, the devotee feels in his heart that everything is searching for the Lord who is the fulfillment of life itself. In the phenomenal world of birth and death, there is nothing tangible that should attract our attention. Our inner heart's search is for *sat*—the eternal, *cit*—consciousness that satisfies our perception, and *ānandam*—the satisfaction of our hankering after beauty and love. When love awakens, the function of the brain retires. We will understand that love is the fulfillment

When we find His personal beauty and charm, we realise that this is the cause of everything, the final objective

of life. This is a special phase of our life. Wherever we may be, we are automatically always searching, searching, searching . . . searching for that 'Yes,' 'Om.' Om means, a big 'Yes.' What you are searching for—it is. What your inner heart is hankering after—that is existing.

Your search must progress from the apparent to the inner substance. The Lord of your search is there. Thus, *Omkāra* takes us to *Gāyatrī*, then the *Veda*, *Vedānta*, and *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, which describes the ecstatic, joyful side of the Lord. The Infinite

Mahāprabhu taught that we must abandon everything and make our only aim that Vṛndāvana Lord Kṛṣṇa, the source of unlimited manifestations of power

comes so close to the finite, that the finite thinks, "He is one of us." He plays the part of such a close friend that we think He is one of us. This is His highest grace and kindness upon us, and this is our highest attainment, which is found in Vṛndāvana. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu taught that we must abandon everything and make our only aim that Vṛndāvana Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa: *svayam Bhagavān*, God of gods, Lord of lords. He is the source of unlimited manifestations of supernatural power. Therefore, Mahāprabhu announced, "Search for Śrī

Kṛṣṇa. You have no other duty in this world. Take His name, talk about Him, and whatever you do, go on in this way. Very swiftly, you will achieve the fulfillment of your life. Go on taking His name, go on searching for Him, go on talking about Him whether you are sleeping, eating, quarrelling—whatever you are doing, combine it with Kṛṣṇa."

But that search for Kṛṣṇa should not be hypocritical. The sincere seeker will receive help and direction from the real devotees. With the help of the scriptures and the devotees, and with sincerity within you, go on searching after Kṛṣṇa, everywhere. Whoever you meet, talk about Kṛṣṇa, and don't talk of anything that is a prey to death. Wife, children, money—everything will evaporate at the next moment, so don't think about them any longer. But in every step of your life, do everything only for the Eternal Joy.

Kṛṣṇa is not your concoction. He can be known through *sādhu* and *śāstra*, not this mundane world of your enjoyment. Nor can you find Kṛṣṇa in abhorrence—renunciation, but Kṛṣṇa is with the *sādhu*, the pure saint; Kṛṣṇa is the fulfillment of the positive enquiry of

Go on taking His name—whether you are eating, sleeping or quarrelling—whatever . . .

Do everything only for the Eternal Joy

the heart.

Those who are carried away by the charm of the external world cannot understand their inner temperament;

The main necessity is to keep company with the Sādhu who has real faith in Kṛṣṇa—a very rare thing in this world; in any way possible make this ideal the crown of your head, if you aspire for the highest good

they are unfortunate (*na te viduḥ svārtha-gatīm hi viṣṇum, durāśayā ye bahir artha-mānīnah*, Bhā: 7.5.31). The main necessity is to keep company with the *sādhu* who has real faith in Kṛṣṇa. Such a *sādhu*, is very, very rare in this world, but if you want to achieve the highest good, make that ideal

the crown of your head—in any way

possible, take the help of that association.

‘সাধুসঙ্গ’, ‘সাধুসঙ্গ’— সর্বশান্তে কয়।

লবমাত্র সাধুসঙ্গে সর্বসিদ্ধি হয় ॥

(চৈ: চ: মধ্য ২২/৫৪)

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

(C.c. Madhya 22.54)

“A moment’s association with the *sādhu* awards all success, and this is the verdict of all the scriptures.”

किं प्रमत्तस्य बहुभिरोक्षैर्हायनैरिह ।

वरं मुद्रृत्तं विदितं घटते श्रेयसे यतः ॥

(भा: ২/১/১২)

kiṁ pramattasya bahubhir, parokṣair hāyanair iha
varaṁ muhūrttam viditam, ghaṭate śreyase yataḥ

(Bhā: 2.1.12)

“Imperceptibly, many, many years pass uselessly in the life of a person intoxicated by mundane pleasures. Better if only for a moment he realises that he is losing valuable time, for he may thus become serious to attain his eternal benefit.”

Here, Śukadeva Goswāmī says that one moment is sufficient to solve the whole problem of life, if it is properly utilised in *sādhu-saṅga*. At all costs, try to utilise the opportunity of *sādhu-saṅga*, the association of the agent of Kṛṣṇa. What is the necessity of living for ages and ages if we are unconscious of our own interest? One moment properly utilised is sufficient to solve the whole problem of our life, for which we are eternally wandering about in this plane. We must be wakeful to our personal interest, not negligent.

One moment properly utilised is sufficient to solve the whole problem of our life, for which we are eternally wandering

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to direct us to our real interest within: "You do not know your own heart.

*With the help of
a proper guide,
search your
own heart*

You are a foreigner to your own heart and its demand. There is a wealth within your heart—try to find it: eliminate the foreign things, and you will find your heart to be a temple of Kṛṣṇa. With the help of a proper guide, search your own heart and you will find Kṛṣṇa there. This is not a foreign thing to you. Every heart is a temple of the Lord. It is your property, it is your home. Back to God, back to home."

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will find your heart to be a temple of Kṛṣṇa. With the help of a proper guide, search your own heart and you will find Kṛṣṇa there. This is not a foreign thing to you. Every heart is a temple of the Lord. It is your property, it is your home. Back to God, back to home."

Chapter Three

The Success of Faith

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written:

সকল ছাড়িয়া ভাই শ্রদ্ধাদেবীর গুণ গাই
ধার কৃপা ভক্তি দিতে পারে ।

*sakala chādiyā bhāi śraddhādevīra guṇa gāi
yāñra kṛpā bhakti dite pāre*

"Giving up everything, let us sing in praise of Śraddhā-devī—faith—whose grace can take us to Kṛṣṇa."

Śraddhā, faith, is the most subtle thing, and it is also the most tangible. It is not imaginary. We must realise that it is reality, it is concrete, and not merely an abstract sentiment of mere individual consciousness. Faith is universal as the most fundamental element that can connect us with the finest objective.

Through electricity or radio we can establish communication over a long distance. The science is very subtle, and not known to anyone and everyone,

yet, we cannot deny its existence; it has its tangible position. But faith is much more subtle, and through it one can establish both higher contact and reciprocation. Subtle faith is not approachable by anyone and everyone; it has its tangible existence and it may function in any circumstance if we have its peculiar contact. We cannot give false statements that we possess it; our power and grandeur are not necessarily any proof of its presence in us. Despite great pomp and show, all we personify may be falsehood. We should be very cautious to maintain our contact with genuine faith.

Of course, sincerity is the main requirement for faith's connection. No price, however valuable in this world, can purchase it. The qualification is *lauhyam*—

The main qualification for faith our sincere and earnest desire for the thing. No one can purchase the Absolute, and no price can purchase Him. The absolute necessity is our sincere desire and earnestness. With insincerity, we cannot make trade with Him; He is not so foolish as to become an object of trade for anybody! Sincere desire for Him is required, and that will awaken the conception to serve Him. We want Him, sincerely—through affection. We love Him, so we desire Him. And to love means to sacrifice for the object of

*Power and
grandeur are
not proof
of faith*

our love.

Śrila Jīva Gosvāmī Prabhu has given a beautiful definition of the word 'Bhagavān': *bhajaniya sarvā-sad-guṇa-viśiṣṭa*— "The Supreme Lord, Bhagavān, is of such a nature that everyone who comes in contact with Him will want to serve Him and to sacrifice themselves for His satisfaction." This is the result of faith in its developed form. He is so noble, we shall think that if we die to satisfy Him, our life's objective will be fulfilled. His noble quality is such that it draws so much sacrificing spirit for Him; it draws everything towards Him. "Die to live." Faith is such.

We are in the ocean of faith, and the devotees are the essential agents. Each helps the other. We are much relieved from the fatigue and trials of a long journey if we have a companion or the association *The agents of faith* of a group. Similarly, in this ocean, if we obtain the help of devotees of similar nature to ours, that will be most conducive. Even our Guru Mahārāja, in a speech he delivered on *Vyāsa-puṣṭi*, his Holy Appearance Day, addressed his disciples, "Vipada uddhāraṇa bandhu-gaṇa: Oh my friends, who can give me relief from danger."

*His noble quality
draws so much
sacrificing
spirit for Him:
"Die to live,"
to satisfy Him*

"To me, you are my deliverers from danger. In the ocean of faith, it is very difficult to journey onward alone, so you have come to help me in my dangerous, ambitious journey in the infinite. You have come, and

Faith is the only capital you are engaging me in talking about Him, and so, you have given me some engagement. Otherwise, to live and move alone in the infinite is very difficult, troublesome and dangerous. You have all come to hear something, and in this exchange of talks about Him the situation has been made very safe and easy to journey so far toward Vaikuntha."

We must be conscious of our real position when we are searching for Kṛṣṇa. It is not easy, and also, it is very easy—both simultaneously. Faith is the only capital by which we can make our journey towards the Infinite. *Bhakti*, devotion, has no beginning and no end (*ahaituky apratihata*). There is no beginning—it is there already. Before we came to know about it, it was there.

The essential element in your journey It was there, it is there, it will be there. No one can resist it—that *bhakti*, that faith, is irresistible. It is part of the eternal substance. Its very nature is eternity—none can oppose it. We only have to make contact and associate with it, and the wave will carry us towards our goal. And if we can have the company of the devotees, the journey

becomes very easy and pleasant, whereas to go alone is very difficult.

In the progress of our contact with faith, when we come to take benefit from the devotees and have faith in them, we are more safe and our progress is also tangible—it comes to reality. From a vague, abstract position, faith becomes deeper within us. We can then recognise many others with the same objective in life, and the journey becomes easier. It becomes conceivable. It comes into measurement. When we have faith in the real devotees, we can come into contact with such a tangible thing.

Thus, the position of the devotees is very important in our journey, especially in the middle stage. In the primary stage, not much importance is given to the devotees. With only a vague conception from the scriptures and with the help of previous accumulated merits (*sukṛti*), the journey is begun. But gradually, the beginners find that to journey onwards in the infinite is not an easy thing: "We thought that with a little progress we could attain the desired end, but now we find that it is not so." When we come to consider the real position of devotion, of what is God—He is universal, He is

Faith in real devotees brings us to a tangible thing

To journey onward in the Infinite is not an easy thing

the ultimate goal—we may gradually become disappointed. But if along the way we take help from the devotees of similar objective, we shall feel much relief by their company, even though the destination may be far away.

Difficulties begin when we enter the journey exclusively

The difficulties of the journey are more prominent in the second stage. In the primary stage, we are not very exclusive in our objective, and so, we do not experience much difficulty. Real difficulties begin when we enter into the journey exclusively, with no other objective than to engage our whole energy towards

When our shortcomings can be rectified that high and elevated path. And if we actually achieve a touch of the highest stage, the *mahā-bhāgavata* stage, the journey again

becomes easier. But the middle portion is difficult, and at that stage the devotees are very important to save us. This is the period of both tangible acquisition and difficulty; our failings on the path to realisation are to be rectified in this middle stage.

When we enter into war, in the beginning we have much hope. We feel confident. But the real test is when the fighting begins. And when we finally conquer, we again become very satisfied. But the middle—when the war is being conducted—that is the difficult period. At that time, our co-workers, our comrades who fight along-

side us, are very, very important to us. "I am not alone, but there are many others battling alongside me in that middle fighting period of war." Those companions are important. Some may disappear from the field but there will be others to encourage me.

Similarly, on this journey, we may see that many stalwarts are falling. It may discourage us to see such respected persons going away—falling in the middle path. Nonetheless, in the midst of those unfavourable circumstances there are others who are bravely making progress with unflinching faith, and they will help us. To stick it out to the end is difficult—but important and valuable. The test comes and shows how much faith we have. Nothing comes in vain, and we must take everything that happens in that way.

There may be so many stalwarts, like Bhīṣma and Drona, who fall flat in the battlefield, but still we must go on (*karmany evādhikāras te, mā phaleṣu kadācana*, Bg. 2.47). We are out to fight to the end. We must achieve our end of life, and we can imbibe such firmness from the character of the devotees. The *śastra* will also offer helpful advice, but the association of the devotees is nonetheless of ultimate importance.

Those companions of import in the battle against māyā

The association of devotees is of ultimate importance

We need lasting faith, not flickering faith: "Oh, I attempted for some time but I did not find any tangible fruit from *bhakti*, so I left"; or, "To me, it seemed very, very vague. When I began, I thought this to be something tangible that I would quickly attain, but it is not so. It is uncertain. I am giving so much energy for the cause, but still the desired result is not achieved." Previous tendencies also draw from the negative side, and so we find that many stalwarts are falling.

How to persevere on this journey?

Take courage from those standing and deeply engaged

Still, we have to persevere in this journey, and we shall have to take courage from those who are standing and who are deeply engaged. Though it is told hundreds of times that the Absolute is infinite, in the beginning we still tend to take it in the conception of the finite. We are accustomed to think of anything and everything in terms of finite. So, although we hear that it is infinite, it is *Vaikuṇṭha*, it has no limit—we nonetheless cannot grasp the proper meaning. But when we make practical progress, many new conceptions must come to our knowledge.

Now, when our Guru Mahārāja addressed his disciples as *vipada uddhāraṇa bandhu-gaṇa*, "My dear friends who have come to deliver me from danger," we

should, of course, recognise such a statement from both the relative and absolute standpoints. Students are a necessary part of a professor—when a professor has students, he feels the practical utility of his life has been successful. Thus, from the relative point of view, disciples can help the Ācāryya. But from the absolute standpoint, Kṛṣṇa's will is everything, and the *nitya-siddha* or eternally perfect great souls who inwardly know the Lord's intentions cannot be disturbed by any danger in any respect, but outwardly such an appearance may be manifest in their dealings.

मच्चिता मद्गतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम् ।
कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥

(गीता १०/९)

*mac-cittā mad-gata-prāṇā, bodhayantah parasparam
kathayantaś ca māṁ nityam, tuṣyanti ca ramanti ca*

(Bg. 10.9)

Mac-cittā: "Their attention is in Me"; *mad-gata-prāṇā:* "Their energy is also spent for my cause"; *bodhayantah parasparam:* "They mutually assist one another." This reminds us of the 'Napoleonic chair.' Once, when stranded in a marsh, Napoleon arranged that each man

sit on the lap of another, in a circular formation; each automatically protected the other from the otherwise

By mutual understanding and discussion, a nectar arises to nourish the devotees

fatal cold, and they could all remain awake to pass the whole night of intolerable cold. Otherwise, his army would have perished. So, by mutual help, one devotee is asking questions, another is answering, and they are both getting engagement. The questioner is giving some energy and the answerer is also energising. *Bodhayantah parasparam*: those of equal standing exchange their thoughts about Kṛṣṇa—*kathayantaś ca māṁ nityam*—and thereby their blissfulness is generated. By mutual understanding and discussion, a kind of nectar arises that nourishes the devotees. “One is asking something about Me and another is answering, and thereby that discussion creates a flow of nectar that nourishes both parties.” *Tuṣyanti ca ramanti ca*: “Satisfaction is generated from that mutual understanding, and it develops up to *ramanti ca*, up to the quality of the absolute reciprocation, the ‘wholesale transaction.’ It rises up to that standard, *ramanti ca*, and again I give them a further installment, an illumination of new light (*dadāmi buddhi-yogam tam*), and they take a new course and are promoted into the ‘suicide squad,’ that squadron which is eligible for every type of service.”

That particular type of ‘soldier’ is competent to fight on the land, in the water, in the sky or in any circumstances, and he is prepared for any form of fighting, any form of service. “I direct them to that section.”

*To be Competent
for any type of
sacrifice or service*

Yena mām upayānti te (Bg. 10.10). Unconditional service: they are ready for any service demanded of them. They are ready to sacrifice their lives for any form of service, and that peculiar group is in Vṛndāvana. I mentioned to Śrīpāda A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja that in Gitā, after *ramanti* (10.9) comes *buddhi-yoga* and then *upayānti* (10.10); according to me, the meaning is that *ramanti* or divine service in *madhura-rasa* progresses through *buddhi-yoga* or *yoga-māyā*, up to *upayānti*, or the highest plane of service in Vṛndāvana. Śrīpāda Swāmī Mahārāja responded, “What more could it mean than this!”

Hence, *upayānti* means *kāma-rūpā*. In his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, Śrila Rūpa Goswāmī has mentioned *sambandha-rūpā* and *kāma-rūpā*, the two types of *Rāgātmikā-bhakti*, or devotion rendered by the Eternal Associates of the Lord, headed by the residents of Vraja. In *sambandha-rūpā* the Lord’s Associates cooperate according to their fixed relative positions of *dāsyā*, *sakhyā*, *vātsalyā* or *madhura*, whereas in *kāma-rūpā* they

come forward to serve any necessity that is demanded of them. They are ready to serve any and every desire of the Absolute.

They are like that group of soldiers who have been trained to do any service in the war without being limited

A chance to render higher service to fighting only in a particular division such as the army, navy or air force. They are prepared for all sorts of service, anywhere. Such is the *kāma-rūpā* group. This is *upayānti te*; they are awarded the instruction (*dadāmi buddhi-yogam tam*) by which they earn such capacity in the service of the Supreme. Kṛṣṇa is ready to co-operate with the servitors in any position. In Mathurā, He gave even Sairindhri, Kubjā, the chance to render higher service. Kṛṣṇa is prepared for anything, and so the other side, His servitors, must also be prepared in that way. The high conception of *kāma-rūpā* is very, very abstruse. It is most difficult for ordinary mortals to comprehend.

तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानं तमः ।
नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥

(गीता १०/११)

teṣām evānukampārtham, aham ajñāna-jam tamah
nāśayāmy ātma-bhāva-stho, jñāna-dipena bhāsvatā

(Bg. 10.11)

"I am so indebted to those devotees that whenever they feel the pain of My separation, I cannot tolerate it. I immediately run to co-operate with them in accepting My service. Such is the intensity of the demand I feel from them."

In an examination hall, many of us may sit for the examination, yet many are unsuccessful and fall back. But we are not to dwell on them. Rather, we shall try to keep company with the successful candidates. They should be the focus of our attention, and with their help we shall progress. Progress means selection and elimination, and there is no end of making progress. We must take courage to that extent.

Everywhere and in whatever direction we may go, we shall find both successful and unsuccessful candidates. We shall try to avoid the unsuccessful. Some may be brilliant in the primary classes, but in progressing further, we find that they are proving dull and cannot pass the test. And there may be many who were not very successful in the primary classes but flourish in higher education. Thus, we should not be discouraged and disappointed on hearing that so many once-respected stalwarts are falling away. We should try to feel the

Try to keep company with the successful candidates

The soil on which we are actually moving

actual soil. We need a sincere acquaintance with the soil on which we are moving. It is unintelligible to the fullest extent, but we must spare some energy to cultivate a deeper feeling for where we are, what we want, and where we are going. We must have a deeper feeling for the plane of our objective and achievement. We must not allow ourselves to be captured by the outer charm of things, but we should try to feel and trace the reality as our friend.

क्लेशघ्नी शुभदा मोक्षलघुताकृत् सुदुर्लभा ।
सान्द्रानन्दविशेषात्मा श्रीकृष्णाकर्षिणी च सा ॥

(सिद्ध, पूर्व १/१७)

*kleśa-ghni śubhadā mokṣa-, laghutā-kṛt sudurllabha
sāndrānanda-viśeṣātmā, śri-kṛṣṇākarsiṇī ca sā*

(B.r.s. Pūrvva 1.17)

"*Uttamā-bhakti*, the purest devotion, is the vanquisher of all sin and ignorance, and the bestower of all auspiciousness; liberation is belittled in the presence of such devotion, which is very rarely attained, the embodiment of the deepest ecstasy, and the attractor of Śri Kṛṣṇa Himself."

Even if we achieve liberation from all the unde-

sirable forces around us, pure devotion undermines this position of liberation (*mokṣa-laghutā-kṛt*). We may be a liberated soul, free from the reactions and apprehension of the future, but association with the positive engagement, *bhakti*, is much more difficult to attain (*sudurllabha*). To obtain a 'passport' is not the same as securing a 'visa.' One may have a passport, but in order to secure a visa it will have to be necessary to undergo more trouble. In other words, we may be released by the reactionary plane, yet we may not have entrance into the higher plane. To have entrance there is far beyond this liberation. The qualification to eagerly aspire to give oneself wholly for the other plane of life is hardly to be found in anyone. Such a person has no motive to acquire anything for the plane in which he had previously been living for so long.

Furthermore, if he is appointed to be a preacher, an agent to do relief work here, he will execute that duty solely under the appointment of, and in the interest of, that higher plane, without any attachment that "I shall bring some good to the people." He will think, "I must put myself wholly at the disposal of the higher plane, and I shall not be eager to become an *ācāryya*, a spiritual master. Otherwise, there is the danger of committing *nāmāparādha*, offence against the Lord's name."

Aśraddadhāne vimukhe 'py aśṛṇvati, yaś copadeśah śiva-nāmāparādhah. It is an offence to give the holy name to the faithless. It betrays the motivation to gain a 'position' in the higher sphere. This is a type of mundane attachment, a spiritual tradery, as is the habit of caste 'Goswāmins' and other spurious lines. Rather, the healthy attitude should be, "If I am appointed from above, then I shall serve as appointed, and that too, only for the interest of those who have appointed me. I am entering that rank solely for the interest of that higher land." That should be the pure and perfect approach.

So, with a passport alone we cannot hope to enter easily into that higher plane which is *sudurlabhā*, very rarely attained. But if we can enter, we shall feel *sāndrā-nanda viśeṣātmā*, "Yes, the very plane itself is most happy and full of independent spirit. I desired to secure a 'visa' to enter this country, and now I find that it really is as promised. I directly perceive that I am breathing in a far higher, sweeter atmosphere—a homely atmosphere that far excels anything of my previous soil." And finally, *śri-kṛṣṇākarsinī ca sā*: Kṛṣṇa Himself, Reality the Beautiful, who attracts the hearts of all—even He is attracted by the dedication of his surrendered servitor. Neither power nor knowledge have any play in this domain, but the Sweet Absolute is captured by the love of His devotee.

Chapter Four

The Honest Enquirer

We should note the difference between a servant and a trader. Many approach with some trading purpose, but the character of the real devotee should be that of a servant. Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja has mentioned that one who associates with the *sādhus*, wanting something in return for his personal interest, is making 'trade' with the *sādhus*. He thinks, "How much can I gain, and how much shall I have to give?" But a pure devotee should not have any such separate interest. Rather, he should try to merge within the interest of the Lord. In whatever position he is, it does not matter—whether he is a *brahmacārī*, a *sannyāsi*, a *grhastha*, a *vānaprastha* or any other position—he must be willing to merge (*viśate tad anantaram*).

He will not like to keep any separate account. His sole objective will be to enter into the family of the Godhead. This is the very basis of pure devotion. *Tato māṁ tattvato jñātvā, viśate tad anantaram* (Bg. 18.55). We want to surrender, to be one of common interest with the Lord, and not to approach, ask some questions, pocket the answers, and then make trade with them

elsewhere in any way. Once, when I was being asked many questions, I replied, "This is not an enquiry office." The inquisitive want to satisfy their idle curiosity; or, they want to be masters of many keys—that they will be able to give solutions to everyone's problems, and attain some status. They have many motives but they cannot understand the real necessity.

We require specific articles to execute worship,
My sole enquiry is, such as incense, flowers, lamp, etc.
'How can I be utilised here?' Similarly, if we wish to realise the supersubjective plane, there are three specific necessities: *pranipāta*, *paripraśna*, and *sevā*. Without these three ingredients, our search will be imitative, unsubstantial and farcical.

Praṇipāta means 'to fall flat near the feet of the worshippable': "I have come to the end of all enterprise with my previous plane of life; I could find nothing there to fulfill my life's objectives. Finally, after 'completing my errands,' I have come here." This is the practical symptom of *pranipāta*.

Paripraśna means 'sincere enquiry.' Honest and sincere enquiry is allowed. The spirit of such enquiry is, "I want to know how I can be utilised in any way. All the charm for living elsewhere is over. My sole enquiry is 'How can I be utilised here?'"

And *sevā*, service, is the all-important factor. "I have come to serve and to be utilised for the cause of the subject about which I have enquired. I have not come to take anything from here. I have come only to serve, with no other motive."

तद् विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत् समित् पाणि: श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठम् ॥

(मुण्डक, १/३/१२)

tad vijñānārtham sa gurum evābhigacchet
 samit pāṇih śrotriyaṁ brahma-niṣṭham

(Mundaka Upaniṣad, 1.2.12)

Abhigacchet means *samyak-gacchet*—'not with a return ticket.' *Abhi-* means *samyak*, 'fully.' I have completely lost my charm for the previous life; I have come to surrender to *śrotriyaṁ brahma-niṣṭham*, one who can teach me, being already in a position in the divinity and possessing both theoretical and practical knowledge about the objective. Without this process, everything will be futile.

तस्माद्गुरुं प्रपद्येत जिज्ञासुः श्रेयः उत्तमम् ।
 शान्दे परे च निष्णातं ब्रह्मण्युपशमाश्रयम् ॥

tasmād gurum prapadyeta, jijñāsuḥ śreyah uttamam
 śābde pare ca niṣṇātām, brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam

Tasmāt means ‘consequently’—because the candidate has lost all charm for the world of his previous experience—he has consequently approached with the sole objective of seeking an honourable place here for his future life. *Prapadyeta* means *prapannam*, ‘surrender’; he will exclusively devote himself for the cause. *Jijnāsuḥ śreyah uttamam*: he has come in search of a higher life. “The lower lives are over; can I have an elevated life here?” He is therefore surrendering to one who is versed in both aspects of the truth—the reality (*pare*) as well as the literary description of that reality (*śabde*, or *śruti-śāstre*), which is revealed truth extended from the higher quarter, beyond this world of sensual experience (*Bhā*: 11.3.21).

In the *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja refused to accept any boons offered to him by the Lord. He said, “One who accepts boons in return for his service to You is not Your servant but a merchant” (*na sa bhṛtyaḥ sa vai vaṇik*, *Bhā*: 7.10.4). Those who approach Guru and Kṛṣṇa with their separate interest have come only to make trade. They have come to acquire something to satisfy their own purpose. We must be very cautious to avoid such traits within ourselves. For what have I come? There may be many motives.

After a famous renowned Goswāmin who was well-

versed in *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* had explained the *Bhāgavatam* in a public gathering, Śrila Gaura Kiśora Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, who was present during the lecture, later ordered his servant, “Purify this place with water and cowdung!”

The servant was wonderstruck. “Why? It is already purified; the recitation of *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, *Bhāgavata-kathā*, took place here.”

Śrila Gaura Kiśora Bābājī said, “You heard *Bhāgavatam*, but I heard only ‘money, money, money.’” In other words, The Goswāmin had been very eager to have Śrila Gaura Kiśora Dāsa Bābājī present at his lecture; the publicity that Śrila Bābājī was present to hear his ex-

Trading with Bhāgavatam is a grave offence, aparādha

planation of *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* would give the lecturer greater scope to make more money in his trade. He came to read *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* only for that purpose, and not to satisfy *Bhāgavatam* or Kṛṣṇa. He came for his own business; not for the purpose of *Bhāgavatam*. Trading with *Bhāgavatam* is an offence, *aparādha*, against the *Bhāgavatam*, most detrimental to pure devotion. One’s attitude in devotion is all-important. Śrila Śridhara Swāmī, the renowned commentator of *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, has stated, *sā cārpitaiva sati yadi kriyeta, na tu kṛtā sati paścād arpyeta*: “Devotional

services must be first offered to the Lord, then performed; not performed and offered afterwards."

We should be already committed when we come to serve, and not that we shall collect capital and later

*Only if I receive
an impression from
the higher quarter
will it be service*

try to utilise it in the service of the Lord. The commitment is to Him, to Kṛṣṇa. I have come to know about

Him for *Him*, not for me or anyone else. Then, why is there a preaching department for others' benefit? That department exists only because of the instruction from above. Only if I receive an impression from that higher quarter, "Go and preach," shall I do so, and only then will my preaching be service, and never if it is done for the name and fame that "I am a good preacher doing good work, etc." I must have engagement from the higher office, and only on their behalf I shall preach; then it will be genuine preaching. Otherwise, it will be trading. *Na sa bhṛtyah sa vai vanīkः* Prahlaḍa Mahārāja has warned us against this trading mentality in the name of spiritual truth.

Devotion is a separate and distinct plane where we live only for the centre; we aspire to live and move only as an agent of the centre, never disconnected from the centre—this is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Reality is for itself, and we must strictly abide by this rule. He is for Himself,

everything is for Him—and *I* am for Him. And whatever I do must also be for Him. We must strictly adhere to this conception, and always examine whether what we are doing is for Him or for any other part, however important we may think it to be.

And what is the guarantee? The guarantee is Vaiṣṇava and *śāstra*. One should not be so audacious to think that he can conceive the whole thing; one should do everything with the approval of a Vaiṣṇava (*vaiṣṇavera ānugatya*). In the beginning, when I joined *Gaudiya Math*, my Godbrother Professor Sanyal remarked one day, "If we read *Bhāgavatam* on our own accord, we may perhaps acquire some knowledge, etc., but not *bhakti*, devotion. But if a Vaiṣṇava orders us to read, our reading will be in devotion." Even reading of the scriptures is not devotion unless done on the order of the Vaiṣṇava; independent reading is only knowledge-seeking. By following the Vaiṣṇava, our bond with the Lord is guaranteed. *Sādhu-saṅge kṛṣṇa-nāma*: in the company of the devotees, chanting the name or whatever service we render is guaranteed to reach Him. And what is the guarantee of that? The reply will be, "His agent is saying so, and I am therefore engaged. I am not my master—I am his servant." Such consciousness must be genuine, as far as

*The audacious
reject the Vaiṣ-
ṇava's guidance*

possible; success depends on this principle.

Reality is for itself. This truth, however hard it may seem, must be accepted. 'Die to live,' and 'Reality is by itself and for itself—these sayings of Hegel can be very nicely employed by the Vaiṣṇava school.

अहं हि सर्वयज्ञानां भोक्ता च प्रभुरेव च ।

(गीता ९/२४)

aham hi sarvya-yajñānām, bhoktā ca prabhur eva ca

(Bg. 9.24)

In Śrī Gītā, we find that 'Reality is by itself and for First surrender: itself': "I am the Lord and Enjoyer of all then serve sacrifices." Thus, Śrī Śridhara Svāmipāda has remarked, "First surrender, then serve." Otherwise you will try to acquire something, pocket it, and fly away. No. Sign the contract for everything that is given to you, then do the needful service without relying on yourself.

Is such a life desirable? We have to think it out: there is so much risk—'Die to live.' Must we first die in order to live in the future? Are we prepared to take such a risk? Are we sufficiently disgusted with the present environment that we can risk so much for some bright future? "I shall jump!" Are we disgusted enough to take

such a step?

If I am sincere to myself, and if I have a glimpse of the bright future, then only can I take such a risk. Otherwise, no one would be so foolish to take such a risk and jump, giving up the present for the uncertain future. To feel the courage to jump, one must have caught a glimpse of even the tiniest ray of such a bright existence.

Sukṛti, devotional merit, and *śraddhā*, good faith, are required. If only a point of noble faith has arisen in one's heart, he may take such a bold step and he must jump; otherwise it is impossible. First *śraddhā*, then *sādhu-saṅga* and *bhajana-kriyā*: with faith, when one has the association of the devotees, the practices of devotional service follow. With faith, one can embrace the process of realisation. *Sakala chādiyā bhāi, śraddhādevīra guṇa gāi*: give up everything and with your utmost energy praise the nobility of faith, the ray for a new and noble life.

Even great scholars and stalwarts of the religious world cannot comprehend the quality of the life of surrender to Kṛṣṇa (*na vai vidur ṛṣayo nāpi devāḥ*, Bhā: 6.3.19); what, then, can common humans comprehend?

Catch a glimpse
of even the
tiniest ray

Only a point of
noble faith is
needed to jump

Praise the nobility
of Faith—the ray for
a new and noble life

Those remaining outside may be trying, but they have not yet come to the soil.

When prospecting for oil or minerals, one may see many outer symptoms indicating the presence of those elements within the earth below, but only after pen-

*If we do everything
for Him, every-
thing will be very
beautifully done*

etrating deeper can one confirm his find. Despite many outer symptoms without substance, only when the search has reached to a certain stage can one know, "Yes, we have struck oil, or iron, or gold." So, Śrī Caitanyadeva said, *eho haya, āge kaha āra*: "The divine life you are searching for is; now go further."

In this way, with good faith, *śraddhā*, one can thus progress. Faith must be of this nature: if we supply food

*Contribute your
quota, however
small* to the stomach, naturally the whole body will be nourished; we shall not try to

nourish a particular part by a local injection. If we supply water to the root, the whole tree will be fed. Similarly, by faith we can realise that if we do everything for Him, the centre of Beauty Personified, everything will be very beautifully done. With all your might contribute your quota, however small, and from that point your efforts will be distributed beautifully. And this is the highest harmony. The highest life for every part is of the nature of harmony with the whole.

If you have a good cook, why try to cook separately yourself? If you simply assist him according to his directions, your ingredients cooked by his hands will be tasteful to all. So engage

*Whatever you have,
place it at the
disposal of the
Highest Beauty*

yourself with that principle. Whatever might you have, however small, place it at the disposal of the highest beauty, love divine, and it will be distributed; and you will also be inundated with the *The 'trading temperament'* highest quality and degree of joy *is a great danger in our approach to pure devotion* and fulfillment. Such a life of devotion has been recommended as the key to our life. Prahlāda Mahārāja, who is a *śuddha-bhakta*, a pure devotee, of the primary stage, *śānta-rasa*, has warned us of the contamination of the 'trading temperament'; it is a great danger in our approach to pure devotion (*na sa bhṛtyah sa vai vanīk*). So we must scrutinise ourselves and abandon this trading temperament. At its root is *pratiṣṭhā*—the quest for self-establishment, name and fame. Genuine devotion is devoid of such a temperament.

*...to progress very intensely and become
more intense...
...and also, when approaching the high spiritual life,
you must move death at every step. Give yourself with
the most intense desire do or die. At every point, keep*

Chapter Five

Unconditional Service

Try to adjust yourself through sound only, the subtlest element of this plane. Through sound, go on cultivating spiritual life; and that too must be approached with a serving attitude, otherwise it will be futile. We are recommended to approach divinity through the most subtle element of this gross world. Although it is apparently nothing to us at present, this divinity is actually everything.

So, accept the subtlest thing. But if the very life is absent, our search will be futile. Learn to give yourself, learn to 'die,' to embrace so-called death at every second. Even in this world we find the 'do-or-die' attitude in ambitious politicians, social workers, etc. In every duty and at every step they are ready to sacrifice their lives for the cause. If one embraces that do-or-die principle of life, he is sure to progress very intensely and become a great success.

Here also, when approaching the high spiritual life, you must invite death at every step. Give yourself with the most intense desire: do or die. At every point, keep

your life as your guarantee: "I shall succeed or I shall die." Approach the sound, giving yourself with this spirit. No giving—no getting.

Transformed by an intensified giving nature

If you can desire to give with such an intensified nature, you will be transformed into a bona fide candidate for the higher world.

The Beautiful is playing, dancing in His own sweetness

Service means self-giving, self-dedication, and this should be our attitude to approach that plane. In that way, all the coatings of ego will vanish one by one, and the genuine self will come from within and select its own soil: "This is my home." So many coverings are deviating us in different directions, taking us far, far away from our *svarūpa*, our real noble self—a servant in the highest plane of the whole organism. The Beautiful is playing, dancing in His own sweetness and affection, and we can reach Him, following such a course of 'do-or-die' at every moment.

Through self-giving I can acquire my fortune, and not as a master sitting in my chair gathering information from different quarters to utilise for my selfish plans. *Ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-saṅga 'tha bhajana-kriyā* (B.r.s. *Pūrvā*, 4.15): to progress with faith, keeping the association of devotees and dedicating one's activities to the Lord, means this—you must go forward in your life

with the spirit that you are willing to give away this life. 'Do-or-die' is, of course, not in the physical sense but the internal sense (*bhajana-kriyā*). This is self-giving, ego-giving.

Tato 'nartha-nivṛttiḥ syāt: if you can adopt this, the undesirable things within you will disappear very easily and swiftly. *Tato niṣṭhā:* then you will find a continuous connection with such a principle in your life. That principle will always act continuously, and other fleeting, mean desires won't be able to approach or touch you. Next, you will find *ruci*, a real taste for divinity. Otherwise, before that continuous stage, whatever taste we may think we have is only treachery and not real taste. *Niṣṭhā* means *nairantaryya*: when we are established in twenty-four hours a day continuous connection with that charming substance, a real taste will arise, and we can rely on that taste. Any taste that we may find in any other position is unreliable. Twenty-four hours a day connection with divinity—eliminating all other charms of this world—is necessary. Then, the *ruci*, the conscious taste that arises in us, is a reliable guide.

After that, *āsakti*, natural affinity, arises, and then the symptoms of *bhāva*, the 'bud' stage of the 'flower' of

*Mean desires
won't be able
to touch you*

*Divine taste
awakens in con-
tinuous connection*

prema, divine love, makes its appearance. This is the way of our progress. But if there is any imitation, only offences will be created. Those offences will be recorded in that circle of the examiners of the upper quarter, and they will give a stamp of disqualification that we are criminal and unfit. This will go against us and hamper our future progress. Thus, we must be very careful not to commit offence, *aparādha*. It is better to be a newcomer with a new introduction than to have a criminal record, for that will go against us. We must be very, very careful in our quest for the highest objective of our eternal life. This caution has been especially given by our Guru Mahārāja, Śrila Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura, and he attracted us to the line of exclusive devotion.

Sevonmukhe, serving attitude was foremost. Our Guru Mahārāja did not allow us to read much, even of the lower types of scriptures dealing with general *sādhana*

The very life of the practice is all important—this is self-dedication or practices, not to speak of the higher books. Rather, we were expected to actually follow those practices by hearing from the proper source and practising accordingly whatever was instructed from there. Serving—learn to give yourself properly. There are different methods of service: *śravaṇa*, hearing; *kirttana*,

chanting; *smarana*, remembering; *vandana*, praying, etc. Śrila Rūpa Goswāmī has mentioned sixty-four kinds of devotional practices, and it has also been further mentioned that there are one thousand types of devotional practices. But practices are not very important; the very life of the practice is all-important, for this is self-dedication. Thus we should be very particular to learn that dedication is work under a Vaiṣṇava.

Try to get practical training, working under a proper agent; that will help you most to learn and practise true dedication. Guidance must come from above. It may be very rare, but it is most valuable. We must selflessly surrender to whatever directive descends from above. "I won't serve my whims or the whims of men of my level, but whatever comes from the plane above, I shall obey very eagerly." This is the key, and this is service.

Sevonmukhatā, serving attitude, means what? One day, during the latter days of his presence in the world, our Guru Mahārāja Śrila Prabhupāda said to a certain *san-*
nyāsi who had led a full twenty years of life in the mission, "You did not see me—you could not see who I am. Like a zamindar you have kept some householder

Dedication is work under a Vaiṣṇava

Selflessly surrender to whatever directive descends

No compromise in wholesale surrender

servitors under you, and from them you periodically give a donation to me. You have become like a broker, but you should be wholesale mine—my agent. You are not doing that. You are dependent on those householders while maintaining some connection with me. This is not necessary. You are not a member of this world. You are mine alone. Whatever I say, you should do. You should not sell yourself to anything or any proposal of this world. You are to be wholesale my servant." Thus, this necessary attitude is rarely to be found. We should surrender to whatever flows from the higher plane and thereby substantiate its reality.

विरचय मयि दण्डं दीनबन्धो दयां वा
गतिरिह न भवतः काचिदन्या ममास्ति ।
निपततु शतकोटिर्निर्भरं वा नवान्ध-
स्तदपि किल पयोदः स्तूयते चातकेन ॥

*viracaya mayi danḍam dinabandho dayām vā
gatir iha na bhavattah kācid anyā mamāsti
nipatatu śata-kotir nirbharam vā navānbras
tad api kila payodah stūyate cātakena*

The bird known as Cātaka always looks above for rainwater, but it will never take any water from the

ground even if there is an abundance there. He waits only for whatever water will come from above. Sufficient rain may come, or thunder may come, yet he will not take even a single drop from the earth.

Our attitude should be like that. We must follow whatever instruction and direction comes from above, and never try to fulfill any plan from the mundane world. "The Director, the Master, the Lord above—I am connected with Him." This sort of practice is conducive.

We may chant the name, hear the musical *kirttana*, etc., but the very life will be present only as much as our activity is on the order descending from the plane above, and as much as that order is earnestly being carried out by us. In that way, we may be taken above. We may be promoted to the higher layer by preparing ourselves only to carry out the order from above, without question. If we are certain that the order is coming from the higher layer, we should surrender without question. By living at the disposal of the higher, we learn selfless service of the higher, which is not of any mundane source. This is our necessity: *Vaiṣṇava-sevā* and *Guru-sevā*—service to the Vaiṣṇava and Guru. By *Guru-bhakti* alone—devotion to the service of Śri Gurudeva—in one stroke, all desirable pursuits will be

*Life will be
present only when
following the
order from above*

accomplished (*etat sarvam gurau bhaktyā, puruṣo hy añjasā jayet, Bhā: 7.15.25*). There are also many symptoms by which to recognise the genuine Guru, and by obeying the directions of the higher, we can make progress towards the higher; we may hope to be selected by the higher and be taken up to that layer if we are considered sufficiently qualified. This attitude will be the main tenure of our lives if we want to go to the high, super-conscious region.

In the *Vedānta-sūtra*, it is mentioned that the process to reach that region is by revealed reason, we shall truth and not by reason (*tarkā-be nowhere pratiṣṭhānāt*). If we apply reason, we shall be nowhere. Among expert arguers, there may always be one more expert—in this way, on and on, no end. Thus, *tarka*, reason and argument, is inconclusive (*apratīṣṭha*). Intellectualism has no standing here, because super-consciousness is beyond our jurisdiction. It cannot be an object of our intellect. By serving, by honouring, by self-giving, by heart-giving, and never otherwise, can we invite that high guest. It is not possible to capture and encage Him by intrigue and conspiracy. Such an attempt will betray Satan in another colour.

Not only self-abnegation, but self-surrender is

The attitude for the main tenure of our lives

necessary to approach God. Deep self-surrender will take us into connection with the higher, noble substance, and it must be cultivated by all means. Understand that And service is not service to *māyā*. I you must bow must be very careful to perceive that I down your head am not merely serving *māyā*, who has appeared in a charming or 'godly' form. In our present position we must be extremely cautious regarding who and what we are serving. The main wave will be *jñāne prayāsam udapāsyā* (*Bhā: 10.14.3*): hatefully discard (*ud-apa-asya*) all proposals that your intellect may offer you. Whatever the intellect can judge and accept or reject must necessarily be of a lower type. So, you are to summarily reject that, and understand that you must bow down your head (*namanta eva*).

The beginning of your interest is to bow down your head, and your heart will be captured automatically. Try to connect with that section where you will always be with folded palms, and where you can never be master. Try to connect with that section where you can never be master Such abnegation and courage of self-giving is necessary if you want to live in the higher plane. Otherwise, you may reign in hell. According to Satan's word, "it is better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven." But just the opposite is necessary.

Even tears and crying have no value if the inner tendency of self-giving is absent. *Sevā*, service, means *Haphazard self-giving is dangerous* self-giving, and that is the standard principle in the life of a devotee. This self-giving must really be to the higher sphere and not just haphazardly around us, for that is another way to be captured by hateful things.

Jñāna, knowledge, is generally regarded as being *Knowledge without Kṛṣṇa is hatefully rejected* very pure. By the majority of people, *jñāna* is considered to be very innocent because it has no relationship with gross, material things. It is always admitted that to handle the gross material energy is very unwholesome (*śaśvad abhadram*); and knowledge is considered by the higher personalities to be very pure, very innocent and spotless (*jñānam alam nirañjanam*). But if it is not connected with Kṛṣṇa, such knowledge must be hatefully rejected.

नैष्कर्म्यमप्यच्युतभाववर्जितं न शोभते ज्ञानमलं निरञ्जनम्।

(भा: १/५/१२)

*naiṣkarmmyam apy acyuta-bhāva-varjjitam
na śobhate jñānam alam nirañjanam*

(Bhā: 1.5.12)

Here, in the *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, it is said that knowledge is widely considered to be spotless, pure and innocent, but if it is not connected with the positive absolute good, then it is your enemy. A qualified candidate will consider things in this way. *Jñāna-śūnyā-bhakti*: Surrender is so pure, that any connection with knowledge, which is considered to be very innocent and pure—even that must be hatefully rejected. Such a degree of surrender is necessary for the higher association of genuine devotion.

Both the charm of material acquisition, and the charm of the mastery of knowing everything, are to be rejected (*jñāna-karmmādy-anāvṛtam*). It is not possible for you to know anything about the infinite, either in magnitude or quality. The infinite is a flow of autocracy, so what can you know of it? Therefore, knowledge means more than storing so many relative or false incidents, and 'selling' that information to the world in order to fulfill some other function such as personal name and fame. Hatefully give this up and engage in unqualified and unconditional service. That is noble, and that will take you up to the nobler region.

Thus, *karma* and *jñāna*—handling matter and

The degree of surrender necessary for the higher association of genuine devotion

The information revolution services only name and fame

handling knowledge—both are discouraged. Knowledge Service means surrender to the plane uncontaminated with material and intellectual acquisition. won't be allowed to enter that 'market' where the absolute will and autocracy reign. No rule and regulation can work there. False gathering and false store have got no standing there.

Only surrender, and we will have that high relationship. Serving attitude is our friend. We are a unit of serving attitude, and service means to surrender to the higher. And the higher means the plane uncontaminated with material and intellectual acquisition. We must serve such a higher plane.

Chapter Six

The Highest Conception of Conduct

One day, Śrila Bhaktivinoda Thākura was chanting the Lord's names and wandering in the sky, at his sweet will. Suddenly he found that he was just near Yamālaya where Yama, the lord of death, holds court for judging the sinners of this world. He also found there Brahmā, Nārada, Śiva, and others, discussing with Yamarāja the meaning of two *ślokas* spoken by Śri Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.30,31); but they could not solve the problem of discerning the proper meaning of the *ślokas*.

अपि चेत् सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक् ।
साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग् व्यवसितो हि सः ॥

*api cet sudurācāro, bhajate mām ananya-bhāk
sādhur eva sa mantavyah, samyag vyavasito hi saḥ*

"Externally, a person may be seen to commit many sins, but if he is exclusively given to My devotion, he should be considered most pure—a saint. Whatever

he does, he does cent-per-cent rightly."

क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्च्छन्ति निगच्छति ।
कौन्तेय प्रतिजानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ॥

*kṣipram bhavati dharmātmā, śaśvac chāntim nigacchati
kaunteya pratijānīhi, na me bhaktah prāṇasyati*

"Very soon, he will become religious in his behaviour, and he will be seen to acquire real peace in his life. O son of Kuntī, confidently declare to the public that my devotee never meets ruination."

The exclusive devotee is transcendental to piety and sinfulness

But one who is engaged in the Lord's exclusive devotion, *ananya-bhajana*, has been defined by the Lord in His own words, *sarva-dharmāṇ parityajya, māṁ ekāṁ śaraṇāṁ vraja*: "My exclusive devotee is he who gives up all phases of duties (*sarva-dharmāṇ*) and surrenders to My feet, accepting only his duty to Me." How, then, having already surpassed all phases of duties and surrendered to the Lord, can that exclusive devotee (*ananya-bhāk*) further be seen to become a 'dutiful' or externally 'pious man' (*kṣipram bhavati dharmātmā*)? This is an anomaly.

Yamarāja, Brahmā, Nārada, etc., discussed this

point, but could not arrive at any solution. How can one become "righteous in the near future" when he has already abandoned all kinds of duties, either righteous or unrighteous, in order to exclusively surrender to the feet of the Supreme Lord?

Finding no solution, they sent for Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura who, they noticed, was moving in the sky and taking the name of the Lord: "He is a pure devotee—and not an ordinary devotee—he has deep knowledge of the scriptures, so let him come and explain these verses of *Bhagavad-gītā*."

And so, Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was invited, and he went there. He gave the meaning. *Api cet sudurācāro, bhajate mām ananya-bhāk*—despite his outer practices, the exclusive devotee (*ananya-bhāk*) is to be accepted (*mantavyah*) as a cent-per-cent saint (*sādhu*). Therefore, the conclusion is that he who can realise this, he who declares that an exclusive devotee of Kṛṣṇa, regardless of his outer practices, is cent-per-cent saintly—he will soon become *dharmātmā*, virtuous and religious. His statement and conclusion is cent-per-cent correct, and his conduct will soon become very pure and he, too, will have the chance of accepting the path towards eternal truth.

Śrila Bhaktivinoda
Ṭhākura was
invited to speak
by the demigods

"So Arjuna, you take advantage of this and boldly declare to the public that My devotee who gives himself wholly unto Me can never come to ruination. Even if he may be seen to be outwardly doing something *Whether or not we obey* wrong—he will be saved. His *provincial laws, we must* successful life is assured. By this *obey His Absolute law* declaration, you will get the benefit of becoming righteous and have the chance of attaining eternal spiritual peace. Whoever can understand this and has the courage to declare that My exclusive devotee is never subject to ruination—he, in turn, gets his chance to come to this path of exclusive devotion, and he will attain eternal peace."

He will attain everything because he has the proper *We must carry* appreciation for exclusive devotion. *on our duty* Everything is for the Lord, and not for *towards the* any other part. In the Absolute, every-
centre

thing is 'for itself.' The Absolute is for itself.' Whether we obey or disobey the laws of provincial or separate interest, we must without fail obey the rule that everything is for Him. This is the main rule, and all others are subsidiary. We may or may not carry on our duties, but we must carry on our duty towards the centre; this is the all-important factor in every case. Thus, one who can appreciate this and boldly assert it

to the public must have substantial appreciation for this conception, and he is sure to survive and improve his future condition very soon. "He will attain the path of eternal peace, and that is the service of Myself, Kṛṣṇa." This is the underlying meaning.

The highest quality in every part of the whole is that everyone must be dedicated towards the centre, even crossing his dutifulness in respect *Exclusive adherence to any other environmental position.* *to the call of the Absolute Centre* And one who can feel, appreciate, and assert this—he will also soon achieve such a position. His inner heart can appreciate, and that is something of a realisation on that path; it will very soon take effect, and the public will see, "Oh, he is also entering this path of *ananya-bhajana*, the exclusive adherence to the call of the Absolute Centre, and that is all-in-all."

Dharma means morals, duties, including duties to father, mother, country, society, humanity, etc. But if one neglects all these and keeps a *Consider him straight relationship towards Me, he will free from fault* be considered free of any fault. He is in the line of *sarvā-dharmān parityajya, mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja*. He is doing right, and one who can simply appreciate this will also very soon be converted to the same class." This is the whole purport.

In the standard or most general interpretation, the beginner in devotional service may have so many bad tendencies in his behaviour, but when he matures these must disappear. Nonetheless, undesirable behaviour may sometimes be seen to persist, at least externally.

The more we are particular about the conduct of others, the more we lose our own time and energy.

By chewing his poison, poison will come to me

Instead of benefitting us, such a practice is reactionary. If I try to find fault with anyone, especially a devotee, the fault will come back to me. By chewing the poison in his body, that poison will come to me. Avoid such association. Try to find the good in others—that will help you.

There was a system in our *Math* at the time of *Kṛṣṇa Himself* our Guru Mahārāja: he ordered one *has taken charge* devotee to praise another—especially one that the devotee disliked. Thus, the devotee would be forced to find the goodness in the other devotee who he didn't particularly like, and thereby be benefitted. Eliminating what was bad in his conception of the other person, he was to search for what good he could find, and thereby be benefitted.

There need be no culture with any bad thing, anywhere, especially in the devotees. Kṛṣṇa has taken charge of His surrendered souls (*ananya-bhāk*). Thus, whatever

good or bad may be present in them is His responsibility. Any badness or evil in a devotee may disappear at any time by His will, otherwise Kṛṣṇa may have that tendency continue in order to serve some purpose of His. We must have this vision. We must not dare to criticise those who are directly under the charge of Kṛṣṇa, or we shall accrue great difficulty. We should try to find the good in them, for that will help us a great deal. This is not a theoretical matter, but a most practical consideration.

Śrila Rūpa Gosvāmī has given the example that the sacred Ganges water may externally appear to be filthy, but that outward filthiness of mud, bubbles and foam cannot change the purifying capacity of the Ganges water; similarly, the devotee himself, the pure soul or *ātma*, is the purifying agent—the purest and most normal factor in the world. Whatever may be externally seen in his character is like the mud, bubbles and foam that is found in the Ganges water. The purifying capacity of the Ganges water is separate, and cannot be disturbed by any foam or dirt mixed with the water. The spiritual capacity does not depend in any way on the apparent material capacity. A Vaiṣṇava may sometimes be seen to be a little greedy, a little angry; or physically he may be blind or deaf or lame—but the saintly character

Dare not criticise those under charge of Kṛṣṇa

of the Vaiṣṇava is independent of the mental or physical characteristics.

During Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's tour of South India, there was the case of Vāsudeva-vipra, at Kurmmakṣetra. He was a leper, but at the same time he was a great devotee. His physical behaviour was also uniquely exemplary: if any worms fell from his open sores to the ground, he would pick them up and replace them in the sores so the worms would not die. He was a thorough devotee. Mahāprabhu embraced him, and by the touch of His embrace, the leprosy disappeared.

Also, Srīla Sanātana Goswāmī contracted sores all

The Lord's Associate receives His merciful dispensation

over his body due to the contact of bad water in the jungle, when he was returning from Vṛndāvana to Puri. Mahāprabhu used to welcome him by embrac-

ing him, but Sanātana would try to withdraw. He objected, "Don't touch me! This is the body of a sinful man." The sores were oozing and emitting a bad odour, but Mahāprabhu embraced him forcibly. Sanātana had decided, "I shall either leave this place or I shall invite death by falling under the wheel of the cart of Lord Jagannātha." But as the Lord in the heart of all, Mahāprabhu knew Sanātana's mind. He chastised him, and

embraced him, forcibly. All the sores disappeared, and Sanātana's body immediately became like gold.

Mahāprabhu said, "Sanātana, you are a Vaiṣṇava. Your body is not defective. Aprākṛta-
Impurity is only deha tomāra 'prākṛta' kabhu naya. Kṛṣṇa
is testing Me. I am a sannyāsi, and He
is examining whether there is any partiality in My deal-
ings with a Vaiṣṇava simply because of his externally
having so many sores. He is examining whether I will
shrink from the association of such a Vaiṣṇava and cast
him aside. But your body is already pure, and only for
the purpose of testing the public, Kṛṣṇa has created this;
and if I cannot see this, I will have failed His test and
will have been deceived by Kṛṣṇa. It is a mere show, it
is nothing; your body is pure because you are a Vaiṣṇava,
a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. This impurity is only an appearance
in order to serve Kṛṣṇa's divine purpose. Wherever there
is Vaiṣṇavatā, true saintly devoted-
Exclusive devotion to Kṛṣṇa is the only necessity
ness, there can never be any contami-
nation. Only to test my devotion has
Kṛṣṇa sent you to Me in this condition." So Mahāprabhu
embraced him and demonstrated that he was absolutely
pure.

Whether externally pure or impure, the whole principle is that our exclusive devotion for Kṛṣṇa is the only

necessity. In the ordinary sense, the Gopīs are also sinners. They crossed the laws of society and the *śastras*, so they are 'sinners.' But they hold the highest position of purity by their exclusive devotedness to Kṛṣṇa and no other. They cannot help but to serve Kṛṣṇa cent-per-cent, even at the risk of crossing the entire code of morality. They are considered to be the highest devotional ideal.

But that sort of devotion is not so cheap that everyone will go on with their activities in this world, taking advantage of such ideals. That won't do. The real measure of devotion must be there, not that anyone may do anything passing in the name of pure devotion, like the *prākṛta-sahajiyās*. That can't be allowed.

Chapter Seven

The Grand Victory of Love

Devotion is above all. *Śaranāgati*, surrender, is the highest property of everyone. Surrender to Him, and He may graciously make His name known to us, and we will be able to know Him.

In the *Upaniṣads*, it is said, *yam evaśa vṛṇute tena labhyah*: whoever He chooses to make Himself known to can know Him. Otherwise, no one can know Him against His will. He has reserved all the right of not being exposed to the senses of anyone and everyone. He is so high, He can do that. If He does not wish to make Himself known, no one can know Him—whenever He wishes to make Himself known to someone, they can know Him. This is His position.

On the order of his Gurudeva Devarṣi Nārada, the scripture *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* was given by Vedavyāsa as the conclusion of his teachings. After giving the *Vedas*, *Upaniṣads*, *Purāṇas*, *Mahābhārata*, *Bhagavad-gītā*, etc., the last gift of Vedavyāsa in the world of scriptures was *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*. And the message of the *Bhāga-*

vatam is that beauty is above all—not knowledge or justice. Mercy is above justice. Affection, love, beauty, charm, harmony—these are above all, and this absolute conception of the ultimate reality is in the Kṛṣṇa conception.

Beauty is above knowledge and power. Knowledge is above power, and above knowledge is beauty, charm,

Hanker for neither power nor knowledge, but hanker after the service of the Beautiful

love. That is the supreme. Śrimad-Bhāgavatam has declared, *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*: the Kṛṣṇa conception of Godhead is the

most original conception of the Absolute. This is the prime declaration of the *Bhāgavatam*: the Lord, as Beauty, is above all. And below Him is awe, reverence, power, etc.

And Mahāprabhu Śrī Caitanyadeva pointed out, "Go to the beautiful—Reality the Beautiful—He is your highest attainment. Hanker neither for power nor knowledge, but hanker for service of the Beautiful, and thereby, you will be taken in and given entrance into the land of the Beautiful." This is the highest realisation. Don't waste your energy by engaging yourself in any other pursuits, but go straight—*jñāna-sūnyā-bhakti*. By the help of *sādhu-saṅga*, take the name of the Lord and try to march straight onwards to the Kṛṣṇa conception

of Godhead. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is our highest achievement, and this is given by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrimad-Bhāgavatam.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu recommended, "Don't waste your energy for anything else. Utilise your energy for the Kṛṣṇa conception of Godhead."

So we try to make our progress in this line, and at the same time we also ask our friends *March toward to try to embrace this life. The fulfillment universal good* of life for every particle of existence of this world can be found here.

March towards universal good. Wherever and whoever you are, it does not matter. Take your course towards Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is the highest fulfillment of the life for everyone. You are only to turn your face towards Him and march, and the Sweet Absolute, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, will welcome you. This is the campaign of the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavas.

Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī described Kṛṣṇa in a scientific way: *akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrttiḥ*. Our *All our necessities are personified in Him* hearts are hankering for satisfaction and happiness of different types, but He is the emporium of all such *rasas*, flavours of ecstasy. All types of *rasas* are in Kṛṣṇa and He is the personification of them all, so everyone can find his corresponding place

in Him alone, and nowhere else. He is Kṛṣṇa—*akhila-rasāṁṛta-mūrttiḥ*. All our necessary satisfaction is personified in Him. So only He can say, "Give up everything and come to Me, and you won't have to repent. You will find your highest satisfaction." No one else has ever said such a thing in any place. Only Kṛṣṇa has said this, and Mahāprabhu pointed it out. "Go directly that side and don't go any other way, but march straight for the Kṛṣṇa conception—that is your home."

*Go directly that
side and don't go
any other way;
march straight
for home*

Chapter Eight

The Brightest Sun

परिवदतु जनो यथा तथायं ननु मुखरो न वयं विचारयामः ।
हरि-रस-मदिरा-मदातिमत्ता भुविविलुठाम-नटम निर्बृशामः ॥

*parivadatu janō yathā tathāyam
nanu mukharo na vayaṁ vicārayāmaḥ
hari-rasa-madirā-madātimattā
bhuvi-viluthāma-naṭāma niruviśāmaḥ*

"The gossipers may slander us, but we shall not heed them. Completely intoxicated by drinking the wine of the ecstasy of Śrī Hari's service, we shall dance and roll about on the ground, and faint."

There is a class that think they can take intoxication and chant and dance and roll about on the ground, imitating the divine intoxication mentioned in this verse written by

*The imitationists think
they can purchase divine
ecstasy very cheaply with
the help of intoxication*

Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācāryya. They think they can purchase 'divine' ecstasy very cheaply with the help of intoxication, but their whole attempt is deception. Not to mention them, even the yogic attempt is inferior.

यमादिभिर्योगपथैः कामलोभहतो मुहुः ।
मुकुन्दसेवया यद्वत् तथाद्धात्मा न शास्यति ॥
(भा: १/६/३५)

*yamādibhir yoga-pathaiḥ, kāma-lobha-hato muhuḥ
mukunda-sevayā yadvat, tathāddhātmā na śāmyati*
(Bhā: 1.6.35)

"The agitated mind, repeatedly taken captive by its enemy in the form of depravity rooted in lust and greed,
Do you think that control of lust and anger is everything? is directly mastered by serving the Supreme Lord, Mukunda. It can never be likewise checked or pacified by practising the eight-fold yogic discipline, which is generally based on sensual and mental repression (*yama, niyama, etc.*)."

Here, Śrī Nārada Muni is saying "You yogis think that by the process of controlling the breath you are getting peace of mind and also control over the senses. But it is only for the time being. Even if it continues for lives together, it is an artificial thing. It cannot have any permanent contribution. You think that control of lust and anger is everything, and that you will find a sort of peace within yourself that you are master of lust, anger, and greed, etc. (*kāma, krodha, lobha, etc.*). But

you cannot retain that position. That is a lower position, a lower peace, and it cannot be maintained permanently. You will have to fall down. It is temporary (*hato muhuḥ*—controlled repeatedly). But *mukunda-sevayā yadvat . . . śāmyati*: the peace you attain from *yoga* practice cannot reach to the degree of peace you will find in yourself by serving Mukunda. This *yoga* is the artificial means of checking the *kāma, krodha, etc.*, that disturb the mind and bring quick reactions. By the practice of controlling the breath, the *prāṇa-vāyu*, one can become a 'master' of the senses, but it is temporary.

In the narrative of Ajāmilā, we also find mention of the atonement of the 'elephant's bath':

क्वचिन्निवर्तते भद्रात् क्वचिच्चरति तत् पुनः ।
प्रायश्चित्तमथोऽपार्थं मन्ये कुञ्जर-शौचवत् ॥
(भा: ६/१/१०)

*kvacin nivarttate 'bhadrāt, kvacic carati tat punah
prāyaścittam atho 'pārtham, manye kuñjara-śaucavat*
(Bhā: 6.1.10)

"Sometimes a person refrains from sin, but in time he again commits the same kind of sin. Therefore, I consider atonement (in the line of *karmma-kānda*, or in

the calculation of worldly deeds) to be as futile as an elephant's bath. (The elephant is habituated to immediately rolling about in the dust after taking a dip in the river.)"

I have done something sinful, and if I follow that by an opposite practice as atonement (*karma-prāyaścitta*), the sin is absolved. But the next moment I will compulsively commit that sin again. By *jñāna-prāyaścitta* we may gain a somewhat more permanent abstention from the sinful activity.

तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण शमेन च दमेन च ।
त्यागेन सत्य-शौचाभ्यां यमेन नियमेन वा ॥
देह-वाग्-बुद्धिजं धीरा धर्मज्ञाः श्रद्धयान्विताः ।
क्षिपन्त्यधं महदपि वेणुगुल्मभिवानलः ॥

(भा: ६/१/१३, १४)

*tapasā brahmacaryyena, śamena ca damena ca
tyāgena satya-śaucābhyaṁ, yamena niyamena vā
deha-vāg-buddhijam dhirā, dharmmajñāḥ śraddhayānvitāḥ
kṣipanty aghāṁ mahad api, veṇu-gulmam ivānalah*

(Bhā: 6.1.13,14.)

"Austerity or one-pointed attention, exclusive celibacy, subjugation of the internal and external senses,

charity, truthful speech, cleanliness, sensual discipline (*yama*) headed by nonviolence, mental regulation (*ni-yama*) headed by regular utterance or concentration on *mantras*—by the strength of such practices, faithful liberationists (*jñānīs*) who know the mysteries of religion drive away even the most grievous sins committed in thought, word, or deed, as bamboo clusters are destroyed by fire."

The landscape may be clear for a whole year, but next year with the coming of the rainy season, many shrubs will inevitably sprout again. But the type of purity we shall attain when coming in connection with the service of Vāsudeva, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is of eternal factor and peculiarly purest nature. We cannot hope to attain this by any other method than our submission to, and acceptance of, the service of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Reality the Beautiful.

केचित् केवलया भक्त्या वासुदेव-परायणाः ।
अबं धुन्वन्ति कात्स्येन नीहारमिव भास्करः ॥

(भा: ६/१/१५)

*kecit kevalayā bhaktyā, vāsudeva-parāyanāḥ
aghāṁ dhunvanti kārtsnyena, nīhāram iva bhāskaraḥ*

(Bhā: 6.1.15)

"But most rarely, the devotee who is cent-per-cent absorbed in the service of Lord Vāsudeva annihilates all sins at the root by his practice of exclusive devotion which is indifferent to the abovementioned practices of austerity, etc. As the sun completely destroys a mountain of snow, the exclusive devotees absorbed in the service of Vāsudeva are also similarly able to totally uproot sin by the strength of their devotion, that is, even without exerting themselves."

Such peace can never be found anywhere else. Our proper understanding and adjustment with the highest centre will give us such peace and freedom from anxiety of all types that cannot be achieved by any artificial methods which are devoid of understanding of the highest centre.

तपस्विनो दानपरा यशस्विनो मनस्विनो मन्त्रविदः सुमङ्गलाः ।

क्षेमं न विन्दन्ति विना यदर्पणं तस्मै सुभद्रश्रवसे नमो नमः ॥

(Bhā: २/४/१७)

tapasvino dāna-parā yaśasvino

manasvino mantra-vidah sumaṅgalāḥ

kṣemam na vindanti vinā yad-arpaṇam

tasmai subhadra-śravase namo namaḥ

(Bhā: 2.4.17)

"I offer my repeated obeisances unto the Supreme Lord, who is all-famous as the Supreme Good. Without offering their actions unto Him, neither the liberationists (*jñānis*) who are dedicated to austerities, nor the charitable worldly workers (*karmmīs*), nor the world-famous, nor the performers of Aśvamedha sacrifices, nor the sages or *yogīs*, nor persons dedicated to chanting *mantras*, nor persons of virtuous behaviour—none of them can attain any auspiciousness in life."

Here in his inaugurating speech before delivering Śrimad-Bhāgavatam, Śri Śukadeva Goswāmī says to the scholars, "I know that in this assembly there are many scholars, *yogīs*, and *tapasvīs* of different types, but I present my case before you all: *tapasvīno*—there are many penance-making ascetics; *dāna-parā*—there are those who are famous for their big donations; *yaśasvīno*—there may be many famous for their writings or their sacrifice; *manasvīno*—there are many great thinkers; *mantra-vidah*—there are those who are well-versed in the application of the mystic words, and so on. But you must realise that none of them can be successful in life without surrendering to Kṛṣṇa. Understanding with the highest central truth can give you your peaceful and harmonious life, and no partial attainment can compare with such an acquisition."

Concentration induced by drugs is artificial concentration. All contributions from the mundane cannot but be artificial and of lower nature.

In other words, this is 'fossil-fatherism.' 'The fossil has created

God.' From the fossil conception, God consciousness has 'come.' The fossil is supposed to evolve to the human species, and the God-conception grows in the human section. So fossil is the 'cause' to produce God-conception. Fossil is the 'father' of God. So, to think that mundane intoxication can give birth to the happy ecstasy of the conception of the absolute beauty and sweet-ness—this is atheism.

Although consciousness is subtle, it is more durable than these fossils of the mundane. We must not be afraid of transforming, or 'dying'; we should welcome the death of our ego. 'Die to live.' If our motivation comes from the proper source, we shall also know the troubles we face as not mere renunciation. We must not accept only trouble, but we have to fulfill His purpose. The inner sacrifice is more necessary than the external sacrifice. So *yukta-vairāgya* (abnegation in the spirit of devotion) has been recommended to be the most useful. Physical affliction is not our aim and object. Our object is to satisfy Him, and thus, whatever policy

*Fossil is the
Father of God:
this is atheism*

may be considered best for us will be recommended from there. We have to accept wholesale surrender to the higher agency. That is necessary. If we are allowed to consider our own case, we shall accept *yukta-vairāgya*, because privation or affliction is not our end. Our end is to satisfy Kṛṣṇa. The fire lit by our Guru Mahārāja must be allowed to burn. We must not keep a feeble fire. The ideal that Gurudeva has given is very rarely found in this world. Out of thousands and millions of chances, we may have such a seed sown in our heart.

मनुष्यानां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद् यतति सिद्धये ।
यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन् मां वेति तत्त्वतः ॥

(गीता ७/३)

*manuṣyānāṁ sahasreṣu, kaścid yatati siddhaye
yatataṁ api siddhānāṁ, kaścin māṁ vetti tattvataḥ*

(Bg. 7.3)

"Out of countless souls, some have reached the human form of life, and among many thousands of human beings, some endeavour to attain direct perception of the individual soul and the Supersoul; and among many thousands of such aspirants who have attained to seeing the soul and the Supersoul, only a few receive

actual perception of Me, Śyāmasundara."

ব্ৰহ্মাণ্ড ভৰিতে কোন ভাগ্যবান् জীৱ ।

গুরু-কৃষ্ণ-প্ৰসাদে পায় ভক্তি-লতা-বীজ ॥

(চৈঃ চঃ মধ্য ১৯/১৫১)

*brahmānda bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bija*

(C.c. Madhya 19.151)

"According to the thread of their *karma*, the living beings are wandering throughout many species of life in the universe. Among all such wandering souls, one for whom the fortune of spiritual merit (*sukṛti*) has arisen by which devotion is facilitated, gains the seed of the creeper of devotion by the grace of Guru and Kṛṣṇa; that seed is good faith (*śraddhā*)."

It is not a light thing. We must know that this seed of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the most valuable thing in the whole of creation. "Everything—good or bad—belongs to Kṛṣṇa, and I am His unconditional servitor." Our general thought must be like this, and the details will develop gradually. We need not apprehend any injustice. He is Absolute Good, so His mercy is absolute, His love is absolute; He is the loving centre. We must

make our heart broad, wide, to accept such a seed. Love is the widest thing. Love can accommodate even the enemy. Love is not afraid of any sacrifice, so it can accommodate even the enemy, and he is thereby conquered. Such conquering is complete and perfect. Our conquest is not perfect, but love's conquest is perfect. So we must be prepared to pay the value of this greatest achievement. 'Die to live.' What can I give? Everything belongs to Him, and I also belong to Him. I must admit that I am His. This much is necessary. This is the central knowledge, and it is not unreasonable. I am not out of central control, and His all-controlling potency is not power, but love. This is the most liberal proposal, good news, and fortune.

Suspicion and hesitation are the worst enemies. We may be near to the truth, but because of our previous *karma*, our suspecting nature deceives us. In Śrī Gitā it is mentioned, *samśayātmā-vināśyati*—the suspicious are doomed. Time is valuable, but it is passing in mere hesitation. If a general is sent to the battlefield and he harbours a suspicious mentality, what can he attain? Nothing. He will put all his soldiers into the jaw of the enemy general. But he should have a definite plan, and engage with proper intensity; to fight with *māyā*—and *māyā* is willing. The

enemy is willing. One should feel his personal deficiency, and fight for the centre. And supplies and fortifications

Supplies and fortifications must be had from the most special department—sādhu-saṅga

With the help of the saints and the scriptures we must subdue the enemy within us and within our house. The worst part of the problem is that

The worst problem is that the enemy is not situated without, but is within

world. They are our real friends. We are troubled by our enemies lust, anger, greed, etc., (*kāma, krodha, lobha*, etc.), and doubt or suspicion is also our enemy. There is also insanity, illusion, and hatred (*mada, moha, mātsarya*). Hesitation comes out of ignorance, or *moha*.

परिनिष्ठितोऽपि नैर्गुण्ये उत्तमःश्लोकलीलया ।
गृहीतचेता राजर्षे आख्यानं यदधीतवान्॥

(Bhā: 2/1/9)

pariniṣṭhito 'pi nairguṇye, uttamah-śloka-lilayā
grhita-cetā rajarṣe, ākhyānam yad adhitavān

(Bhā: 2.1.9)

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī explained to Mahārāja Parikṣit and all the topmost assembled sages, "This illusory world is full of variety and movement, and above it is the Brahman, the non-differentiated plane of the Absolute. But on the other side, there is again a differentiated and specified world, Sukadeva charmed the *adhokṣaja* world (beyond sensual perception). This Brahman is not the ultimate existence, but crossing Brahman, on the other side, there is an *adhokṣaja* world. There, we find *Kṛṣṇa-līlā*, which is not a thing of this mundane world. You all know I have no charm for this world whatsoever. And my mind was attracted by the charm of that higher *līlā*. Today I shall speak to you all about that *līlā* (divine pastimes)."

The king and the sages had to give their undivided attention. "What does he say? This young boy, over sixteen years of age, does not even care to use any clothing. He goes naked. He feels no excitement, and he is constantly engaged in Brahman conception. And he says that there is another world on the other side of this Brahman! And *Kṛṣṇa-līlā* is the wealth of that side." They could not but give audience attentively. "And what does he say? How does he know? And what is the nature of that *līlā* he speaks about?" They became more and more attentive to hear.

Sometimes musicians think that music will create disturbance in the stage of Brahman, but in the highest stage we are told there are musical instruments such as

Imitation is in the land of exploitation the flute, *vīṇā*, and many others. There are expert musicians there, but they are already fully established in satisfying Kṛṣṇa's senses, doing nothing for their own. Otherwise, music captures and attracts our minds towards this material plane. The element must be spiritual—all service. *Kṛṣṇa-līlā* springs up from the land of dedication, and the imitation is in the land of exploitation. And midway is Brahman, the land of cessation—sever everything. *Sevonmukhe hi jihvādau, svayam eva sphuraty adah:* when the Lord's transcendental name, form, qualities, and pastimes are spiritually served with all our faculties, He personally makes His gracious appearance within our spiritual senses. We must be very attentive to the tests that face us in service. No deception can stand there.

অতএব কাম-প্রেমে বহুত অন্তর ।

কাম—অঙ্গতমঃ, প্রেম—নির্মল ভাস্কর ॥

(চৈ: চঃ আদি ৪/১৭১)

ataeva kāma-preme bahuta antara

kāma—andhatamah, prema—nirmala bhāskara

(C.c. Ādi 4.171)

"There is a gulf of difference between lust and love; lust is dense darkness, love is the brightest sun."

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says,

কাম—প্রেমে দেখো ভাই, লক্ষণেতে ভেদ নাই,
তভু কাম 'প্রেম' নাহি হয় ।

*kāma-preme dekho bhāi, lakṣanete bheda nāi,
tabhu kāma 'prema' nāhi haya*

"My brother, lust and love appear as one and the same; yet, lust is never love."

Karmma-māṁsamaya kāma—lust is only concerned with flesh and blood, but *prema*

is the *cid-ānanda-dhāma*—the abode of consciousness and blissfulness. There is no question of perceiving it through these mundane senses. Our ideal must be pure, and we must strive for it. We may

be in a lower position, but if the ideal is clearly before us, that will help us in our real improvement of life. A man who possesses the true ideal is a real 'capitalist' in gaining a better position.

Lust is only concerned with flesh and blood—certainly lust is never love

There is no question of perceiving love through these mundane senses

जातश्रद्धो मत्कथासु निर्विणः सर्वकर्मसु ।

वेद दुःखात्मकान् कामान् परित्यागेऽप्यनीश्वरः ॥

(भा: ११/२०/२७)

*jāto-śraddho mat-kathāsu, nirviṇṇah sarvā-karmmasu
veda-duḥkhātmaṅkān kāmān, parityāge 'py aniśvarah*

(Bhā: 11.20.27)

"A person who has developed faith in narrations of My divine nature and pastimes may still for some time suffer the reactions to his worldly deeds (*karma*); although he perceives his addictions to worldly pleasures to be the essence of his misery, he is unable to abandon them."

He knows what is good, what is bad, but he can't help himself from falling into the clutches of the mundane senses. Still, he will repent.

भूमौ स्वलितपादानां भूमिरेवावलम्बनम् ।

त्वयि जातापराधानां त्वमेव शरणं प्रभो ॥

(स्कन्दपुराण)

*bhūmau-skhalita-pādānāṁ, bhūmir evāvalambanam
tvayi jātāparādhānāṁ, tvam eva śaraṇāṁ prabho*

(Skanda-purāṇa)

"For those who have stumbled and fallen upon the ground, that very ground is the only support by which they can arise once again. Likewise, for those who have offended You, O Lord, You alone are their only refuge."

In the beginning, when a child tries to walk, he falls down. But he gets up and tries again. In this way, we must proceed, but we must not stoop to deceive ourselves. That is *māyā*, deception. To deceive our own self and others is only to live in the world of deception. Such persons are deceiving themselves, and the environment also.

Those who can conquer their partiality and prejudices can stand amongst the most qualified. The eye to detect our disqualification is our real wealth. And we are given the eye to see by the grace of our Gurudeva. *Om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā, cakṣur unmilitāṁ yena, tasmai śri-gurave namaḥ*: "I worship my Guru who has opened my eyes that were blinded with the darkness of ignorance, by adorning them with the collyrium of knowledge." Most important is the eye to see what is good, what is bad, and then to accept and reject. First the eye is necessary. Then there is justice, and above that there is mercy. Justice is the standard, but above that we can conceive that there is

*Those who can conquer
their partiality and preju-
dices can stand with
the most qualified*

also a land of mercy, compassion, grace.

With our faith and earnestness we can aspire after

Increase the power of your position as a negative unit

that mercy. If we increase the quality of our negativity, or the feeling that we are so mean, the positive will be automatically attracted. Try to in-

crease the power of your position as a negative unit. *Tṛṇād api sunicena* (by feeling oneself lower than the grass), *dainyam* (humility), *ātmanivedana* (surrender).

Hankering in surrender is our wealth; we are the negative unit, potency of the positive

Hankering in surrender is our wealth. We are the *sakti*, the potency, and potency refers to

the negative unit of the positive, the Potent. Increase your negative side, your hankering. The positive will be automatically attracted to you.

In the impartial judgement, *taṭastha-vicāra*, we must find that the more humility, *dainyam*, we possess,

Humility will give rise to devotion as hunger will give rise to health

the more devotion and intimacy we possess. Health depends on hunger. The more one feels hunger,

the better his health may be; that is, real, natural hunger. It is something like this. And humility is to feel, 'I am the lowest.' So in this comparison, the more one has realised the Infinite, the more he thinks, 'I am the lowest.'

যদি গৌর ন হ'ত, তবে কি হৈত,
কেমনে ধরিতাম দে।

*yadi gaura na ha 'ta, tabe ki haita
kemane dharitām de*

In the pastimes of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, one of the principal Gopīs of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, one of the *aṣṭa-sakhīs* of Vṛndāvana, came here as Vāsudeva Ghosh. In appreciation of Mahāprabhu's descent here, he says, "How could I keep up my life if

That is near to life, near to vitality. The Vitality of the vitality; if I had not come in touch with this, I should have been finished

Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu did not come down? If I did not come in touch with Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, how could I live at all? That is so near to life, so near to vitality. It is the vitality of the vitality. If I had not come in touch with such a potent vitality, I should have been finished." In this way, our intimacy may accommodate Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Vāsudeva Ghosh said, "I could not live at all if such nectar had not been extended into me. It would have been completely impossible to go on with my life."

How could I keep my life if Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu did not come down to this plane?

Chapter Nine

Faith in the Land of Sacrifice

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is putting the questions and Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya is answering: in this posing, the entirety of theological development was expressed there on the banks of the Godāvarī River. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is magnanimity and sweetness combined. And that meeting on the banks of the Godāvarī was the only time Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu revealed His real identity. He revealed it to Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya in that place only, and we never find it anywhere else. *Rasa-raja, mahābhāva—dui eka rūpa*: Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa combined. The most secret portion of the Truth was shown there, only once; and we never find that it was expressed in any other place.

The most secret portion of the Truth was revealed there only once

The whole cause of existence is twofold: the Predominated Part of Beauty and the Predominating Part of Beauty. This has been taught by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrimad-Bhāgavatam. Not power or force,

*The most secret
portion of the
Truth was revealed
there only once*

but beauty and love is the Prime Cause. This is a new grant to the world, which was never given to the world before: the Prime Cause of the whole infinity is beauty and love.

A new grant never given to the world before
And this is the speciality of *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* and Śri Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

So we need not be afraid. Apprehension is a superficial thing—it is *māyā*, illusion. In the depth of our

In the depths of our life's achievement, there is no apprehension; all is love and beauty
life's achievement, there is no apprehension; all is love and beauty. Our future is guaranteed in a most optimistic way. In his *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāṁṛtam*, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

Prahlāda Mahārāja has been accepted as the basis, the beginning of pure devotion in peacefulness
tries his best to take us through the path of gradual development in devotion. Prahlāda Mahārāja has been accepted as the basis, the beginning of pure devotion, *śuddha-bhakti*, in peacefulness or *sānta-rasa*. Hanumān is above that,

in servitorship, or *dāsy-a-rasa*. Above that are the Pāṇ-

Adherence in devotion for Kṛṣṇa automatically flows towards Vṛndāvana
ḍavas in friendship or *sakhya-rasa*. And Uddhava is somewhat in friendship, connecting with parenthood, *vātsalya-rasa*,

and consorthood, *madhura-rasa*. In this way, adherence

in devotion for Kṛṣṇa automatically flows towards Vṛndāvana. The acme is in Vṛndāvana. This is also found in Śri Caitanya Mahāprabhu's conversation with Śri Rāmānanda Rāya.

Tebhyas tāḥ paśu-pāla-pāṅkaja-dṛśas-tābhyo 'pi sā rādhikā (*Śri Upadeśāmṛta*, 10): and the high devotion of Śrimati Rādhārāṇi is categorically different from that of all the Gopis. The type of service found in Her is practically unaccountable, inconceivable. *Śrutibhir vimṛgyām* (*Bhā*: 10.47.61): the Ṛṣis, the Seers, saw that the Vedic mantras were eternal. They are not creators of the mantras in the Vedas, they are only seers and feelers of spiritual current; they are only observers.

The knowledge that is contained in the Śruti (Vedas) is not created by anyone or anything. It is eternal and flowing. The Ṛṣis are onlookers and recorders. And that Śruti has come to reveal the Fundamental Truth underlying the whole creation; still, they are only inquisitive of something, they are enquiring about something. What that thing is, they do not know. They are only searching for the highest revelation that ever

Rṣis are Seers and Feelers of spiritual current, not creators

Śruti has come to reveal Fundamental Truth underlying the whole creation; still, they are only inquisitive of something

The highest revelation that ever came down!

came down in the world. They are only searching for *Where a mere seeker can possess the highest fortune* that reality, but they have not yet come into its connection. And this is *Kṛṣṇa-bhakti* and *Vraja-bhakti*—loving devotion for Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana. And Mahāprabhu and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* came with the quality of that type of adherence to the Truth: unconditional surrender, adherence, searching, and serving attitude, seeking such fortune of serving the Truth. That higher type of truth and existence is such that if we can be only a seeker after it, we may consider ourselves to be possessors of the highest fortune. We can really post ourselves in the path leading to that Highest Truth.

That quality is the very basis and the degree of self-
The criterion for our self-surrender surrender (*ātma-nivedanam*). Whatever beautiful and valuable things we come across, we cannot but surrender ourselves to them. That is the criterion. If we come across anything higher

We cannot help but surrender ourselves to beautiful things within our vicinity, our appreciation means surrendering ourselves unto that. So according to the degree of our surrender, we have to measure what degree of quality of truth we have come across. That can be measured only according to the degree and intensity of surrender, or how much we could

surrender to what we came into connection with, to the point of no return. And the true devotees know no satisfaction or fulfillment of feeling that "I have it." They feel no trace of such satisfaction that "I have achieved."

Never. The inner sweetness of the truth and its infinite characteristic is such. It attracts. It can attract to the highest degree and magnitude. When some of the *Brāhmaṇas* performing sacrifices wanted their wives to attend the *yajña*, some of the ladies were on their way to see Kṛṣṇa at the time. One *Brāhmaṇa* came and forcibly opposed this. He stopped his wife, "No! I will not allow you to see Kṛṣṇa." He stopped her body, but the life expired. The dead body remained there. She felt so much attraction to have a *darśana*, a divine glimpse, of Kṛṣṇa. Immediately a lifeless body stood there, the life vanished.

Kṛṣṇa is Beauty—Reality the Beautiful. Beauty absorbs us. The *māyāvādīs*, the impersonalists, say that the Brahman absorbs the individual soul so much that no trace of it remains. But this is an artificial conception of absorption. In the real conception of absorption, the existence of the seer of the truth is not done away with. He remains, but he is absorbed with *life*. He is so

The quality of the truth is measured by the degree and intensity of our surrender to it—to the point of no return

absorbed and attracted that he becomes one. Even maintaining his separate existence, he is always *one*, full of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the highest degree, and this is

*A 'oneness' in which
one's separate exist-
ence is maintained*

visible to the world outside. The 'oneness' of the *māyāvādīs* is of course crossed in the beginning.

Brahma-bhūtah prasannātmā na śocati na kāṅkṣati, samah sarvveṣu, bhūteṣu: "I am one with Brahman"—that stage is surpassed, and then—*mad bhaktim labhate parām*, devotion is attained. There is oneness in divine attraction, union, and separation, in different *līlā* or pastimes. To maintain the setting of *līlā*, the *līlā* is maintained. Here, complete absorption and oneness does not mean that everything is annihilated. *Līlā* is also eternal; the Lord's *nāma* (name), *rūpa* (form, beauty), *guṇa* (qualities), *parikara* (entourage), *līlā* (pastimes)—all are eternal. His relationship is a dynamic thing, not a static one. There is even union in separation. There is unity in every stage. The dynamic character of His pastimes requires unity, otherwise His Self-giving and the devotees' God-attainment would have been impossible.

When I entered Śrī Gauḍiya Maṭh, I received Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's small Bengali book, *Śaranāgati*, for the very first time. It was so sweet to me that I purchased several copies and distributed them amongst

my friends. Its price was only four paise. It is so sweet, it touched my heart. I thought, "Here is Kṛṣṇa—Kṛṣṇakathā (talks of Kṛṣṇa) is Kṛṣṇa Himself. Here is talk about Kṛṣṇa, the *adhokṣaja*, the transcendental." I later composed a short commentary when I was in Nandagrām, and it is published along with Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's commentary in Bengali.

I wrote an introductory poem to the commentary of *Śaranāgati*:

स्वैराचारब्धि-संमग्नान् जीवान् गौराङ्गिपङ्कजे ।
उद्धर्त्य शरणापत्तेर्माहात्म्यं समबोधयत् ॥

*svairācārabdhi-saṁmagnān, jīvān gaurāṅghri-paṅkaje
uddhṛtya śaranāpatter, māhātmyāṁ samabodhayat*

"All the conditioned souls are *saṁmagnān*—they are diving or struggling in the ocean of *svairācāra* or pleasure-seeking—*anyābhilāṣa*—immoral or whimsical activities, energising there. *Gaurāṅghri-paṅkaje uddhṛtya*: taking them out of that ocean, you put them in the lotus—you took them to the lotus feet of Śrī Gaurāṅga. You collected them from the wide, troubled ocean, and gave them to the lotus feet of Gaurāṅga. *Uddhṛtya śaranāpatter māhātmyāṁ samabodhayat*: and so, having placed

them there, you began to instruct them about the great nobility of and high value of *śaranāgati*, exclusive surrender.

We want mastery over everything—modern science want everything under their control; but Śaranāgati is just the opposite of that

Thākura Prabhupāda did so, so I bow down unto you first." Then I also wrote a verse offering obeisances unto the writer of *Śaranāgati*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura.

Admission of *śaranāgati*. When our appreciation for *śaranāgati* comes, we will realise that we have come into the relativity of a great substance. Otherwise, one cannot find the necessity of *śaranāgati* at all. "Why *śaranāgati*? We want mastery over everything!" Modern

Śaranāgati contains Kṛṣṇa within science, the exploitationists, the *karmmis*—they want everything under *their* control. But this is just the opposite, and opposite to the highest degree. In this, we shall find such a great and noble aspect of nature that we will voluntarily offer ourselves to be the eternal servant of it. "I am in the relativity of such a magnanimous, noble thing!" *Śaranāgati*, herself, is reality. She contains Kṛṣṇa within her boundary. Come to *śaranāgati*, and you will find Kṛṣṇa. The halo of Kṛṣṇa is *śaranāgati*. Through

śaranāgati you can approach the Kṛṣṇa conception, but not by enquiry. Not by barren enquiry,

*Approach Kṛṣṇa,
but not by
barren enquiry*

but sincere and substantial enquiry—and that requires *śaranāgati*. *Praṇipāta, paripraśna, and sevā*. *Praṇipāta*: first you must give exclusive respect to Him. If you want to approach Him at all, the first qualification is *praṇipāta*:

*Only by service
can we connect,
feel, have any
experience at all*

you must surrender. We are approaching a great thing, great in the infinite. And then, there is *paripraśna*, enquiry, to a certain extent. And then service—to be utilised by Him. To serve means to taste the juice. Only by serving can we connect, feel, and have any experience. This is just the opposite of enjoyment and indifference. Enjoyment, indifference—and service. And there is service as duty, and service as love—loving service. Thus, service is generally of two kinds. Service from the standpoint of duty is found in Vaikuṇṭha. Of course, that also fetches something. But service in love, service actuated through love only, is most amply giving. That gives us amply. And there is also a gradation therein—*śānta, dāsyā, sakhyā, vātsalyā, madhura*. This is reality. In this material world, in the world of 'enjoyment,' we also find the most intense enjoyment in lady-love, but this is the perverted reflection of reality. But there in the divine

plane, in devotional service, divine consorthood is found in *madhura-rasa*. There also, in that section of devotees, there are gradations of servitors.

The Rāmānuja Sampradāya (Divine Succession founded by Śri Rāmānujācāryya) divided into two, the

Tenkalai school, the maxim of the cat Teṇkalai and Vadakalai sections.

Vadakalai refers to those who give more importance to the Vedic scriptures, and Tenkalai are those who give stress to the Tamil scriptures. They are known as Ālwārs, beginning from Śathakopar or Nammālwāra. In the process of surrender, the Tamilian school lay stress on *mārjjāra-nyāya*, or the maxim of the cat. *Mārjjāra* means 'cat.' In the cat's dealing with her kitten, the kitten does not do anything, whereas the mother catches the kitten's neck in her teeth and moves it here and there, wherever she likes. The kitten is pass-

Vadakalai school, the maxim of the monkey ivede—no attempt can be seen on its part. He simply accepts whatever the mother does. She feeds him, moves him, etc. This is *mārjjāra-nyāya*. The Vedic school, which was headed by Deśikācāryya, favour the *markaṭa-nyāya*, the maxim of the monkey. The cub catches hold of the mother's body, and then the mother wanders and moves the cub here and there. But the beauty of the cub is to clasp the mother's body. So the Vedic school says, "You

have free will, O *jīva* soul—you have something to do. In *śaranāgati*, you have your part to play. It may be very small, but still you have some part to play. You are endowed with free will, so you must properly utilise your free will." And in the Tenkalai system they say, "No, we have nothing to do. We only need to think that we are His, and He will do whatever is necessary on our behalf." This is the difference between the two schools. The Vedic school holds that some action for free will is necessary. Your pure acceptance and consent is necessary, and the rest will be done by the Lord. But your consent or free will of acceptance, however meagre it may be, must be present. This is pure consent. And the Tenkalai section hold that we have nothing to do.

Our consideration is nearer to this Vadakalai school, the Vedic school. The *jīva* has something to do in the way of cooperation or consent.

Otherwise, how can the *jīva* be a part of the Absolute? If the *jīva* has nothing to do, then everything is God's *lilā*, spontaneous pastimes, and the

jīvas are all dolls of play in the hand of the Lord. No doubt, this may be so in the highest stage of realisation. But that stage is yet to be attained. In the beginning, one has to acquire such a position. Because the *jīva* is

That the jīva has nothing to do may be so in the highest stages—but that is yet to come

part of the subjective world, he is naturally endowed with freedom. There can be no consciousness without *Everyone is mostly actuated by feeling* freedom. Because he is an infinitesimal particle, his freedom is also very small, still, because he is *spirit*, he cannot but possess free will. In divine service that freedom is maintained, otherwise *vilāsa*, freedom of movement in pastimes, cannot be maintained. In Goloka, everyone is mostly actuated by feeling, by *Yogamāyā* (internal divine potency);

The environment cannot devour the personal character of everything they are actuated by love, but still they have their meagre personal consideration, and that is influenced by the all-good and favourable environment of the divine plane. Otherwise, how would they maintain their particular name, pastime, and service? So individuality in the atomic energy is maintained all through. We do not deny the influence of the environment, but the environment cannot devour the personal character of existence of anything and everything.

Of exploitation and renunciation (*bhukti and mukti*),

The glamour of renunciation renunciation is more dangerous, because it holds a greater position than exploitation. It can exploit more, just as half-truth is more dangerous than falsehood. It can misguide the devotees more. It has its own special glamour, over and above

exploitation. It can capture the scholars. One who wants relief can think, "Oh, this is the conception of relief; there is no further." Renunciation captures those who may have been making real progress towards their good, and tells them, "Yes, you have come here, you have succeeded." It captures them in the name of the higher plane. Renunciation holds some prestige over exploitation; people think, "Oh, that must be the highest goal." So, in this way, half-truth is more dangerous than falsehood.

সে দু'এর মধ্যে বিষয়ী তবু ভাল ।

মায়াবাদি-সঙ্গ নাহি মাগি কোন কাল ॥

(শরণাগতি, ২৭)

*se du 'era madhye viṣayi tabu bhāla
māyāvādi-saṅga nāhi māgi kona kāla*

(*Śaranāgati*, 27)

"The association of a materialist is preferable to that of a *māyāvādi*."

If the *māyāvādi* can make you enter into the cell of *sāyujya-mukti*, the liberation of merging with the Absolute, you are finished. There is no calculable time when you will be able to emerge from it. But if you are in materialism, *viṣaya*, the recruiters may come to you.

You may get the chance of meeting a preacher in this material world. But in *sāyujya-mukti* you are nowhere.

Awaken from the deepest sleep It is very difficult and rare to awaken you from the deepest possible sleep. So that is more dangerous, as half-truth is more dangerous than falsehood.

The *māyāvādi* may even try to bring others into his impersonal conception, because he is suffering from

The misguided also help to misguide others that disease. He thinks that impersonal liberation is the highest, so he recruits for his own purpose. *Ye 'nye 'ravindākṣa vimukta-māninas tvayi astabhāvād aviśudha-buddhayāḥ* (*Bhā*: 10.2.42).

They do not perceive the mistake in their calculation, but they think they have attained the highest type of liberation, and so they try to recruit others for their purpose. But there is a mistake in their calculation. They are not aware of the fact. They are misguided and they also help to misguide others. How can one who is not established in the truth guide others towards the truth? If it had been possible for him to know the truth, he would have gone toward the land of truth himself; but he has no knowledge of it. He has miscalculated.

Yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyah: but there is a conscious land, and whoever is accepted by that land can

enter it. Otherwise, by dint of one's own power, no one can enter that land. This point has been missed by the *māyāvādis*. That is an independent element; the soil is independent. Matter is not independent, and the soul is 'independent' here in the material world. But the conscious world is made of supersoul—the very soil is independent. If the minutely independent soul accepts that land, he can enter that land, otherwise not. There is such a land. So the question of becoming a slave must arise.

The highest qualification within us is our acceptance of the slave mentality for the Absolute. This is the only way to be earnest for the association of the highest existence. We must be ready to accept slavery to its perfection, and then we will be allowed to enter into that domain. Otherwise, we have no hope. It is not very easy to embrace slave mentality—eternal slavery. Slavery is also our future prospect. Are you ready to think like this? You have to be so broadminded and hopeful that such a higher entity exists. Your hope and faith will have to be of such a magnanimous type to enter that land. You will sign the bond, the contract: "I am going to accept eternal slavery! I want to enter that land!" You have to search your fortune, and sign the

Accept slavery to its perfection
Be earnest for the association of the highest existence

bond of slavery: the association there is so high that even as a slave I want that association.

Hanker for that land where you can be a slave

I earnestly hanker for that sweet land where my meagre personality can become a slave. Such intense faith is necessary, where all other experience, even knowledge, fails. Only faith can carry us there.

Śrāddhā—faith in devotion to Kṛṣṇa is the unit with which the whole structure has been constructed there. All is faith. The land of faith. There, faith holds autonomy. Everything moves through faith—no calculation, no robbing, no stealing, no cheating. This is automatic there in the land of faith. None of this nasty life. "I shall always be alert that I may not be cheated in the land of so many cheats; Here, I always have to be alert—I will be cheated, I will be cheated." That is a nasty life. So we must enter into a life where there is automatically no cheating, no calculation, and no reasoning. All are good—all are busy to give you something. Here, we are suffering from the opposite. But there, everyone is promoting you in your progress, pushing you towards your highest fortune. Such a land is there. To become a slave there is really to become a master. Whoever tends most toward slavery will be held by all as the head! Just as in love of country,

Become a slave there—you will become a master

If a leader is most sacrificing, he naturally becomes the head of the party. Sacrificing is his qualification. Generally, men have faith in one who has sacrificed much for the country, and they take him as their leader. But here in the mundane world, love of country is only extended selfishness. They will fight with another country. Or, for humanitarianism, they will fight with other minerals or the vegetable or the animal kingdom. They are constructing a great civilisation at the cost of the vegetable and mineral substances. The 'civilised' section are busy only to exploit nature, and that will have to be paid to the farthing to clear the debt.

All their comfort is more than a loan. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu wants his followers to be agents to preach Kṛṣṇa's devotion to the public (*yāre dekho, tāre kaho, 'krṣṇa' upadeśa*)—speak about the special prospect of the land of Kṛṣṇa, Vṛndāvana.

श्रवणकीर्तनादीनां भक्तयङ्गानां हि याजने ।

अक्षमस्यापि सर्वाप्तिः प्रपत्त्यैव हरविति ॥

श्रीप्रपन्नजीवनामृतम्

śravaṇa-kīrtanādināṁ, bhakty-aṅgānāṁ hi yājane
akṣamasyāpi sarvāpтиḥ, prapattyaiva harāv iti

(Śrī Prapanna-jīvanāmṛtam 1.40)

Mahāprabhu wants His followers to be agents to Preach Kṛṣṇa's devotion

If one is not able, or does not have the opportunity to execute the different forms of services to Kṛṣṇa, if he has only *śaranāgati*, he will accomplish everything in the future. *Śaranāgati* will give everything. *Śaranāgati* is the most fundamental and basic substance in the devotional world. The whole structure of the devotional world is based on *śaranāgati*. Without *śaranāgati* there can be no real entrance into the domain of service. *Śaranāgati* is the very life and essence of devotion, so it must be present in all forms of services. Without *śaranāgati*, service will be mere imitation, mere lifeless activity, and not devotion proper. *Śaranāgati* is the first condition. Prahlāda Mahārāja has said, *manye tad etad akhilam nigamasya satyam, svātmārpaṇam svasuhṛdah paramasya pūṁsaḥ*: the whole gist of Vedic teachings is *svātmārpaṇam*—to give and fully dedicate oneself to the Lord. To give oneself is the substance of all devotional activity. This is also stated by Śrī Śridhara Swāmipāda in his commentary of the nine basic devotional practices (*śravaṇam kirttanam viṣṇoh smaraṇam*, etc.). If devotional hearing, chanting, etc., is already dedicated to Him, only then will it get recognition as devotion, *bhakti*. Otherwise, everything is bogus. If I hear to fulfill my mundane purpose, then it is no longer

To give oneself is the substance of devotion

bhakti. If I perform *kirttana* or speak *Hari-kathā* to make some money, then it will not be *bhakti*. *That bond must "Whatever I shall do, it is for Him." first be 'signed'* That sort of bond must first be 'signed' and then whatever will be done on that basis will be recognised as *bhakti*. This is the foundation of *bhakti*. Without *śaranāgati*, all attempts will be exploitation, renunciation, meditation (*karma, jñāna, yoga*), anything but *bhakti*. "The result must always go to my Lord; I am His slave—*nitya-dāsa*."

"I am wholly His servant, without any independence to keep my independent property. Whatever I shall acquire, or whatever I shall do, the owner is He." *Jivera svarūpa haya kṛṣṇera nitya-dāsa:* *nitya dāsa* means eternal servant, that is, slave. He has the right to make or marr, to do anything with me as He likes, according to His sweet will. So whenever we perform devotional hearing, chanting, remembering, with this feeling, that will be devotional activity. But if that is withdrawn, everything will go to hell. If the plank of the dancing stage is withdrawn, the whole show is gone. Therefore with *śaranāgati*, self-dedication, devotion is possible. Only the activity of the man of dedicated self can be reckoned as *bhakti*. He does everything on behalf of Kṛṣṇa. He always takes

He has the right to make or marr, do anything with me as He likes, according to His sweet will

Kṛṣṇa's side, abandoning all separate interest for the fruit of his work.

Consciousness of separate interest (*dvitiyābhini-*

*According to the degree
of our self-abnegation
in self-surrender, we
will be benefitted*

veśataḥ) has made us separate from Kṛṣṇa. The common interest is solely in Him. Then only our service will be *bhakti*.

Without that, everything is lost. *Śaranāgati* must be present in order to have living devotion, otherwise hearing and chanting are only forms, not life. Therefore *śaranāgati* means exclusive connection and identification with the interest of Kṛṣṇa. And Kṛṣṇa is not directly seen by us, so we serve the Guru and the Vaiṣṇava who are dear to Him. According to the degree of our self-abnegation in self-surrender we will be benefitted, and the specific characteristics of *śānta-*, *dāsyā-*, *sakhya-*, *vātsalya-*, or *madhura-rasa* will develop, and there are also subdivisions within these *rasas*. In this way, the devotee will be properly located. But without *śaranāgati*, all the formal practices will lose their life and will become something other than *bhakti*, either in the plane of exploitation or the plane of renunciation; but the plane of dedication is the land of devotion.

By His sweet will, sometimes the attention of the Lord is drawn towards the most needy, and sometimes

a more qualified person may be ignored. We cannot interfere with His independence: "Why have You shown mercy in this case, and not in mine?" We cannot take Him under law. That is not *śaranāgati* or surrender. When we put such a question to Him, we deviate from the position of *śaranāgati*; we cannot expect to be enlisted, even in the primary class.

So what is the spirit of *śaranāgati*? "If You come to consider my case, calculate my position, I have no hope. I am such a mean fellow; if You come to calculate right and wrong about me, I have no hope. So I have come to that

school of Yours where only mercy will be my hope. I want only Your mercy, but if You come to examine me, I have no hope." This is the primary necessity in our *śaranāgati*, in our surrendering. Surrender means this.

Surrender does not allow us to think, "Why have you shown grace to him, and not to me?" This is anti-surrendering temperament. No calculation.

"If You come to calculate, I have no hope; so if You can show me some grace—some causeless mercy—then I have that hope. I have come to this department of the Lord, by surrendering. Anyone may have His voluntary

*If You come to
examine my case, I
am hopeless; so,
I have come only
for Your mercy*

*If I hesitate, thinking
of justice: my name
will be struck from
the register*

mercy, but I may not. If I hesitate and think about justice, then I am already cancelled from the list. My name will be struck from the register."

This is one of the finest points in *śaraṇāgati*. What is surrender, and what should be the quality of surrender? *Mārabi rākhabi yo icchā tohārā* (*Śaraṇāgati*, 11): "According to Your sweet will, You can make or marr me." With such understanding we can go to surrender. Calculation is not allowed in that department of causeless mercy. Mercy may be extended to everyone except me, but I have nothing to complain about. What more can

To surrender means to leave all prospects one give than this? This is the thunder-bolt from the blue! To become *śaraṇāgata*, to surrender, means to leave all prospects—to be so emptied—"I have no prospect"; to be fully emptied, and then to surrender. There cannot be the least application in the petition: surrender means a clean slate. Complete dependence upon Him means

I admit My master's right to make or marr me He can make or marr. I must admit my Master's right to make or marr. I am a slave. Mahāprabhu says, *jivera svarūpa haya kṛṣṇera nitya-dāsa*.

That is Your constitutional position. Have you enough boldness to admit it? Can you admit that your Master has full rights over you? "Yes! My Master has

fullest rights over me. I am ready to go to eternal hell to supply His slightest pleasure." Such narrations—as for example, we have heard the story about when the Gopis were ready to supply their foot-dust as 'medicine' to alleviate Kṛṣṇa's 'headache'—such narrations we may hear as very sweet to our ears, but to accept is horrible. *Jivera svarūpa haya kṛṣṇera nitya-dāsa*; no risk: no gain. Whole risk: whole gain. Such confidence is necessary. A free, clear, and bold choice. Are you ready for that? Kṛṣṇa is not like a sweetmeat, that His price may be so cheap or so expensive. He is everywhere—He is nowhere. He may say, "You all belong to Me," or, "I don't care for any of you." We are inhabitants of that land now, and really, by constitution we have every right to serve Him. It is the truth, and we must be bold enough to 'call a spade a spade.'

Can you accept that you are the eternal servant—you are a slave of Kṛṣṇa? And Kṛṣṇa is so dignified that even His slave holds the highest position: Kṛṣṇa's nature is such that He does not hesitate to serve even His slaves. He is so great and magnanimous. *Aham bhakta-parādhino, hy asvatantu iva dvija* (*Bhā*: 9.4.63): "I feel My tendency to serve My devotee in such a way

A clear,
free and
bold choice

Kṛṣṇa is so
dignified that
even His slave
holds the high-
est position

that I am not independent; I feel Myself to be under their direction."

This is the nature of devotion—*bhakti*. *Bhakti* is infinitely more wonderful than *jñāna*, knowledge. To

If you follow the path of surrender, real knowledge becomes your servant

'know everything' is a very charming temptation. That makes one think that he has become the master of almost everything. But *sevā*, service,

is far above this kind of consciousness. Real knowledge practically becomes your servant, if you follow the path

When the infinite comes within the fist of the finite

of surrender, *śaranāgati*. The Infinite comes within the fist of the finite.

Can you imagine it? Is it imaginable?

Sometimes we hear about a great general falling into the clutches of a loving girl—a great dictator who commands a whole country's forces may be in the clutches of a girl. *Śri-kṛṣṇakarṣṇī ca sā:* and Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Autocrat, is controlled by love, and nothing else. Divine

You will be able to control the Master of the masters

love, *prema*, is such, that it can control the Absolute Autocrat. Even He can be controlled, and this is the clue. Śri

Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to distribute this; the Master of masters came with this offer: "This path will lead you to a plane where you will be able to control the Master of masters."

ब्रह्मादि ये प्रेम-भक्ति-योग वाञ्छा करेण ।
ताहा विलाइमु सर्वा प्रति घरे घरे ॥

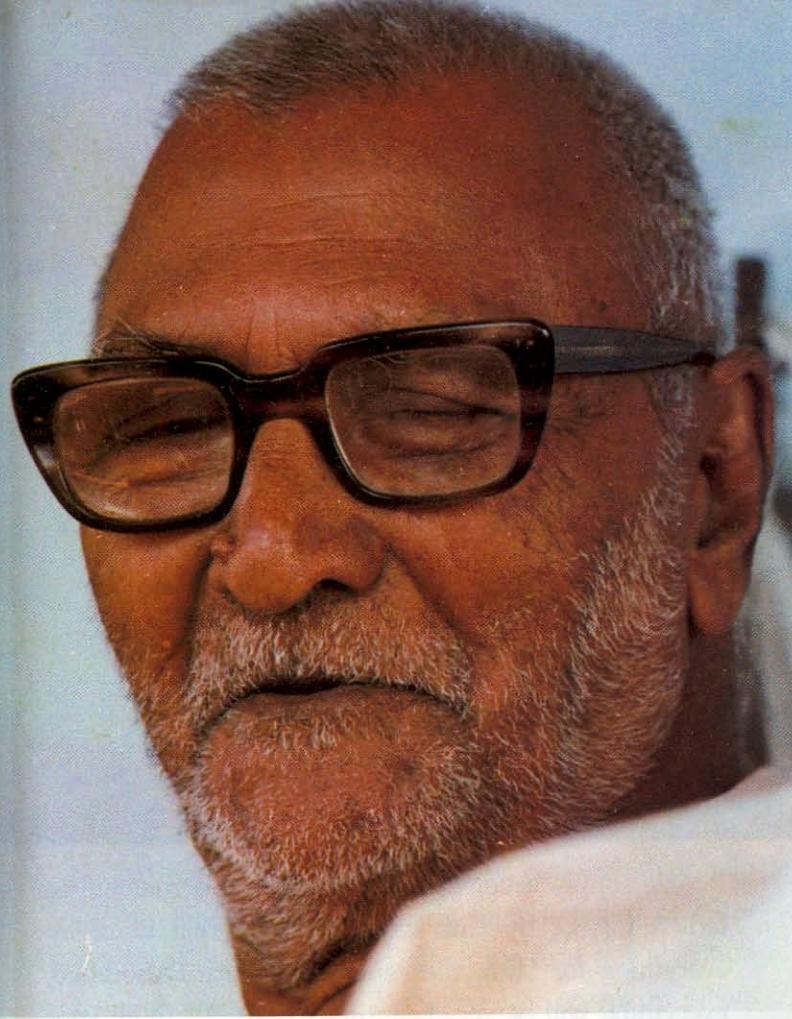
(ठैः भाः आदि ५/१५२)

*brahmādi ye prema-bhakti-yoga vāñchā kare
tāhā vilāimu sarvā prati ghare ghare*

(C. Bhā: Ādi 5.152)

Mahāprabhu came as the most gracious Descent. He brought such nectar, even a drop of which is aspired after by the masters of the creation and dissolution of this visible world, Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva.

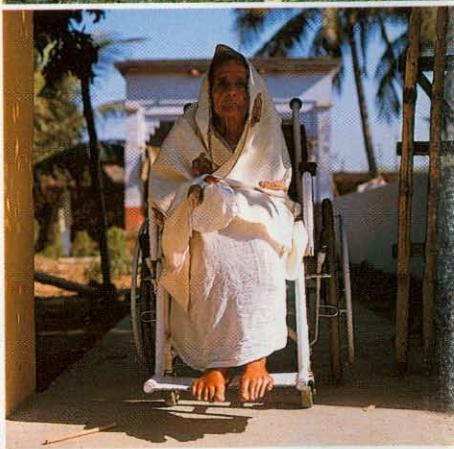
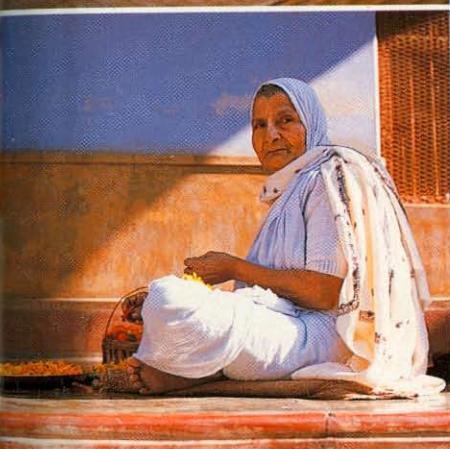
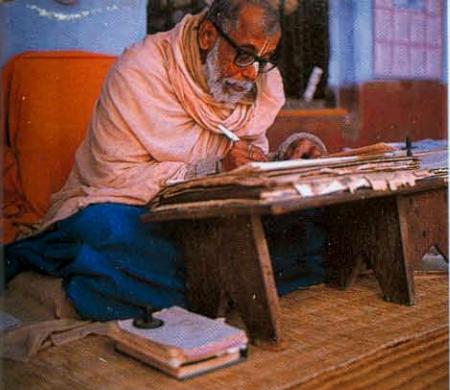
I earnestly offer my humble obeisances again to the lotus feet of my most Wonderful Supreme Master, the Supreme Empress of the Gopas, Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Śrīdhara Svāmī. p. 217



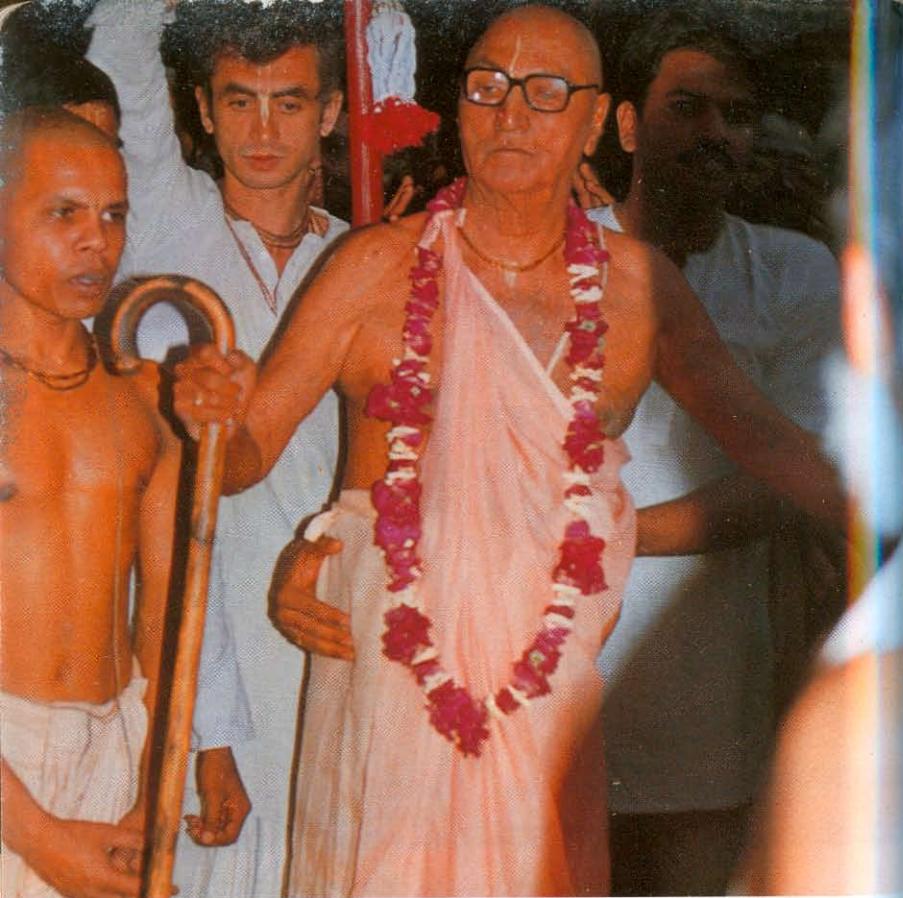
I eternally offer my humble obeisances unto the lotus feet of my Most Worshipful Divine Master, the Supreme Emperor of the *Sannyasi* Kings—Srila Bhakti Rakshak Śrīdhar Swāmī. p 207



We supply water to the root, the whole tree will be fed. Similarly, by faith we can realize that if we do everything for Him, the centre of Beauty Personified, everything will be very beautifully done. With all your might contribute your quota, however small, and from that point your efforts will be distributed beautifully. And this is the highest harmony. The highest life for every part is of the nature of harmony with the whole. p62



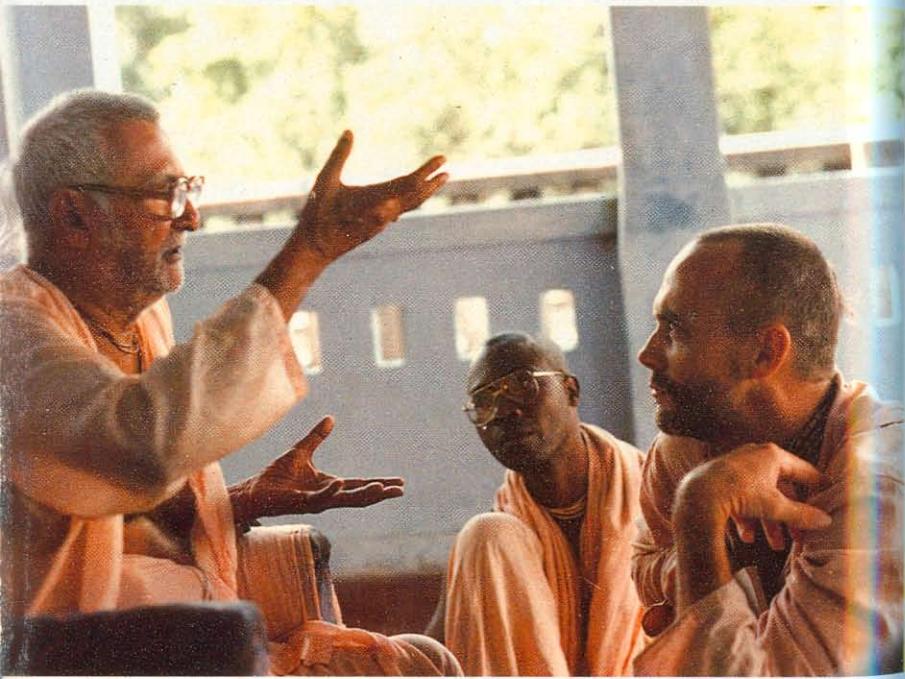
When we pay heed to the devotees, with their help we are raised to a particularly high standard of faith. We are in a safe position when we turn our attention towards the devotees. They are like so many pillars standing and proving His presence. Summarily neglecting the enjoyable objects of this world, they stand with their heads erect, proving and declaring their experience of the Supreme Entity. p. 29



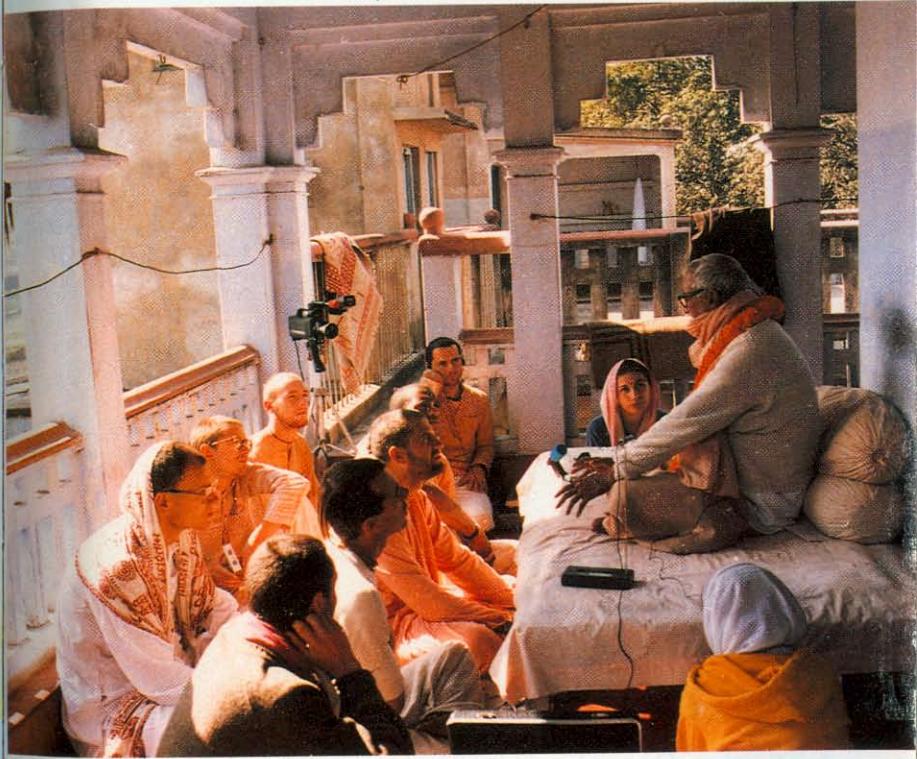
Slavery is also our future prospect. Are you ready to think like this? You have to be so broadminded and hopeful that such a higher entity exists. Your hope and faith will have to be of such a magnanimous type to enter that land. You will sign the bond, the contract: "I am going to accept eternal slavery! I want to enter that land!" p 125



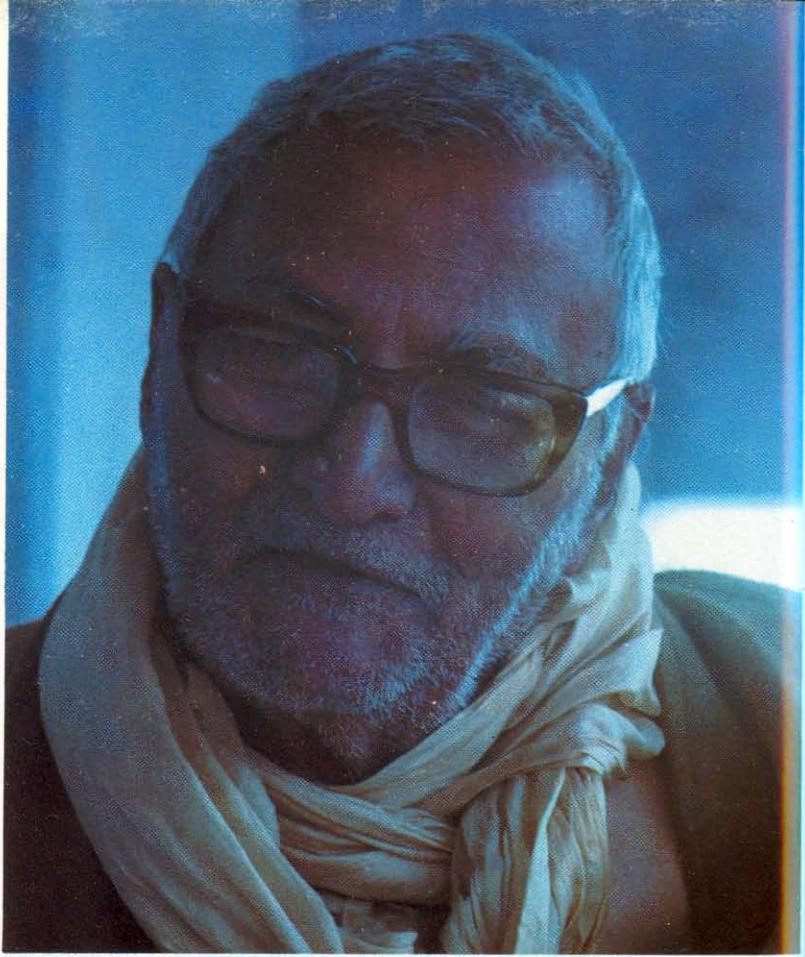
Through self-giving I can acquire my fortune, and not as a master sitting in my chair gathering information from different quarters to utilize for my selfish plans.
p 66



Bha: 7.10.4 . Those who approach Guru and Kṛṣṇa with their separate interest have come only to make trade. They have come to acquire something to satisfy their own purpose. We must be very cautious to avoid such traits within ourselves. For what have I come? There may be many motives. p 56



His inner heart can appreciate, and that is something of a realization on that path; it will very soon take effect, and the public will see, "Oh, he is also entering this path of *ananya-bhajana*, the exclusive adherence to the call of the Absolute Centre, and that is all-in-all." p 81



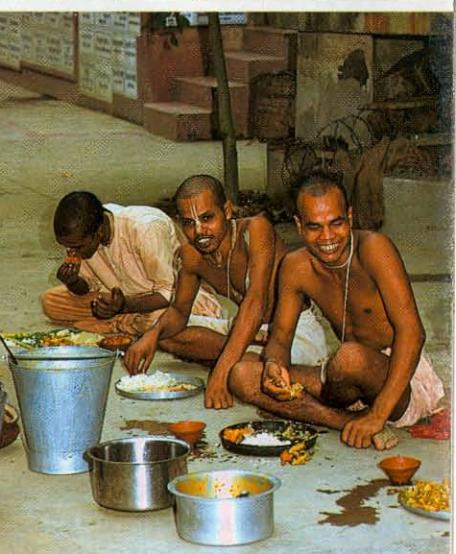
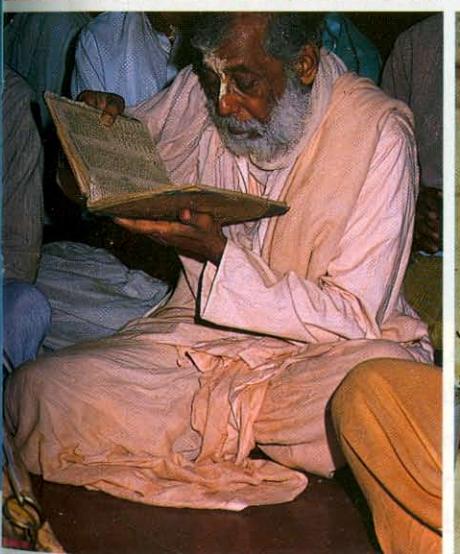
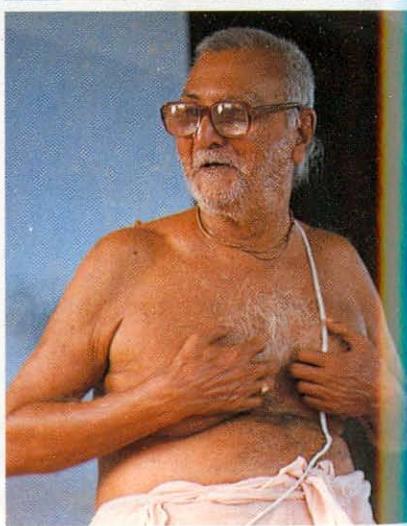
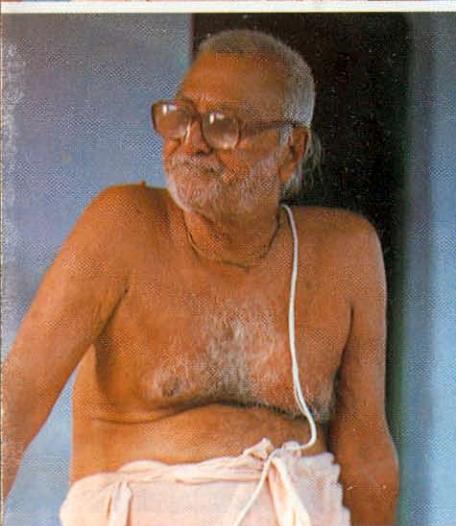
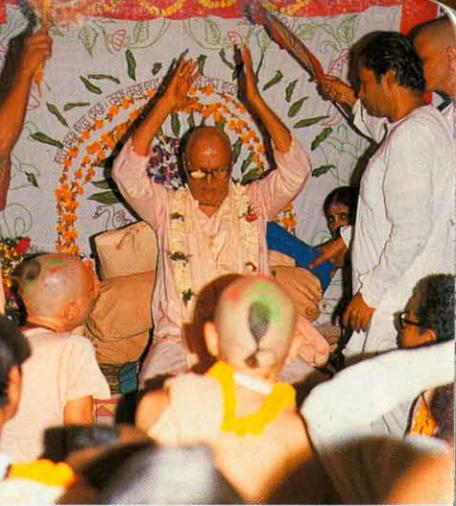
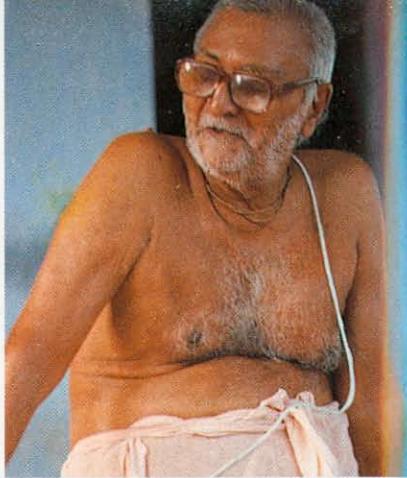
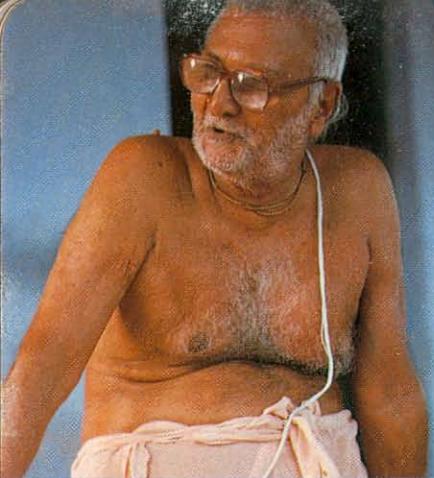
Kṛṣṇa, everywhere. Whomever you meet, talk about Kṛṣṇa, and don't talk of anything that is a prey to death. Wife, children, money—everything will evaporate at the next moment, so don't think about them any longer. But in every step of your life, do everything only for the Eternal Joy. p 33



"There is a gulf of difference between lust and love; lust is dense darkness, love is the brightest sun."

Srila Bhaktivedanta Ṭhākura says,

"My brother, lust and love appear as one and the same; yet, lust is never love." p 105



This must be understood. This independence that apparently seems to be your friend is really your enemy, and you must learn how to live together with others.

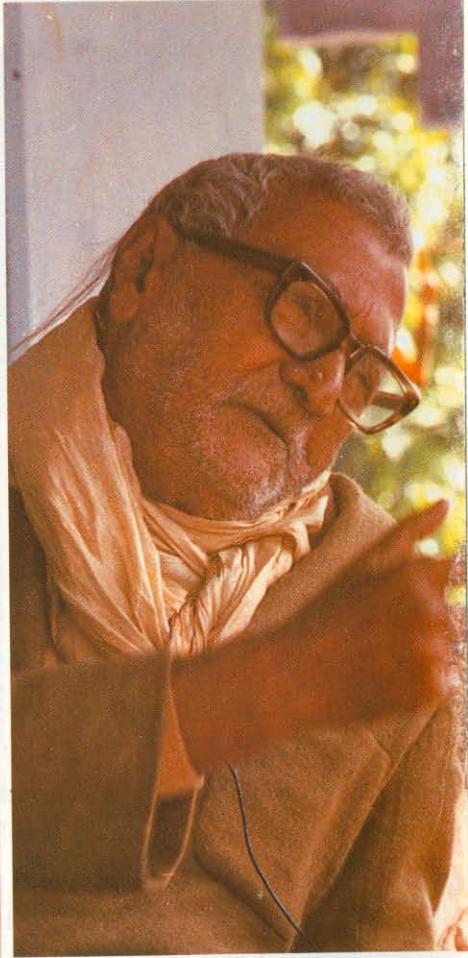
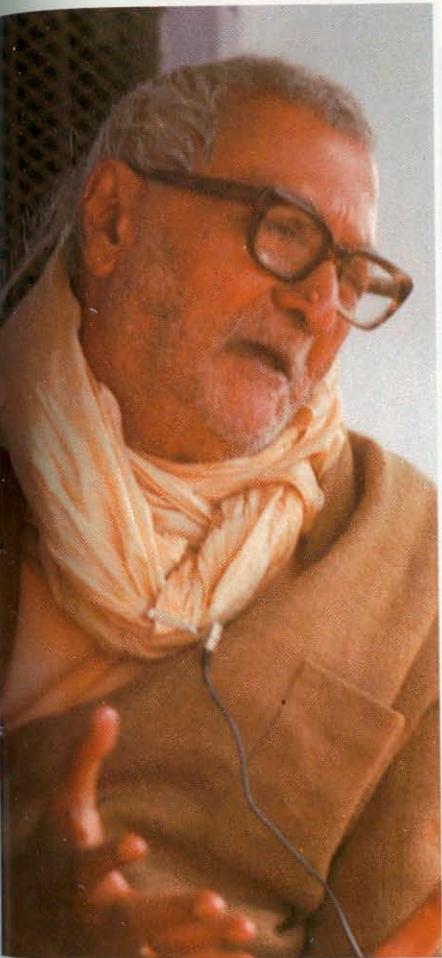
p 171

A transformation from mortality to immortality gradually occurs. The progress is sure and substantial.

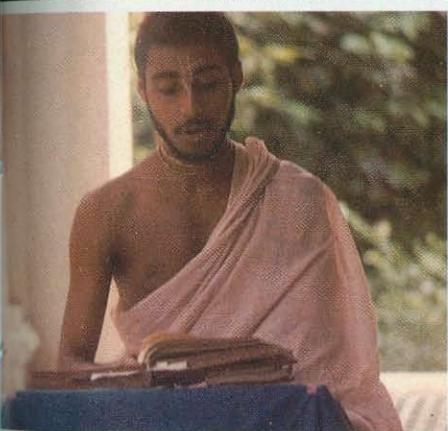
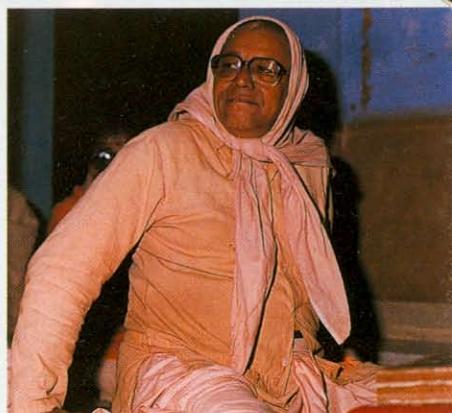
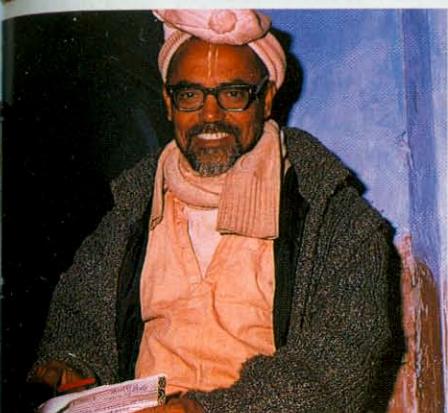
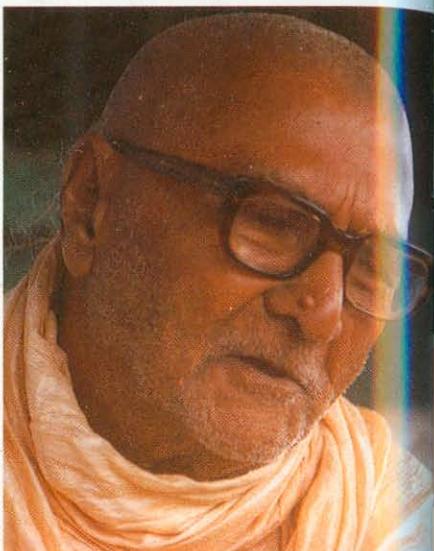
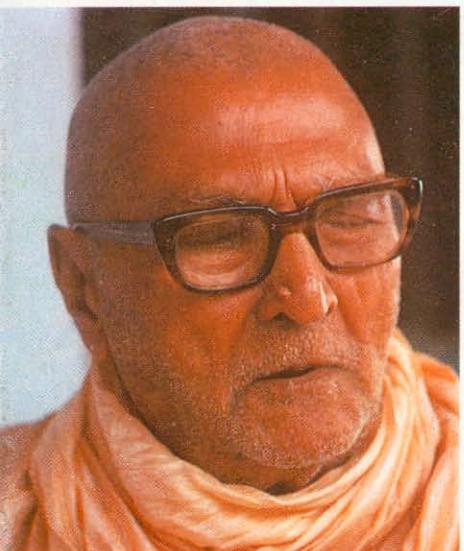
p 138



So here, in Koladvipa, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu gave His best to all (*kuliyā-grāmete āsi' śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya, hena nāhi, yā 're prabhu nā karilā dhanya*). He gave the most desirable service, service of the sweetest type. Such service is found in Vṛndāvana, and Mahā-prabhu Śrī Caitanyadeva recommended Vṛndāvana life as the highest. Neither knowledge nor power can even approach this Vṛndāvana service. In Vṛndāvana, heart is everything. p192



"I am in the relativity of such a magnanimous, noble thing!" Śaranāgati, herself, is reality. She contains Kṛṣṇa within her boundary. Come to śaranāgati, and you will find Kṛṣṇa. The halo of Kṛṣṇa is śaranāgati. p118



"One is asking something about Me and another is answering, and thereby that discussion creates a flow of nectar that nourishes both parties." *Tusyanti ca ramanti ca*: "Satisfaction is generated from that mutual understanding, and it develops up to *ramanti ca*, up to the quality of the absolute reciprocation, the 'wholesale transaction.' It rises up to that standard, *ramanti ca*, and again I give them a further installment, an illumination of new light (*dadāmi buddhi-yogam tam*), and they take a new course and are promoted into the 'suicide squad,' that squadron which is eligible for every type of service."

p 46

We shall relish being in the company of His devotees. We have found children of the same soil—we are meeting our home associates. If our internal satisfaction is of that type, we are holding something of a safe position. We want to recognize our home, but we are now travelling in a foreign land. We should try to find the inner feeling of our hearts, without wanting some miracle. p 11

Beyond Doubt

मर्त्ये यदा त्यक्तसमस्तकर्मा
निवेदितात्मा विचिकीर्षितो मे ।
तदमृतत्वं प्रतिपद्यमानो
मयात्मभूयाय च कल्पते वै ॥

(Bhā: ११/२९/३४)

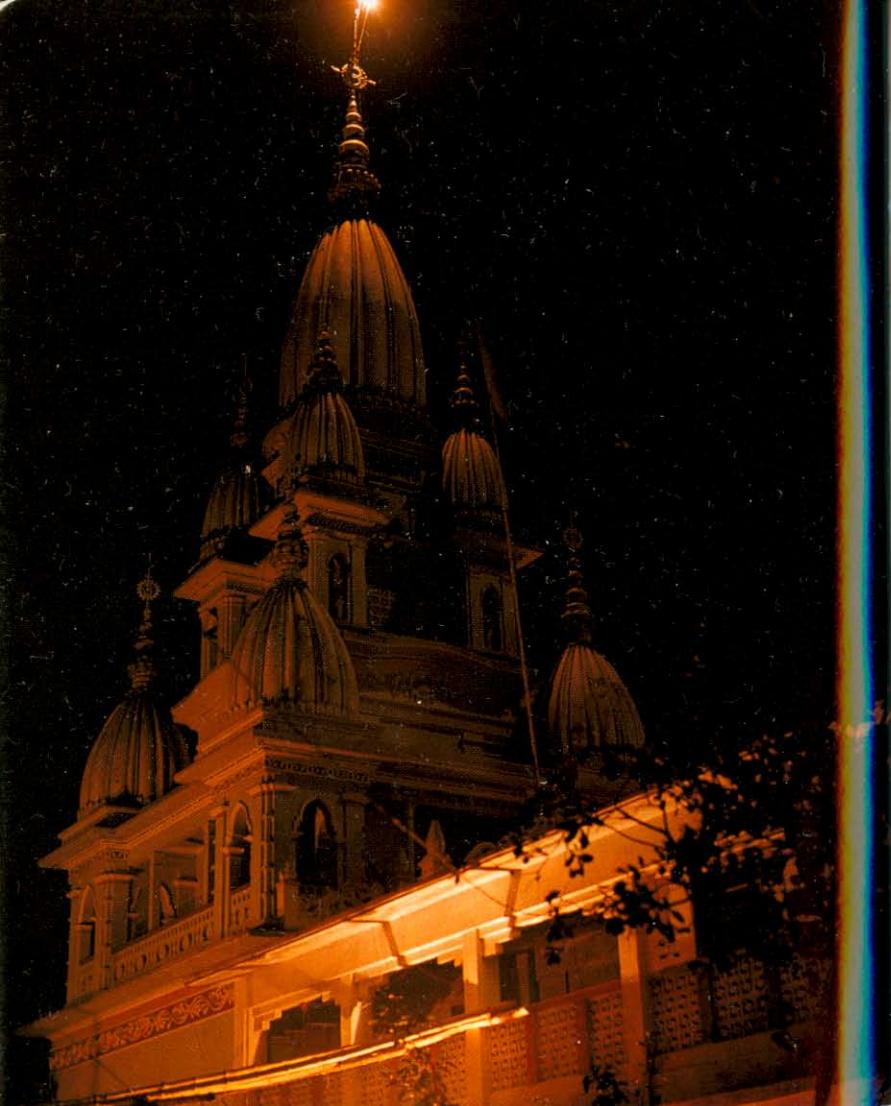
*martyo yadā tyakta-samasta-karmmā
niveditātmā vicikirṣito me
tad amṛtatvam pratipadyamāno
mayātma-bhūyāya ca kalpate vai*

(Bhā: 11.29.34)

“When a mortal totally abandons all *karma* and offers himself to My direction, at that time he acts according to My sweet will and becomes one with Me—he attains the fitness to become My family member in his divine form of *saccidānanda* nature.”

This is a transformation that can be seen in the physical system also. The physical cells undergo transformation. Old cells vanish—new cells grow. And this also occurs when one accepts *prasādam*, food offered to

Feeling is commanding everything. First feeling, then thinking, then willing. p 201



the Lord. A revolutionary transformation occurs.

There is a transformation in the physical system by living a pious life

Unconsciously, there is transformation in the physical system, by the gradual process of living a pious and divine life. Imperceptibly, the transformation takes place.

"*Marttyo yadā tyakta-samasta-karmmā*: he has de-

More and more, he identifies as a member of that family, that plane

tached himself from all the activities of this so-called mundane world; *niveditātmā*: and he considers himself

no longer a member of this material world. He has entered and enlisted in the family, in the entourage, of another plane. And gradually he more and

He is very busy to find out what pleases Me; that is his errand always; that is the only principle in him

more intensely identifies himself as one of that family, that plane. *Niveditātmā vicikirṣito me*: he is very busy to find out what can please Me. That is his errand always. He is always seeking how to please Me. That is the only principle in him; he automatically thinks over and over again, 'How can I please Him? How can I please Him?' *Tad amṛtatvam pratipadyamāno*: then, indispensably, such a change cannot but come in him: the necessary transformation. A transformation from mortality to immortality gradually occurs. The progress is sure and substantial.

Mayātma-bhūyāya ca kalpate vai: and consequently, he comes to be reckoned as one of My family members." Also in *Bhagavad-gītā*, *viśate tad anantaram*: "My devotee enters into My family."

With our *bhajana* (divine service), such transformation is inevitable. It must happen. Material hankering will be diminished. Mostly in *rāja-* and *tamo-guṇa* (the modes of passion and ignorance) there is dissipation of vital energy, but in *sattva-guṇa* (truthfulness, realisation) the energy lost is of much less quantity.

भक्तिः परेशानुभवो विरक्ति-
रन्यत्र चैष त्रिक एककालः ।
प्रपद्यमानस्य यथाश्रतः स्यु-
स्तुष्टिः पुष्टिः क्षुदपायोऽनुघासम् ॥

(Bhā: ११/२/४२)

bhaktih pareśānubhavo viraktir
anyatra caiṣa trika eka-kālah
prapadyamānasya yathāśnataḥ syus
tuṣṭih puṣṭih kṣudapāyo 'nughāsam

(Bhā: 11.2.42)

"As with every mouthful an eater feels the threefold effects of satisfaction, his stomach being filled, and his

hunger being dispelled, in the same way when a surrendered soul serves the Lord he realises devotion of three natures simultaneously: devotion in love, the personal appearance of the Lord who is the abode of love, and detachment from all other things."

Progress can be measured by detecting this kind of transformation within. *Pareśānubhavo*: somehow, a conception of the Supreme must grow clearer and clearer in me. What is He? Who is He? *Viraktir anyatra*; and *The inner sanction of a clear conscience* indifference to everything 'non-of-a-clear-conscience' Kṛṣṇa' grows in me also. I avoid what does not concern Kṛṣṇa, and when it appears anyway, it produces some apathy or even irritation in me, "Oh, why has this thing come to me?" The measurement from the negative direction will be how much I am apathetic to 'non-Kṛṣṇa' things. *Tuṣṭih puṣṭih kṣudapāyo 'nughāsam*: and also, the inner hunger should be felt to be fulfilled. "Yes, I am feeling fulfillment." I shall feel self-approval that I am walking in the right direction. I shall have inner sanction of my clear conscience. "Yes, yes, I am doing right." I will feel inner satisfaction.

भिद्वाते हृदयग्रन्थिष्ठिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।
क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि मयि दृष्टेऽखिलात्मनि ॥

(भा: ११/२०/३०)

*bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiś, chidyante sarvā-saṁśayāḥ
kṣiyante cāsyā karmmāni, mayi drṣte 'khilatmani*

(Bhā: 11.20.30)

"When the soul directly beholds Me as the Supreme Soul within all souls, his mundane ego is dissolved, all his doubts are slashed, and all his worldly deeds (*karma*) are annihilated."

This is a scientific measurement, and of course, science of the transcendental world is not to be applied in the nature of the mundane. By this standard of adjustment, we

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the centre. If the centre is clear, then the circumference is properly located

shall gradually make progress towards proper adjustment. If the centre is clear, then, of course, the circumference is properly located. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the centre, and in that consciousness every event can be found to be properly adjusted. In this way, by that inner satisfaction and realisation one can measure his personal progress. But this does not mean that his thirst will be quenched; rather, it will increase. But the assurance will come that the direction is the right direction. "I am now making progress in the proper line, because many new things can be explained by

The Absolute is harmonising those things hitherto unharmonised

that formula. They seemed to be unintelligible and meaningless. Now, what I am told to be the Absolute *The solution is felt by one who is a real student* is harmonising all these things hitherto unharmonised. These points are being solved. So, *chidyante sarvva-saṁśayāḥ*: the doubts are being cleared, and more satisfaction of a wide and spacious nature, the solution, will be felt in the heart of one who is a real student, a regular student of the *Bhāgavata* school. *Chidyante sarvva-saṁśayāḥ* is a great thing. We cannot accommodate this within the narrow shell of our brain! “All doubts should be cleared? What is this?” It is inconceivable that all doubts will be cleared. But everything will be solved if we accept the harmonising centre in such a point as advised by *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu—Kṛṣṇa*-conception of the Absolute.

Absolute love and charm is all-accommodating. None can deny it. None can say, “I don’t want love.” It *All-accommodating Absolute Love* is so universal. One may say, “I do not want any grandeur, any power,” but, “I do not want any love”—never. Sometimes one may even go as far to say, “I don’t want justice.” That may be possible. Of course, generally it may be the exception, but still it may be said, “I don’t

want justice. By justice that man will suffer. Rather, I shall suffer, and that man be saved.” Just as Jesus Christ told, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” By that prayer, Lord Christ set justice aside: “No, justice may go on this side, and let me be the sufferer.” We can take the risk of dismissing justice, but we can’t avoid love. We can give up everything but that love for love. If we have the eye to see, then we shall see that only to get love, *prema*, we can give up everything in the world. So how valuable is that thing? And Mahāprabhu and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* came with that.

Before the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* appeared in the world, Devarṣi Nārada came and gave a regular stricture to Śrila Vyāsadeva: “What have you done for so long? This is nothing! Rather, you did some downright wrong.”

जुगुप्सितं धर्मकृतेऽनुशासतः

स्वभावरक्तस्य महान् व्यतिक्रमः ।

यद् वाक्यतो धर्म इतीतरः स्थितो

न मन्यते तस्य निवारणं जनः ॥

(भा: १/५/१५)

*jugupsitam dharmma-kṛte 'nuśasataḥ
svabhāva-raktasya mahān vyatikramah
yad vākyato dharmma ititarah sthito
na manyate tasya nivāraṇam janah*

(Bhā: 1.5.15)

"You have committed a great wrong. In your injunctions of religious duty for the masses, you have sanctioned condemnable worldly works for fulfillment of mundane desires. The masses are already by nature attached to condemnable worldly works for fulfillment of mundane desires. It is a great wrong because the worldly masses will conclude that your messages alone are the central religious duty. Even if they are taught by other knowers of the truth to refrain from those worldly works, they will not accept those teachings, or, they will not be able to understand them for themselves."

"The people generally have natural affinity for these things—*dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and then *mokṣa* (religion,

Mokṣa is only a reaction to exploitation wealth, sense-pleasure, and liberation).

You have recommended these four things in a regular and polished way, but this is already their natural demand. When one is overfed, he wants fasting as a reaction. So, *mokṣa* is only a reaction to exploitation. This is already a fact, and you have recommended the same thing. What new thing have you given them? You have done wrong! Why? Because when a person of your status has recommended *mokṣa*, it will be difficult to give anything further. No one will be prepared to oppose your opinion, your standard. All will say that Vyāsadeva is the highest authority,

and that they don't care for the advice of anyone else. The highest authority is Vyāsadeva. So it will be very difficult to get the people to accept through other sources anything beyond what you have given. So, you have done wrong! It may be considered your misdeed. Now, the only relief can be that you yourself will give the fifth end (beyond the aforementioned four common pursuits). You, personally, will have to take this work: 'So far, what I have given is very limited, but now I shall give you something far superior.' You alone will have to take up this task, and only then you will have undergone the proper penance necessary for your chastisement. *Mahān vyatikramah*—it is a great wrong, because *jugupsitam*—what is very condemnable; *dharma-kṛte*—is given under the stamp of religion; the goods under the stamp are ultimately non-religious. What good is that? Only 'to do wrong and not to do wrong.' But to do good—is it not included there? Of bad and non-bad, non-bad does not mean positive good. So, you will have to take this duty with earnestness and clarify the position for the people: 'So far, what I have given you is more or less of a negative character. Now I have come to give you something positive.' In this way, you must create the atmosphere to give them something substantial.

Of bad and non-bad, non-bad does not mean positive good

"*Dharma-projjhita-kaitavo 'tra paramo nirmmat-sarāñāṁ satām* (the religion of the *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* is free from the deceptions of the four ends of humanity, and it is the religion of the true saints). *Nirmatsara* means 'an impartial mentality,' and *matsara* refers to the jealous. 'So far, I have given advices to that particular section which is not free from egoistic thinking. I have dealt with them. But now I shall deal with the normal-thinking—the good-hearted people. I shall now advise them.' Because it will be difficult to dissuade the people from the path taught by you, I have therefore come to you. Only through you can the higher, developed conception be given to them. This is the only way."

So Śrī Vyāsadeva was chastised in this way by Devarṣi Nārada. Then, with an outline of ten basic principles (*Bhā*: 2.20.1,2) he had to meditate, assimilate, and

A new colour given to everything delivered previously finally reproduce. Devarṣi Nārada left the *āśrama*, and Śrī Vyāsadeva began to meditate and assimilate. "So far, this was my conception of religion and non-religion; now some new light has been given to me, and in perspective I have to think out the whole system; the whole system must be coloured with a new colour. A new colour should be given to everything I delivered previously." So, he came to write *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*.

And he also felt, "*Mokṣa*, the *Brahma-jñāna* (liberation in the non-differentiated Absolute), has been given the highest position. Now, the higher conception that has been given to me by Devarṣi Nārada must be delivered to the world by a person whose *Brahma-jñāna* is unquestionably admitted by all the scholars." So he searched for Śukadeva. "Śukadeva is the only person who is very widely respected by the so-called liberationists. This higher doctrine should be brought to light through him, and then the position of *Bhāgavatam* will be automatically unchallengeable. So he hunted after Śukadeva.

He sent a woodsman whose business it was to cut down trees in the jungle and dense forest, and who made a trade from that. He told this *śloka* to that woodcutter:

निवृत्तरैरुपगीयमानाद्
भवौषधाच्छ्रेत्रमनोऽभिरामात्।
क उत्तमःश्लोकगुणानुवादात्
पुमान् विरज्येत विना पशुघ्नात्॥

*nivṛtta-tarsair upagiyamānād
bhavauṣadhač chrotra-mano 'bhirāmāt
ka uttamah-śloka-guṇānuvādāt
pumān virajyeta vinā paśughnāt*

"Wherever you will find a boy like my son, you

will try to chant this *śloka*. You always wander in the dense forest, and my boy is there, roaming hither and thither in the jungle. It is very difficult to trace his whereabouts, because he does not stay in one location. Always roaming and wandering, he lives on only leaves and fruits, and he takes water from the river."

Suddenly one day, this *śloka* caught Śukadeva's attention. "What do these woodcutters say?"

निवृत्तरूपगीयमानाद्
भवौषधाच्छ्रोत्रमनोऽभिरामात्।
क उत्तमःश्लोकगुणानुवादात्
पुमान् विरज्येत विना पशुनात्॥

nivṛtta-tarṣair upagiyamānād
bhavauṣadhāc chrotra-mano 'bhirāmāt
ka uttamah-śloka-guṇānuvādāt
pumān virajyeta vinā paśughnāt

"This big sound, with high meaning—where did they get it from?" Then after hearing twice, thrice, he approached them. "What do you say?" They again repeated, "Nivṛtta-tarṣair upagiyamānād: who have had all their thirst quenched, satisfied—they come and sing this song; bhavauṣadhāt: it is the medicine for the solution to

birth and death; śrotra-mano 'bhirāmāt: and it is always pleasing to the senses. The senses should not be considered as one's eternal enemy, and eliminated from any utility. They can be utilised. This song is very sweet for all the senses. Śrotra-mano 'bhirāmāt:

*The ear and
the mind are
pleased by a
high class of joy*

both the ear and mind are pleased by a high class of joy. *Ka uttamah-śloka-guṇānuvādāt pumān virajyeta vinā paśughnāt*: who but a suicide will keep such a conception of life, such a model ideal of his life, at a distance? Only a self-killer can do so! *It is suicide to keep such conceptions at a distance* Otherwise, one who is wakeful to his real interest can never avoid the *uttamah-śloka-guṇānuvāda*—the praise and prayer of the highest entity, the Lord Absolute. Who can keep himself aloof from this highest conception of life which is beyond even *mokṣa*?"

Then, after having a glimpse into the meaning of this *śloka*, this poem of *Bhāgavatam*, Śukadeva enquired,

"Where did you obtain this *śloka*?"

"At Badarikāśrama."

"Can you show me the place?"

"Yes, come."

And they took him to Vyāsadeva. He could recognise, "Oh, this is my father's āśrama. Vyāsadeva, my father, requested me to stay with him, but I did not

care for that. I ran away to the forest to avoid human society. To avoid being influenced by human society's designing attitude, I left it. However, for the solution I find in this *śloka*, I cannot but enquire from him."

So he came, and asked his father the meaning of the *śloka*. Śrīla Vyāsadeva then explained according to the angle of vision that Devarṣī Nārada had recently given him. And when Śukadeva later delivered the *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, he openly admitted in the assembly:

परिनिष्ठितोऽपि नैर्गुण्ये उत्तमःश्लोकलीलया ।
गृहीतचेता राजर्जे आख्यानं यदधीतवान् ॥
तदहं तेऽभिधास्यामि महापौरुषिको भवान् ।
यस्य श्रद्धतामाशु स्यान् मुकुन्दे मतिः सती ॥

(भा: २/१/९, १०)

pariniṣṭhito 'pi nairguṇye, uttamahṛṣloka-lilayā
grhita-cetā rājarṣe, ākhyānam yad adhitavān
tad aham te 'bhidhāsyāmi, mahāpauruṣiko bhavān
yasya śraddadhatām āśu, syān mukunde matih sati
(Bhā: 2.1.9,10)

When Parikṣit Mahārāja enquired from Śrī Śukadeva Goswāmī, Śukadeva first introduced himself in this way:

"O sage among kings, despite being excellently merged in the transcendental Brahman, I have studied

this *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* because my heart was attracted by the pastimes of the Supreme Lord Uttamahṛṣloka.

"King, you are a devotee, and as such you are most qualified to come to Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person; therefore I shall explain this narrative scripture to you. Swiftly does divine love for the Supreme Lord Mukunda arise within the heart of one who has developed faith in this *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*."

Śrī Śukadeva Goswāmī told Mahārāja Parikṣit, "You seem to be a student of a high standard of learning (*mahā-pauruṣiko bhavān*). There are many seekers of their future fortune, but you are a bona fide student; presently death is encroaching upon you, so no ordinary aspirations are in your mind. You are a genuine student and enquirer. *Dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa* (religion, wealth, sense pleasure, and liberation) are known as the fourfold ends of human enquiry (*puruṣārtha*), but because I consider you to be the most bona fide and sincere seeker of truth (*mahāpauruṣiko*), I think I can teach you what I have heard from my dear father very recently; I consider that to be the highest end of every life.

अधीतवान् द्वापरादौ पितुद्वैपायनादहम् ।
(भा: २/१/८)

तदहं तेऽभिधास्यामि महापौरुषिको भवान् ।
(भा: २/१/१०)

adhitavān dvāparādau, pitur dvaipāyanād aham

(*Bhā*: 2.1.8)

tad aham te 'bhidhāsyāmi, mahāpuruṣiko bhavān

(*Bhā*: 2.1.10)

"At the end of Dvāpara-yuga, I studied this *Mahāpurāṇa Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* from my father, Śrī Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana Vyāsa. I conceive that to be the highest standard of education and you are the fittest man to receive it. Therefore I shall deliver it to you."

Saying this, he began the talk of *Bhāgavatam*. And there he gave the principle of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, that harmonises all classes.

To receive descending spiritual knowledge in this way is the method of the deductive school. And the

The deductive school is exclusively for those aspirants who are free from the intolerance of jealousy

nature of such fit recipients is described as *nirmatsara*—they are free from jealousy. Those who are suffering the disease of jealousy cannot tolerate anyone

holding a higher position than themselves. They cannot tolerate the merit of others: "I am the best. None can be greater than me." This is their disease (*matsara*). But the *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* is for those who are free from

the disease of such a mean egoistic feeling. The students that come forward to read the *Bhāgavatam* must be of such character that they have conquered that mean egoistic sentiment of considering oneself to be all-in-all.

Realism that death and mortality cannot challenge

When that sort of mean, egoistic feeling is removed, one will be fit to study *Bhāgavatam*, and he will successfully imbibe the teachings herein and make a great and inconceivably divine improvement in his life.

Vedyāṁ vāstavam atra vastu śivadam: "I am not dealing with an imaginary concoction. This is *vāstava-vastu*, a realistic thought which death and mortality cannot challenge. I am dealing with such a thing here. The whole world you are living in is unreal, but what I am dealing with here is the only reality. The realistic thought is not unreal. You are suffering from the mania of unreality. *Tāpatrayonmūlanam:* and your disease will be wholesale cured. The disease and its effect—your suffering—will be uprooted to the extreme."

Chapter Eleven

The Guardian-ruled Family

"The Vaiṣṇava is all in all, and I am nothing." Such a feeling grows infinitely in the Vaiṣṇava. "I am nothing, but he is everything—he is a Vaiṣṇava; Guru and Vaiṣṇava really hold Kṛṣṇa-bhakti. They are the stockists. But I am empty-handed; I have nothing." This is the nature of the association of the finite with the infinite. As much as we shall have a real approach towards the infinite, we cannot but consider ourselves to be the meanest of the mean. The standard of Vaiṣṇava qualification (*vaiṣṇavatā*) is measured in this way. And this is not lip-deep, but the sincere dealing of the innermost heart. When Śrila Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Goswāmī says, *puriṣera kiṭha haite muṇī sei laghiṣṭha*—"I am lower than the worm in stool"—this is not mere imitation, but his heartfelt truth. Ācāryya-abhimāna, the assertion of the Guru over his disciple, is a different posture. That is assertion, but only for the service of the Vaiṣṇava; the sincerity is maintained therein. The Guru's assertion is not selfish assertion. His assertion is only for the sake of saving the public and upholding the prestige of the

Vaiṣṇava. So that is proper adjustment with reality, in twofold senses: to establish the real position of a Vaiṣṇava, and at the same time to save the ordinary persons from the danger and the reaction of false attempt or false thought. So that kind of assertion is not egoistic. Rather, we should know that as sacrifice in the dynamic sense.

Self-assertion as sacrifice in the dynamic sense; this assertion is not egoistic

In Viśva-vaiṣṇava-rāja-sabhā, our Guru Mahārāja tactfully managed in this way: he asked one of his disciples to speak something in praise and appreciation of another disciple. And he especially asked this of disciples who were a little antagonistic to one another. He asked them, "Speak something in praise of your 'friend.' " Why? To try to mark the bright side, the *svarūpa*, and to try to ignore the apparent side. He instructed, "You try to speak something in praise of your friend, your apparent opponent." The Guru's order was given, and so the disciple had to speak something in praise. Necessity is the mother of invention; he had to dive deep into the bright side of the other person and try to bring that side out. Thereby, the Vaiṣṇava atmosphere of giving and taking was aroused and the apparent, *māyika* side was gradually ignored, disregarded and dissipated. Something similar happens in *kīrttana* as well. Why is *kīrttana*

so powerful? Because when we are requested to speak something, we cannot but utilise our best attention to speak. We have to assert our best ability in the attempt to gather the proper information to speak something about the Supreme Lord. So, also, in the case of the Vaiṣṇava, as in the case of the Lord, we must approach the *svarūpa*, the inner side, the inner aspect, the bright side—and ignore the apparent side; and thereby we will thrive. There, the real mutual relationship will be aroused. Once a year in the Holy *Dhāma* of Śri

Caitanya Mahāprabhu, it was the practice of our Guru Mahārāja to preside in a meeting under the banner of Viśva-vaiṣṇava-rāja-sabhā (Universal Assembly of the Topmost Pure Devotees), and there his method was such: "Try to praise the Vaiṣṇava."

So, to appreciate the nobility of a Vaiṣṇava may be difficult, but if we can do so, we may have a chance to reach a standard of real devotion to a certain extent. It is said by the Lord in the *Ādi Purāṇa*, "One who 'loves Me' does not really love Me; but one who loves My servitors—his love for Me is more real; it is true and of absolute character." We must try to appreciate the character and conduct of the Vaiṣṇava, and thereby

*He who loves Me,
does not really love
Me; but one who loves
my servitor—his love
for Me is more real*

we can raise the standard of our own life of dedication.

The infinitesimal and the infinite are very closely connected. The consciousness of the infinitesimal is in this line:

যে যত পতিত হয়, তব দয়া তত তায়,
তাতে আমি সুপাত্র দয়ার।

(গীতমালা, যামুনভাবাবলী, ১৯)

*ye yata patita haya, tava dayā tata tāya,
tāte āmi supātra dayāra*

(*Gitamālā, Yāmuna-bhāvāvali*, 19)

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, "Your grace is given in accordance with the necessity of those who really deserve it. In that consideration, I have some claim. I am fallen of the fallen, the most fallen, so I have some claim to Your grace." That should be the attitude of the servitors. Increase the negative side. "I am the most deserving because I am meanest of the mean, poorest of the poor." We have to increase and develop our knowledge towards that side: "I am so low, so needy, so mean, in all respects."

The closer you come to the boundary of your knowledge, the more you will find Him transcending it

That consciousness will draw Him towards you; the mass energy collected (*karma*) or the attempt to know Him (*jñāna*) cannot do so (*jñāna-karmmādy-anāvṛttam*). To think, "I can know You, I can measure You"—that is impossible, wild goose-chasing, and this has been declared by *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*. You can never know Him. The closer you come to the boundary of your knowledge, the more you will find Him transcending it. None can bind Him. That was shown in the attempt of Mother Yaśodā. When she went to bind Dāmodara, Kṛṣṇa, around the waist, the rope was always two fingers short.

যদাসীত তদপি ন্যূনं তেনান্যদপি সন্দর্ভে।

তদপি ঘৃঙ্গুলং ন্যূনং যদ্ যদাদত বন্ধনম্॥

(Bhā: ১০/৯/১৬)

*yad asit tad api nyūnam, tenānyad api sandadhe
tad api dvy-aṅgulaṁ nyūnam, yad yad ādatta bandhanam*

(*Bhā: 10.9.16*)

"(After joining the original rope with another) that rope was also short by the measure of two fingers. Then she tied more rope; that also was short by the same measure. In this way, no matter how much rope she

added, it was always short by two fingers."

It is a mathematically impossible margin, but it is such. Similarly, we must know that the Absolute is

*It is His monopoly,
within His fist; you
may conjecture
many alternatives,
but to no avail*

subjective, not objective. Examples like this show us the failure of the objective calculation. Don't go to calculate the transcendental truth by the objective process. The factor of *His will* can never be eliminated, and that is the real factor. If you approach to calculate about Him, the most realistic thought you must keep in your mind is that it depends on His Supreme Will. He is *abhiñā*, omniscient, and *svarāt*, fully independent. Only He knows what is what and what should be what. It is His monopoly, within His fist. You may conjecture so many alternatives, but to no avail. He knows what He will do; and at the same time, He is not under any obligation to anyone. He cannot be compelled to give any explanation for His deeds. Only He knows what is what, and He is the Absolute Autocrat (*artheśv abhiñāḥ svarāt*, *Bhā*: 1.1.1). He does not care for the consideration of others. If we approach Him with this kind of understanding and impression, we must advance towards the divine realm.

I have no possibility of pressing any demand on Him. There is no possibility of placing any application,

"Please consider this or that." But at the same time, we must not forget that He listens only to the words of the devotee who is actually of such a temperament (*aham bhakta-parādhināḥ*, *Bhā*: 9.4.63). This, also, cannot be eliminated. But who is such a *bhakta*? One who knows the Lord's nature in *this way*—he's a devotee. So, to become submissive to him is in other words to keep one's own independence! To be submissive to the surrendered soul amounts to no submission, because it is to submit to a person who is fully His. When He says, "I am subservient—I work under the direction of My devotee," then who are the devotees? They are those who have surrendered cent-per-cent to His sweet will. Then, in other words, they are as independent as He is. They do not have their independent wishes, but nonetheless, for the sake of the Lord's pastimes, *līlā*, such things are designed by *Yogamāyā*.

In different *rasas* we may see that the devotee and the Lord sometimes take opposite sides. Just as Kṛṣṇa wants to steal, and Yaśodā won't allow Him to steal, and she is punishing Him. Apparently they seem to be opposing forces, but *Yogamāyā*, the internal potency of the Lord, is acting. Somehow it is Kṛṣṇa's will to play like that. A director of a drama may order his actors, "You must say like this; and I shall oppose." *Līlā* also

is a movement to one point, harmoniously without any disturbance. This is *līlā*. *Līlā* has no rhyme and reason; it is dynamic existence. It is just the opposite of the fossil. And *līlā* is of the nature of *rasa* or *ānanda*, beauty and charm. Beauty and charm are the very nature of the Lord.

To become disconnected from that original flow is the trouble caused by *māyā*. The conditioned souls

Conditioned souls are suffering from disease and have lost their own property and wealth
are under the potency of *māyā*, as though suffering the disease of insanity. They have lost their own property and wealth. This is *māyā*.

Mā means 'what is not,' and *yā* means 'that.' The word *māyā* is also derived, *mīyate anayā iti māyā*: *māyā* is 'that by which measurement is made.'

Separate interest is the cause of all the anomaly
The spiritual experts inform us that separate interest has been the root cause of all disturbance (*dvitiyābhiniveśataḥ syāt*).

Really everything is alright, but the spirit of separatism is responsible for the whole anomaly.

भयं द्वितीयाभिनिवेशतः स्यादीशादपेतस्य विपर्ययोऽसृतिः ।
तन्माययातो बुध आभजेत् तं भक्त्यैकयेषां गुरुदेवतात्मा ॥

(भा: ११/२/३७)

*bhayam dvitiyābhiniveśataḥ syād
iśād apetasya viparyyayo 'smṛtiḥ
tan-māyayāto budha ābhajet tam
bhaktyaikayeśam gurudevatātmā*

(Bhā: 11.2.37)

"A person who turns away from the Lord forgets his own innate identity by dint of the *māyā* potency of the Lord, and his perception becomes topsy-turvy whereby he thinks, 'I am the body.'

From this, he becomes absorbed in separate interest, identifying himself with the body, senses, etc. This is the cause of all apprehension.

Therefore, a judicious person should worship that Supreme Lord with exclusive devotion, casting aside all spurious desires, and with the knowledge that Gurudeva is one's worshipful lord and dearmost friend."

To think "I can thrive individually," is to ignore the collective line and try for one's separate interest. This fine point is said to be responsible for all the disturbance: "I wanted to seek my own pleasure, separating myself from the consideration of collectiveness."

The judicious worship that Supreme Lord with exclusive devotion

Know that Gurudeva is one's worshipful Lord and dearmost friend

The fine point said to be responsible for all the disturbance

The next stage is *iśād apetasya viparyyayo 'smṛtiḥ*: deviation from consideration of my master. The first stage is self-interest, and then next is deviation from guardian-consciousness, or to lose the consciousness that "I have my master, my guardian." Separate interest means, "I am my own guardian." Then, *tan-māyayāto*: why is it so? Because I am *taṭastha*, marginal.

Second stage: to lose consciousness that 'I have my master'

On the other side is *māyā*, and somehow that influence has captured my weak decisive faculty. I am an infinitesimal particle of consciousness with minute independence. But without my cooperation, the *māyika* or mundane transaction is impossible. So my consent was necessary. With the consent of a minor

With the consent of a minor child, the guardian can do anything and everything

child, the guardian can do anything and everything. The minority or infinitesimal character is inherent in me, and that makes room for this error. *Tan-māyayāto budha ābhajet tam*:

but because *māyā* is not independent, she also has to

Don't go to māyā, but go to He who is the Master of māyā

work under the guidance of the Supreme Authority; so don't go to *māyā*, but go to He who is the Master of *māyā*. *Tan-māyayāto budha, ābhajet tam—na tu*

māyām. Although *māyā* is coming to capture the soul because of his weakness of co-operating with her, still, *budha*, which means *sumedha*—the pious souls—will go for relief to the Master of *māyā*. This is the decision of *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*. *Tan-māyā* means *tasya māyā*—His *māyā*. *Māyā* is not the highest entity; she also has her Master. So when the temptation comes in you to perform a bad deed you must file an appeal for help to the Supreme Authority, and not to *māyā*.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* also the Lord says:

दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।

मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥

(गीता ७/१४)

*daivī hy eṣā guṇamayī, mama māyā duratyayā
mam eva ye prapadyante, māyām etām taranti te*

(Bg. 7.14)

"This trimodal supernatural or alluring deluding potency of Mine is practically insurmountable. However, those who exclusively surrender unto Me can certainly

When temptation comes in you, you must file an appeal to the Supreme Authority and not to māyā:

The decision of Śrimad-Bhāgavatam

surpass this formidable fantasy."

Māyā, misunderstanding, is troubling the fallen souls, but misunderstanding itself cannot give them relief. The Prime Cause of misunderstanding—He alone can give them relief. "So you can easily escape *māyā*" don't go to that side, come to Me. By My instruction that *māyā* will leave you. She's more powerful than you; *daivi*—she has higher backing, So you must try to seek your relief from the higher office, and not approach directly to *māyā*. That will not be helpful to you. If you have My slightest backing, you can easily escape from that *māyā*."

Misunderstanding is there, but it is not very powerful inasmuch as it does not have its own support—it is not independent. It is also dependent on truth. Truth has the better position over misunderstanding. So your

Your transaction should always be with the Truth transaction should always be with the truth, with the positive. And what is positive truth? *Sat-cit-ānandam*: unsatisfiable existence, self-consciousness, and fulfillment. It is fulfillment in itself. In Hegelian philosophy, unsatisfiable existence is described as 'by itself and for itself.' The conscious element in the middle has been suppressed in that philosophy. The Absolute Truth feels His Self-consciousness. He feels that He exists. Stone exist-

ence may not feel its existence, but soul perceives his existence; he is *cit* or *cetana*—conscious. But his consciousness is not perfect. It has some want, some demand, some hankering for a higher life. *Ānandam* or *rasa* is beauty, harmony, love. That is the conception of the fullest integer: having existence, consciousness, and also fulfillment. Not only hankering or knowing is present, but that which is to be hankered for or known about is present there, and that is *ānandam*. *Ānandam* and *sundaram* are synonymous.

The soul has some want, some demand for the higher life

I saw that some of the European philosophers have translated this word *ānandam* as 'beauty,' as in 'Reality the Beautiful.' We find that to be very near to the conception of Kṛṣṇa. Probably it was the philosopher Martineau, a very good linguist and a poet of high style, who proposed that the ultimate element is 'Reality the Beautiful.' Wordsworth hinted at 'eye-beauty' and 'ear-beauty.' In one poem Wordsworth described a girl of his dreams. He wrote that she was a village girl, and there was a brook alongside that village. He says that the jingling sound of the brook contributed to her beauty. Many scholars tried to give some interpretation to this conception, but one Bengali scholar, Harināth De, who was a master of thirty-two languages, gave the interpre-

ation: 'ear-beauty contributed to eye-beauty.' His explanation was very taking to me. The ear-beauty, the beauti-

The soul can only be satisfied in the Absolute Beauty; any partial representation of the Absolute, or even eternal existence, cannot satisfy his quest

ful sound of the brook, added to the appearance of that girl; that means that contributed to eye-beauty. Eye beauty, nose-beauty, touch-beauty, etc., all are *ānandam*, *rasam*, or beauty in the broadest sense.

In another Upaniṣadic word, it is stated, *satyam*, *śivam*, *sundaram*. Śiva means *maṅgalam*. What is the criterion of *maṅgalam*? *Amaṅgalam* means mortal: mortal is *amaṅgalam* (inauspicious). And immortality is *śivam*,

For the stone there is no question of satisfaction *maṅgalam* (auspicious). So *śivam* means immortal, and that means conscious, as found in the soul. Soul

is immortal. So, stone is mortal, but soul is immortal. Therefore, soul proper is *śiva*; but we see that the soul is vulnerable. Supersoul is beauty, *sundaram*. That is concrete reality as the independent and fullest representation of existence. All other existences are but partial representations of the Absolute. *Sundaram* is satisfaction; the soul is dissatisfied, and for stone there is no question of satisfaction; it possesses only mere existence. But soul is dissatisfied, even though he is an eternal unit of self-

consciousness. The words Śiva, Mṛtyuñjaya and Mahādeva mean 'free from mortality or change; eternal.' But mere eternity is not sufficient. Only *rasam* or *sundaram* can fill the gap. So *sundaram* is the object of our quest. If wherever we go and whatever we do is examined minutely it will be detected that we are searching after beauty, after fulfillment, after *sundaram*, after *rasam*.

न ते विदुः स्वार्थगतिं हि विष्णुं
दुराशया ये बहिरथमानिनः ।

(Bhā: 7/6/31)

na te viduh svārtha-gatim hi viṣṇum
durāśayā ye bahir artha-māninaḥ

(Bhā: 7.5.31)

"Those whose minds have been polluted by mundane sense-pleasure, and who hold respect for sense-enjoyers addicted to external mundane pleasures—they cannot know of the glories of Lord Viṣṇu, the exclusive refuge of those desirous of attaining the supreme goal of human life."

Externally and ignorantly, it may be seen that we are in quest of this and that—duty, money, sense-pleasure (*dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*); but this is an external

and partial examination of things. But with a deep examination it must be found that we are eagerly searching for only *rasam, sundaram*: the fullest satisfaction, and not for partial, temporary so-called pleasure. So *dharma, artha*, and *kāma* cannot satisfy our inner hankering. Not to speak of them, even liberation (*mokṣa*) from the present flickering hankering is not the goal, and this is the finding of the scholars. Mere liberation from the negative side is an artificial life. Life must have *Zero cannot be the conclusion of the whole existence; Infinite is the conclusion* its fulfillment. Everything has its fulfillment and necessary position. It is not meant for nothing! Zero cannot be the conclusion of the whole existence. Infinite is the conclusion, not zero. So mere liberation—to remain as in a long, deep slumber—that is destructive and inconclusive. That cannot be the object of creation or the object of our existence. The other side must be searched out—the *cid-vilāsa* (the transcendental dynamic plane). And where can we get that? Here in this world is exploitation, and there is just the opposite: dedication.

Bhakti is dedication, after surrender to the centre. As I mentioned earlier, we have drifted into separate interest. Now we must give up that separate interest and enter into the undivided family; we must accept the

guardian. We have been advised to enter the guardian-ruled family. We have to adjust ourselves to live in a family under guardianship. But we shall strive to understand that life under a guardian is the wholesome and healthy life. We need not search after our full independence, for that independence cannot solve the problem we are faced with. There is no doubt that we are in the midst of a problem. Apparently, it may be thought that by independence the problem may be solved. But it is wrong.

The scriptures and *mahājanas* come to our help: "No! At present you may think that independence will give you proper satisfaction of your inner heart, but really, it is wrong. Your apparent thought is your enemy. You want to get out of any circumstantial infringement, and if you get freedom you'll be happy—this is wrong. Rather, the opposite is true. You should try to live in a joint family. You must be accommodative; you must correct *your* nature. Your independence is your enemy."

This must be understood. This independence that apparently seems to be your friend is really your enemy, and you must learn how to live together with others.

We are in the
midst of a problem;
apparently, inde-
pendence will solve
the problem; but
it is ill-conceived

You must try to
live in a joint
family

You cannot separate yourself from the environment; it is not possible. That is death, *samādhi*, or the infinite slumber. That is no life, that is no answer, that is no solution. You must live with many. You must see that you are a part of the whole, and that only your spirit of independence is disturbing you. And you must try to save yourself from the hands of your 'friends.' "God, save me from my friends, my so-called friends."

Only surrender can give you relief, can give you the real, higher life. You will be able to understand that from your innermost heart. In *Bhagavad-gītā*, Kṛṣṇa has repeatedly hammered this *rāga-dveṣa*—apathy and sympathy (*rāga-dveṣa-vimuktaiś tu*, Bg. 2.64) Those two are your enemies. Apathy for something and sympathy for something—these are your enemies! Be independent of those two enemies, and concentrate yourself towards your guardian. Know that He is not partial. Your first consideration should be that the guardian is not partial. "I am guardian, but I am friendly to you all (*suhṛḍam sarvva-bhūtānām*, Bg. 5.29). Don't leave this thought! I am your guardian, but at the same time I am your friend. Don't forget this, otherwise there alone is the danger in your whole life."

Try to save yourself from your 'friends'

Be optimistic, don't be pessimistic. You are good and all around you is bad, and withdrawal from everything and everyone will give you real bliss? Don't be so selfish-thinking. That is your environment; they should be relied upon—they also have goodness in them. So try to adjust yourself with them. *Tat te 'nukampām* (Bhā: 10.14.8): all our situations in life occur by His grace. Especially try to adjust with the Guardian who is at the bottom of all movement and all creation. Have faith in Him, and through Him, approach your environment. Then everything will be properly adjusted.

In *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* it is said:

सर्वभूतेषु यः पश्येद् भगवद्वावमात्मनः ।
भूतानि भागवत्यामन्येष भागवतोत्तमः ॥

(Bhā: ११/२/४५)

*sarvva-bhūteṣu yaḥ paśyed, bhagavad-bhāvam ātmanah
bhūtāni bhāgavaty ātmany, esa bhāgavatottamah*

(Bhā: 11.2.45)

We can attain the highest position in this way. Whatever and whoever we come across, we must see it at the central interest and not from provincial or local interest. Go straight to the centre: *bhagavad-*

bhāvam. Then, *ātmanah.* Try to see the centre in everything, and then in connection with or through the centre, come to approach your environment. First go to the

This separate relationship is not wholesome centre, and from the centre, knowing your relationship with the centre, come to adjust with your surroundings and company. What is a person's relationship to the centre, and what is my relationship to the centre? Considering these two factors, I shall ascertain what shall be my relationship with that person. My connection with everything and everyone should be ascertained through the centre. My relationship with others must be calculated from the central interest, not the local or partial interest between them. That will be wrong, and that is the root of all evil. This separate relationship is not wholesome. Only go straight to see things through the

Your Relation-ship will descend eye of the interest of the centre, and your relationship will descend (*sarvva-bhuteṣu yah paśyed, bhagavad-bhāvam—ātmanah*). Next, *bhutāni bhagavaty* and then *ātmani*—vice versa: what is God's relationship with the thing, and what is the thing's relationship with God; and according to that calculation, you come into adjustment with them, with your environment. Then you are out of danger. But eliminating the central interest, if you want to mix together and get

your local benefit satisfied in the meantime, you'll be in danger (*yo mām paśyati sarvvatra . . . pranaśyati, Bg. 6.30; sarvva-bhuteṣu yah paśyed . . . eṣa bhagavatottamah, Bhā: 11.2.45*).

So the environment is not bad. We are suffering from misunderstanding, *māyā* (*na te viduh svārtha-gatim hi viṣṇum*), and that misunderstanding should be cleared. We shall try to live anywhere and everywhere, and we shall see the environment as all-loving, if we have that deep vision to see who is at the basis of all of us, if we find Him. It is also mentioned in the *Upaniṣads* that in pure consciousness, one can see nectar everywhere—in the wind, in the ocean, in the plants, in the stars—everywhere.

Try to recognise that your situation is full of honey—full of nectar. Don't try to see only the outer cover. Your vision must be deep enough to see the real position. Then you will find everything is like nectar to you. *Śṛṇvantu viśve amṛtasya putrāḥ.* This clarion-call is coming from the *Veda*: "O you sons of nectar! Attempt to listen to my words! You are really sons of the nectar lake. Why should you be like poison? Are you a poisonous unit? Are you now down-trodden to become units of poison? But your real, innate self—you are a drop of the nectar ocean!" *Śṛṇvantu viśve amṛtasya putrāḥ*

—“Awake! Arise! Arise to your self-consciousness that you are a drop of the nectar ocean! Try to realise it!”

“Your attachment to the outer cover—not only the

*Dive deep and
you will find
nectar—no
poison*

covers outside but of yourself also—all are covers in reality. Don't be a ‘cover-calculator.’ Dive deep into your own self, in the existence of your environment.

Dive deep, and you will find all nectar, no poison. Poison is a thing superficial to your real conception.” To make much of the cover of things, ignoring the substance within, is nothing but cover transaction (*na te viduh svārtha-gatim hi viṣṇum, durāśayā ye bahir artha-māni-nah*). It is poisonous.

In this world, we may think we find something to be beautiful, but beauty in local interest is not real beauty.

*Beauty for posse-
sion is poison*

We have to be able to distinguish between the central interest and the local interest. Beauty for individual possession is poison. We are desirous of independence to enjoy that local beauty. This is the trap. But beauty is meant for the service of Kṛṣṇa. Everything is meant for Him—there we will find real beauty. The real nature of beauty is present in that which is attractive to Kṛṣṇa. Beauty should be measured from the central consideration. The danger lies in consideration of beauty from the separate

interest viewpoint.

What is beauty? An object to be enjoyed. To be enjoyed by whom? If by me, then I am lost. Everything is meant for Him, and we have to enjoy beauty like that. If that is possible, we are alright. Whenever we see anything beautiful, it must come to our minds, “Oh, Kṛṣṇa will be able to enjoy this very much.” Our mentality should be like this. Our mentality should be ‘centre-centred’: “Whatever good I see will immediately remind me that Kṛṣṇa will enjoy it very much.” The tasteful—“Kṛṣṇa has enjoyed this curry; I shall enjoy it subsidiarily. My position is dependent upon how Kṛṣṇa has enjoyed.”

Everything should be seen through Him, and only after that—‘mine.’ *Sarvva-bhūteṣu yah paśyed bhagavad-bhāvam—ātmanah.* ‘Mine’ should mean ‘how Kṛṣṇa has enjoyed.’ Everything may be fittingly enjoyed by Him. I must be Kṛṣṇa-centred. Then other centres such as beauty to be enjoyed by any other person, not to speak of oneself, will be recognised as risky and poisonous. Beauty—everything—is to be enjoyed by Him. It is meant, it is created, it is sustained—for Him. We must reach this understanding, for this is to be situated in the deepest plane. This is *nirguṇa*, transcendental. Otherwise, all

*Our mentality should
be centre-centred*

*Get out of
the waves of
local interest*

is *saguna*, or superficial. Get out of the *saguna*, the waves of local interest. That may be centred in a family, a village, a country, a species, or human society to the exception of birds, beasts and insects—the circle may increase, but it is still limited. But properly adjusted, we want nothing less than Kṛṣṇa, so everything must be connected with Him and seen through His interest. My interest should not entertain any independent friendship with anyone. Everything should be done on Kṛṣṇa's account. Negotiation, transaction, and future prospect—everything is for the centre, Kṛṣṇa. In this way, everything will come to me through the Absolute Good. Then all the poison will be eliminated and whatever comes to me will be mixed with nectar.

So whatever we contact must come via Kṛṣṇa or His bona fide servant—Gurudeva or Vaiṣṇava, whose cause is inseparable from Kṛṣṇa's. We can rely upon them. Somehow, everything must percolate through the Absolute Good—not vulnerable or limited goodness—but the Absolute Good. Via that, all transactions between the plurality must be checked and sent as *prasādam* (merciful remnants) from the centre. That should be the proper attitude. And that is really sweet.

My interest should not entertain any independent friends

If we can come into that plane, we shall feel this. Otherwise, our actions will be performed as duty, by scriptural injunction and so on. But if we can reach the plane of the Absolute Good, our own soul or existence and practical life will bear testimony for us that this life is the topmost, and without it, we cannot live.

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, "Esaba chodata parāṇa hārāū: Śri Vṛndāvana and its surroundings so intensely awaken my remembrance of Kṛṣṇa; and if these things are taken away from me, I shall lose my very life. They are sustaining me, because they are encouraging me to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They are all encouraging and helping me towards Kṛṣṇa consciousness in different aspects. Whatever I see there, rādhā-kuṇḍa-taṭa-kuñja-kuṭīra, govarddhana-parvvata-yāmuna-tīra (the dwelling in the groves on the banks of Śri Rādhā-kuṇḍa, the holy Govarddhana mountain, the banks of the holy Yamunā river)—reminds me in such a sweet way, taking me towards Kṛṣṇa conception and Kṛṣṇa-līlā, spreading nectar in my heart. If I am to leave them, then I shall leave my existence. They are all around me; they are so encouraging and life-giving to me. They are so fulfilling to my life—indeed, they are more than

This life is topmost, and without it we cannot live

Everything takes me towards a Kṛṣṇa conception, spreading nectar in my heart

my life! *Kusuma-sarovara, mānasa-gaṅgā, kalindanandini vipula-taraṅgā* (the holy lake midway between Mathurā, Govarddhana, and Rādhā-kuṇḍa, the river at the edge of Govarddhana, the rolling waves of the Yamunā); *kha-ga-mṛga-kula, malaya-bātāsa* (the birds and animals, the breezes of spring)—what a sweet contribution all these things offer me! Kṛṣṇa is very near to me! I would die without them. Such beauty, the whole thing takes me with lightning speed directly towards Kṛṣṇa consciousness, towards His Associates and His pastimes with Them. That is direct nectar, and that will come in me.”

ରାଧାକୃଷ୍ଣଟୁ-କୁଞ୍ଜକୁଟୀର । ଗୋର୍କନପର୍ବତ ଯାମୁନାତୀର ॥
 କୁସୁମସରୋବର, ମାନସଗଙ୍ଗା । କଲିନ୍ଦନନ୍ଦିନୀ ବିପୁଲ-ତରଙ୍ଗା ॥
 ବଂଶୀବଟ୍, ଗୋକୁଳ, ଧୀରସମୀର । ବୃଦ୍ଧାବନ-ତର୍ଫ ଲତିକା-ବାନୀର ॥
 ଖଗ-ମୃଗକୁଳ, ମଲୟ-ବାତାସ । ମୟୁର, ଭ୍ରମର, ମୁରଲୀ-ବିଲାସ ॥
 ବେଣୁ, ଶୃଙ୍ଗ, ପେଦଚିହ୍ନ, ମେଘମାଳା । ବସନ୍ତ, ଶଶାଙ୍କ, ଶଞ୍ଜ, କରତାଳା ॥
 ଯୁଗଳ ବିଲାସେ ଅନୁକୁଳ ଜାନି । ଲୌଲାବିଲାସ-ଉଦ୍ଦୀପକ ମାନି ॥
 ଏସବ ଛୋଡ଼ତ କାହା ନାହି ଯାଉଁ । ଏସବ ଛୋଡ଼ତ ପରାଣ ହାରାଉଁ ॥
 ଭକ୍ତିବିନୋଦ କହେ, ଶୁନ କାନ । ତୁଯା ଉଦ୍ଦୀପକ ହାମାରା ପରାଣ ॥

*rādhākuṇḍataṭa-kuñjakuṭīra
 govardhanaparvvata yāmumatīra
 kusumasarovara, mānasagaṅgā
 kalindanandini vipula-taraṅgā*

*vaiṁśīvaṭa, gokula, dhirasamira
 vṛṇdāvana-taru latikā-vānīra
 khaga-mṛgakula, malaya-bātāsa
 mayura, bhramara, murali-vilāsa
 venu, śrṅga, padacihna, meghamālā¹
 vasanta, śāśānka, śāṅkha karatālā
 yugala vilāse anukūla jāni
 lilāvilāsa-uddipaka māni
 esaba choṭata ḡāhā nāhi yāu
 esaba choṭata parāna hārāu
 bhaktivinoda kahe, śuna kāna
 tuyā uddipaka hāmārā parāna*

The grove-dwelling on the banks of Rādhā-kuṇḍa,
 Govarddhana mountain, the banks of river Yamunā;
 Kusuma-sarovara lake, Mānasa-gaṅgā river,
 The rolling waves of Yamunā, daughter of the sun;
 Place of the Rāsa dance, and Gokula, the gentle breezes,
 The trees, vines, and Vetasā palms of Vraja;
 The birds and animals, the sweet air of spring,
 The peacocks, bumblebees, the flute's sweet song;
 Flute, horn, His footsteps, range of clouds in the sky,
 Season of spring, the moon, the conch, hand-cymbals;
 I know all these things are nourishing
 the pastimes of the Divine Couple,

I can feel they arouse the holy pastimes of the Lord;
 I can never leave all these things so dear to me,
 Without them I know I'll surely die;
 Hear me, O Kān, says Śrī Bhaktivinoda:
 You are the only light of my life.

This is Vṛndāvana. Vṛndāvana is so friendly, so sweet, so near to us, and such a wellwisher of ours. We are quite at home there—sweet, sweet home. *Svarūpe sabāra haya, golokete sthitī*: in our innate and innermost existence, we are members of that plane. Now we have come out, and we have scattered our consciousness all over the surface. Cover, cover, cover—there are so many layers, and they are all dry things. And the substance, the spirit, is within. Eliminating this bodily cover, the mental cover, the liberation cover, the Vaikuṇṭha cover—then I may enter into the land of Vraja. Vṛndāvana resides within me, if I can find my friends everywhere. They are my friends and relatives, and they will give me all-pleasing experience, ecstasy. Mahā-prabhu came with this news for us. "Oh, you are a child of that soil; why do you suffer here, my children, my boys? Why do you suffer? *Amṛtasya-putrāḥ*: you are a child of that soil, and you are suffering so much, coming in the desert? Your home is so resourceful, so sweet,

and you are running in the desert? What is this? Come! Leave this poisonous charm, this suicidal charm. This charm, *māyā*-charm, misunderstanding charm—this is suicidal. Leave this apparent charm! This is poisonous, like a witch. The witch has charmed you here and made you spellbound. Come along with Me! I shall take you to your home which is so very sweet!"

In general, this is the call of Śrī Caitanya Mahā-prabhu and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. Don't try to think yourself a master of so many *siddhis* like *animā, laghimā, vyāpti* (becoming small as the atom, lighter than a feather, all-pervading, etc.). The thought that you can play with miracles is all lower conception. With *mukti* (liberation), then *siddhi* (yogic supernatural mystic powers), you will have to encounter so many traps and obstacles that your very existence will be at stake. To the South there is the Bhīmarula-varuli, the hornet's nest of unfulfilled desires (*karma-kānda*); to the West, there is the Yakṣa, the deceitful ghost representing the death of merging into the Absolute by supernatural yoga-practice (*yoga-siddhi*); and to the North there is the Ajagara, the black python representing the death of merging into the Absolute Brahman by the liberationists

*Don't try to think
yourself a Master
—to play with
miracles is all a
lower conception*

*Mahāprabhu takes
us to the East side*

on the path of knowledge (*jñāna-mārga*). They will all bewilder you. But most naturally and with the least effort on your part, Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu will take you to the Eastern side, to the wealth that is within your heart. That is universal, spacious, sweet, and most intimate. There is your home, all are mutual wellwishers there. That is the gift of Śrimad-Bhāgavatam and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Gaura Hari bol.

Chapter Twelve

Every Word is a Song

"Where every word is a song, every step is a dance,
and the flute is the favourite attendant . . ."

(*Śrī Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā*)

Every word is a song . . . but this is not a sound of this plane. This is from some other world, some other world that is so soft, so sweet, so heart-capturing. It is a world where correct behaviour occurs most sweetly and harmoniously. Every word is like a song (*kathā gānam*). Every movement is sweet, like dancing (*nātyam gamanam api*). It has been described in this way. Everything is replete with the highest degree of beauty. This is the land of beauty—there everything is beautiful. Everything has the touch of beauty divine. The prime cause is charming, attracting, and arresting heart and soul, "Stop!"

There is a land of such existence. Our aspiration is for such a life (*rādhikā-mādhavaśām*). We can sincerely foster the idea to feel attraction to a life of such a plane, where everything is of a musical character. The flute of

Kṛṣṇa guides everything. That can even draw out the life from the body.

The sound is so charming, it appears that one's very feeling wants to come out of bodily existence. Whatever part of our body is touched with any sort of such dealing, that part seems to disconnect from the other parts, and—if it is possible to imagine it—that part runs to join the subject. If there is colour, the eye wants to feel it, as though separating himself from the other parts of the body. There is such a competition: "I don't want your connection, O body! I want to run towards that direction—a call has come from there." The hands, the eyes, the touch—all faculties will compete; whatever part is touched will want to run away from the other friendly companions.

Once, after conducting the *parikramā* (circumambulation) of the whole Vraja-maṇḍala (the perimeter of Śri Vṛndāvana), Śrila Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda asked his disciples, "Which pastimes attracted you most? Which location in Vṛndāvana has attracted you most?" When he asked me this question, I replied that Kadamkhāṇḍi, the place of Śrila Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu's *bhajana*, attracted me most of all. Midway between Nandagrām and Yāvaṭ there was an āśrama where Śrila Rūpa Goswāmī settled and used to write his book

Śrī-Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu. That place attracted me most. Again, after a year or two, when we were at Śrī Rādhā-Kuṇḍa in the company of Śrila Prabhupāda, he very suddenly remarked, "Your place. That place of yours . . ." I was astounded. "What, where is my place?" He said, "Your place is Kadamkhāṇḍi, the place of Śrila Rūpa Goswāmī." I thought, "Oh, he had some purpose when he enquired a year or two ago which location was attractive to who; he kept these things on his mind, and accordingly today he is saying, 'Your place.' "

So he was very particular about *ruci-parikṣā*, or to examine the taste of a particular person for a particular *līlā* and a particular group of service. It is necessary for the Ācāryya to examine his disciple and determine the place where he is to be located. He must determine where his disciple stands and accordingly in harmony with that innate taste help him in his march towards that land of his aspiration.

The destination has been settled, but how shall I reach it? When shall I reach it? Those who come to my aid to take me there—they are my masters, my Gurus: *Śikṣā-gurus* and *Dikṣā-guru*. Whoever helps me to go there is my Guru. He is my guide who will help me to

In harmony with the innate taste of his sincere disciple, Śri Guru—the Ācāryya or the Divine Master—guides the disciple's march onward to the land of his aspiration

reach my located destination, the station of my innermost hankering (*rādhikā-mādhavaśāṁ prāpto yasya prathitah kṛpayā śrī-gurum tam nato 'smi*). He has helped me to locate my destination; he has educated me how and what to aspire after, and how to reach that highest aspired shelter. I have attained all these things through him. He is my all-in-all in life, the master of my life. There is a boat, and he is the helmsman (*guru-karṇadhāram*). I have surrendered unto him, I have accepted him. I have boarded his boat and he is taking me towards the goal of my life.

The human body (*nṛ-deham*) has been compared to a boat. By utilising my resources in this body and mind, my Gurudeva, as the helmsman, is guiding me towards the goal. One who does not take this opportunity after coming into the human species commits suicide. He commits suicide by failing to take advantage of crossing the ocean of life and death, birth and death, birth

One who does not take this opportunity commits suicide and death. The very nature of the ocean of mundane existence is waves—life and death, birth and death. The helmsman to take us across this ocean of life and death, birth and death, is Gurudeva. It is said in the *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* that anyone who misses this chance is committing suicide:

नृदेहमाद्यं सुलभं सुदुर्लभं
प्लवं सुकल्पं गुरुकर्णधारम् ।
मयानुकूलेन नभस्वतेरितं
पुमान भवाब्धिं न तरेत् स आत्महा ॥

(Bhā: ११/२०/१७)

*nṛ-deham ādyam sulabham sudurllabham
plavam sukalpam guru-karṇadhāram
mayānukūlena nabhasvateritam
pumān bhavābdhim na taret sa ātmahā*

(Bhā: 11.20.17)

Here, the Lord is inferring, "So many boats are passing, and I am helping like a favourable wind. The helmsman is Guru, and I am the favourable wind. The boat is this human body, and you should all take this opportunity to cross the ocean of life, birth, and death. The world is compared to the infinite. It resembles infinity; it is very difficult to cross the ocean of life and death, birth and death. If you want to escape these troubles (*janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhi-duḥkha-doṣānudarśanam*), you must take the chance. Otherwise, you will lose so much that it amounts to suicide."

The grace of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu presupposes some selection, but Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu's grace has

no selection. He gives His grace to whoever He comes across. Nityānanda Prabhu is so magnanimous that He

Mahāprabhu's grace presupposes some selection, whereas Nityānanda's grace has no selection

Prabhu is most benevolent. Mahāprabhu has a sort of discrimination, but Nityānanda Prabhu does not care for any discrimination whatsoever. Whether one is a fit or an unfit candidate, he is still counted as worthy. Such is His mercy.

Never dare to approach Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, neglecting the grace of Lord Nityānanda (*hena nitāi vine bhāi, rādhā-kṛṣṇa pāite nāi*). So, our revered Śripāda Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja laid stress on Nityānanda Prabhu. Nityānanda Prabhu is Lord Balarāma. Nityānanda Prabhu's grace is stressed for the fallen; His grace is real wealth for them because discrimination has hardly a place in it. Although not much, we nonetheless find some sort of discrimination in the magnanimity of Lord Gaurāṅga. But Nityānanda Prabhu is more generous. So first go to Nityānanda Prabhu, and by His grace you will go to Mahāprabhu. And by the grace of Mahāprabhu you will easily reach Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda in Vṛndāvana. This is the way shown to us.

saves whoever He comes across on His way. His mercy is so raw, undiscriminating, and broad. Nityānanda

यथा यथा गौरपदारविन्दे विन्देत भक्ति कृतपुण्यराशि: ।
तथा तथोत्सर्पति हृद्यकस्माद् गाधापदाम्भोजसुधाम्बुराशि: ॥

(श्रीचैतन्यचन्द्रमृत ८८)

*yathā yathā gaura-padāravinde
vindeta bhaktim kṛta-puṇya-rāśih
tathā tathotsarpati hṛdy akasmād
rādhā-padāmbhoja-sudhāmbu-rāśih*

(Śrī Caitanya-candrāmrta 88)

"As devotion unto the lotus feet of Śrī Gaurasundara is attained by a greatly pious person, unexpectedly the ocean of nectar which is the service of the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā is accordingly born within his heart."

Percolated by the mercy of Śrī Gaurāṅga, try to approach Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Then there will no possibility of any dirt entering you *No dirt can disturb you if you have Śrī Gaurāṅga's shelter plane.* That will be percolated by Śrī Gaurāṅga. If you have the shelter of Śrī Gaurāṅga you can be sure that you will very safely, smoothly, and intimately attain to the service of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Otherwise it is very dangerous, and sometimes suicidal. If you do not approach through Śrī Gaurāṅga the attempt will be reactionary. It is very dangerous to approach Śrī

Vṛndāvana and Śrīmati Rādhārāṇī directly. You must approach commanded by Śrī Gaurāṅga. In other words, if you can appreciate the life of Śrī Gaurāṅga, the ideal of Śrī Gaurāṅga, then *kāma* (mundane desire), etc., will be exhaustively eliminated. You will be really purified to be acceptable to that domain of the highest *līlā*.

So here, in Koladvipa, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu gave His best to all (*kuliyā-grāmete āsi śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya, hena nāhi, yā 're prabhu nā karilā dhanya*). He gave the most desirable service, service of the sweetest type. Such service is found in Vṛndāvana, and Mahāprabhu Śrī Caitanyadeva recommended Vṛndāvana life as the highest. Neither knowledge nor power can even approach this Vṛndāvana service. In Vṛndāvana, heart is everything. Śrī Uddhava also said,

आसामहो चरणरेणुजुषामहं स्यात् वृन्दावने किमपि गुल्मलतौषधीनाम्।
या दुर्ल्यजं खजनमार्यपथञ्च हित्वा भेजुर्मुकुन्दपदवीं श्रुतिर्भिर्विमृग्याम्॥

(Bhā: १०/४७/६१)

*āsām aho caraṇa-reṇu-juṣām ahaṁ syāt,
vṛndāvane kim api gulma-latauṣadhinām
yā dustyajān svajanam āryya-pathañ ca hitvā
bhejur mukunda-padaviṁ śrutibhir vimrgyām*

(Bhā: 10.47.61)

"Ignoring society and even scriptures, they (the Gopis) have given themselves up *The Gopis gave up everything for Him* to the Absolute. They gave up their own relatives, and what is socially considered to be holy; they gave up everything for the cause of the service of the Lord." So Uddhava, the highest type of devotee, said, "I aspire after a *Whoever has tenacity to follow this line has the greatest hope of success* birth as a blade of grass or some plant in Vṛndāvana, so that the feet-dust of the Gopis easily falls on my head." So high is the position of the Gopis and Vṛndāvana. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu recommended that very thing, with the added feature of distributing it to others. Giving it to others, one may have a wholesale dealing with a life so divine. All conceptions of *dharma* (duty), *adharma* (irreligion), *jñāna* (knowledge, renunciation, liberation), etc.—they are very, very low in comparison to these affairs of Vṛndāvana. Here, the heart is everything. Whoever has tenacity to follow this line has the greatest hope of success in life.

And again, *diṣṭyā yad āśin mat sneho, bhavatinām mad āpanah* (Bhā: 10.42.44): "It is supposed that one who gets My connection is fortunate, but I consider it My

The affairs of dharma and adharma are despicable in comparison to the transcendental loving affairs of Vṛndāvana

fortune that I got your (the Gopis') connection. Others say that anyone who gets My connection is fortunate. But I consider Myself fortunate because I have your connection. I am the most fortunate. It is My fortune that I have your connection, so it is sure that I shall be yours—I shall always be yours." Such things were spoken by Kṛṣṇa when He met the Gopis at Kurukṣetra. Such things are unattainable—people cannot even think so high, that such a life is possible. *Bhaktyā sañjātayā bhaktyā* (*Bhā*: 11.3.31): *bhakti* will produce more *bhakti*, and that *bhakti* will also produce more *bhakti*—in this way. Nothing else comes as a fruit. *Bhakti* is such a thing, it is its own reward.

यस्याः कदापि वसनाञ्चल-खेलनोत्थ-
धन्यातिधन्य-पवनेन कृतार्थमानी ।
योगीन्द्र-दुर्गम-गतिर्मधुसूदनोऽपि
तस्याः नमोऽस्तु वृषभानुभवोदिशेऽपि ॥
(श्रीप्रबोधानन्दसरस्वतीपाद)

yasyāḥ kadāpi vasanāñcala-khelanottha-
dhanyātidhanya-pavanena kṛtārthamānī
yogīndra-durgama-gatir madhusūdano 'pi
tasyāḥ namo 'stu vṛṣabhānubhuvodiśe 'pi

(Śrī Prabodhānanda Sarasvatīpāda)

Here it has been told that once the flow of the wind had touched some part of the cloth or dress of Śrimati Rādhārāṇī; that wind touched Kṛṣṇa's body, and Kṛṣṇa was besides Himself with cheer, with gladness, with pleasure. "Oh! I felt a touch of the wind that blew past the dress of Rādhārāṇī—I am so fortunate!" And who is that Kṛṣṇa? All the religious experts, scholars, yogis, etc., they are all hunting after Kṛṣṇa's grace—and that Kṛṣṇa, *He* thinks Himself fortunate if He gets a little touch of the breeze that blew past the dress of Śrimati Rādhārāṇī. So pure is Śrimati Rādhārāṇī. Her surrender, Her service, is so pure, that even a touch of that wind makes Kṛṣṇa, Bhagavān, the Supreme Lord Himself, think that He has gained the highest fortune. He feels, "I am so fulfilled in My life."

Śrimati Rādhārāṇī's position is first and foremost. Śrī Jayadeva Goswāmī has written that Kṛṣṇa wants the feet-dust of Śrimati Rādhārāṇī (*dehi pada-pallavam udāram*, *Gita Govinda*). However, ordinary people cannot understand this. Only the followers of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, by His grace, can understand anything of the substance of *Rādhā-dāsyam*, the servitude of Śrimati Rādhārāṇī. So *Rādhā-dāsyam* is the highest aspiration of the Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava.

After Śrī Caitanyadeva took *sannyāsa*, He wandered

throughout South India, and conquered the religious conceptions there. At Benares, Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara *Transcendental* also wanted to take *sannyāsa*, but the function was half-done. When the Lord arrived at Puri, Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara became as though mad, and with his *sannyāsa*-function half-completed he ran to Puri. His name was Puruṣottama, and his *brahma-cāri* name was Svarūpa Ānanda. So, with this name still, he ran to Puri, like a madman, to see his guardian and friend, his everything. He greeted Śrī Caitanyadeva with this *śloka*:

हेलोद्धनितखेदया विशदया प्रोन्मीलदमोदया
शास्यच्छास्त्रविवादया रसदया चित्तपितोन्मादया ।

शशद्वक्तिविनोदया शमदया माधुर्यमर्यादया

श्रीचैतन्यदयनिधे तव दया भूयादमन्दोदया ॥

(श्रीचैतन्यचन्द्रोदयनाटक)

heloddhūnita-khedayā viśadaya pronmīlad āmodayā
śāmyac-chāstra-vivādayā rasadyā cittārpitonmādayā
śāśvad-bhaktivinodayā śamadayā mādhuryya-maryyādayā
śrī-caitanya-dayānidhe tava dayā bhūyād amandodayā

(Śrī Caitanyacandrodaya-nāṭaka)

"O ocean of mercy, Śrī Caitanya—that mercy

which effortlessly dispells all lamentation; that mercy within which absolute purity resides; that mercy within which supreme ecstasy is revealed (overshadowing all else); that mercy which ends all scriptural debates by its appearance; that mercy which charms all directions by its pastimes of divine love—by its absolute sweetness may that all-expansive mercy of Yours, the bestower of all goodness, awaken in our hearts."

Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara fell at the feet of Śrī Caitanyadeva, with this *śloka* on his lips. "O great ocean of mercy, Śrī Caitanyadeva, let Your grace be distributed to one and all. You are the ocean of grace—let that grace be distributed to one and all. It is the grace which once begun never comes to end in any other wave; it will never produce any bad thing thereafter. Your *dayā*, Your mercy, is of such quality that if anyone gets a particle of it, then in no time that mercy will eliminate any bad position. *Mando* means 'bad position,' so *amandodayā* is such *dayā* that won't bring inauspiciousness at any time." Like a mad friend fallen at his feet, Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara sang this *śloka* to Śrī Caitanyadeva. In the line of instruction from Śrī Caitanyadeva, Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara is first, then Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana (*viśvambhara priyāṅkara, śrī-svarūpa-dāmodara, śrī-goswāmi rūpa-sanātana*). Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara's position is such.

In Vṛndāvana, his position is Lalitā-sakhī. *Bhūyād* means *āśirvāda*, blessings; "I bestow my blessings to one and all; one and all may get the blessings of Śrī Caitanyaadeva."

A hint of the particular standard of Śrimatī Lalitā Devi's service has been given by Śrila Rupa Goswāmī:

राधामुकुन्द-पद-सम्भव-घर्मबिन्दु-
निर्माणोपकारणे कृतदेह-लक्ष्याम्।

rādhā-mukunda-pada-sambhava-gharmabindu-
nirmāṇanopakaraṇe kṛta-deha-lakṣyām

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

*The unprecedented
standard of devotion
in the Personal Associa-
tes of the Lord*

can enter this domain to trouble Them. But how without our notice has this perspiration appeared? Perspiration, perspiration!" So she is furiously chastising herself, and 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. If the least difficulty is seen in the serving area, the Lord's

Associates can't tolerate it in any way, and such eagerness, self-abuse and earnestness is found in them. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said,

সনাতন, দেহ-ত্যাগে কৃষ্ণ যদি পাইয়ে ।
কোটি দেহ ক্ষণেকে তবে ছাড়িতে পারিয়ে ॥

(চৈঃ চঃ অন্তঃ ৪/৫৬)

sanātana, deha-tyāge kṛṣṇa yadi pāiyে
koṭi-deha kṣaṇeke tabe chādite pāriye

(C.c. Antya 4.56)

"O Sanātana, to attain the service of Kṛṣṇa, I want to immediately die ten million times. I am ready to embrace ten million deaths if that will help me serve Him."

The *Hlādini-śakti*, the feeling potency, is Śrimatī Rādhārāṇī. Even She feels dissatisfaction within Herself; "I can't . . ." This holds the extreme position: "I can't do My service, My duty; I can't do it."

At the meeting in Syamanta-pañcaka at Kurukṣetra, Kṛṣṇa Himself suddenly fell at Śrimati Rādhārāṇī's feet and begged forgiveness: "I am an offender, a criminal to your position. You are so self-giving, I cannot fulfill My real duty towards You. Your service to Me is so

loving, I can't do My duty to You." But Śrimati Rādhā-rāṇī said, "It is I who am committing offences, because I am still living despite Your separation. In Your separation I am still living—that proves that I am the offender. I am the offender, not You, because I am living. That is sufficient proof that I am not fit for You. Why did I not die with the separation? There is the proof."

Kṛṣṇa fell at Her feet: "Your position is so high, so high. So long I was without You, increasing My different duties. Without trying to satisfy You, I engaged Myself in consideration of different duties." But Śrimati Rādhārāṇī said, "No, no, it is I who am the offender, that I did not die without Your company. We find in the scriptures that the male has such freedom, but not the female. So I should have died in the separation, and You have no offence that You left Me to do so many duties here and there. You have so many duties to discharge, but I am only for Your service. As such, I could not keep up the standard." Such was the meeting at Kurukṣetra.

So in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, the potencies are *Sandhīnī*, *Samvit*, and *Hlādīnī*. *Hlādīnī* holds the highest position because of wholesale self-surrender. Next is *Samvit*, and then third is the position of the *Sandhīnī*. Thinking, feeling, and willing: willing is *Sandhīnī*, thinking

is *Samvit*, and feeling is *Hlādīnī*. Ordinarily we may think that feeling is the last of all, but no, it is the first. Feeling is first. Feeling, real feeling, has been given such a high position. We are all under feeling. We are all searching, and feeling is commanding. We think feeling is the result. No. Feeling is commanding everything. First feeling, then thinking, then willing. Generally the *karmmis* give the better hand to willing—willpower—all command; and the *jñānis* place everything in thinking—"We command the will, so we are holding the high position." But feeling is at the basis of everything. He, or It, or She—is commanding everything. It has been told like that; we have to understand the position of feeling. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

श्रीश्रीगृ-गौराङ्गै जयतः

All glory to Śrī Śrī Guru & Gaurāṅga

ॐ अष्टोत्तरशतश्री-

श्रील-भक्तिरक्षक-श्रीधर-देवगोस्वामि-विष्णुपादानं
परमहंसानं चतुर्नवतितम्-शूभ्रविर्भव-वासरे

प्रणति-दशकम्

Pranati-daśakam

Ten Prayers unto the Holy Lotus Feet of

Om Aṣṭottara-śata-śri-
Śrīmad Bhakti Raksak Śridhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

Offered on His 94th Holy Day of Advent, 1988

composed by
The Present President-Ācāryya
Om Viṣṇupāda Tridandi Swāmī
Śrimad Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj

प्रणति-दशकम्

नौमि श्रीगुरुपादाब्जं यतिराजेश्वरेश्वरं ।
श्रीभक्तिरक्षकं श्रील-श्रीधर-स्वामिनं सदा ॥ १ ॥

सुदीघोंत्रतदीप्ताङ्गं सुपीव्य-वपुषं परं ।
त्रिदण्ड-तलसीमाला-गोपीचन्दन-भूषितम् ॥ २ ॥

अचिन्त्य-प्रतिभास्त्रिग्यं दिव्यज्ञानप्रभाकरं ।
वेदादि-सर्वशास्त्रानां सामञ्जस्य-विधायकम् ॥ ३ ॥

गौडीयाचार्यरत्नानामुज्ज्वलं रत्नकौस्तुभं ।
श्रीचैतन्यमहाप्रेमोन्मत्तालीनां शिरोमणिम् ॥ ४ ॥

गायत्र्यर्थ-विनिर्यासं गीता-गृद्धार्थ-गौरवं ।
स्तोत्ररत्नादि-समृद्धं प्रपन्नजीवनामृतम् ॥ ५ ॥

अपूर्वग्रन्थ-सम्भारं भक्तानां हृदसायनं ।
कृपया येन दत्तं तं नौमि कारुण्य-सुन्दरम् ॥ ६ ॥

संकीर्तन-महारसरसाब्येश्वन्द्रमनिभं ।
संभाति वितरन् विश्वे गौर-कृष्णं गणैः सह ॥ ७ ॥

धामनि श्रीनवद्वीपे गुप्तगोवद्धने शुभे ।
विश्वविश्रुत-चैतन्यसारस्वत-मठोत्तमम् ॥ ८ ॥

स्थापयित्वा गुरुन् गौर-गाधा-गोविन्दविग्रहान् ।
प्रकाशयति चात्मानं सेवा-संसिद्धि-विग्रहः ॥ ९ ॥

गौर-श्रीरूप-सिद्धान्त-दिव्य-धाराधरं गुरुं ।
श्रीभक्तिरक्षकं देवं श्रीधरं प्रणमाम्यहम् ॥ १० ॥

श्रद्धया यः पठेन्नित्यं प्रणति-दशकं मुदा ।
विशते रागमार्गेषु तस्य भक्त-प्रसादतः ॥

दीनाधमस्य त्रिदण्डभिक्षु-श्रीभक्तिसुन्दर-गोविन्दस्य

Praṇati-daśakam

*naumi śri-gurupādābjaṁ, yatirājeśvareśvaram
śri-bhaktirakṣakam śrla-, śridhara-svāminam sadā [1]*

*sudirghonnata-diptāṅgam, supibya-vapusam param
tridanya-tulasimālā-, gopicandana-bhūṣitam [2]*

*acintya-pratibhā-snigdham, divyajñāna-prabhākaram
vedādi-sarvvaśāstrānām, sāmañjasya-vidhāyakam [3]*

*gauḍiyācāryya-ratnānām, ujjvalam ratnakaustubham
śri-caitanya-mahāpremon-, mattalinām śiromanīm [4]*

gāyatrī-artha-viniryyāśāṁ, gitā-gūḍhārtha-gauravāṁ
stotraratnādi-samṛddhaṁ, prapannajīvanāmṛtam [5]

apūrvagrantha-sambhāraṁ, bhaktānāṁ hṛd-rasāyanāṁ
kṛpayā yena dattāṁ tam, naumi kāruṇya-sundaram [6]

saṅkirttana-mahārāsasābdheś candramānibhāṁ
sambhāti vitaran viśve gaura-kṛṣṇāṁ gaṇaiḥ saha [7]

dhāmani śri-nāvadvipe, guptagovarddhane śubhe
viśvaviśruta-caitanya-, sārasvata-maṭhottamam [8]

sthāpayitvā gurūn gaura-, rādhā-govindavighrāhān
prakāśayati cātmānaṁ, sevā-saṁsiddhi-vigrahaḥ [9]

gaura-śrīrūpa-siddhānta-, divya-dhārādharam gurum
śri-bhakti-rakṣakan devam, śridharam praṇamāmy aham [10]

śraddhayā yah paṭhen nityāṁ, praṇati-daśakāṁ mudā
viśate rāgamārgēṣu, tasya bhakta-prasādataḥ

dīnādhamasya tridaṇḍibhikṣu-
śri-bhakti-sundara-govindasya

— 1 —

I eternally offer my humble obeisances unto the lotus feet of my Most Worshipful Divine Master, the Supreme Emperor of the Sannyāsi Kings—Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Swāmi.

— 2 - 4 —

He possesses a lofty, dignified, divinely effulgent, incomparable holy form, so charming to behold. Adorned with Gopīcandana and a necklace of Tulasī beads, he holds the triple staff of the Vaiṣṇava ascetics. Although he possesses the qualification of inconceivable potency, he is full of the utmost affection. All the ten directions are illuminated by the effulgence of his supramundane unalloyed perception. He is the dispenser of the genuine proper harmonious adjustment of all the scriptures—the Vedas, the Vedānta, the Upaniṣads, the Purāṇas etc. headed by the Śrimad-Bhāgavata-Purāṇa (Śrimad-Bhāgavatam) which holds equal importance with the Vedas. In the necklace of the jewels of Ācāryyas in the Śri Gauḍiya Sampradāya he shines resplendently like the brilliant Kaustubha gem, and he is radiant in

his glory as the Crown-jewel of the bumblebee-devotees who are mad in the Supreme Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahā-prabhu's love supreme. I eternally offer my obeisances unto him, my Most Worshipful Divine Master.

- 5 - 6 -

By his grace, he brought to full bloom the deepest underlying purport of Gāyatrī, the Mother of the Vedas; by his grace he opened the hidden treasure treasure-house of the glorious internal purport of Śrimad Bhagavad-gītā—and he distributed these gifts to one and all, even the lowest of the low. He revealed the supreme holy book Śrī Prapanna-jīvanāmr̥tam, which is a treasure of many types of precious gems of holy stanzas (the wealth of holy stanzas compiled from *Stotra-ratna* by Śrī Yāmunācāryya and many other valuable sources) sung by the Lord and His devotees; he revealed an unprecedented collection of holy books (Search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa—Reality the Beautiful, Śrī Guru and His Grace, The Golden Volcano of Divine Love, etc.) that are the very life-nectar for the devotee's hearts and spiritual senses—he gave these gifts to the world. I eternally offer my obeisances unto him, my Most Worshipful Divine Master, the beautiful Deity of mercy incarnate.

- 7 -

He revels in his full-blown splendour as along with and through his intimate servitors he distributes in the entire universe the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Gaura-Kṛṣṇa, the moon risen from the nectar ocean of the Grand Dance of the congregational chanting of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's holy name.

- 8 - 10 -

In Śrī Navadvipa Dhāma, which is nondifferent from the holy abode of Śrī Vṛndāvana, His Divine Grace established the world-renowned Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh at Śrī Koladvipa, the selfsame 'Hidden Govardhana Hill' (*Gupta-Govardhana*), which is the sacred place where all offences are absolved (*Aparādhabhāñjana-pāṭa*). There, he revealed the beautiful devotional service of the Worshipful Deities Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga-Gāndharvā-Govindasundara, divinely manifesting his very self as the Deity of service in perfection. Eternally do I offer my obeisances unto the holy lotus feet of my Divine Master Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhār Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj who carries the divine current of Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī coming in

the line of Śrī Rūpa, the object of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu's divine affection.

One who with pure faith happily sings this Praṇati-daśakam every day, gains the qualification to serve the Supreme Lord on the path of spontaneous love (Rāgamārga), by the grace of the associate-servitors of that Śrila Gurudeva.

*Rendered into English by
Tridāṇḍi Svāmī Śripāda B. A. Sāgar*

Epilogue

His Divine Grace Śrī Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śridhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj was born in 1894 in a highly respected *Brahmaṇa* family of the Bhaṭṭācāryya order, at Hāpanīya, District Burdwan, West Bengal. He received his education at Baharampur University. Having taken his pious birth in Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala, the holy lands where Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu exhibited His divine pastimes on the earth, Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj, from his very childhood, had natural affinity for the mission of Śrī Caitanyadeva—*Saṅkirttana*, the Grand Congregational Chanting of the Holy Names of the Supreme Lord.

In 1926, Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj joined the Śrī Gauḍiya Math, and became an initiated disciple of its founder, the illustrious Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura Goswāmī Prabhupāda (1874–1937). He later

accepted the holy order of *sannyāsa* (monkhood) in 1930. Recognising him as a faithful stalwart preacher of the perfect precepts of Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇavism, Śrila Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda conferred upon him the name ‘Śrī Bhakti Rakṣaka’, meaning, ‘Guardian of Devotion’; and further, echoing the statement of the great Vaiṣṇava Preceptor Śrila Jīva Goswāmī (who referred in his Sanskrit writings to the renowned Śrimad-Bhāgavatam commentator, Śrī Śridhara Svāmipāda, as *bhakti-eka-rakṣaka*, ‘Supreme Guardian of Devotion’), Śrila Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda gave him the *Tridāṇḍa-sannyāsa* title of ‘Śridhara.’ Thus, he became Śrimad Bhakti Rakṣak Śridhar Mahārāj. As a prominent preacher in the Śrī Gauḍiya Math mission, he travelled extensively throughout India and preached fluently in Bengali, Hindi, Sanskrit, and English, spreading the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu on mass levels in universities, public seminars and *Saṅkirtana* festivals.

Śrila Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda also expressed high appreciation for Śrila Śridhar Mahārāj’s Sanskrit composition ‘Śrī Bhaktivinoda Viraha-daśakam,’ considering it an omen of assurance that the grand ideals and dignity of the Śrī Gauḍiya Divine Succession (*Sampradāya*) would be perfectly upheld and preached

by such a learned and sensitive devotee as Śrila Śridhar Mahārāj. And practically, as a testimony to this fact, just prior to Śrila Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura Prabhupāda’s departure from this mortal world, Śrila Prabhupāda had Śrila Śridhar Mahārāj sing in his presence the holy prayer most venerated by the entire Śrī Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava community—Śrī *Rūpa-mañjari-pada*, *sei mora sampada*.

After the passing of Śrila Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura Goswāmī Prabhupāda, Śrila Śridhar Mahārāj’s Godbrothers, associates, and the public, naturally revered him as the seniormost representative of the Śrī Gauḍiya *Sampradāya*, although Śrila Śridhar Mahārāj himself was more inclined to anonymity as a humble Vaiṣṇava. Nonetheless, by the call of divine duty and divine inspiration, he established the Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Math at Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām, hinting in a short Sanskrit poem that the *Math*—as a sanctuary where the holy message of his Gurudeva, Śrī Rūpa, and Śrī Caitanyadeva was preached—would inevitably become renowned throughout the world amongst the sincere and pious seekers of unalloyed truth and divinity.

Śrila Śridhar Mahārāj is the composer of numerous classical prayers and commentaries in Sanskrit and Bengali. His works are hailed as gems of pure Vaiṣṇavism

by scholars, philosophers, and devotees world-wide. He authored *Śri Śri Prapanna-jīvanāmṛtam*, a Sanskrit devotional treatise on the subject of divine surrender, which has become a standard text-book for devotees everywhere.

Upon reaching his eighties, not only Indians but persons from America, Europe, and the world over, became attracted by his teachings and personality. He was known as a pure saint of the most simple habits of living. He was respected and loved for his saintly simplicity, his affectionate nature and dealings; and he was revered by all, whether Godbrothers, disciples, other devotees, or the general public, being unanimously venerated for his formidable encyclopaedic command of the revealed scriptures, and further for his unique and unprecedented style of casting newer and newer light upon the most internal philosophical and revelatory purports of pure *Śri Gauḍiya-Vaiṣṇava-Siddhānta*.

A vast library of his taped discourses has been compiled by his disciples, and from such recordings have been published the exquisite English books "Search for *Śri Kṛṣṇa*—Reality the Beautiful," "*Śrī Guru and His Grace*," "*The Golden Volcano of Divine Love*," "*Loving Search for the Lost Servant*," as well as his unique commentary and interpretation of *Śrimad Bhagavad-gītā*,

"The Hidden Treasure of the Sweet Absolute," and many others. Many more publications are also anticipated.

On 12th August, 1988, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj departed from this world, to enter into the eternal pastimes. His departure did not herald the departure of one of the great stars of the *Śri Gauḍiya* firmament, but that of the moon itself. Even the earth herself trembled on two occasions, forecasting and punctuating the event. A divine temple, named "The Temple of Union in Separation," will be erected at his holy shrine at *Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Māṭh*, Nabadwip, and worship will continue throughout the generations.

Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj selected his most intimate and senior *Sannyāsi* disciple, Śrimad Swāmī Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj, as his successor, blessing him with the position of *Ācāryya*-President of *Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Māṭh* and all its affiliated branches. His Holiness Śrimad Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj penned the preceding *Praṇati-daśakam* as an offering to his Gurudeva. All over the world it is sung with devotion by the devotees of Śrila Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj. Śrimad Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj is a distinguished and talented Sanskrit scholar and illustrious preacher of the Precepts of *Śrī Caitanya*-

deva, qualities that were prominent in his glorious Gurudeva, Om Viṣṇupāda Aṣṭottara-śata-śrī Śrimad Bhakti Rakṣak Śridhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj.

Humbly,
Tridāṇḍi Swāmī B.A. Sāgar
Editor

Abbreviations

सिन्धु—श्रीभक्तिरसामृतसिन्धुः
गीता—श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता
भा:—श्रीमद्भागवतम्

চেঃ চঃ—শ্রীচৈতন্যচরিতামৃত
চেঃ ভাঃ—শ্রীচৈতন্যভাগবত

B.r.s.—Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhuḥ
Bg.—Śrimad Bhagavad-gitā¹
Bhā.—Śrimad-Bhāgavatam
C.c.—Śrī Caitanya-Caritāmṛta
C.Bhā.—Śrī Caitanya-Bhāgavata

