

His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī Mahārāja

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[Known present GBC members: Tamal Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja, Jayapataka Mahārāja, Jayatīrtha Mahārāja, Harikeśa Mahārāja, Satsvarūpa Mahārāja, Jayadvaita Mahārāja, and others]

Jayapataka Mahārāja: After the departure of our beloved spiritual master we came to offer our respects to you as well as to hear your esteemed *upadeśa* on certain matters; if you'd be kind enough.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: It is mentioned in the *śāstra* with an example. The Gurudeva; *śiṣya* is like a lotus, and Gurudeva the water around. Just as in a pond or in a lake the Gurudeva's position is like water, and Kṛṣṇa is like sun. As long as the lotus is floating in the water, sun will please the lotus. But if water vanishes, that very sun will burn the lotus. Do you follow? This sort of example is given in *śāstra*. I can't exactly remember the Sanskrit verse but such example is there. The water around the lotus; without water, the sun, Kṛṣṇa, will burn. Without the help of Guru the disciple is nowhere. And [Raghunātha] Dāsa Goswāmī Prabhu, the *prayajana* Ācārya of the whole Gauḍīya philosophy, spiritual system, he has also remarked: *vyāghra-tuṅḍāyate kuṅḍam, girīndro 'jagarāyate*.

[*śūnyāyate mahā-goṣṭham, girīndro 'jagarāyate / vyāghra-tuṅḍāyate kuṅḍam, jīvātu-rahitasya me*]

["Now that I no longer have the sustainer of my life, the land of Vraja has become empty and desolate, Govardhana Hill has become like a great python, and Rādhā-kuṅḍa has become like the gaping mouth of a ferocious tiger."] [*Śrī Prārthanāśraya-caturdaśaka, Fourteen Prayers For Shelter, 11*]

"After the demise, departure of Gurudeva, Rūpa, Sanātana, the Govardhana Giri which is the representation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself is, it seems to me just like a big python, *jagar*, is coming to devour me. And Rādhā-kuṅḍa, the holiest place of the divinity of the Gauḍīya *sampradāya*, is like tiger's mouth is coming to devour me, for the separation of Gurudeva. So much excitement they're giving to me about this absence of my Gurudeva, my dearest and my highest spiritual guardian, who has the most intense affection for me, to nurture me for spiritual purpose, he's not here. How can I tolerate? My everything is gone; all vanishes with his departure."

Such sort of deep, sense of separation will come, and the...

Where is Bhāvānanda? Is he here?

Jayapataka Mahārāja: He couldn't come today.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: He told here the other day in his lecture, "Union in separation is the highest realisation." I was very happy to hear from his lips that union in separation, *vipralambha*. *Vipralambha*, that is also the highest kind of attainment, *vipralambha*. Without *vipralambha* nothing else can come to us. Kṛṣṇa and the opposite thing - that is antithesis; that will come as *vipralambha*, *viraha*, Kṛṣṇa *viraha*, Kṛṣṇa *viram* Kṛṣṇa *viraha*, and no reaction. Without *viram* there cannot be any other reaction to that, without that separation, *viraha*, *vipralambha*. So *vipralambha* is the most spacious, most spacious thing pertaining to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And we can have the grace of that plane; if in forgetfulness also if there is Kṛṣṇa connection then we are saved, we are safe. In the forgetfulness also we shall have the

Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the background and nothing else. No *māyā*. The safest position, fearless position - stand. So *vipralambha*, in *vipralambha* of Gurudeva, in separation to Gurudeva, if we can stand then: *vidyavatam bhagavate parikṣad*, I have passed the highest stage, test. This announcement I have, if in separation also I can retain the memory of Śrī Gurudeva, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: Mahārāja, when our Śrīla Prabhupāda left then he has given instruction that for initiating and for carrying on the *sampradāya* there will be eleven. In the beginning he appointed eleven devotees, his disciples, to be initiating spiritual masters, or to accept disciples. And in the future that number would also be able to be increased. So we wanted to take your advice on some points as to various details of how these initiating spiritual masters should deal with certain questions; if we could ask questions to you then?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes. You may ask.

Devotee: He's given explicit desires, but he told us on other technical points and other matters of the philosophy, if there was question, we should approach you. He said that during his, when he was very ill, he had appointed eleven *ṛtviks* and he said that after he disappears that these *ṛtviks* would continue as initiating spiritual masters and that they could be increased later. That would be decided by the GBC, or Governing Body Commission. The first question was, we wondered that, some of the disciples had been initiated by Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja and, but um, this Hari *Nāma*, so they'll be taking *dīkṣā* or, from one of his disciples?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes.

Devotee: So they wondered what is their relationship in this type of situation with each of the spiritual masters? Those who are initiated by our Śrīla Prabhupāda with Hari *Nāma*, then when they approach one of these eleven and take second initiation, then they'd like to know what is the, who is the Guru?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Amongst these eleven, a disciple he may like one first, or third, or fourth, or fifth, how to solve that?

Tamal Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: That we must solve.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: A person...

Jayapataka Mahārāja: He can take who he likes. He may take whichever one he wants.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes, according to his *śraddhā*.

Devotee: His faith.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: According to his *śraddhā*. A newcomer should be given some time; who'll come to be initiated, he should be given some time for, a fair period of time to hear from different persons, and then the *śraddhā*, the faith...

Devotee: Will be awakened.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: ...will be considered, that to whom he will submit. Do you follow?

Devotees: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: After *śravaṇa* then *varaṇa*; five stages there are. First, to hear, first stage is to hear. And second stage is to, that that is *varaṇa*, to, acceptance, by the Guru and the *śiṣya*; both the preceptor and the disciple. That is the second stage, *varaṇa-daśā*. Then the *sādhana-daśā*, the attempt for realisation will begin. First stage to hear, open field, fair field, to hear, and then the connection should come between Guru and *śiṣya*, the preceptor and disciple; from both sides. Then that should be better. *Śravaṇa-daśā* then *varaṇa-daśā*, then *sādhana-daśā*, *āpana-daśā*, *prapanna-daśā* - five stages in *sādhana*, in spiritual life.

Devotee: At which stage does *dīkṣā* come?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: *Prapanna-daśā*. Last. First *śravaṇa*...

Devotee: Hearing.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: *Śravaṇa*, to hear, to listen to. And then *varaṇa*, both, preceptor accepts the *śiṣya*...

Devotee: The Hari *Nāma* stage.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: But Hari *Nāma* is the main thing and *dīkṣā* only to help Hari *Nāma*. It is mentioned in Jīva Goswāmī's writings that Hari *Nāma dīkṣā* is the main thing and the *pañcarātriḱā dīkṣā* it is *bhagavati dīkṣā* - Hari *Nāma dīkṣā* means *bhagavati dīkṣā* - and the *pañcarātriḱā dīkṣā* is *mantram* and that only to help Hari *Nāma*. That one can reach to the *siddhi* of Hari *Nāma*, this *mantra* will help. *Mantra's* jurisdiction up to salvation, liberation, and after liberation Hari *Nāma* can't... Hari *Nāma's* circle is a greater circle, and *dīkṣā* is a smaller circle within the Hari *Nāma* circle. Hari *Nāma* reaches to the lowest and highest. And *dīkṣā* in the middle point it maybe mid circle that may help Hari *Nāma*. *Muktafal* Hari *Nāma*, not *mantra* _____ *trayateti mantra*, this mental, which will remove us from mental speculation, that is *mantram*; this *manodharma mantra*, that is, the worldly mind should be, we should get relief from the worldly mindedness by *mantram*. That Hari *Nāma* is a natural thing, it reaches to the lowest and it goes to the highest; Hari *Nāma*.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: So those who have received Hari *Nāma* from Bhaktivedānta Swāmī then they're his disciples?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: They'll take help, his disciple mainly, and they'll take help from the *dīkṣā* Guru. *Dīkṣā* Guru, because they're in the *sādhana*, on the way to the end, so they'll take the help of this *mantra* Guru. *Nāma* Guru, *mantra* Guru; *Nāma* Guru is Bhaktivedānta Swāmī and when he'll take *mantram* from any of his disciples he will be his *mantra* Guru.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: So they'll offer respect to both? The disciple will offer respect to both, *Nāma* Guru and *mantra* Guru?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: *Mantra* Guru. Then there is also *sannyāsa* Guru. *sannyāsa* Guru is also in a stage, *sannyāsa* or *bābājī* stage; that is also Guru. One in many forms; *śikṣā* Guru: *atamat ta mantra gurūn śikṣā gurūn* _____ [?]

Vande 'ham śrī-guroḥ śrī-yuta... Tamal Kṛṣṇa was saying the other day, vande 'ham śrī-guroḥ śrī-yuta-pada-kamalaṁ śrī-gurūn vaiṣṇavāṁś ca. Śrī-gurūn, plural, vaiṣṇavāṁś ca, one and the same - all.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: What is the difference between *śikṣā* Guru and *dīkṣā* Guru?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: *Dīkṣā* Guru...

śikṣā-guruke ta' jāni kṛṣṇera svarūpa [antaryāmī, bhakta-śreṣṭha, — ei dui rūpa]

["One should know the instructing spiritual master to be the Personality of Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa manifests Himself as the Supersoul and as the greatest devotee of the Lord."]

[*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 1.47*]

...*Caitanya-caritāmṛta. Śikṣā* Guru, both extension of Kṛṣṇa, Guru is Kṛṣṇa.

ācāryaṁ mām vijānīyān, [nāvamanyeta karhicit / na martya-buddhyāsūyeta, sarva-deva-mayo guruḥ]

["One should know the Ācārya as Myself and never disrespect him in any way. One should not envy him, thinking him an ordinary man, for he is the representative of all the demigods."]

[*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 1.46*] & [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 11.17.27*]

The Kṛṣṇa has come there to liberate me in different appearances, representations. He's coming, Kṛṣṇa's coming; oneness in variegated positions.

Tamal Kṛṣṇa Swāmī: Who is qualified to be a *śikṣā* Guru?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Whoever sincerely will help me to go towards Kṛṣṇa, he's *śikṣā* Guru. Vaiṣṇava also *śikṣā* Guru, Vaiṣṇava's are *śikṣā* Guru. Who will come in my connection and will help me to go towards – he's *śikṣā* Guru. *Vartma-pradarśaka*, he's *vartma-pradarśaka* Guru, *śikṣā* Guru, *mantra* Guru, *Nāma* Guru, then *sannyāsa* Guru.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: What is the relationship between a *sannyāsī* and his *sannyāsa* Guru?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: That is *taṭasthā*. Whom I am much indebted for my spiritual progress, who will help me most in my spiritual progress, there we shall find the main Guru. Otherwise through whom the maximum grace will come to me to take me towards the Supreme Entity? He is the supreme Guru.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: What is their relationship - of *sannyāsī* and his *sannyāsa* Guru?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Guru is...

Devotee: Just like a *śikṣā* Guru.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: First Guru, *vartma-pradarśaka* Guru is the first Guru, who shows the way. He may leave, otherwise the *mantra* Guru, the *Nāma* Guru, if I am accepted by any *Nāma* Guru then as long as the *Nāma* Guru is present I am getting only one Guru. And after his departure if *sannyāsī* Guru or *mantra* Guru comes then I shall offer all my regards to him, seeing the representative of the previous Guru. Do you follow?

Devotees: Yes.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: In the presence of...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Only *vartma-pradarśaka* may be present before the real Guru. And other Gurus cannot be present, the *Nāma* Guru or *dīkṣā* Guru, that will be one and same.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: Whoever the *Nāma* Guru is he should also consequently be...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: If *Nāma* Guru is living then he should be *mantra* Guru, he should be *sannyāsa* Guru – everything. And the *ṛtviks* are but *vartma-pradarśaka* Guru. When he was living he appointed so many *ṛtviks*, representatives, really they're *vartma-pradarśaka*. Do you follow?

Devotees: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: *Vartma-pradarśaka*, that way showing, indicating the way.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: At which stage is the *karma* accepted by the Guru?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: When Guru first accepts the disciple then he will take the charge. *Dīkṣā*, *bhagavati dīkṣā* is *Nāma dīkṣā*, a *pañcarātrika dīkṣā*, *mantra dīkṣā*. At the time of *dīkṣā* initiation the Guru accepts him as he is, accepts him, the charge, to wash away the sins by his instructions. *Santevas saucindate mana basangam itibi* [?]

Devotee: Hari *Nāma*?

Tamal Kṛṣṇa Swāmī: Both, the *karma* is accepted for both because he washes and cleans that time.

Devotee: At what time?

Tamal Kṛṣṇa Swāmī: Both initiations.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: And the Guru, he also does the function by the help of his Guru. In this way the chain goes to Kṛṣṇa. But *tada bhaktave*, the medium is so transparent, no time can be, *Guru paramparā* it goes to Kṛṣṇa, in no time. So the Guru should be transparent. Who has wholly given himself to his own Guru, he's Guru. The cent-per-cent servant of his Guru is Guru. This is the criterion. Who is wholly dedicated himself to Guru, he's Guru. Whatever comes to him he already redresses to Guru, this transparent medium.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: And to whatever extent he's not surrendered that much won't go forward. (Bengali): *jatadur samarpen haya nama tatakun ara* [?]

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: *Tatakun*, coming to opaque, coming to transparent.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: Partially.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Partially opaque and partially transparent, according to the transparency the Guru should be recognised in *taṭasthā vicāra, vijayate taṭasthā tata*, that will be clearly, *taṭasthā*, impartial judgement; and the relative and absolute, two sorts of judgement, absolute and relative.

You see just as in the worldly representation. My mother most affectionate to me, his mother is most affectionate to him. But when the comparison will be drawn between two mothers, who is more affectionate, then another thing will come; relative and absolute calculation. Absolute calculation will get the super-most hand.

That is to be done amongst you, both relative and absolute. Even a disciple he may commit error, disciple, when he's going to accept his Guru he may be erroneous. It is the duty of the other Vaiṣṇavas to give him proper guidance. That should also come. In the consideration of absolute realisation these intricate points will arise.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: If the initiating Guru, the *Nāma* Guru, say he falls down, just as we hear Purī Mahārāja defended... say he falls down from the path by act of providence, then what should the disciple do?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: He will take Name again and ... he may wait for some time because if he was sincere first, if he was a sincere disciple to his Guru first, now for some offences he's neglected by his Guru for some time, he may be here and there, astray, led astray, then he may come again, after that offence.

Devotee: _____ [?]

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: _____ [?]

guror apy avaliptasya, kāryākāryam ajānataḥ / utpatha-prathipannasya, parityāgo vidhīyate

["A Guru who is addicted to sensual pleasure and polluted by vice, who is ignorant and who has no power to discriminate between right and wrong, or who is not on the path of *śuddha-bhakti* must be abandoned."] [*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*] & [*Mahābhārata, Udyoga-parva, 179.25*]

In *Mahābhārata*, in Bhīṣma's sayings, statement. *Dvādaśa mahājana*, one of *dvādaśa mahājanas* is Bhīṣma. Bhīṣma says to Paraśurāma, his *astra* Guru, *astra* Guru also *Veda* Guru, *Atharva Veda*. He says: *guror apy avaliptasya, kāryākāryam ajānataḥ*. Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu has taken this example.

guror apy avaliptasya, kāryākāryam ajānataḥ / utpatha-prathipannasya, parityāgo vidhīyate

If he goes astray then he should be left. But there may be such instances, for some time by the inconceivable desire of Kṛṣṇa he may go astray and he may come back again, come back again. So the disciple may wait for some time. And this is very unfortunate for the disciple when he gets such - a test.

In *Hari-Nāma-cintāmaṇi*, written by Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, you will find this elaborately dealt with, *Hari-Nāma-cintāmaṇi*, by Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. There you will find this Guru *tyāga* chapter, how he has dealt with it carefully. *Hari-Nāma-cintāmaṇi*.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: So in ISKCON there are many initiating Gurus...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Just as you see if a son disobeys his father then the father may be indifferent to the son. And for some time he may perform a will excluding him. But after some time he sees that the son comes back and be obedient then again he may correct his will. It may be like that.

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

[“If even a person of extremely abominable practices, abandoning all non devotional pursuits of exploitation and renunciation engages in My exclusive and uninterrupted devotional service, he is venerable as a true saint because he has embraced the revolutionary plane of life.”]

[*Bhagavad-gītā*, 9.30]

So only very abruptly we should not deal with such things of unfortunate incidences. Wait and see. Generally, in his own zone he will perform *dīkṣā*, generally, but there should be special arrangements.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāja: *Aki mandire* _____ [?]

Jayapataka Mahārāja: There are five disciples in one temple, each with a different Guru of these eleven.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: _____ [?]

Jayapataka Mahārāja: Their picture is on the altar, a different thing, how these things would be managed?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Then the *arcak*, who will perform the worship, he will worship the portrait of his own Guru as Guru and other Gurus as Vaiṣṇava, he will do, worship. Do you follow?

Jayapataka Mahārāja: Yes. And those pictures will be put on the far left side?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes. They should be in a position that should be adjusted; they should be dealt with as Vaiṣṇava, after Guru *pūjā*. After his own Guru *pūjā* he'll perform the Guru *pūjā* and others and then Vaiṣṇava *pūjā*. The other Gurus will come in the rank of Vaiṣṇavas.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: So everyone's picture could be there?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: All the portraits should be there.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: And he'll worship his own Guru as Guru...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: One's Guru as Guru and other Guru as *śikṣā* Guru, Vaiṣṇava *śikṣā* Guru.

Devotee: Then as Vaiṣṇavas.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: The other Gurus as Vaiṣṇavas, *śikṣā* Gurus.

Tamal Kṛṣṇa Swāmī: But explain. In one temple, in one of our Maṭhs, the disciples may have many different Gurus. Just like there are eleven persons now, so say three of those eleven persons may be the Gurus of the disciples in that Maṭh, then how to know which picture to put on the...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: So to get out of these difficulties the zonal preference should be maintained; to get out of all these difficulties as much as possible. But what I told that may be applicable easily in the branch Maṭhs, but in the main Maṭhs, like Māyāpur, Vṛndāvana, where all are interested keenly, the difficulty will arise there.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: So there, there can be a group photo (group laughter).

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes, group photo. But then also a difficulty will arise. His Guru's photo, but everyone will like that his Guru must be in the centre.

Devotees: (group laughter)

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: This difficulty may arise.

Devotee: We can take eleven different group photos with each man in the centre.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: But, you may start with your Gurudeva Swāmī Mahārāja in the centre and others as *parṣada*. You may start in this way now, then the time will help you gradually.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: Thank you. Those Mandirs which Śrīla Prabhupāda...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Prabhupāda in the centre – group photo, you manage in this way. Prabhupāda in the centre, and all others, those that will initiate, as *parṣada*, in this way.

Tamal Kṛṣṇa Swāmī: This is in the main branches or in the sub branches?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: This may be maintained everywhere, everywhere. Synthesis will help you most.

Devotee: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: As much as you can synthesis that will come to help you most.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: The disciples of our Guru's picture shouldn't be on the *vyāsāsana*? It was suggested that if that *vyāsāsana* was kept for Prabhupāda, a second *vyāsāsana* for others could be installed. This was one idea. We don't know what is the proper etiquette.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: That *āsana* should not be occupied by any of his disciples. Because the disciple who is initiating, the initiating disciple, the present Guru, he'll also regard his Guru as superior to him. So he cannot occupy, naturally, that seat.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: So similarly his picture should not occupy? _____ [?]

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: _____ [?] Just next to that seat, the present Guru's seat should be given, should be placed.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: Second seat?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Second seat should be given to the initiating Guru, present initiating Guru.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: On the original *vyāsāsana*, no picture...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: That picture of Swāmī Mahārāja will be established there and just a little below, nearest, a seat will be for the present Ācārya. The disciple will say that he is giving honour to his own Guru. That will rather, impress the disciple that even the *siddha* Guru he's also giving respect to his own Guru. In this way I must learn. The Guru should be always kept above.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: But in those temples which are now newly established by zonal Gurus, in that place then this would not be required. _____ [?]

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: My opinion is, even in new organisations also the same thing will go on, because whatever you are creating that will give the impression, first impression with him from him. Let them all come within the same administration.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: So when such disciple does Guru *pūjā* at these *āsanas* then he'll first do the *pūjā* to his Guru, and then to his Guru?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Then his Guru, his Guru, the Deities, and afterwards all other Gurus or Vaiṣṇavas.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: Vaiṣṇavas are after the Deities?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: After the Deities.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: Which *mantra*?

Tamal Kṛṣṇa Swāmī: Just like if Jayapataka gives one of his new men initiation, how they... If Jayapataka Swāmī gives *dīkṣā* to somebody, how that *śiṣya* will offer his *praṇāmas* to Jayapataka, in what words, what *mantra*?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Ordinary *mantra* of Guru *pūjā*, until and unless his disciples compile a special *mantra* for him. He'll not go to arrange the *mantra* of *praṇāma* but when his disciples will come and make a *mantra*, for Guru *pūjā*, they will do by that. Otherwise by general *mantra*.

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmilitam yena, tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

[I offer my respectful obeisance unto my spiritual master, who has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance, with the torchlight of knowledge.]

With this ordinary common *mantra* it will be performed. But when his disciples will come to such a stage as to compose a special *mantra* for him with his special characteristics mentioned there; then they will perform with that *mantra*.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: To say *nama om viṣṇu-pāda* _____ [?]

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes, that may be. The *śiṣya* will always say that; *viṣṇu-pāda*, the representative of Viṣṇu.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: That's a general *mantra*.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: He's in the holy feet of Kṛṣṇa. *Nama om viṣṇu-pāda* common, and other things that *śiṣya* will see in Guru that should be mentioned; special characteristics. That may be general. Then *viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya*, and *bhū-tale*, it is all common. Then his name will come and special characteristics may be mentioned there. But that will come from the disciple. Sanskrit may be translated...

Jayapataka Mahārāja: Should be pure Sanskrit?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Correct Sanskrit language, otherwise you see, one fine point. It arose in our position also. Our Gurudeva, he dictated in English some instructions once, but little faulty from the standpoint of correct English. Then our professor, one Professor (Baul?), disciple, he told that, "Dictionary should be corrected. What Gurudeva has said that is all right."

Devotees: (Ha, Ha. Jaya!)

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Follow? "Grammar and dictionary should be corrected, but what Guru says it is all right." Then another, a little higher positioned disciple, he told that, "That is the lowest class disciple's statement. The higher class disciple will see what Guru wants from him, what sort of service. He wants that correct English should go to establish his position to the public." So when it comes to the *śiṣya* it will dress... Suppose your Gurudeva, when you're going to take his photo, he with ordinary dress he comes before the photographer. But *śiṣya* will come, "No, no. Will you stand in this posture, with this dress you must take the photo." Do you follow?

Devotees: Yes, very clear.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: So, in language also, Gurudeva gives the main point, but the language, if a little faulty, faulty to the public, the *śiṣya* will come, "No, this should be couched in a good language." That is not harmful. Do you find, follow?

Devotees: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: So, in Sanskrit what your Guru Mahārāja has told, that *sarasvatam*, "all these things you say" I can't follow whether it is correct grammatically. But it will be your duty, according to my opinion, to couch it well, in the language. And that will be the greater service, higher quality, service of higher quality. And to say that dictionary should be corrected, then the grammar should be corrected, what my Guru has said, practically that will be the *kaniṣṭha adhikārī's* service, the lower *śiṣya*, the lower status *śiṣya*. To spread his prestige and position, you will dress him in good dress.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: For giving *vānaprastha*, is there any ceremony?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: By the simple desire of the Guru.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: On the desire of Guru. No special ceremony?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: His order.

Jayapataka Mahārāja: On his order. _____ Should there be any strict, can there be any restrictions on activities of the Guru?

Devotee: That's very complicated.

Harikeśa Mahārāja: Because we are working with a government and we have GBC, a governing body, the governing body of the whole society; so is it possible that even if some members of the governing body, they are not Gurus, but can the governing body as a whole make a restriction on the activity of an individual Guru?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Ha, ha, ha. A most difficult thing; the non Guru comes to regulate the Gurus, is it not?

Devotees: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Those that are not fit for Guru, who are not considered to be fit, he will come to guide the Guru, so many Gurus; is it? So, it will be better that all the members of the governing body is Guru; they're all Ācārya.

Tamal Kṛṣṇa Swāmī: They are all Ācāryas.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: The *sabhā*, the assembly of Ācāryas they will consult with each other.

Tamal Kṛṣṇa Swāmī: And make rules.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: The Ācārya *sabhā*, the assembly of the Ācāryas, they will do the function about all the spiritual matters, Ācārya board. There should be an Ācārya board to guide the whole thing from behind, without non Ācārya within the meeting. Then if anybody is considered to be the most expert for the management, he will work under the Ācārya board. But what he has said you must carry out that at present. But I think, gradually you'll have to get new experience.

Tamal Kṛṣṇa Swāmī: Some practical experience.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Practical experience you will have to get.

Tamal Kṛṣṇa Swāmī: Time will guide us.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: We are suffering a great deal from that. So, the non Ācārya, the majority speaking is non Ācārya?

Tamal Kṛṣṇa Swāmī: Yes. The majority is non Ācārya.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Non Ācārya. But that will... I, according to my opinion, that will create a difficulty.

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