

Devotees Reading Bengali Translation transcript (part 2)

80.08.20.B

[Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja] He always had great trust in me that I will not make a disciple out of his disciple. For this reason he would come to me and also he knew me from earlier years. Pishima had taken Hari *Nāma dīkṣā* from Bhaktisiddhānta Śrīla Prabhupāda and she had come to me for the second initiation. At that time I decided not to give any *dīkṣā* because I thought myself unfit, but yet on the other side there was Bhaktisiddhānta Śrīla Prabhupāda's order to give *dīkṣā pracāra* so I was wavering between these two points. On one side my Guru's orders and on the other side I thought myself unfit and not to give *dīkṣā*. But more or less the point that I did not want to give was more dominant. I went to Śrīpad Nityānanda Prabhu's place and there I felt an urge to give *dīkṣā*. And then reading Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī I came across a point where it's said that I should give what I have. If I don't give what I have then I'm a cheat, short; all these points. And Bhaktisiddhānta Śrīla Prabhupāda was always in favour of *kīrtana* and *pracāra*, all these points. So when Pishima came I had to turn her away. Many people had come, very many nice people had come, but I had to turn them away, all of them. And they all wanted me to become Ācārya.

Mādhava Mahārāja and Keśava Mahārāja would not have become Ācāryas if I had taken up this post of being Ācārya. They all wanted me to become the Ācārya and if I had become Ācārya then they would not have become. Especially Mādhava Mahārāja and Keśava Mahārāja and many others, even Yajava Mahārāja, they started initiating because I did not want to initiate.

So your Śrīla Prabhupāda had great faith in me that I would not try to lure away one of his disciples. I do not, did not want to become a big person. That is not in my nature. I do not want to move around with many people. I'm just satisfied with whatever I have. I'm only concerned about my high thinking. That is my life, my spiritual thinking is my life; the conclusions of the scriptures, the advices of the *mahājanas*, to relish them and practice them and to discuss them in a small confidential circle. That is the main goal of my life. That's why he used to trust me. That's why he used to send his disciples to me. Because he knew that I will teach them the truth and I will not take them away, unlike many others. That's why he used to come to me. He used to like me and he used to enjoy discussing with me. There are many points in *Bhagavad-gītā*, very subtle points, like I was telling the other day that *śloka*:

*teṣāṃ satata-yuktānāṃ, bhajatāṃ prīti-pūrvakam
dadāmi buddhi-yogaṃ taṃ, yena māṃ upayānti te*

["To those devotees who are constantly dedicated to Me, and who engage in My service out of their love for Me, I bestow the internal divine inspiration by which they can approach Me and render various intimate services unto Me."] [*Bhagavad-gītā*, 10.10]

Here, this *upayānti te* is *upa*, is *parakīya*. Once I discussed this point with him and he agreed and he said that at this point there cannot be anything else but the *parakīya rasa* of Braja. He agreed with me and supported me although this was my conception. These four are the four main *ślokas* of *Bhagavad-gītā*. [10.8 – 10.9 – 10.10 – 10.11] *ahaṃ sarvasya prabhavo*.

In my book called *Prapanna-jīvanāmṛtam* which I wrote about thirty years back I explained this as *Rādhā-dāsyā*, the servitor-ship to Rādhārāṇī. Here there is a hint of the servitor-ship to Rādhārāṇī.

*ahaṃ sarvasya prabhavo, mattaḥ sarvaṃ pravartate
iti matvā bhajante mām, budhā bhāva-samanvitāḥ*

["I am Kṛṣṇa, the Sweet Absolute, I am the root cause of the all-comprehensive aspect of the Absolute, the all-permeating aspect of the Absolute, and also the personal aspect of the Absolute - the Master of all potencies, who commands the respect of everyone - Lord Nārāyaṇa of Vaikuṅṭha. The universe of mundane and divine flow, every attempt and movement, the *Vedas* and allied scriptures which guide everyone's worship - all are initiated by Me alone. Realising this hidden treasure, the virtuous souls who are blessed with fine theistic intellect surpass the standards of duty and non-duty, and embrace the paramount path of love divine, *rāga-mārga*, and adore Me forever."] [*Bhagavad-gītā*, 10.8]

Kṛṣṇa is telling that everything has been introduced by Him. Even the service to Him also has been introduced by Himself, 'Has been introduced by My potency which is non different from Me.' With that conception if we want to serve Kṛṣṇa, if we try to serve Kṛṣṇa, then that service is through the submission to the spiritual master, following the spiritual master, following Rādhārāṇī. In *Bhagavad-gītā* in remote connection this link is there. I wrote that.

I was extremely enchanted with the meanings of the scriptures, with the teachings of the scriptures. That's how I used to pass my time, discussing about these intricate instructions inwardly. And along with that I used to do some preaching on the side; and that also in that kind of circle. When I used to stay next to his house in Sita Kanta Banergee Lane he used to come to me quite often and for a long time we used to discuss about these subjects. There used to be an exchange of understanding. That's why he used to know me quite well. In Allahabad also along with Tapasi Mahārāja I went to his house, gave lectures, and brought him to our Maṭh. Before that he met Śrīla Prabhupāda [Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura] once. One of his friends took him to Śrīla Prabhupāda at Ulṭā Ḍāṅgā and just by seeing Śrīla Prabhupāda he realised that at last the responsibility of spreading the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has fallen on the shoulder of such a person who will do something about it, who will spread it all over. Now this responsibility has fallen on a real qualified person. This was his realisation. And then in Allahabad I was the media to attract him to this path. Then in Sita Kanta Lane, Bombay, and many other places I was with him.

When Bon Mahārāja came back from England and we met in Bombay and he had many questions and I started giving the answers to them. Then he commented that, 'Today, Europe has been defeated by Asia.' He saw that after preaching in Europe quite extensively, the doubts, the questions that he had in his mind, I answered them and dispelled his doubts. That's why he commented like that.

I always had a close connection with him and there were confidential exchanges; that's why he used to trust me so much. He had his confidence in me in both ways; he used to trust me in my behaviour and he used to trust me about my spiritual realisations. That's why he used to feel happy to come to me.

Sarvabhavana Prabhu asks Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja, 'Mahārāja, the other day you were telling me that when Śrīla Prabhupāda was inaugurating the Māyāpur temple then you went there along with your disciple Govinda Mahārāja and you made Govinda Mahārāja give a lecture.'

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja, Yes, and I also gave a lecture, and in that lecture Govinda Mahārāja said, 'He, Śrīla Prabhupāda, considers me like his own son, and he considers my spiritual master Śrīdhara Mahārāja, as his *śikṣā* Guru.' In that assembly Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābājī Mahārāja also was present. Govinda Mahārāja quoted the *śloka*,

*kam prati kathayitum īše, samprati ko vā pratītim āyātu
go-pati-tanayā-kuñje, gopa-vadhūṭi-vitaṁ brahma*

["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?"]

[*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 19.98*]

'Who will believe this at this present time? Through him, Śrīla Prabhupāda has done something that is beyond belief. He has done something unbelievable.' Saying this he said that, 'He loves me like his own son and he considers my spiritual master as his *śikṣā* Guru.' And he, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is so humble that in reply to this he said, 'Whatever Govinda Mahārāja has said is correct. I consider him like my son, and I consider his spiritual master Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja, as my *śikṣā* Guru.' And then he glorified me by saying Om Viṣṇu-Pāda etc and giving, *Jaya dhani*. He was so humble. And I became a little ashamed due to this.

Bhakti Caru Swāmī asks Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja that, 'Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja wants to ask two more questions.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja asks the question and then Bhakti Caru Swāmī translates it into Bengali; the question about Dhruva Mahārāja and his mother Suniti.

Then Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja asks another question which Bhakti Caru Swāmī translates it into Bengali. This question is about the GBCs. The question at last mentions that the GBCs, there's a proposal that the GBCs also should be included as initiating Gurus.

Then **Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja** questions, 'That only the GBCs, not outside the GBCs?'

Bhakti Caru Swāmī says, 'No.'

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja asks, pointing to Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Swāmī, 'He's in charge of which zone?'

Bhakti Caru Swāmī says, 'He's in charge of Los Angeles temple.'

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja says, 'I guess Hamsadūta Mahārāja also has that sort of idea?'

Bhakti Caru Swāmī says, 'Well maybe right now he's thinking that way, but previously they all were thinking alike. That is, none of them really wanted to increase the number of the Gurus. They were thinking that these eleven are all-in-all and they did not want to include anybody else.'

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja, 'I told them right at the beginning when they came to discuss with me about this after Swāmī Mahārāja departed. Then I suggested that this should be made into a dynamic practice so that every year during Gaura Pūrṇimā some new Gurus can be included. Then the other party, the God-brothers, non initiating God-brothers, will have their confidence on the initiating God-brothers and give their support to them. Otherwise if they maintain some rigid practice then the relationship will be cracked. This was my suggestion but they did not care about that. On the other hand emphatically they said that no, only these eleven that Śrīla Prabhupāda has selected will remain. Outside these eleven they will not include anybody else. I pointed out that if you include some more initiating Gurus that will be favourable. As it is when you all are going to leave then you have to appoint your disciples as initiating Gurus. You have to empower your disciples. So why can't you do that to your brothers? Can there be no qualified person? So better you keep it opened. This practice will be very dynamic. If needed you eliminate some people also from their position of Guru, and include also somebody when he's qualified.'

Bhakti Caru Swāmī requests Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja to speak this in English so that everybody can hear it in his voice and Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja speaks it in English.

Then Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Swāmī asks a question and Bhakti Caru Swāmī translates it into Bengali.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja laughs and says, ‘So now they don’t want to listen to the uncle Gurus. That way they can give formal respect but actually the nephew can supersede the uncle also.’

Bhakti Caru Swāmī says, ‘Yes, they may but they do not.’

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja, ‘Actually they have gone or not, that criterion is different in absolute consideration. Relatively they will offer their respects but the nephew can also supersede the uncle, but still he will give him his due respect.’

Bhakti Caru Swāmī points out that Caitanya Mahāprabhu told Vallabhācārya that the one who does not recognise the superiority of the spiritual master, he is like a prostitute. The one who thinks that who has superseded his spiritual master, he is to be considered as a prostitute.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja, ‘Noticing the realisation of Vallabhācārya, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said that, but in the line of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrī Jīva Goswāmī he has mildly differed from Śrīdhara Swāmī, like, *tejo-vāri-mṛdām yathā vinimayo* [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 1.1.1], this *vinimayo* Śrīdhara Swāmī has translated as implementation, but Jīva Goswāmī did not agree with him. He said that *vinimay* never means implementation or imposition; *vinimay* means transformation. So Jīva Goswāmī differed with him in this respect. But Vallabhācārya, to establish some faulty conclusions, in spite of being the disciple of Śrīdhara Swāmī, has attacked him. That was his audacity. There was no substance in it. That’s why Mahāprabhu has rejected him.’

Bhakti Caru Swāmī, ‘At least there was some scriptural understanding, but here there is no scriptural understanding.’

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja, ‘I heard from different people that Swāmī Mahārāja has told his disciples that in Bengal, most of the disciples of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura, have deviated from his teachings. So know you have to go and reinstate that pure teaching of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura. Giving such inspiration he sent them here. Now if that is true, of course I myself have not heard it from him, I simply heard it from others, and in a way I think it is quite possible also, just to encourage them so that they might not have gone this far from that. What they might think that what our spiritual master, the great preaching work that he has done, what he received from the lotus feet of his spiritual master, that is novel and a wonderful substantial potency. And with that he has come here to recapture. And the ones who are in possession of that they’re almost dying. So you all must go and give it there. Like when the *brāhmaṇas* fell down in Bengal at one time, then Adisur (?) brought the *brāhmaṇas* from Kanoge (?) and then he re-established the *varṇāśrama* system here, like that. He also has done something like that.

I heard from Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābājī Mahārāja that before leaving this planet, Swāmī Mahārāja requested him to beg forgiveness on his behalf from his God-brothers, that at times he might have offended his God-brothers while preaching. This he said – I heard it from Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. He said that although he had due respects towards his God-brothers, but still while preaching he might have offended them a little bit; so he should be forgiven.

Like I heard once Akiñcana Mahārāja ask him, ‘What your other God-brothers are doing?’ So he replied, ‘Well, they just eat and sleep and ring the bells.’ Hearing this, they became very offended and then they came to me. But my observation is neutral so I said, ‘The drum that he’s playing, if he accepts you as a player of the bell in that band, then you should consider this to be a great honour.’ I told this. My views are different. I saw that he’s playing a huge drum, a battle drum, so if you get a chance to play the *kashi*, or cymbals, along with that, that is a great honour to you. This I’m speaking from the absolute consideration.’

Bhakti Caru Swāmī pointed out, ‘Mahārāja, if Prabhupāda gave this instruction then he must have given this instruction to all his disciples. Now why, instead of all his disciples, only eleven of them are so hung-up about this? It is not so much of Prabhupāda’s instructions; it’s a matter of their personal, selfish motives. To guard their selfish motives they have closed their doors and windows very tightly so that no attack can come from outside.’

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja, ‘That’s a kind of a policy true, but that cannot be rejected altogether. The way, there was a practice in India before that, ‘Do not go beyond the seas because due to the social exchange you might get degraded.’ Due to the exchange, instead of benefit, you might become degraded. So make a boundary so that you do not become degraded, the way the Chinese made the wall around their country so that the national culture cannot be degraded or destroyed by any external invasion or influence. It may be something like this.’

Bhakti Caru Swāmī, ‘But Mahārāja, the main consideration is that many of Prabhupāda’s disciples are leaving the movement. They’re quite unable to tolerate all this nonsense any more.’

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja, ‘Yes, the ones, those who won’t be able to check themselves they’ll come forward, and the ones who are wavering, those who can tolerate a little more, they can wait and examine what actually is Kṛṣṇa’s desire for a little longer. The primary consideration is Kṛṣṇa’s will.’

Bhakti Caru Swāmī, ‘But we are seeing that in order to accelerate Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes Nārada Muni is acting in certain ways as if he’s acting against Kṛṣṇa’s desire.’

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja laughs and says, ‘Yes, the way he caused Kaṁsa to kill the first six sons of Devakī. Yes, the inward feeling should be like that. So if this is degradation then even if he cannot come forward then at least inwardly he would feel that, yes, if there’s degradation then let it happen quickly. Let the reaction come quickly. Otherwise it will cause a great damage to many people. Yes, the ones who won’t be able to control themselves they will dive into it. Without considering the good, bad, honour and infamy, without considering the future, they will dive into it for reformation. That is also quite possible.’

Bhakti Caru Swāmī, ‘Śrīla Prabhupāda is giving an example that if somebody has a boil then instead of blowing that boil it is better to press it and get the poison out. Instead of blowing the boil for temporary relief, the one who is a real well-wisher, he will press the boil and get the puss out. That might cause some pain, momentary pain initially, but in the long run this will be beneficial.’

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja laughs and says, ‘The ones who believe in homoeopathic treatment they will say that instead of making such demoniac attempt give him some medicine and that will cure him.’

Bhakti Caru Swāmī, ‘But Mahārāja, it has been seen that homoeopathic medicine does not work with everybody.’

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja laughing, ‘But Hanumān will not agree with that.’

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja continues. Like once when a drowning man was floating across the Ganges and on the bank a *yogī* was meditating. And one other man saw this drowning man floating by so he dived into the river and rescued the man and brought him onto the bank. And then he told the *yogī* that this man was drowning and you’re chanting while sitting on the bank of the river. Then the *yogī* replied, yes, I saw that you are coming, I knew beforehand that you are coming to rescue him so I did not make any attempt myself.’

So there are different kinds of people. The ones who cannot resist themselves they’ll dive into it. The ones who are a little sober they’ll think that the remedy for this Kṛṣṇa is sending.’

Bhakti Caru Swāmī, ‘Mahārāja, I asked you this question because in America there’s quite a few devotees, those who are impatiently waiting to hear what you think about all this, what you say about this.’

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja, ‘Yes I know that there are quite a few people, those who are the well-wishers of the movement, they’re waiting and seeing, but this is breaking their heart, this damage to the society. From here, from a distance, I’m saying wait and see. But for them this is becoming *yugas* (twelve years or more). The ones, those who are the real lovers of the institution, for them this is becoming intolerable. This is going beyond their limit of tolerance.’

Bhakti Caru Swāmī, ‘The main reason why we came was because there are many devotees, those who are impatiently waiting to hear what you have to say. Now if you just show us the way that now this has come to this point and unless some rectification is made, must be done, then they all will get together to do something about this.’

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja, ‘If I have to say something formally from outside then I have to say that among you who enjoy the greatest confidence of all the devotees, through such a man you call for a meeting in America or wherever the field is the most important. And in that meeting the ones who are willing to boldly face this situation, participate, the GBCs, those you feel who are dissatisfied inwardly, call them and call a few Ācāryas like Rāmeśvara who are sympathetic. And then in the meeting you record the feelings of different devotees. And then with the strength of that resolution you call for their explanation,

‘That what you are doing in the name of Prabhupāda, you’re all not absolutely infallible. Due to your activities the mass of the disciples of Prabhupāda has become very bewildered, they’re becoming very disappointed. And they can see that a great loss is going to be incurred by the ISKCON Society, the ISKCON Society is in danger. So now you all reconsider yourselves and appeal to them to readjust themselves and thus this disaster can be saved. So many devotees are leaving the movement, so many devotees have become half dead, and so many devotees have already died, and so many are lamenting. And we cannot just sit idly without trying to rectify the situation. We ourselves do not want any position, but what’s going on is intolerable. It shows that the major portion is going to die. So we want some action to rectify this situation. We want some remedy for this. This must be thought out and accepted.’

So with this idea you form a committee, make a resolution, and then selectively invite some. In this way you call for a meeting, pass a resolution, and then call for them and ask them to readjust their position and reconsider. Otherwise we shall be in painful necessity to make progress independently. You can say this in this line.’

Then Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja himself translates this in English.

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