

His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī Mahārāja

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Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: ...say that they're not qualified to be Guru. And they will say that you are saying "Oh. You can be Guru, have two feet here..."

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Two feet here and...

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: So they're saying...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: And the eyes fixed on Vaikuṅṭha.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: They're of that opinion but they have no eyes to Vaikuṅṭha at all.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: And they say that you must be the *uttama* whose acting on the *madhyama* platform. That is the Guru that one must seek out. The *madhyama* Guru he may be some kind of Guru, but who is interested in such a Guru?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: I also had such ideas first, but through transformation I did not venture to make disciples in the beginning, after the departure of Prabhupāda. But I had some transformation through three events. Then I came to take up this work humbly, modestly, in a...

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: What was that, can I ask?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: The other day it was taken in, such question. Tamal Kṛṣṇa asked, "That I do not consider myself quite fit to do this work. Then should I go on?" And what did I answer?

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: You said, "*āmāra ājñāya guru hañā.*" That by the command of Mahāprabhu and my Guru Mahārāja it is his order.

[*yāre dekha, tāre kaha 'kṛṣṇa'-upadeśa / āmāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra' ei deśa*]

[“Instruct everyone to follow the orders of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as they are given in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In this way become a spiritual master and try to liberate everyone in this land.”]

[*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 7.128*]

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: That we must be so much careless if it is possible, that I may go to hell, but I must carry out my Guru's order. So through me the work will go on, may go on. That is one, and another instance, one of *gopīs*, and another instance...

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Kṛṣṇa's headache.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: And another instance I also quoted. What is that? Rāmānuja. I may go to hell. But this sort of conviction.....into the process into *mantram*, that gives us position to carry out. This is

helping, this medicine is – I'm in the curing process, this medicine is helping me. In a similar case the medicine I may hand over to him.

And Jīva Goswāmī says *jñāna śāthya vittha śāthya*. "I have got some money. Another person is suffering, can't pay. If I keep tight that money and he dies fasting without food, then I will be responsible for that, *vittha śāthya*. So *jñāna śāthya* is there. I have got some knowledge. I can help my neighbour but I don't do that, then I'll be responsible, I shall commit some offence against the society and against the cause."

You see, in this world this also came to me. I asked one doctor, "What do you know? Do you know about the disease perfectly? How do you venture to cure, to treat a patient? You have got meagre knowledge. You don't know his body fully. You venture, you are wrong."

The doctor submitted to me, but the reaction came in my mind. Then the whole method of treatment will vanish? All half-knowing, not anyone to be found with full, perfect knowledge, then this curing process should be abolished? It is not possible.

So in the case of all culture one should help others in good faith. In good faith whatever knowledge he has got he must help others with that knowledge and guidance, sincerely. So in that spirit we may take it. Otherwise we'll be blamed.

So with that good sincere spirit we can go on. Wherever, but we must be careful. Whenever a Guru of superior quality is there, I must take to him. Better seed is available. The *kṣetra*, the land, is there, but when better seed is available for the cultivation, no bad seed should occupy. So when the better Guru is available we must help a person to take to him. I must not go to be a trespasser.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: But the Vaiṣṇava he's always thinking himself, *jagāi mādhai haite muñi se pāpiṣṭha* [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā*, 5.205] he's thinking himself, so he will always want to take someone to the other Vaiṣṇava.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: So Vaiṣṇava, the degree of Vaiṣṇavism will take us to almost *akiñcana*, that I am nothing, I am the lowest of the low. But when Ācārya *abhimāna* will flow it will come through the order of Kṛṣṇa, you will have to do it. In that case he wants to do. It is His flow.

Mahāprabhu says, "Sanātana, Kṛṣṇa's grace is flowing, passing through Me to you. I can't understand. Kṛṣṇa is going to grace you, and it is passing through Me, all these words. I don't understand them but it is going, passing through Me, I feel, something like that. My Ācārya's order I am carrying out. Being so low but still I am accepted, ordered by Ācārya to do."

With this necessity, that is not always externally but internally also. The Ācārya asked me, "Go on with preaching, do. You are qualified. If you don't do then why did I give it to you? I spread it so you also spread." If such sincere urge one feels in his heart he must do. If I do not serve the society, whatever I have got with that, then if I think that no, I'll be responsible to my Guru. "That you got so much energy from me and if you keep it within you, four walls within your heart, let them lose to help others." If one comes in this sort of thought he should try. But the difficulty is there that to become a Guru, to capture the position of a Guru, the respect of the Guru, that is one thing, and to discharge the duty that is another stage. Sincerity is necessary in the conception. The conception of course is difficult no doubt. No doubt it is a difficult thing. He will be lost and others will also be lost. So in the name of helping others he will deceive others if he himself is a deceit. So we must be careful. Whether I am eligible to discharge the duty what I have received from my Guru, whether I'm eligible to do good to others.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: But you can do that, you can give *śikṣā* also, yes? You can give what you've heard from your spiritual master, your Guru, you can give to others.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: So what is the necessity of *dīkṣā*?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: That is also a trap to catch the Guru. You give the *śikṣā* and those that have got your *śikṣā* will say, “I cannot go to any other. Whatever I heard from you I cannot accept anyone to be Guru than yourself.”

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: But you can say, “If you accept me, then I tell you to accept him.”

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: And if he’s sincere, if you accept him, I show you have faith in me, real faith, then I show you to go to that gentleman. He may say if he sincerely believes that he’s superior to him, he may say. And if of equal status with the Ācārya then also he’s already in the constitution. “You go to see. I don’t want to disturb the constitutional work.” In that case also to a certain extent it may be adjusted like that.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: But if one says he’s going down, how can I recommend this sincere gentleman to connect with him.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: There at that time he will have to come down himself to take the responsibility of continuing the work of his Guru. It all depends on sincere realisation.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Because some people they came to you and you were telling that you thought yourself unfit and you sent them away, in the beginning.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes. I sent some away. Mādhava’s mother, Swāmī Mahārāja’s sister came to me.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Pishima. [aka Bhāvinī Didi]

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: She had Hari *Nāma* from Prabhupāda and for initiation she came to me. But at that time my mind was hesitating. I sent her to Goswāmī Mahārāja. If I am not going to take up the duty, and he has taken, if you have faith in me, I recommend you to go there. I did, and many I did, in the beginning.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: This is another thing. Some people say that in the *Ādi-līlā* of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, it says there is one initiating spiritual master and there may be many instructing or *śikṣā* Guru, but one *dīkṣā* Guru.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: For the particular person *śikṣā* Guru may be many, but *dīkṣā* Guru one and the same, in general case. But if he’s a bogus one, then he should be left and, *avaiṣṇava*.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: But some devotees, they are bewildered. They’re thinking that if you can only have one *dīkṣā* Guru then how is it that after the disappearance of Prabhupāda, disciples who have *dīkṣā* from him, Hari *Nāma*, they can take *mantra* from someone else? Isn’t *mantra* also *dīkṣā*?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: In considering that he's His *vaibhāva*, extension, he has asked them, His extended delegated power, delegated His will to perform the residue, the duty that is taken up by him. So by submitting to them I am submitting to Him, His order. In this way you may adjust. But if he finds that he's satisfied that he's in the line of former Guru. Otherwise it is also possible that he may not have the second *dīkṣā* at all.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: But what if he takes second *dīkṣā* and he sees some conflict between the *mantra* Guru and Hari *Nāma* Guru?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: In that case he should not, after *dīkṣā* or before *dīkṣā*, if he finds any difference then he may not venture very easily.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: But what about after? He has taken *mantra* from someone and then he sees some difficulty?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: After taking *mantram* he's in difficulty?

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes, between Hari *Nāma* Guru and *mantra* Guru.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: If there's some difference at present in his mind, new ideas of difference have sprung up in his heart?

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: That he's not in the line.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Then of course he cannot but be indifferent to his present Guru, in the beginning. That I see difference, he's not in the line, but I have done. Wait and see. That should be his behaviour, wait and see. I do not find encouragement in him to engage in the service with earnestness, it may be. That is of course a disaster, calamity.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: It may also be due to immature understanding.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: But those defects should be realised whether they're exterior or interior. The difference what is being detected, that is external, superficial, un substantial. If it is superficial, he should be encouraged that this may be neglected. But if internal, then of course it is a difficult case, and cannot but be indifferent for some time, and then gradually the thing will – time will decide and show what's the matter, and then he's to take such steps accordingly.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Jai. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa. Finished?

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes. Thank you.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Ha, ha. Thank you.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: I hope I don't bother you by coming so often.

...

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: ...written about you in his book, this *Autobiography of a Jewish Yogī*.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes. How has he represented me?

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: He compares you to a great general, when he met you. And there he tells of the instructions how Śrīla Prabhupāda told him that he regarded you as his *śikṣā* Guru, and that Acyutānanda Swāmī should come here for your instructions. He was in some spiritual difficulty. So he describes the nine months that he was living here and his hearing from you, the many different subjects you would speak about.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: And ultimately, the conclusion?

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: The conclusion.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: The result of that association has taken him far away from the ISKCON?

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: No, no. Ha, ha, ha.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: The consequence shows this and my association is responsible for that. Ha, ha, ha.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Ha, ha, ha. No. We were, for all these years we have wondered how Acyutānanda Swāmī knows so many things. Everyone has always wondered. And then now we can understand, by you association, where he learned so many things.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Maybe.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: But his conclusion was that your instructions were non different than our Prabhupāda's instructions.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Not different?

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Non different. But at the same time different. This is my understanding. This is the spiritual sweetness of variety. It's non different but at the same time it's different. And I didn't know that it could be like this. Because as you said in your poem to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, about this world is filled with the cheaters and the cheated. So Prabhupāda was the only person that I ever met who did not cheat me, until I met Your Divine Grace also.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: It's corroborated.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: And everything that you tell me.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: But in Acyutānanda's writing there is appreciation for me?

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: That is your opinion? You have read, you have gone through that book?

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes, I've gone through it, and he presents you very nicely.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: All right.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāja: _____ [?]

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Swāmī Mahārāja wrote a letter in his address, in his good name.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: "Ask Mahārāja," that is myself, "to keep Acyutānanda in his Maṭh and to give some advice to him."

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Acyutānanda wanted that letter. At that time it was not found.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes. He has asked me if I can bring it back to him in America. Acyutānanda Swāmī wants me to bring it to America. Now Bhakti Caru Swāmī has it, so I can take it from him and I'm going to New York, I will give it to Acyutānanda, if you like.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: That letter?

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes. And we can leave a copy here.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Caru Swāmī will have a copy?

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes. I'm also keeping a copy.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Copy means?

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Zerox, photo copy.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Block? And then that will be given. Copy should be distributed. The original will be with him and the copies should be distributed.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes. With who, the original?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: With Caru Swāmī.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes, with Bhakti Caru. Yes. All right, then I can give Acyutānanda a copy, because he is putting that letter in his book, he's putting it there.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Acyutānanda does not plan to come to India again? He has no such plan?

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Not immediately, no.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: What is he doing? Is he delivering lectures in different universities?

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes. At universities, and also he's trying to get his book published. Because if you have a book then you can travel around and you can be on television and you can get so many preaching opportunities if you have a book.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes. A better position of a preacher, he has it in black and white. All right. But why *Jewish Yogī*?

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: That is his humour.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: *Jewish Yogī* is converted into a Kṛṣṇa *bhakta*.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Ha, ha, ha. There is one very famous book by ParamahansaYogānanda. Do you know ParamahansaYogānanda? He is a *māyāvādā*, and he has one famous book.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: That is known as *yogada*.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: *Yogada*, I do not know. But he's very popular; this book is very popular in the western countries. And his book is called...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: And Rabindranatha wrote against him, that this hot *yogī* had a closer association with the ladies, to teach them *yoga*, that is a blasphemy in the name of Indian culture. There I saw in the writing of Rabindranatha Tagore, *yogadar*. He had a centre in Ranchi [?] perhaps.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes, I think so, it sounds like the man. He has one book called *Autobiography of a Yogī*, and everyone reads it. So Acyutānanda Swāmī has called *Autobiography of a Jewish Yogī* to take from that popularity.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: From that position he will show that Kṛṣṇa is the highest.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Not the charm of *yoga* and the charm of Jewish method of worshipping of many gods. We have left those two planes and I am going, fixing my aim, to the highest, as Kṛṣṇa conception.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes, he's showing that.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Anyhow, he has chosen that to be the platform where from he's to speak. Kṛṣṇa.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Hare Kṛṣṇa. Jai. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Hare Kṛṣṇa. You are to stay here sometime more?

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: In Māyāpur?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: You are to take *anukalpa*?

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: As you like.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: No, as you like.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Ha, ha, ha.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:

*mahat-sevām dvāram āhur vimuktes, [tamo-dvāraṁ yoṣitām saṅgi-saṅgam
mahāntas te sama-cittāḥ praśāntā, vimanyavaḥ suhrdaḥ sādhaso ye]*

[“One can attain the path of liberation from material bondage by service to the great devotees. One who wishes to advance in spiritual life must render service to the *mahātmās*. For those who are not interested in advancing in spiritual life, who associate with those fond of women and sex, the path to hell is wide open. The great devotees are equipoised. They do not see any difference between one living entity and another. They are very peaceful, and are fully engaged in devotional service. They are devoid of anger and they work for the benefit of everyone. They do not behave in any abominable way. Such persons are known as *mahātmās*.”] [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 5.5.2]

I am here just to try and serve you, then the door to Vaiṣṇava is open.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: You see, service is better than sitting idle. So *prasāda sevā*, if it is service, in a serving mood of course, but at the same time the individual position of a devotee should be considered, should be taken into consideration. The *sahajiyās*, they do not observe Ekādaśī fasting at all. “Oh. We are in Vṛndāvana. No fasting there.” But Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Prabhupāda, did not like in the Name; that is *sahajiyā*, in the name of Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* to go on with feeding, feeding the senses. But when necessary for the service of Kṛṣṇa to keep up the body for the nourishment what is necessary in the service of Kṛṣṇa, we don't like by taking to fasting that the loss of energy may not be affected, in this way we are to... Ekādaśī we honour.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāja: _____ [?]

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: If fasting does not hamper your service you may go on fasting. Your Gurudeva perhaps wanted.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Well, see, he did not do this. Our Gurudeva, he would eat something. So I was thinking that I can fast and I do not become weak, but I was thinking that maybe I will start to think that I am greater than my Gurudeva, because he was eating and I was, so...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: _____ [?]

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: That danger may be there.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: A greater danger, that I am more greater devotee than my Guru. Ha, ha, ha, ha, by observing fast. When you are aware of that danger that won't attack you. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Hare Kṛṣṇa. Now I'm completely confused.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Confused? _____ [?]

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: So you have to tell me, *śiṣyas te 'haṁ sādhi mām tvām prapannam*.

*[kārpaṇya-doṣopahata-svabhāvaḥ, pṛcchāmi tvām dharma-sammūḍha-cetāḥ
yac chreyaḥ syān niścitaṁ brūhi tan me, śiṣyas te 'haṁ sādhi mām tvām prapannam]*

["Now I am bewildered. What is my real duty? Overwhelmed by apprehension for the fall of our dynasty, I am begging You to please tell me clearly which course of action is most beneficial for me. I am Your surrendered disciple. Kindly instruct me."] [*Bhagavad-gītā*, 2.7]

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: A small, only a little honour, to show your respect on the both sides.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: But at your Math there is no conception of little. They have lost this conception. They're only conceiving the infinite, the unlimited. They have no conception of the finite. So I'll take a little, or try. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: When the Guru is there, the disciples are more free, but when he's departed they should be more careful. The guardian's vigilant eye is not over my head I should be careful. But when the guardian's vigilant eye is there, the son is more free to do this thing that thing because he's there, he's to check.

Devotee: _____ [?]

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Mādhava Mahārāja, he showed a strict ideal; very eager to show an ideal of Guru without any defect strongly to his disciples. But when he used to come to visit me he used like a child, like a friend. No restriction of the order. Even the disciples, the followers with him, but here he had no independence. He took his bed just on the floor sometimes, and used to take the fired rice, this *pakula* etc. He was quite free in his dealings. But when he's separate he's a very strict Ācārya, observing so many practices so that his disciples may not mistake him to be in an enjoying mood. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Hare Kṛṣṇa. Also I'm conscious of that, because this is a question of *śraddhā*. And that is not something artificial. *Śraddhā* comes naturally.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Natural, spontaneous.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: But in the beginning, one may want to tell someone else, "Oh, look what I have found," but they may not appreciate the value. So we have to be very careful. But I think...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Careful, and as the well-wisher of ISKCON I am also a little careful.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: I feel. But still what I feel to be sincerely to be the truth, I cannot deviate from that. That is my difficulty.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Ha, ha, ha, ha. Jai.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Dhīra Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Hare Kṛṣṇa.

...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Who are to put question first? Ha, ha.

Tamal Kṛṣṇa Swāmī: We're very glad to see you again.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Very? We'll be more glad, but my age and health is not allowing. I should be rather more bright and more cheerful to do this service. Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol.

Tamal Kṛṣṇa Swāmī: We find you very bright and effulgent.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha ha. Then there's special eyesight. Ha, ha. Hare Kṛṣṇa. Gaura Haribol.

[*varīyān eṣa te praśnaḥ,*] *kṛto loka-hitam nṛpa*
ātmavit-sammataḥ puṁsām, śrotavyādiṣu yaḥ paraḥ

["My dear King, your question is glorious because it is very beneficial for all kinds of people. The answer to this question is the prime subject matter for hearing, and it is approved by all transcendentalists."] [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. 2.1.1]

Śukadeva first invited and welcomed the question put by Parīkṣit Mahārāja, and the second canto of *Bhāgavatam* begins like that. "*Varīyān eṣa te praśnaḥ*, this sort of question should only be made, *ātmavit-sammataḥ*, because from two standpoints the question is judged for its validity, *ātmavit-sammataḥ* and *loka-hitam*. One aspect of the question is *ātmavit-sammataḥ*. Those that know their real intrinsic need by self analysis, it is asked by them, *ātmavit-sammataḥ*. And *loka-hitam*, really, this question will help the good of the people. So Parīkṣit Mahārāja, your question is a bona fide one and I

am just going to answer that.” In this way *Bhāgavata* began. Hare Kṛṣṇa. *Ātmavit-sammataḥ* and *loka-hitam*. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Giri Mahārāja: So, we did have one question to begin, and that is, the disciple comes to the spiritual master in any position and then gradually by the mercy of the Guru he’s elevated through the modes, the different *guṇas*, rising higher and higher up to the mode of goodness and then finally pure goodness. Now in our various duties sometimes we have to act more like a *kṣatriya* or a manager which is more associated with the mode of passion. But on the other hand we’re trying to come more to the stage of goodness and then pure goodness beyond any of the material modes. But sometimes in discharging our management duties it seems that we become affected by the mode of passion and that weakens us.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: You please reproduce it.

Tamal Kṛṣṇa Swāmī: Yes. He’s saying that in doing daily activities, especially our leaders, we have to act in such a way that it is like *raja guṇa*. Yet when cultivating Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* we want to come to the point of *śuddha sattvic* position. So sometimes our daily functions...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes, yes. What is *nirguṇa*, that includes *rajas*, *tamo*, and, seems to be, apparently, seems to include *raja*, *tama*, and *sattva*, but it may be *nirguṇa*. Even killing may be *nirguṇa*, and at the same time, killing and worshipping may be *saguṇa*, formal worship. The very angle of vision, the standpoint, the inner purpose, that is what is the all important factor. You see, if a cent per cent, by the direction, and directed by the Guru’s good will, one is going to control, to handle all these things, that may be *nirguṇa*. This chastisement, stricture, all may be *nirguṇa*. It depends on the plane from where he’s dealing and for what purpose. The external form is not everything to be judged. Of course I don’t say that all the chastisement and all the rough dealings will be *nirguṇa*, may not be, generally it may not be, but it can be *nirguṇa*. The purity of the purpose, the sincerity of the purpose, it depends on that. How he’s handling and what for, how much sincere goodness he has got in his heart for the person whom he’s chastising. Just as mother’s chastising and ordinary enemies chastising is not one and the same; the good will at the back. So only external behaviour is not everything which will guide us to judge the action.

Giri Mahārāja: Yes. Now suppose I go, suppose some sincere lady comes and with all sincerity I want to preach to her, but due to that contact, although I begin will all sincere desire from the *nirguṇa* platform, but after that association...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes. There are crucial points that should be judged from various standpoints. The sincere I shall try to attend, at the same time I shall have to reckon the good of others they may not mistake me, and the position of the person who is going to help, all these things may be taken into consideration. Sometimes a sincere man may be sacrificed for the good of so many. Sometimes it is necessary. And sometimes one’s sincere hankering so much that the Ācārya may take the risk to help him. And the Ācārya’s position must be substantial; he may not be weak, so that he may not be entrapped. All these things should be considered. But generally *ānukūl* and *prātikūl*, *ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ*, *prātikūlya-vivarjjanam*.

[*ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ*, *prātikūlya-vivarjjanam*
raḁṣiṣyatīti viśvāso, *goptṛtve varaṇam tathā*.
ātma-nikṣepa kārpaṇye, *ṣaḁ-vidhā śaraṇāgatih*

evam paryāyataś cāsminn, ekaikādhyāya-saṅgrahaḥ]

[The six divisions of surrender are to accept those things favourable for devotional service, to reject unfavourable things, the conviction that Kṛṣṇa will give protection, to accept the Lord as one's guardian or master, full self-surrender, and humility.] [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 22.100*]

According to our own reason and the wish of our friends, we shall take the decision. And there will be victory and defeat at times and we are to take the responsibility of that in our practical life. We may be taught even by defeat, but sincerity, sincere attempt; that is always laudable and victorious.

Giri Mahārāja: Our Prabhupāda has written in his purport to the verse *api cet sudurācāro* [*Bhagavad-gītā, 9.30*] this similar point. I shall read, that, "When a living entity is conditioned, he has two kinds of activities: one is conditional, and the other is constitutional. As for protecting the body or abiding by the rules of society and state, certainly there are different activities, even for devotees, in connection with the conditional life, and such activities are called conditional. Besides these, the living entity who is fully conscious of his spiritual nature and is engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or the devotional service of the Lord, has activities which are called transcendental. Such activities are performed in his constitutional position, and they are technically called devotional service. Now, in the conditioned state, sometimes devotional service and the conditional service in relation to the body will parallel one another. But then again, sometimes these activities become opposed to one another. As far as possible, a devotee is very cautious so that he does not do anything that could disrupt his wholesome condition."

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Finished?

Giri Mahārāja: "He knows that perfection in his activities depends on his progressive realisation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Sometimes, however, it may be seen that a person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness commits some act which may be taken as most abominable socially or politically. But such a temporary fall down does not disqualify him."

Tamal Kṛṣṇa Swāmī: Have you finished?

Giri Mahārāja: I think so.

Tamal Kṛṣṇa Swāmī: Now what's the point?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes, it is all right.

Giri Mahārāja: So the question is in terms of our lives, what is the meaning of conditional activity?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Provincial and eternal; eternal function of the innate eternal function of the soul is in the plane of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And our country consciousness, our social consciousness, they also attach to us some sort of duty. And when they're one and not antagonistic it is all right. And when there's a clash the weak devotee he will follow the provincial and social and political; he'll be prey to that. But a strong devotee he will repulse this political and social and some such obligation and he'll go on with his program of eternal devotion towards Kṛṣṇa, and he'll be ready to suffer.

Just as, take the case of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Haridāsa Ṭhākura was warned by the Muslims, by the Kazi, "Why, what is this? You are born Mohammedan, in a pure society of Mohammedan School, and you are going to the *kafir* and you are taking the name of their God. I'm warning you, don't do that."

But Haridas Thakura did not care. Then he was punished, whipped...

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