

His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī Mahārāja

81.10.06.B

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: ...I shall remain; being a soldier I shall always try to remain within the fort. Then I am not a soldier. Do you follow?

Devotee: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: But still we shall be careful as I told. That I am a weak man before going to attend the TB patient, or a serious patient, if I feel some weakness I shall intimate to my master that, 'For the time being you may change my field of working, of service!' But I shall have to keep it in mind. I must have to be sufficiently strong that I shall be able to attend that serious patient also. He may be a prostitute, he may be a *dacoit*, he may be a wealthy man. I shall approach him for the service of Kṛṣṇa. Must be bold enough, healthy enough, and I must not be a trespasser in the middle, on the way, taking things to Kṛṣṇa on the way I shall take it, and I shall become a traitor, unfaithful servant.

[*anyathā swatantra kāma-anrthādi jāra dhāma, bhakti-patha sadā deya bhaṅga*]
[*kibā bā karite parekāma-krodha sadhākere, jadi haya sādhu-janara saṅga*]

["If lust is not controlled, then it becomes the breeding ground for a host of vices and checks one's advancement on the path of devotional service. However, if one stays in the association of the saintly devotees, then that association will carry him beyond the influence of lust, anger, and their friends."] [*Śrī Prema-bhakti-candrikā*]

Narottama [Dāsa] Ṭhākura says, the negative side, the temptation side, and the positive side the guardians. Narottama Ṭhākura says if we have got the favour of a great personage then what can these trifle temptations can do to me? Can't do anything! If my guardian is very careful, very strong, very judicious, and I am working under him then no temptations can do any harm to us. That is the key of life, success. Hare Kṛṣṇa. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Generally, according to our capacity we shall try to move. That is the general thing. But at the same time we shall keep in our mind that to attain our highest position it is necessary that I shall, I should be able to deal with all these serious things also, the most serious. Otherwise some defect within. The wholesale conversion must come within me, that I am a servitor and not master. That is not only in this case, in the case of fame also, name and fame. That is the subtle most dangerous enemy; name and fame, *pratiṣṭhā*. That highest enemy, the highest and subtle at the same time, the *pratiṣṭhā*, to take the name, the credit, to one's own self and without giving it to Gurudeva. The greatest enemy is there. And it is very difficult to detect it.

Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol.

Kanak, kāmīnī, pratiṣṭhā, three classifications: *kanak, kāmīnī*, and *pratiṣṭhā*, fame, female, and money. No f in money.

Devotee: Profit?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Profit. Beginning with f, wealth beginning with f.

Devotee: Fortune?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Fortune is a comprehensive that includes everything, not money only.

Bhārati Mahārāja: Mahārāja, *pratiṣṭhā*, how do we detect that within ourselves?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: That is internal perception. Our continuous thankfulness to Gurudeva, that is coming from upward, I have got nothing. I have got no position. My present position depends always on the mercy of my Gurudeva, to be able to remain on that plane of thinking. It may be withdrawn any moment from me, may be withdrawn. It is not a fixed thing in me. Not as a matter of right, but only extended grace in me. The moment it is withdrawn, I am nowhere. It is all His *svarūpa-śakti*. I am *taṭasthā-śakti*, no capital. I am working on the capital of my master. I have got no capital of my own, to realize that. Without his help, without his grace, I am in darkness. My fate is dark. As long as he extends his grace in me I can see. Light is withdrawn, the eye is helpless. It is the position to realize such a position that by my birth, it is my birthright that I am *taṭasthā-śakti*, a marginal potency. And whatever I found that the gracious extension of *svarūpa-śakti* in me. It is their wealth. The wealth, the property belongs to them, to my Guru, Vaiṣṇava, their property. But at the same time, those that are faithful that never occurs, such cruel activity can never be seen anywhere. They are rather busy to extend their circle. And they never withdraw. That is our solace, our consolation. But not as a matter of right I can demand, no demand, no challenge. Challenging spirit towards the Vaiṣṇava must be eliminated forever. We are living on their grace. *Prasād ubaje* [?] *Ucchiṣṭa-bhojino dāsās*, we are entitled only to taste the remnants left by the Vaiṣṇava.

*tvayopabhukta-srag-gandha-, vāso 'laṅkāra-carcitāḥ
ucchiṣṭa-bhojino dāsās, [tava māyām jayema hi]*

[Uddhava says: “Adorned with the articles that have been offered to You, such as garlands, fragrant clothing, and ornaments, we, Your personal servitors who partake of Your holy remnants alone, will certainly be able to conquer Your illusory energy.”] [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 11.6.46]

And in *Gītā*:

*yajña-śiṣṭāśinaḥ santo, mucyante sarvva-kilbiṣaiḥ
[bhuñjate te tv agharṁ pāpā, ye pacanty ātma-kāraṇāt]*

[“Saintly persons who partake of the remnants of sacrifice become liberated from all the sins arising from the five kinds of violence to living beings. But those who cook for their own consumption, those sinners eat only sin.”] [*Bhagavad-gītā*, 3.13]

Only remnants we are to take and live on that. *Para bargo jivevi* [?]

Just as the custom and the law of the Hindu law, *bhaja, sanskriti* [?] the position of the females, no right is given to them. The whole right with the man, nothing with the women. But by their affection and serving spirit, they hold the key to the whole respect, the respect of the son, the affection of the husband, they enjoy like anything. But externally no right is given to them in the law or in the society. But the ladies they hold a peculiar and very venerable position in the eyes of the society. The mother, the wife, the daughter, but no right has been given to them by law.

*pitā rakṣati kaumāre, bharttā rakṣati yauvane
baddha ke suto ruke nastri satan meyatmyat*

Manu says, in early age the father will protect them, in youth the husband will protect them, and in old age the son will protect them. More than gods they draw respect from the society; more than goddess, but externally, no right.

This whole potency holds such a position to Kṛṣṇa. It is His but by the power of affection, not any external right. They do not care for that. But only through affection and loving service they command the whole family, the potency side, aspect of Kṛṣṇa. They don't want any right; no force, no power. But the subtle most power, the power of affection, power of love, the power of service, that is considered to be the highest power ever known to the world. Give up your legal power, or any physical power, won't care for that. So *śakti* is such.

Gaura Hari. Gaura Hari. Gaura Hari. Gaura Hari.

Very laudable is it, very tasteful? I feel proud when I say all these things.

Asutos Mukerji was wanted by the government to go to England several times but his mother did not allow. So he told, repeated, "My mother does not allow me to go to foreign lands, I can't go there." So many instances here, the mother controls the son. Taking the feet dust of the mother, they can do anything and everything; they feel like that, the affection, the love, where power fails.

So Mahāprabhu says, "To give this and that to God that is self deception. Give love, love of Kṛṣṇa *prema*. That is anything and everything; that is all in all. Instead of spending money, giving your physical force, all these things, love is the real essence of any existence and offer that to the Lord, and through that come to the plane of love. The plane of love that God has around Him, Kṛṣṇa has around Him, God is there, Kṛṣṇa. God takes the form of Kṛṣṇa in the plane of love and that is the most fundamental and most subtle plane, behind all this apparent creation of different nature. So come to that plane. Try to penetrate into that plane, where God is Kṛṣṇa and the paraphernalia is Vṛndāvana. Anyhow try to have admission there in that plane. The most happiest form of life you will find there."

Mercy is more beautiful than justice. We cannot blame justice. Justice is justice. How we can move? We cannot think of blaming the spirit of justice. How can we blame? But there is mercy over justice, we can't deny that. But who can extend mercy over justice, He must have such power that He can compensate, has power of compensation, then He can give mercy. So such aspect of the Lord, that is through love, affection. There we want to live anyhow. Mahāprabhu came to show that is the plane for which you try to live.

And Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura told that, "In no time the intelligentsia of the world will come to understand that this is the highest conception of our attainment, of all humans, even for other creation also. The intelligentsia cannot be misguided for long by so many other propositions of the highest attainment of man, of partial attainment. This Christianity, this Islam, this Buddhism, and so many things are going on in the name of religion, in the name of the highest solution of our life. But what Mahāprabhu has given, very soon it will be detected by the intelligentsia of the world. And all will flock under the banner of Śrī Caitanyadeva and they will sing the glory of Mahāprabhu and Kṛṣṇa." What do you think?

Devotees: Jaya.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol. And Prabhupāda began that. And Swāmī Mahārāja has actually, that well begun. And you are all to complete that mission. We are almost finished, our generation.

Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol. Gaura Hari. Gaura Hari. Gaura Hari. Gaura Hari. Gaura Hari.

Devotee: Mahārāja, can you tell us how you happened to meet Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: *Ke bolchen?*

Bhāratī Mahārāja: _____ [?]

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: For my case I may say when I was a student of fourth year class suddenly I met a boy, I was in the fourth year and he was in the first year. My inclination was of twofold nature, when I came in association of the college students in the hostel. Before that I heard about some appreciation of the East Bengal students, their sacrifice for the country, etc. That was told to me by one of my cousins. So the hostel where generally the East Bengal students lived, we also took our seat there. And I found two sections of students. One section, when there is any patient and other physical needs, they run to meet that. Another section who are engaged in meditation and taking names, *sandhya*, etc., but they hate to attend the patient, etc. But one boy I found he is engaged in two departments. He engages himself in meditation, in *sandhya*, etc., taking the Name, singing the praise of the Lord; as well as if any patient is there he forgets his class and study and attends the patient. That attracted me towards him. And I tried to mix with him. When one morning we were going to the jungle for cleansing mouth, you take brush from the branches or so, in course of talk he told suddenly about his father, “That that gentleman was of this type.”

I protested. “That gentleman,” you use for your respectable father, you say, “that gentleman.” _____ [?]

Then he told, “Yes, I should not have mentioned in that way, in your presence. But ultimately it is really so. Only in this life I have come to him. Where I was in previous lives? Only he is a gentleman to me, I came in his house and in this life only.”

That anyhow touched the fine chord in me and I began to think, yes it is right thought. Everyone almost stranger, the father, mother, brother, in this house, everything has temporary connection and I am wandering in the eternity. That sort of impression came in a very intense form, and the whole world was just like empty, fully empty.

At that time, that boy anyhow connected me with the life of Mahāprabhu. The *Amiya Nimai Charit* and *Lord Gaurāṅga*, the writer of *Lord Gaurāṅga* and *Amiya Nimai Charit* in Bengali and *Lord Gaurāṅga* in English, Śīsir Kumār Ghose, the founder of the *Amṛta Bāzzār Patrikā*, he gave me them and with my empty mind I drank fully the life of Mahāprabhu with much pleasure and my attraction came towards Mahāprabhu therein.

Before that of course, I think that on previous life, also some attraction. My mother’s connection, we found there was connection with Mahāprabhu. But father’s family, they were anti Gaurāṅga. *Smārta*, *śakta*, *nyāyic*, this logician, and they were goddess worshippers, *śakti* worshippers and strictly *smārta*; that is the good *sat-karmī smārta* means. But anyhow I had the connection with Gaurāṅga. Then I wanted a good connection with the devotees of Gaurāṅga later on. I searched also for such a *sādhu* to accept as my Gurudeva but I was not satisfied.

Anyhow then I went to study law at Calcutta, then joined the non cooperation on movement of Gandhi, leaving the college. Then after about six years, the movement lulled, temporarily stopped. I of course joined only temporarily, because my fate I thought that it is already tied with Mahāprabhu, so I cannot give anyone my whole life energy. So temporarily I did that. And I was in search of a Gurudeva.

The Founder of Bharat Sevā Āśrama, Pranananda, of same age, that boy was in his connection so I met him also, but he was a *karmī*. He tried his best to take me within his fold. I asked him, no, my head is already sold to Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu.

He told that, “Yes, I also recognize Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu to be the highest. First the *vairāgya*, the indifference, renunciation of Buddha, and then the discussion of the *Vedānta* of Śaṅkara, the *jñāna acana*, and the highest is *prema* of Śrī Caitanyadeva. Otherwise that *prema* will be misunderstood by the ordinary section.” That he told.

I of course was very much pleased to hear that, but I put him this question. You say that first Buddha, and then Śaṅkara, and then Caitanyadeva. But Caitanyadeva did not say that if you want to come to Me, come through Buddha and Śaṅkara and then to Me. He has not said. He said wherever you are take the Name, with the company of the *sādhu*, and you will come to Me. He does not say you first become Buddhist and then become Śaṅkarite, and then you’ll come to Me. He did not say so.

So he was silenced.

I asked him if you have some *siddhi*, you please say where my Gurudeva is.

Then he gave some idea, “Go to that gentleman.”

By his request I went there but I did not find him present, that Haranath.

Then one day I found there is a placard and there will be a one month festival in Gauḍīya Maṭha, at number one Ulṭā Dāṅgā Junction Road, near Parisnath temple. I went to visit that place. Gauḍīya, they must have some connection with Śrī Caitanyadeva. And found yes, they are very educated men and gentlemen’s association, well studied in scripture, and also very good practices. In our family of course no intoxication, and so many pure practices were there. I found it there also. And also what attracted me most, deep knowledge of scripture. I had some study, but still I felt that I’m in lower position about the knowledge, as the knowledge is concerned about the *Gītā*, *Bhāgavat*, and Mahāprabhu etc. That attracted me. I began to go there gradually and to hear. And gradually I’m inspired. There were some objections in the beginning. And after I found that they are true, my conception is wrong. In this way by hearing, hearing, hearing. I had in the meantime some opportunity came to my life, family, and I entered exclusively in the Maṭha.

The *śāstra*, whenever anything is told to them if it is in the scriptures, very carefully they come to listen to it. But if it is coming from Arovinda, Vivekānanda, Ramakrishna, Gandhi, Brahmo, summarily rejected. “No, no, no time to lose. No time to waste to hear all these things.” But any reference to any scripture, “Yes, what do you say? You tell it.” That attracted me most; found that they’re devout appreciation in them for the scripture, for the *ṛṣi* what was in me perhaps in sleeping position and that has come thereby. Gradually I found real meaning of *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, for which already I had great appreciation and reverence. I found that they are not outside this. And Caitanyadeva is the highest authority, and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, all these things. Then I entered into. And what misunderstanding I had gradually cleared and I was converted.

So much so that even the senior men used to tell me, “What Prabhupāda has said, please repeat it.” And I repeated, reproduced what I heard from Prabhupāda to them. And they were satisfied. In this way I came to such a position that generally the educated section began to say that, “Śrīdhara Mahārāja can represent the things very well.”

And when [Herr] Schulze [Sadānanda dāsa] came, he also repeated the same thing. “In very concise form, the very substance he can represent without any excitement. There are some when they say something they show signs of excitement. But in a sober temperament he can deliver the very substance with less words.”

That was, my appreciation generally came from others. But I was not very pushing, not forward, rather, hanging behind. That was my nature. Not to go ahead. But like a play from the back, not in the front. That was my nature, I’m keeping back. And I am more busy for my own realization, what are the meanings of the different ślokas of *Bhāgavatam*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. I may remain here but generally I meditate on the meanings of the śāstra ślokas and get some new illumination also sometimes and understand the meaning of the higher things. In this way I am passing my days.

Swāmī Mahārāja, I first came across him in Allahabad when he was the agent of Kartick Bosh and Bengal Chemicals, and then in Bombay Maṭha also I had his company for long time. But real company of him I had in Calcutta after departure of our Guru Mahārāja. I opened a centre there. And he was living in a building and on the ground there was a laboratory. And on the first floor, four rooms, I took, sublease from him and stayed there for some time. And he used to come almost every day and we had discussions about the meanings, teachings of *Bhagavad-gītā* generally. And surrounding other things also, but mainly on the basis of *Bhagavad-gītā* he had discussions with me.

And this Govinda Mahārāja was there all along. And Hari Charan for some time also, a newcomer at that time. Govinda Mahārāja was very much liked by Swāmī Mahārāja. As he mentioned that, “I saw him as my child.” Ha, ha.

Hare Kṛṣṇa. Hare Kṛṣṇa. That is my connection, entrance and the living in Gauḍīya Maṭha.

After forty three years once I went back to my native place, stayed there for four nights, then came back. Now of course they are constructing a building there in commemoration.

Hare Kṛṣṇa. Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol. Nitāi Caitanya. Gaura Haribol.

Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol. Nitāi Caitanya.

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavat* is the last gift of Vedavyāsa who is generally the master of the givers of all the scriptures, including the compilation of the *Vedas*, systematically to classify them. The whole thing generally comes from him. But his last gift is *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. And Mahāprabhu took the teaching of that *Bhāgavatam* and distributed to the length and breadth of this humanity, human kind. And fortunately we have come within the fold of Him. And in our own meagre ways we are trying to live a life thereby, waiting our death. Hare Kṛṣṇa. Hare Kṛṣṇa. So many illustrious persons that we found as our friends in this circle, one by one they have departed and very few remnants we are still continuing. In the last moment you are so many newcomers of so many variegated nature are present here. It is a miracle to me.

Hare Kṛṣṇa. Hare Kṛṣṇa. Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol.

Bhāratī Mahārāja: Mahārāja, yesterday you were going to tell us what ‘thank you’ means.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Oh, thanking! Then, have you explained that, my viewpoint to them?

Bhāratī Mahārāja: Not really.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Thanking, when you express such feeling to any other that, ‘thank you,’ what is at the bottom, what is at the root of such expression as, ‘thank you?’ Expression of gratitude, ‘thank you,’ it presupposes a background of the person who gives thanks, his separate interest. My interest is helped in a particular way, so I feel gratitude, I thank you. I have got my separate interest, separate position.

But that should not be the nature of a devotee. I have got no separate interest. I hear if I can receive anything as grace, or a ray of knowledge, anything, that rather I shall try to absorb me in that one whole interest. So I have no words. I only feel that I am being one with the person whom presently I am going to thank.

I have got my separate interests, separate individuality, separate position, and I gain something from the other party, I thank them. So thank God. There is in Christianity, perhaps in the *Bible* thank God, such a word is to be found there, thank God. It is current with the Brahma School here, Rabindranath and others. He has given so many benefits to us, this air, the earth, to live on the food, so we are bound to thank Him. Thanking means maintenance and development of some individual case of life.

But we don’t want to have any individual position. We want to merge, in another sense, in the interest of the Lord. So thanking - when I hear, get some knowledge from a Vaiṣṇava Guru if I say thanks for that - No, rather I want that you will attract me more to be one in your family. Engage me. I shall be fortunate if you absorb me as one of your servants, in the section of your servitors. I want that. Our mentality should be that. I am receiving some benefit and showing my gratitude to him, I am a separate entity - No, I rather want I may be one, feet dust - please make me the dust of Your lotus feet. We must go down to that position; instead of expressing our feeling of gratitude with our head erect.

That’s what I told the other day to some of you. Thanking, it does not hear well, at least in our ear, thanking. What gratitude I may show in exchange of what I receive from the agent. No magnitude of gratitude can be ever found in the world, so no question of thanking. Rather it will increase our inner earnestness to become, as I told, the feet dust, the dust of the holy feet. That should be our hankering. Hearing the news of my home, I shall be eager to go to the home like a madman. Not separate interest, one interest, common interest. It hears such in my ear, but I do not know really what is the derivative meaning of the word ‘thank.’ As I generally come to know the spirit, on that basis I am talking with you, thank.

Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol.

In our childhood we read in perhaps thirteenth year or so:

ekam api akaram yas tu guru sisyenivedaye _____ [?]

From *Hitopadesa* or some quotation: though we find that only one word the Guru gives to his disciple, *ekam api akaram*, one word, one lettered word, a word of one letter, *ekam api akaram yas tu guru sisyenivedaye*, confers that to the disciple. _____ [?]

In this broad, and this wide world, there is nothing by giving which he may clear that debt.

_____ [?]

He can clear the debt of that, only one word, one lettered word. That I read in fifth class.

ekam api akaram yas tu guru sisyenivedaye _____ [?]

It can liberate from that loan, so such valuable one word may be there. All the resources of the world can’t be compared with that. There is such possibility of life, such prospect we may have in this world. And that comes from the revealed truth. The whole system is saying that you are...

