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Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: ...consciousness proper. Then his position will be higher than any Christian, or Islam, Mohammedan, or Śāṅkarite, or anyone, or even devotee of Nārāyaṇa.

Vidagdha Mādhava: But Kṛṣṇa consciousness proper means he's actually...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Proper must - not show, like the *goswāmīs*, the *bābājīs*, the pseudo Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but real Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And slight participation in that should be considered to be the highest fortune of all religionists in the world. The comparative study is there. What is Kṛṣṇa? Svayaṁ- Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa. The Vṛndāvana *līlā* of Kṛṣṇa. Reality The Beautiful - to be connected with the Reality The Beautiful. That is to have the greatest fortune than any other man who has connected his fortune with any other conception of religion.

Vidagdha Mādhava: But Guru Mahārāja. Didn't Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Prabhupāda, didn't he say that Jesus Christ was *śaktyāveśa avatāra*? He said like that?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: That might have been. But *śaktyāveśa avatāra*, Vyāsadeva *śaktyāveśa avatāra*, Paraśurāma, Nārada, there are so many *śaktyāveśa avatāra*. But what they're dealing with, that is to be concerned, what he gave. We can only compare in the teachings.

Vidagdha Mādhava: And also we have many disciples of Swāmī Mahārāja who've come and gone. They stayed for many years, practising the basics, the beginning *sādhana* of *bhakti yoga*.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Coming and going, that is another question.

*api cet sudurācāro, bhajate mām ananya-bhāk
sādhur eva sa mantavyaḥ, [samyag vyavasīto 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]

To have the highest conception of theology, if we have any connection with that, gradually my future will be there. So one might have attained the fullness of a particular conception. But slight Kṛṣṇa consciousness will be better than that, more valuable, considering its prospect. When he's connected with Kṛṣṇa consciousness anyhow he'll reach the goal. So considering the prospect and the man who has realised a lower conception of religion he's finished there. But one, a beginner, in the higher Kṛṣṇa consciousness _____ [?] Just as an ordinary *jñānī*, a member of the *jñānī* school, he's better than a bona fide *karmī*. And a member of the devotional school is better than a *mukta*, one who has attained emancipation, or liberation. But this man is not liberated, but anyhow he's got chance to be admitted into the devotional school, *śuddha bhakti*. He should be considered from the standpoint of his prospect, that he's better. And this man's finished ABC. Some finished in A, some finished in B, another has got connection with C, but now he's not in such normal position. But near future he'll be there in C. But considering the prospect

he should be considered as better. So transaction must be with reality, and not any pseudo imitation. Imitation has got no value. Real connection, slight connection, of the higher reality, is better than the full achievement of the lower status. Do you follow what I want to say?

Vidagdha Mādhava: Yes I follow. Is it possible in the *kaniṣṭha*...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Full realisation in the lower order of religious conception, and slight connection of the highest religious conception, slight connection, and the full realisation of the lower conception. What should be considered as better?

Vidagdha Mādhava: I just heard you say 'the slight connection is better.'

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes, better, because tomorrow he'll be there. And this man is finally settled here, in lower office. One is a probationer in a higher office rank. And another a clerk, but now drawing more money than the beginner. But in no time this officer will go to fetch more money, and the head clerk will be there, finished. And the officer will go. But now the head clerk drawing more money, and this man less. Something like that. Am I not clear?

Vidagdha Mādhava: Yes Guru Mahārāja.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: So our future prospect should be taken into consideration. According to the prospect we shall judge who is superior who is inferior.

Devotee: I have a question about *amāninā mānadena*. That we're all *jīva* souls, all equal in the eyes of God. But in normal society, also Vaiṣṇava society...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Not all equal in the eye of God. In the eye of God there is also difference. God says, "My devotees, there is also gradation." That saying to Uddhava.

*[na tathā me priyatama ātmayonir na śaṅkaraḥ]
na ca saṅkarṣaṇo na śrīr naivātmā ca yathā bhavān*

["Neither Brahmā nor Śīva are as dear to Me as you; My elder brother Saṅkarṣaṇa is not as dear to Me as you, nor even Lakṣmī Devī. Even My own Self is not as dear to Me as you."]

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 11.14.15]

The gradation amongst the devotees, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself says by His own mouth. *Na tathā me priyatama ātmayonir na śaṅkaraḥ, na ca saṅkarṣaṇo na śrīr naivātmā*. "But Uddhava, you are most beloved, even more than My own self."

And that Uddhava again says, "Oh. In Vṛndāvana, what sort of divine love I've experienced? If I have a birth of a creeper and bush, then the feet dust of those damsels will naturally fall on my head. I shall consider myself purified."

The gradation is there, not all equal, amongst the devotees. And the non devotees they're also of lower order. The *karmī, jñānī*, and all these things, gradation is there, not all equal.

Devotee: But still the teaching is...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: All equal in *this* sense that He likes that everyone may be good, in that sense.

Devotee: Still the teaching is, though the...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja:

*samo 'ham sarva-bhūteṣu, na me dveṣyo 'sti na priyaḥ
ye bhajanti tu mām bhaktyā, mayi te teṣu cāpy aham*

["I am equally disposed to all souls, therefore no one is My enemy or My friend. Yet, for those who render devotional service unto Me with love, as they are bound by affection for Me, I am similarly bound by the tie of affection for them."] [*Bhagavad-gītā*, 9.29]

"I am equal to all. But who is devoted to Me, I'm also partial to them."

That is His position. That is His meeting, one who is doing, the father, a bad child, a good child, father wants to be impartial to all the children. But one is very bad, a rogue, and another is very honest. Naturally the honest will get more attention and more support from the father. But otherwise the father likes both the children equal if they may be good. But when one is good, one is bad, naturally some more affection towards the good will come. Otherwise he should be considered impartial. 'Why he's attracted towards bad and not towards good?' He'll be blamed, the father will be blamed for inconsideration.

The letter. Kṛṣṇa. Not clear?

Devotee: Yes. That's clear. But sometimes also it's said that the naughty child he gets the affection from his mother. His mother is always thinking for that naughty child, how he can, she's worried about him.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Not naughty in that sense, naughty not at heart, but within they're a little disturbing, that is naughty type. Externally may be of disturbing temperament, that sometimes pleases the mother, father. But if there's poison within none can _____ [?] Remove the poison. Paternal affection, or motherly affection, will like the poison to be removed. But at heart he's good, but externally he's very _____ [?] breaking this thing that thing _____ [?] They like that kind of. And always sleeping, sleeping, sleeping, do not like that. That is *tāma guṇa*. _____ [?] Evil aim has got also utility, but in the indirect way, punishment. Punishment has got its utility, but not in the direct, but in the indirect sense, not desirable. But still it's useful sometimes.

...

...*'ham sarva-bhūteṣu*. "I'm neutral, equal, environmental whole, to anything and everything. But those that are coming towards Me, they're getting the benefit of My affection. And who are apathetic they're not getting. But I'm approachable by everyone. That is _____ [?] Anyone may approach and get. I'm not ill-disposed to anything, equal _____ [?] If he

does not come and he also gets then there'll be _____ [?] not equal. So one coming he's getting, not coming not getting. But if not coming also gets the same thing then not equality."

Devotee: Then what is the meaning of causeless mercy? Even one might not be going, still might be getting.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Causeless, that is eternal, none has created. It's flowing in its own way. But the others that are endowed with free will, if they connect they'll get. Each flowing in his own way, and if ill- fated he'll run away, when the flow is coming he'll run away. Ha, ha.

Devotee: Still we might see two devotees...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: There are special cases also, alokamani [?] four kinds of special cases. Causelessly coming from upward to lower, that is also four kinds. General case is, if you approach you'll get, that is the general case. But a special case there are and that also of four types. Suddenly one may get the Grace of God. I don't remember exactly the four types, but there are four cases. Alokadan [?] And Śukadeva is one case. Another case I don't remember. Memory failing. You will find in *Jaiva Dharma*. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has analysed them. Independent of the inquiry of the *jīva*, sometimes it comes from above, comes down, and that is also of four types. *Bhakta kṛpa*, Bhagavān *kṛpa*, and also another two, four types are there, get suddenly. But if we're to, we can trace, if we're able to scrutinise and trace the subtle points then also we can count that _____ [?] must have been some *sukṛti* for which this has suddenly come.

Devotee: From previous life.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: From previous life *sukṛti*. In this life nothing much seemed ostentatiously, but in the background there must be something from previous life _____ [?] so suddenly he became ____ [?] But it was acquired in his previous life.

purva janmad gita vidya, purva janmad jita dhanam [?]
purva janmad gitam punyam, pascad dhavati dhavati [?]

Anything required. purva janmad gita vidya. Learning. _____ [?]
Punyam. Very good merit acquired in previous life, that comes to help in this life also.

Devotee: Still I'm a little confused, how to apply _____ [?] *amāninā mānadena*. Always not desiring respect for myself.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: *Amāninā mānadena. Tṛṇād api sunīcena*. Humbler than a blade of grass. If we give foot pressure on the blade of grass it will go down, no position. So highest type of devotee won't go to create any trouble in the environment, because his time is very valuable, so no disturbance he'll invite. He'll try not to be party to any quarrel, avoids it, for this such policy because his time is very valuable. He's engaged in such a valuable thing that outward disturbance may harm him very greatly. So the peace of the environment he'll try his best to maintain. So if any opposition coming he'll try to withdraw as much as possible. Neither he won't be the cause to give opposition to anyone. But still opposition coming he'll try to avoid it, at his own cost. *Tṛṇād api*

sunīcena, taror api sahiṣṇunā. If it comes he'll try his best to go on in his own way with toleration. And *amāni*, he won't search for any prestige or position, name, fame. Won't care for anything else, whole concentration towards his own object of life, *amāninā*. Neither blame from outside, nor any appreciation from outside, should affect him. Won't care, close the door, of any sort of appreciation or dis-appreciation from the public. Independent of the appreciation or dis-appreciation of the popular opinion. *Amāninā mānadena.*

But still anyone comes to disturb, "Oh, you're all right. I'm in a mean, lower position."

When Prakāśānanda went to charge Mahāprabhu in Benares, "Why? You're a *sannyāsī*, why do You not read *Vedānta* and discuss the ontological side, all these things?"

Mahāprabhu He told that, "I'm stupid. My Gurudeva he told, 'You're an ignorant man. You don't go to discuss the abstruse arguments in *Vedānta*. You go on taking the Name of the Lord. That will suffice.'"

guru more mūrkhā dekhi' karila śāsana. mūrkhā tumi, tomāra nāhika vedāntādhikāra.

[*prabhu kahe — śuna, śrīpāda, ihāra kāraṇa / guru more mūrkhā dekhi' karila śāsana*
[*mūrkhā tumi, tomāra nāhika vedāntādhikāra / 'kṛṣṇa-mantra' japa sadā, — ei mantra-sāra*]

[Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu replied to Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī, "My dear sir, kindly hear the reason. My spiritual master considered Me a fool, and therefore he chastised Me." ["'You are a fool,' he said. 'You are not qualified to study *Vedānta* philosophy, and therefore You must always chant the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa. This is the essence of all mantras, or Vedic hymns."]
[*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 7.71-72*]

"And so I take the Name of the Lord. I've not much qualification to understand and discuss the ontological side of *Vedānta* in this way. *Mānadena*. You are bigger scholarly persons, you can do so. But I'm an ignorant person."

In this way He avoided. But when they came with more sincerity to approach Him, then He came out.

"That what you are cultivating that is all false. What will be the real meaning? The real meaning is such and such." But in the beginning He did not create any opposition. He avoided them. But when with sincerity they came to know, then He came out with His own thing.

And Sārvabhauma also. Sārvabhauma he's a good scholar, and a guardian's position.

"Young man, You're well connected with my family. Your maternal father _____ [?] elder brother were all class friends, in this way. So I've got much affection for You. So though You've committed very wrong _____ [?] It is very difficult to keep up the purity of the *sannyāsa* life. Anyhow I shall help You, try my best to make You understand and analyse the nature of this world that it's all false. Then Your *sannyāsa* may be protected. I shall help you. Many *sannyāsīs*, I have a class where many *sannyāsīs* come to attend and hear *Vedānta* from me. And I admit You also as a student in that class. Always think of the *Vedānta*, that the world is nothing, all false, then only Brahman is there. Then it will be easy for You to maintain Your renunciation role."

Then Mahāprabhu, "Yes. You are My well-wisher, you are My guardian. What you order I must do that." He attended the class every day, but He was sitting silently.

Then after a week Sārvabhauma told, "The boy looks very intelligent, but He silently attends my class without putting any question. I'm taking so much labour to make Him understand all these higher points of *Vedānta*. But though He seems to be very intelligent, but He does not utter a single word. What's the matter? Does He understand or not? My labour is only useless?" Then one day he could not contain him, asked, "I'm taking so much care to help You by explaining the Śāṅkara *Vedānta bhāṣya*, all these things. But You don't ask any question. Do You understand or You don't understand?"

Then Mahāprabhu told, "You are My well-wisher. You have ordered Me to hear. I did so. But what you say, you mention about the *sūtra*, the original points, I understand clearly. But your explanation I can't follow."

Then, Sārvabhauma was an intelligent man. "What does He say? He understands the original quite clearly, but my explanation He can't understand? That means He says that I'm explaining in a wrong way, my explanation is wrong, eh? He's so much bold to say like that? He can't understand my explanation, but He can fully understand the original thing, *sūtra*." Then he asked anyhow, formally, as formality he had to ask. "Then can You explain the *sūtra* in Your own way?"

"Yes. I you order I can do." He began to explain the original *sūtra*.

And Sārvabhauma went to refute that, but could not. Whatever he says Mahāprabhu discards that. Then he was nonplussed. Then anyhow there was that *ātmārāma śloka* in *Bhāgavatam* [1.7.10], and with much care and scholarship Sārvabhauma prepared nine kinds of meanings explained from that *śloka*, separate kinds of meaning. Sārvabhauma began to explain that. Mahāprabhu heard them, patiently. "And then, have You got any other explanation?"

"Yes. If you'd like to hear I can try." So Mahāprabhu, these nine kinds of explanation, without touching any one of them, Mahāprabhu came with, independently, another eighteen kinds of explanation from that *śloka*.

Then Sārvabhauma was bewildered, dumb. "What is this? He's not a man."

This Gopīnātha, his brother-in-law Gopīnātha Paṇḍita, he previously told, "You want to protect His *sannyāsa dharma*, He's not an ordinary man..."

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