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Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: So, it is safe, whether it is service or not we do not find Him, but His representative, a *sādhu*, Guru, his sanction we shall try to have, whether it is service, or something else. The Guru or Vaiṣṇava they're to examine and give their opinion how many percent serving element is there in my actions, and how many percent it is *anyābhilāṣa*, *karma*, *jñāna*, etc. They'll test, examine, and they'll give report, that such percent is Kṛṣṇa consciousness, such percent is this and that, all these things. It is not a hazy thing, it has got scientific position, that they can measure, the scientists of that world.

...

... got some regard, some faith, then also Tulasī ____ [?] can begin. Without *śraddhā* everything may be appearing *aparādha*, offensive in kind. So *śraddhā*, by education - *Ke?*

Devotee: _____ [?]

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: _____ [?] First we're to create some faith, and then such transaction. Otherwise if they're ill treated, the *prasāda*, the Tulasī, that will be offence. Not to belittle these things. Without faith these transcendental dealings will not be fair. So they must be educated, must have training how to deal with these things respectfully. That sort of *śraddhā*, that is faith, should be created, and according to the degree of the faith, distribution of Tulasī. In the case of *prasāda* it is more liberal, and in the case of Tulasī Devī distribution that should be more considered and kept within strict high boundary.

Devotee: Sometimes the devotees they will put some glass beads in Tulasī neck bead and give them to everyone in the street, thousands. So that will not be good, not recommendable?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: The glass bead?

Devotee: Yes. Tulasī beads, and then some one, two, three glass beads mixed, to make it look nice. And then giving to everyone, thousands.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Ha, ha, ha. That is some - like trading. Hmm?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāja: _____ [?]

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: _____ [?]

...

_____ [?] [Kṛṣṇadāsa] Kavirāja Goswāmī Prabhu - "It's wonderful that I'm writing. I'm so old, my hand is trembling, eye cannot see, memory failing, still I go on writing this book. It is very, very strange. Someone is doing work through me, utilising me."

Sanātana Goswāmī Prabhu also says, "What a mean and insignificant fellow I am. And I'm giving the description of so many queens of Kṛṣṇa, Satyabhāmā, Rukmiṇī, Jāmbavatī, where they're in the most confidential circle of Kṛṣṇa, in the harem of Kṛṣṇa, those ladies, and I'm giving description about them? What audacity I've got. But my readers, it is not mine. Someone is forcing me to write all these things. It's coming from some other quarter. I'm only the instrument. Otherwise what audacity I may have that I shall know and write about the character of the distinctive characteristic of those ladies in the harem of Kṛṣṇa. Is it possible? But someone is forcing me to go on with the pen in a particular way."

That is the thing, who can give himself at the disposal of that transcendental thought, of knowledge, they have to be instrumental. And the transcendental truth will come down to explain itself through a particular person, agent, in that way. The revealed truth comes in that way, scriptures come in that way. Of course there's degree, there's possibility of comparative study. But all of them are coming down, controlling the agent, they come through them. That is, revealed truth means that. They're mere instruments. And truth likes to come down from higher to lower through them. That is scripture, that is revealed truth. And there is also gradation of different type, different section, different plane, and there also comparative study is possible. That is also made by the same truth through some agency how the gradation is there. *Ke?*

Devotee: Saranga dāsa.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Hare Kṛṣṇa. Hare Kṛṣṇa. To have faith in this, that requires fortune, *bhāgya*.

brahmāṇḍa brhamite kona bhāgyavān jīva, [guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja]

["Wandering throughout the material universe, the very fortunate living entity who receives the grace of Guru and Kṛṣṇa receives the seed of the creeper of devotional service."]

[*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā*, 19.151]

Ordinary people they cannot put faith in these tales. "Oh, they're all stories, tales. What value it has got? Only abstract thinking - near about hallucination. But what is the difference between hallucination and your transcendental statement? They're one and same. They're all hallucination." But,

*yā niśā sarva-bhūtānām, tasyām jāgarti saṁyamī
[yasyām jāgrati bhūtāni, sā niśā paśyato muneḥ]*

["While spiritual awareness is like night for the living beings enchanted by materialism, the self-realised soul remains awake, directly relishing the divine ecstasy of his un-interrupted spiritual intelligence. On the contrary, the wakefulness of materialistic persons addicted to sense enjoyment is night for the self-realised person who is completely indifferent to such pursuits. The realised souls, indifferent to the mundane, are ever joyful in the divine ecstatic plane, while the general mass is infatuated by fleeting mundane fancies devoid of spiritual joy."] [*Bhagavad-gītā*, 2.69]

Ordinary persons find night, and there are some who can see, and that degree of light. And as general persons when they find day, that is night to some people. So some consciousness - they have got recognition of such revealed truth that this is reality, and what you say to be real that is transient. All is changing, dying, evaporating. And ultimately you also admit that this will all vanish. The whole solar system, the concrete solar system of your thinking, that will go nowhere one day. I also know, you also admit that.

So there is time, and we've got opportunity to find out some other soil where to go and to take our permanent residence. We're in search for that.

Just as being afraid of the war of atom bomb, underground rooms are being prepared. If such fighting begins then we must enter into underground with arrangement of some oxygen and food.

So when the whole world will vanish, then from before we're searching for some soil. And we're known, we're given assurance, that is a permanent and very happy soil. And we can trace within you also a portion of that, *ātmā*. We can eliminate the world, then the senses, then the mind, then the wisdom, and above wisdom there is some light, spark. Spark of knowledge, divine spark, and we're told that you are that spark. And you as spark, the source of spark is there above your head. That is the land, that is the soil for which you are meant to live.

*[na tad bhāsayate sūryo, na śasāṅko na pāvakaḥ] yad gatvā na nivartante, tad dhāma paramam
mama*

["My supreme holy abode is that place which the surrendered souls reach, never to return again to this deathly plane. Upon going there, one never returns to this material world. Neither sun, nor moon, nor fire - nothing can illuminate that all-illuminating supreme abode."] [*Bhagavad-gītā*, 15.6]

"A very sweet soil to live in." Kṛṣṇa says. "None will come to push you down from there. *Na nivartante*." And here within this circle of material going up, down, according to action, reaction. Going up and down, up and down, dying, dying, dying. *Janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhi* [*Bhagavad-gītā*, 13.9] This is concrete. Real intelligence can detect all these defects of this life. So life has got higher prospect, try for that. This is nothing. What is there? *Āhāra*, *nidrā*, *bhaya*, *maithuna* (eating, sleeping, defending and mating). *Āhāra*, to relish the food. *Nidrā*, to enjoy the sleep. *Bhaya*, and then apprehension, always from all sides that some injury, harm may come to me in any form, this *bhaya*. And then *maithuna*, and to be united with a lady, and lady with a gentleman. But these are such pleasure is to be found all transient. That is always, even the animal circle, even in the tree circle also it's to be found, all these things.

But in human species you can search for your own home, sweet home, so try that. Find out your way and means how to reach your sweet home. That is permanent, *sat*, then *cit*, that is full of consciousness, knowledge. *Ānandam*, and that has got its fulfilment, *ānandam*. Don't want anything else but that fulfilment. You'll find that all the necessities you find in yourself, feel in yourself, has got its satisfaction there. The wholesale satisfaction of your inner demand is to be found only in the land of Kṛṣṇa, nowhere else. The subtle-most demand in your heart, everything in details will have its full satisfaction there. Kṛṣṇa is such. Without Him you are negative, your nature is a negative one, hankering, hankering, hankering. *Ke?*

Nimāi: Nimāi. _____ [?]

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: _____ [?]

...

That is the cause of suicide.

Devotee: I see.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Nothing in spirituality here. Only to join a particular association, that does not mean that one is relieved from all his previous tendencies of mind. Some previous bad tendencies were there. He could not have sufficient tolerance, forbearance, could not put sufficient faith in the dealings of the Lord. That whatever comes to him according to his previous *karma* that should be tolerated. And we must go on putting our faith and prayer towards the Supreme.

*tat te 'nukampāṁ [susamīkṣamāṇo, bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtaṁ vipākam
hrd-vāg-vapurahir vidhadhan namas te, jīveta yo mukti-pade sa dāya bhāk]*

[Lord Brahmā said, "One who, in the hope of achieving Your grace, goes on enduring the inauspicious fruit of his own *karma*, and passes his days practising devotion unto You in every thought, word, and deed - such a person is heir to the land of freedom: he attains to the plane of positive immortality."]

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 10.14.8]

Whatever adverse circumstances we fall in we must not back out. But we go on praying. "My Lord, my previous *karma*, the result is causing suffering. But You please protect me." While continuing that troublesome mental stage he won't lose his balance of mind, not lose his patience. He must go on praying. "Lord, this trouble, even leprosy, even severe pain due to anything else, that is due to previous *karma*. And that I must suffer. I don't like that will be taken up by anyone, to distribute that to any other agency. What I incurred, good or bad, I must suffer that, I won't transfer that to anybody. Nor I like that the Lord will come and purify them. Why? Why He'll come to purify? I shall have to suffer what I already - what has come as the misdeeds of my past life. I shall try to satisfy Lord, I won't go to smear Him with these bad things. "Here, You take all my sins. All the sins I give to You." This is not well for a pure devotee, he does not like that. "Oh Lord, remove my sins." No. "All the sins that I've committed I shall suffer. Only I want Your sweet connection, I may not forget You, and I can satisfy You, I can serve You. And not that You will serve me. *Nāmno balā pāpa buddhiḥ*. "I shall take the Name and Name will purify me. And I shall go on committing sin, and take the Name and the Name will purify my sin." That is offence. We won't ask God to take our sin, to purify our sin. I shall suffer that. But I want the connection."

And gradually these limited things will disappear. Mundane things are limited, they'll have to disappear. And I with pristine glory I shall enjoy the atmosphere of the purest devotees. *Śuddha bhakti* is such. They want only to serve, no selfish idea, nothing of the kind, only that, to satisfy Him.

Vidagdha Mādhava: Guru Mahārāja. There are friends of this person...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: _____ [?]

...

...outsider. Day before yesterday, near to that land, is it?

Vidagdha Mādhava: Right on the other side of the bridge, just on the other side, nearby the bridge.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Heinous dacoit. One man killed on the spot.

Vidagdha Mādhava: Very bad. Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Ladies are also disturbed, snatching...

Vidagdha Mādhava: Molested.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: ...the earrings etc. In this way heard, how the administration going, the collective result of our *karma*. None to blame. This is the direction of *Bhāgavatam*. None to blame. A bad workman quarrels with his stools. As I eat, according to this, following my system stools come. No crime of stool. It is a necessary product of the food. So *karma* is like stools. As we do, so we earn the environment and the reaction. As we act, reaction similarly comes to us, individually and sometimes collectively. All like stools, all the results, all the environment. We earn such environment so none to be blamed.

But everywhere the Grace of the Lord to be traced. In the iron age also, in the worst period of our life, but the Lord is there waiting to help me. Only we must look after His Grace, and with all sincerity. He's everywhere waiting.

"My boy, look at Me. Don't make much of the environment external, dive deep. I'm very near to you. You have cast aside your focus, your consciousness cast aside, outside. Make it internal and you'll find I'm here. Make it above. You're looking down to secure your servants and comforts, looking down. But look up for higher existence than you. You'll find Me in that plane. Look up, don't look down for enquiry of servants. You become a master and you're in search for servants, serving things you're hunting after. But just take the course of the opposite, become servant and search for your Master, your Lord. Then you'll be taken, uplifted, taken up on higher soil. If you like higher soil to live in you'll have to serve. And you like mastership then you'll have to come down in the lower where you can be a master."

It is scientific thing, no exaggeration, no imagination. Because you always want to enjoy, you can enjoy only those that are of lower position, so mean association is inevitable to you. Prepare for higher service. Then you'll be able to come in contact with the souls higher positioned soul. Higher sacrifice, sacrifice, by sacrifice you go up. And by enjoying spirit you'll have to go down. So understand what is service, what is exploitation, what is enjoyment, and what is service. Service is pure, and there, there is also joy, ecstasy, that is of pure type in the service.

Just as in earning money, by labour, that is good, better, than securing money by thieving, stealing and committing dacoiting. That is bad. Rather to labour and to earn and to live on that, it is little better.

So when we accept the creed of slavery to the highest then that is the best. It is virod alaṅkāra [?] How to become a slave, to attain the best position, is a mockery. To become a slave, to attain the highest position, what do you say? It is impossible. But slave to whom? The Absolute Good, to have connection with Him.

And it is, Milton says, or someone, "It is better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven."

But just the opposite. "Better to serve in heaven than to reign in hell." That is ours, to serve in heaven, higher heaven, to serve. Automatically, if to have a higher connection we must approach him as a small person. And we can boast 'I'm the Lord.' That must, cannot but be a lower area, it is easy to understand.

Devotee: Guru Mahārāja. What's the difference between being told by a pure Vaiṣṇava to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and receiving Hari *Nāma* from the pure Vaiṣṇava?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: It is written by Rūpa Goswāmī how we shall.

*kṛṣṇeti yasya giri taṁ manasā[driyeta, dikṣāsti cet praṇatibhiś ca bhajantam īsam
śuśrūṣayā bhajana-vijñam ananyam anya-, nindādi-śūnya-hṛdam īpsita-saṅga-labdhyā]*

["One should mentally honour the devotee who chants the Holy Name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, one should offer humble obeisances to the devotee who has undergone spiritual initiation [*dikṣā*] and is engaged in worshipping the Deity, and one should associate with and faithfully serve that pure devotee who is advanced in undeviated devotional service and whose heart is completely devoid of the propensity to criticise others."]

[*Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*, 5]

Wherever we shall have in the Name of Kṛṣṇa we shall adore him in mind. *Dikṣāsti cet*. But if he's connected with a noble Guru, has connection, then we shall bow down to him. *Praṇatibhiś ca bhajantam īsam śuśrūṣayā*. If we have any devotee who is without break continuous in his service then we shall try to serve him. Continuous serving mood, if we find any devotee towards his Lord, we shall go to serve him. *Śuśrūṣayā bhajana-vijñam ananyam anya*. And if we can find by our rare fortune any person who is always deeply engaged in Kṛṣṇa consciousness then we shall try in any way to get some favour from him.

Mahāprabhu says, "Wherever you hear the Name of Kṛṣṇa once you may think that he's within our group, friend. And when you find taking the Name of the Lord always - outside he may engage himself in several different type of services, but internally taking the Name, then you'll know that is the middle Vaiṣṇava, and try to serve him. And whenever by fortune you can find any devotee coming in contact with him you will feel tendency of Kṛṣṇa *Nāma* within you, *yānhāra darśane mukhe*. Whenever you come across to see such type of devotee that you will feel within your self to take the Name of Kṛṣṇa, he's the highest type of devotee in *Nāma bhajan*."

Vidagdha Mādhava: Guru Mahārāja. I think you mentioned there were some things can be done to remove some of the reaction for this boy taking his life. Within the next year, something can be done?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: I don't follow what you say.

Vidagdha Mādhava: This boy took his life, so he has to face the reaction for that.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: We can do to satisfy Kṛṣṇa and His devotees, praying for him, we can do. We can pray, we can offer something for the satisfaction of Deity. Whether we have done anything wrong in us for which that person was pressed to commit such thing. Whether I'm a party, or I have got little contribution for such drastic event. We shall try to pray to the Lord, "Please be gracious to that child who came to this holy association, but his fate dragged him away from such holy life, from the possibility of such holy association for his whole life. Let his soul may be helped."

We may do our duty in this way. Good will for him, prayer to the Lord. And we also must be careful that such things may await any one of us. So we must not be proud, we'll learn to be humble, and patient, and forbearing. And conscious of our past deeds it may not carry us from here to any other place. So we shall try to satisfy the Vaiṣṇava and Kṛṣṇa. And try to learn modesty, humility, that such a rush of self dissatisfaction may not arise. There was some disappointment led him to commit such wrong thing, disappointment. So good association, that under any circumstances we remain faithful to the Lord, to the creed, to Guru, to Vaiṣṇava. Such spacious and generous conception of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, all accommodating characteristic of Kṛṣṇa consciousness we must try to understand, follow.

Come what may. *Taror api sahiṣṇunā*. I must not give any opposition to anyone, but still any trouble comes from the environment towards me, like a tree I shall have to forbear. Like a tree, the branches are cut off, no water poured into the root, tree won't say anything, go on in its way. *Taror api sahiṣṇunā. Amāninā*. Because the goal is very highest, a long way it may be. Different planes we're to cross and to reach there, so patience necessary, forbearance necessary. As valuable the achievement, the requirement should also be of that great type, that magnitude. It is not a sweet-ball, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not a sweet-ball that I shall put into the mouth and send it to the stomach. So we must be serious in our thought, what we have come for. If we can consider that is the highest destination, then we should be ready to pay for that. Why we should be so much impatient? If anything else comes to hinder me, to oppose me, I shall very mildly, and with humility I shall take this fuss, all these difficulties on the way. 'I shall want to get rose but without thorn.' So it should be warning to us, we must be careful. Kṛṣṇa is showing such instances before me, to teach me that I may not be impatient. Patiently, carefully, consciously, and with the association of the higher persons we can only march on. So try to make progress. *Kṣurasya dhārā niśītā duratyayā*.

*[uttiṣṭhataḥ jāgrataḥ prapya varāṇ nibodhataḥ
kṣurasya dhārā niśītā duratyayā durgam pathas tat kavayo vadanti]*

["Awake, arise: Having obtained the human form of life, you must not sleep in the darkness of ignorance. Awaken knowledge of your real self by associating with great souls and obtaining their mercy. This material creation is as sharp as a razor's edge, for it is the cause of many miseries. It is impossible to cross over without transcendental knowledge. Therefore one must take shelter of the great learned transcendentalists who forever sing the praises of that Supreme Person who is the destroyer of birth and death."]

[*Kaṭha-Upaniṣad*, 1.3.14]

Upaniṣad says, "Just like a blade of the..."

Devotees: Grass?

Vidagdha Mādhava: Oh, razor blade.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: *Kṣura* means by which we shave - razor, the razors fine edge. *Kṣurasya dhārā nīṣitā duratyayā*. That is very difficult to pass over that. It is like that, *Upaniṣad* says. Very sharp, we're to pass over. So many subtle things are there. We must be very careful. If we be a little...

Vidagdha Mādhava: Inattentive. Careless.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Careless, then it will cut and blood will ooze. So we'll be all conscious, all alert, in our way. If you go that side offence will come to the Vaiṣṇava, to *Dhāma*, to Deity, all these things, all careful. They're passing over the blade of the razor, with so much care that only inclination this side, that side, will punish me, destroy my object. All alert, very, very careful. Very subtle, very soft thing. So,

tṛṇād api sunīcena, taror api sahiṣṇunā [amāninā mānadena, kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ]

["One who is humbler than a blade of grass, more forbearing than a tree, who gives due honour to others without desiring it for himself is qualified to always chant the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa."] [*Śikṣāṣṭakam*, 3]

No room of any complain from outside we shall create. Our behaviour will be such. Only when we shall find that any assault towards Guru, Vaiṣṇava, we may lose balance, even we shall offer death to - so that they may not be insulted. Our patience may be, that will satisfy the Lord.

"To save the prestige of My servant he's sacrificing himself. He'll be rewarded, highly. And for his own case, there should not be any complain in this. Such way he'll try to move. For his personal account he won't spare a *paisa*, pence. But for the service of the Lord he'll give anything and everything, any amount. *Sādhu*, Guru, Vaiṣṇava, for their satisfaction any amount...

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