



The Divine Voice of Sri Gaudiya Guruwarga

on behalf of Śrī Bhakti Siddhānta Vāṅī Sevā Trust



Monthly E-Magazine 21th ISSUE YEAR II Contents:

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FOREWORD

B*hakti* is often misunderstood. Such misunderstanding may be of different kinds. Those who are very much addicted to the pleasures of the flesh are liable to mistake such pleasure as love of God. Most people nowadays are anxious to acquire wealth and fame and other good things of this world. They often profess appreciation for the religion of love that was preached by Mahāprabhu Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. Mahāprabhu, as is well known, was opposed to barren asceticism. This attitude of his is much liked by all persons who live a luxurious life. But *bhakti* or devotion is not *bhoga* or enjoyment of the pleasures of the senses. There cannot be a greater calumny of a pure devotee than to call him a worshipper of the goddess of worldly prosperity. The conduct of a devotee is unintelligible to both *bhogīs* (epicureans) and *tyāgīs* (ascetics). It is also not less unintelligible to those who study the *śāstras* by themselves or under teachers who are not true devotees. Few people are sufficiently open-minded to be prepared to recognise the great mercy of Mahāprabhu in rebuking the student, who had studied the *śāstras* under a teacher who had no idea of religion, when the said student, forgetting the propriety of conduct of a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* (neophyte) towards the highest order of devotees, presumed to find fault with the conduct of Mahāprabhu Himself in taking the name of Gopī instead of that of Kṛṣṇa. Similar *Śrīvāsa* Paṇḍita's conduct in requiring the assistance of a scavenger for removing wine, meat and other articles for the *tāmasika* worship of the goddess of worldly desires, that had

been placed at the doorsteps of his house by Gopāla-Cāpāla in order to discredit him in the eyes of the people, has also been misunderstood by certain persons who consider that it is the business of human life to grow rich and live a life of pleasures. The pure devotees, by their sharp rebukes, direct our attention to the gravity of the offence of misunderstanding and misrepresenting the conduct of pure devotees, which is the greatest possible obstacle in the way of the attainment of love of God, although it is liable to be regarded as comparatively trivial by most people. It is, therefore, necessary not to rashly declare such conduct of the pure devotees to be prompted by malice or anger specially as it is in reality the most unambiguous expression of the highest magnanimity.

(By Śrī Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, taken from *The Harmonist* or *Sree Sajjana Toshani* VOL. XXXII, No. 17, May, 1936, Chaitanya-Era.)

Again we have tried our best to select some very, very special articles for the next Issue No. 21 of the magazine named 'The Voice of Gauḍīya Guruvarga', in which you can discover very powerful articles from our Sarsavat Gauḍīya Guruvarga to destroy all kind of misconceptions in regard to *Bhakti-tattva*. We have collected special articles which will show the unique qualities of *bhakti* because Srila Prabhupada very often used to say that "*Bhakti* is the natural function of our soul."

All those selected articles can surely create a sensation inside the heart of all those devotee readers. We are actually blind in front of *aprākṛta jagat*, so without the backing of *aprākṛta vāṇī* (*śrī caitanya-vāṇī*) one can never realize who really and what our relationship with the Lord Supreme in true sense is. *Aprākṛta-vāṇī* (*śabda-brahma*) is always going against the strong current of *Māyā*, so naturally almost everyone fears to face that Absolute Truth, but still if we have a strong and honest resolution to know that Absolute Truth, then surely this issue can help us to rectify our wrong prejudicial perception.

Thank you all

Truly yours in the service of Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga and Go-Mata

A loyal and sincere servant of The Prabhupāda

Bābā Śrī Śyām Dās



All glories to Śrī Śrī Guru–Gaurāṅga

ONE DROP OF *BHAKTI* IS SO RARE, THAT IT IS BEYOND OUR HUMAN COMPREHENSION

By Śrī Śrīla Shyām Dās Bābā Mahārāj

Śrī Gauḍīya Goṣṭhī-pati Śrī Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvami Ṭhākura Prabhupāda said that: "To seek the satisfaction of the public and to seek the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord is not the same, and to declare this point loudly is actually called *bhakti*."

Those genuine *sādhu-guru-vaiṣṇava* are like lions. Without hesitation or fear, they are always ready to establish the absolute *siddhānta-vicāra*. Just as the lion is the king of the forest, similarly *guru-vaiṣṇavas* are the true sovereigns of this material world. Their roaring proclamation of pure *Caitanya-vāṇī* drives away the *ṣaḍ-ripus* (six enemies of the *jīva*, or six internal enemies). They are the main obstacles on the path of *bhakti*:

Kāma – lust, uncontrolled desire

Krodha – anger

Lobha – greed

Moha – illusion, delusion, attachment born of ignorance

Mada – pride, arrogance, intoxication with power or wealth

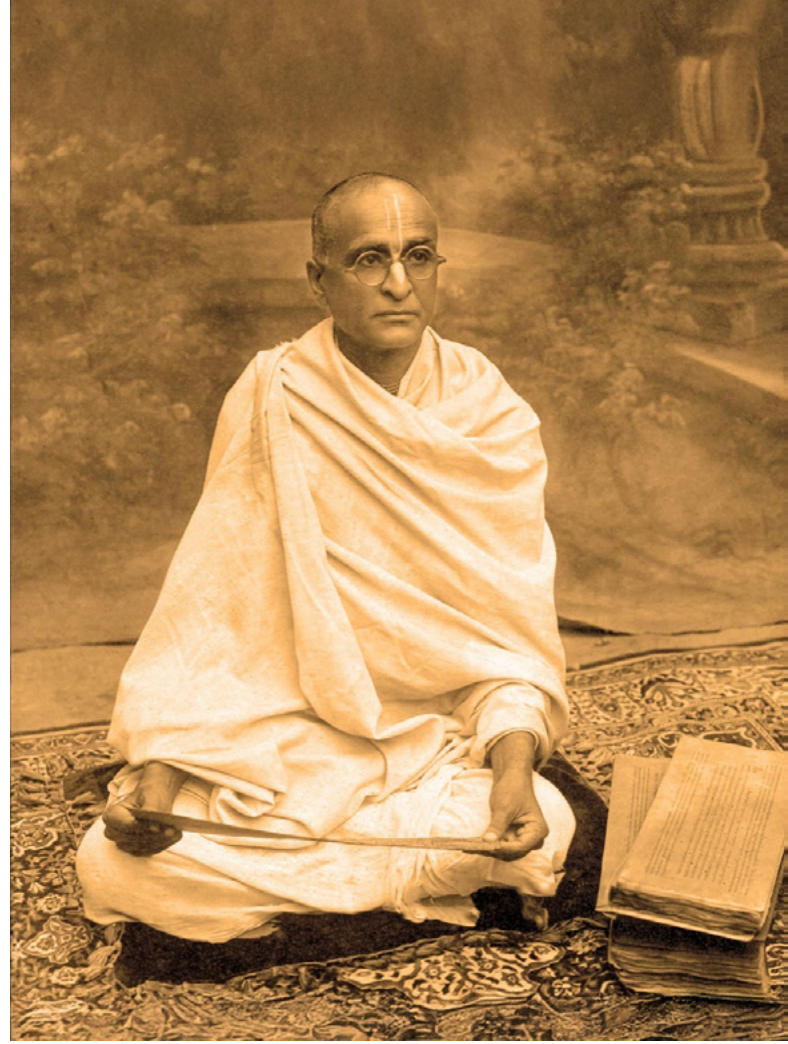
Mātsarya – envy, jealousy

Naturally, most of the people become disturbed when they hear the uncompromising *Caitanya-vāṇī* from pure *guru-vaiṣṇavas*. But this must not be the reason for why absolute truth should be banished. To hide the truth is not preaching at all; in fact half-truth is even more dangerous than complete lie.

The Prabhupāda used to say: "If I am not in the stream of *guru-paramparā*, then whatever I may do surely cannot be called *bhakti*."

Those who have no link to our *Gaudiya guru-paramparā*, no connection with our previous *ācāryas*, can never truly preach. Whatever they may claim in the name of preaching cannot be called *bhakti*. For many this kind of *siddhānta-vicāra* is surely shocking, even unbearable, because the majority of people have since long time been fed with diluted versions presented in the name of pure *bhakti*. If someone is only habituated to eat junk food all the time, then how he will feel if someone serves them some fresh & healthy green vegetables? He surely will hesitate to eat that healthy food, and instead follow his old habits. That is the painful situation at present — that most of the people cannot digest the absolute truth. But for that surely we cannot stop to speak about that absolute truth. The Prabhupāda used to say that:

"We will fearlessly tell everyone the truth, without deceiving anyone. We have to speak the kind of truth that is truly beneficial for the living being, even if it is unpleasant. This is not the same as creating anxiety for others. We have to search for reality. We have to think about the good of all people in the world. With great determination, we have to do what is beneficial for ourselves and others. Unless we speak the truth boldly, we cannot please Guru



and Gaurāṅga. The more determined one is in *bhakti*, the bolder and more courageous he will be as a preacher. If I fail to speak the impartial truth because I might become unpopular, I have certainly abandoned the path of my disciple succession and accepted an unauthorized path. At the end I will either find myself cheated or will become an atheist." (*Prabhupādera Upadeśāmṛta*)

Śrīla Sadananda Svāmī also used to say that: "*Bhakti-yoga* makes enjoyment impossible, because through *bhakti* everything is used in the service, and it completely burns up all that is called man — except the *ātmā*. Only when you hide away this meaning, there will be something left that delights and enthruses man. If you give the *śāstrams* fully unveiled, people will stone you, not invite you. [...] They will be really terrified when I open my mouth." (Letter to Vāmān dās, 1958)

Why people cannot digest that absolute truth?

The Prabhupada always wanted to give us a warning regarding this matter. He used to say that: "Logical interpretation cannot stand in the way of that Absolute truth." About this subject matter we must be always very alert? The question: "Why people cannot digest that absolute truth?" was put in front of The Prabhupada. His reply was like the following: "In this world all are meant for Bhagavan (*Bhagavat seva*). If somehow we develop enjoying mood for all those things, then we would be in great trouble (because they are all *guru-vastu*, not *laghu-vastu*). Those who become aversive (or can develop negative mood) towards hearing *Bhagavat Katha* (or *Harikatha*) can be in the trap of *samsara* (Maya), they can develop strong affinity for this material world. That is why a real aspirant of *Bhagavat bhakti*, having no duplicity, I mean, who likes to get genuine *mangal*, must be very careful to hear *Harikatha* from a genuine *sadhu*. I am doing so much *seva*, or I have done a lot of *seva*, by now I have become a *Vaishnava* — this is called evil conception. Such fanaticism should be avoided to become humble enough to beg for *kripa* with a craving mood continuously to get *Bhagavat seva* with great care."

All those who cannot digest the absolute truth and who constantly try to find faults in *guru-vaiṣṇava* are certainly on the path to hell. As long as their dirty mission of fault-finding continues, and unless they sincerely try to correct their polluted *darśana* regarding pure *guru-vaiṣṇava*, it will be next to impossible for their consciousness to rise. It is our great misfortune that we never sincerely try to harmonize ourselves with *guru-vaiṣṇavas* in true sense. For this reason, even after receiving

dīkṣā from an exalted *vaiṣṇava*, we may remain deprived of genuine *divya-jñāna* and true *seva-bhāva* forever.

The main problem is this: as soon as *guru-vaiṣṇavas* are speaking heavily, we are the first ones who loudly proclaim that they are lacking *trṇād api bhāva*. This kind of misunderstanding is the reason for why we cannot make any progress. People fail to realize that no ordinary preacher has the power to roar like a lion. Those who, in the name of preaching, only seek *lābha-pūjā-pratiṣṭhā* (gain, honor, prestige) can never take up the conch of the absolute *Caitanya-vāṇī* — *Bhaktisiddhānta-vāṇī* — to blow into it to preach it fearlessly like a powerful king lion. Why are there some cheaters acting as preachers? The reason is that if they would speak the exact teachings, then the discrepancies in their own lifestyles would be discovered. Because of that, they are bound to be selective about what to speak and what not to speak. You cannot expect to hear all those topics on the Absolute Truth from them, simply because they fail to apply all those principles in their own life.

According to our *Gauḍīya siddhānta-vicāra*, *trṇād api bhāva* means that there should not be even any smell of *lābha-pūjā-pratiṣṭhā* inside heart. But foolish people think just the opposite — they believe that those who flatter others by licking their feet and presenting themselves sweeter than a doll made of sugar, that they are actually the true example of humility — "humbler than a blade of grass."

Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura boldly declares: "I can provide a kick on the head of that foolish society even after hearing countless glories of Nityānanda Prabhu if they are still unwilling to accept Him." Ignorant people may think that he had no *trṇād api bhāva*, but the actual *siddhānta-*



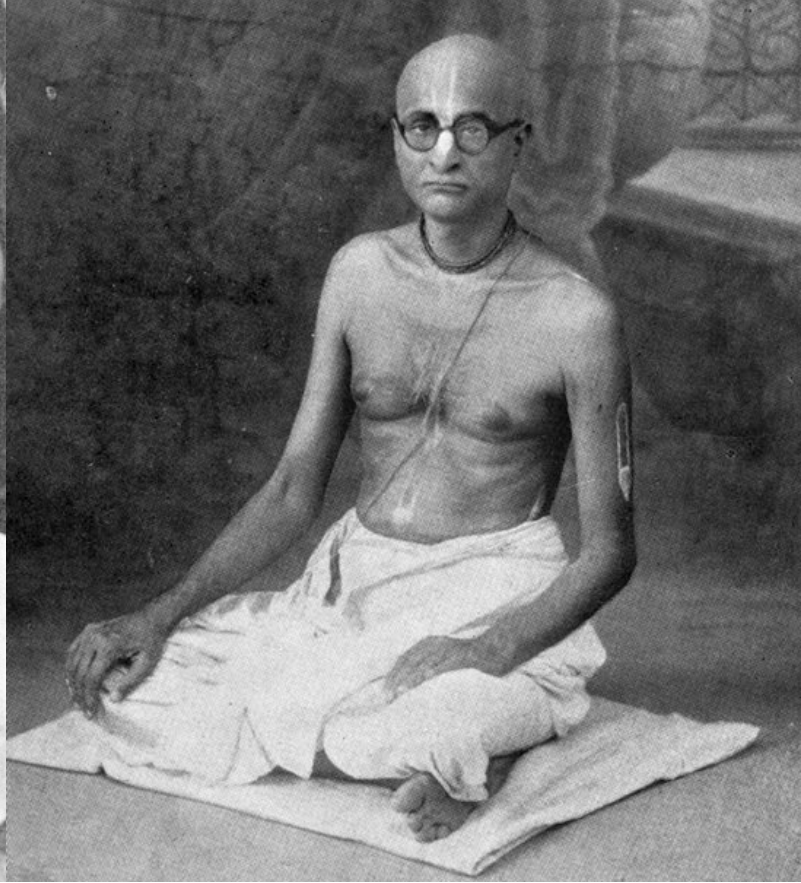
vicāra is this that — Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura was an ocean of humility and mercy. In this way by speaking heavily, he wanted to rectify our polluted material heart by allowing the dust particles from his own lotus feet to pour upon our heads. If we feel insulted when pure *guru-vaiṣṇava* speak heavily, then that only can expose our own weakness, nothing else.

Gauḍīya Goṣṭhī-pati, Śrīla Bhakti-siddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda once also expressed his deep feeling about his own *gurudeva*, Śrīla Gaura Kīśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja in the following way: When I first came before my *paramahansa gurupādapadma*, Śrīla Gaura Kīśora dāsa Bābājī, he tried to avoid me to make me feel that I was the worst element of this whole creation and at that time I could not realize his mood. Only later, when he bestowed his causeless mercy upon me, could I realize his divine mercy — by getting the *darśana* of his divine lotus feet in true sense. Because

of my false ego which I developed from my learning (*pāṇḍitya*), my birth in a high family, and even because of my attractive figure, but he, out of his causeless mercy, wanted to crush down that false ego with a most merciful kick on my head.

Śrī Siddhānta Sarasvatī Thakur Prabhupāda later reflected on this incident in the following way:

When out of false ego I was thinking “I am a great scholar of mathematics and philosophy — let any big *paṇḍita* come at any time, day or night, and I will cut his propositions to pieces,” at that time I got the *darśana* of the lotus feet of Śrī Gurudeva. He ignored everything that was previously appreciated in me — my truthfulness, my moral and pious life, and my intellectualism — knowing them to be of little value. When I saw that he ignored whatever was good in me, I realized how good he himself must be, who could neglect so many “good qualities” in me. What inconceivable wealth he possessed!



Being neglected by him, I understood that there was no one more fallen and contemptible than myself; that was my actual identity. The very things that I adjudged *desiderata*, such as scholarship and upright character, this exalted soul regarded as valueless. I apprehended that within himself this noble personality possessed priceless treasure. I then pondered that either he is extremely puffed-up, or he is exceedingly merciful. I then haughtily said to my *gurudeva*, "You are a worshiper of that cheater and debauch Kṛṣṇa, so why would you be compassionate to someone like me, dedicated to ordinary morality?"

Humbly and sincerely I prayed to the Supreme Lord for His mercy. Later, by His grace, I recognized that without receiving the blessings of this peerless saint and without serving him, nothing good could happen to me. When I accepted that and acted accordingly, and then received the causeless unlimited grace of my śrī-gurudeva and refuge at his lotus feet, I deemed my life fulfilled.

I had considered my *gurudeva* to be unequalled in *vairāgya* but somewhat short of learning. But he reduced to powder my audacity born of book learning. With the mallet of his mercy, he revealed that whatever I had adjudged to be the highest ideal was in fact most low and despicable. When by his grace that instruction first entered my ears, my diminutive brain lacked the capacity to accommodate such transcendental knowledge. But to all fools like me, he gave the chance to hear such lofty topics.

Śrīla Prabhupāda further said that: "I have understood that if the people of this world do not receive the same jolt that I received from my *gurudeva*, then their consciousness will not awaken. Therefore, I am telling everyone, I am more foolish than anyone else on earth. Please, all of you, do not be foolish like me. Do not live your life within the limitation of calculating consciousness. Discuss *Vaikuṅṭha-kathā* and you will become a great person. I am telling you what I have realized to be supremely beneficial.

Although Gaura Kishore das Bābājī Mahārāja always used to forbid strictly anyone to touch his feet, once he voluntarily placed all the dust particles from his lotus feet on the head of Śrī Siddhānta Sarasvatī Thakur and ordered him to preach the absolute truth, by keeping aside all other activities, and in this way Srila Prabhupada's mission was approved by him.

In this way, Śrī Caitanya Deva Himself has deputed Śrīla Gaura Kīśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja and Śrīla Prabhupāda in front of us to uproot completely all the misconceptions about the nature of a pure *guru-vaishnava* by manifesting all those revolting *līlās* in front of us for our absolute *mangal*. How endless merciful are the divine pastimes of the Lord and His devotees! But Alas! What misfortune has befallen me, that even after hearing all such divine *līlās*, still I am unable to realize the divine rank of *guru-vaishnava*, which can never be judged by the imperfect logical mood driven by my material senses.

As long as even a single drop of genuine *bhakti* not getting entry inside my heart till then I will have to remain unable to perceive the absolute glorifications of pure *guru-vaishnava*. In favour of this *siddhanta vichar* so many evidences can be found in *shastras*. A few of them are mentioned below for your kind information.

*dhigastu brahmāhaṁ vadanapariphullān jaḍamatīn
kriyāsaktān dhigdhiḡ vikaṭatapasō dhik ca yaminah
kimetān śocāmo viṣayarāsa mattānarapaśūn
na keṣāncil leśo pyahaha milīto gauramadhunah*

(Śrī Caitanya-candrāmṛtam, verse 32)

"Shame on the gross materialists, so attached to fruitive, ritualistic performances according to the *smṛtis*; shame on the mystic *yogis* who perform severe penances,

following the eightfold path of mystic perfection; shame on the impersonalists who utter *ahaṁ brahmāsmi* ("I am Brahman") — brimming with arrogance, they claim they are liberated and thus, with blissful countenance, sink deep into meditation upon themselves. All these persons are mad for mundane pleasures devoid of any connection to the Supreme Personality. What sorrow can I express for these beasts in human form? Hā Alas! (Oh, me oh my!) Not one of them has received even a minute particle of the honey-drenched pollen from the lotus feet of Śrī Gaurasundara."

*rahūgaṇaitat tapasā na yāti
na cejyayā nirvapaṇād grḥād vā
na cchandāsā naiva jalāgni-sūryair
vinā mahat-pāda-rajo-'bhiṣekam*

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 5.12.12)

"My dear King Rahūgaṇa, unless one smears his very frame with the dust of the lotus feet of exalted devotees, the Absolute Truth can never be realized. Neither by the rigid observance of *brahmacarya*, nor by the punctilious execution of *gr̥hastha-dharma*, nor by the abandonment of home as a *vānaprastha*, nor yet by the acceptance of *sannyāsa* and the endurance of grievous austerities — such as immersing oneself in icy waters during winter or encircling oneself with blazing fires beneath the scorching sun in summer — can the Supreme Reality be attained. Though innumerable processes are proposed for the apprehension of the Absolute, verily He is disclosed only unto that fortunate soul who has been blessed by the mercy of a *mahā-bhāgavata*."

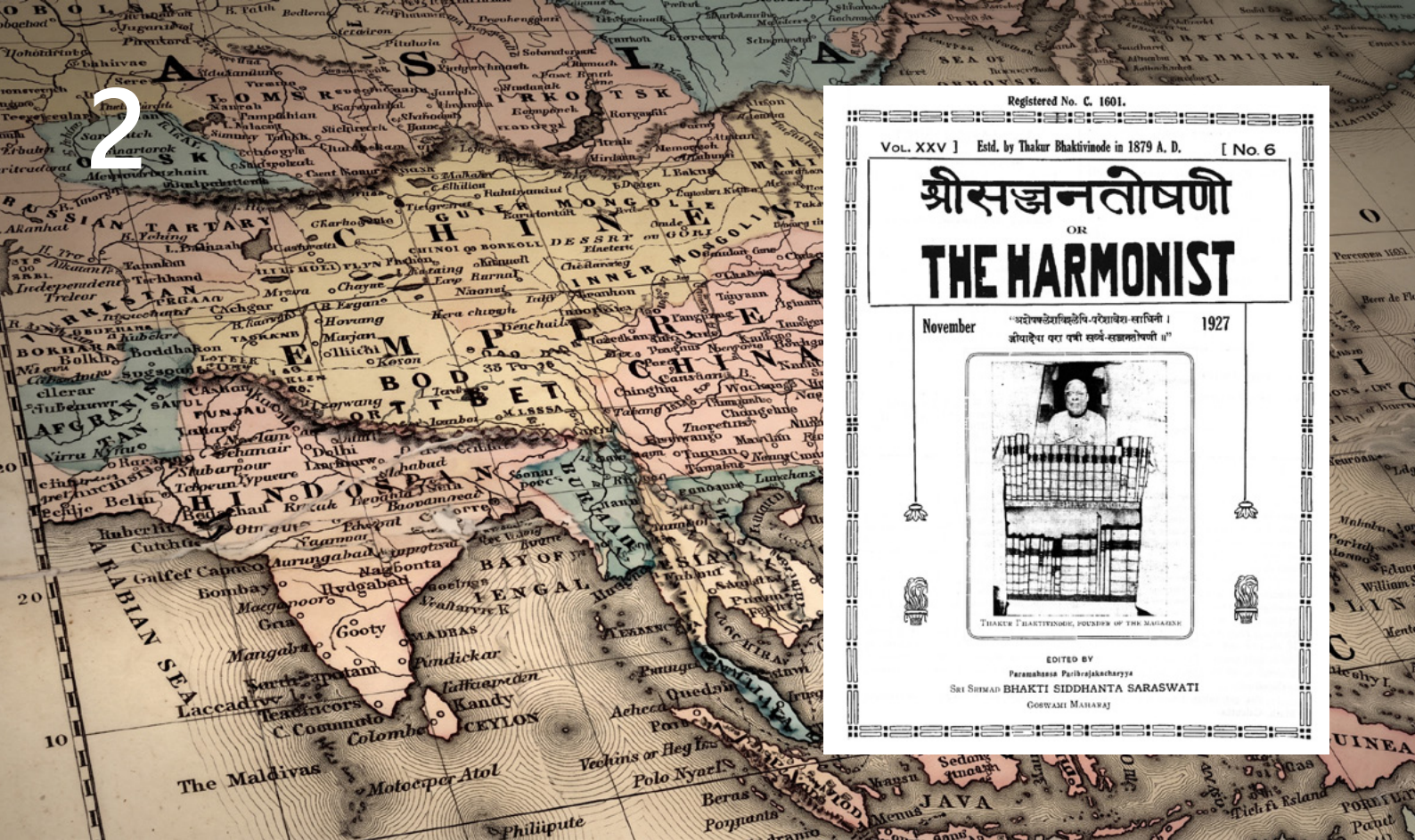
*naiṣāṁ matis tāvad urukramāṅghriṁ
spṛśaty anarthāpagamo yad-arthah
mahīyasāṁ pāda-rajo-'bhiṣekaṁ
niṣkiñcanānāṁ na vṛṇīta yāvat*
(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 7.5.32)

“Unless one anoints his very body with the dust of the lotus feet of a *Vaiṣṇava* who is wholly emancipated from all mundane taint, the materially inclined cannot in the least awaken attachment for the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord—He who is eternally celebrated for His wondrous and inconceivable pastimes. Solely by becoming Kṛṣṇa-conscious and seeking refuge at those all-auspicious feet of the pure devotees, is the living entity delivered from the contamination of worldly existence.”

*nirapekṣaṁ muniṁ śāntaṁ
nirvairaṁ sama-darśanam
anuvrajāmy ahaṁ nityam
pūyetye aṅghri-reṇubhiḥ*
(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 11.14.16)

“With the dust from the lotus feet of My pure devotees, I ever desire to sanctify the worlds, though they all abide within Me. Therefore, I constantly follow in the wake of those devotees who are utterly devoid of selfish desire, ever absorbed in the contemplation of My divine *līlā*, serene in disposition, without enmity toward any being, and possessed of equal vision toward all.”

Gaura hari hari bol



All glories to Śrī Guru & Gaurāṅga

THE MESSAGE OF *BHAKTI* (SHOULD IT BE PROPAGATED OUTSIDE INDIA?)

(Taken from *The Harmonist* or *Sree Sajjana Toshani* VOL. XXXII, No. 5, November 7, 1935, Chaitanya-Era. From a conversation that took place at Sree Gaudiya Math at Delhi on 3.10.35)

Question: As India is *karma bhūmi*, should the propaganda of *bhakti* be pushed to every corner of India before it is carried to foreign lands which are *bhoga-bhūmi*? For India-wide propaganda, should the publications of the Gauḍīya Mission be immediately translated into Hindi?

Answer: India is a land of *karmins* and *jñānins*. *Karma* and *jñāna* should culminate in *bhakti*. *Karmins* are for fruitful enterprise. *Jñānins* want to merge in the Absolute. The Mission is not getting helpful cooperation from these sections. This is the real difficulty in propagating the message of the soul who is meant for the service of the Absolute instead of enriching himself with finitudinal things. We are now busy with the non-absolute. But the *Gītā* says that such possessions cannot be retained. One who gains paradise by the good deeds has to lose his exalted position as his acquired virtues wear away through enjoyment of their fruits.

*kiṁ tad brahma kiṁ adhyātmaṁ
kiṁ karma puruṣottama
adhibhūtaṁ ca kiṁ proktaṁ
adhidaivaṁ kiṁ ucyate
(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 8.1)*

Arjuna inquired: "O my Lord, O Supreme Person, what is Brahman? What is the self? What are fruitive activities? What is this material manifestation? And what are the demigods? Please explain this to me."

This is the position of a *karma-kāṇḍin*. We should not pose as men of action. That is not the eternal interest of the soul. *Jñānins* think that manifestive features are confined to phenomena. But we do not advocate their theory of impersonalism. The Absolute has got a manifestive face. We are not meant to live here eternally. We believe in *seelenwanderung* (transmigration of the soul). The enjoying temperament, on the other hand, covets the pleasures of paradise. But the final position is unknown to these worldly people. We are, therefore, out to inculcate the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gītā*. Viṣṇu is the Personal Divinity. We don't think we should lose our entity. We should rather get rid of all these foreign dirt. We must undergo these troubles.

*etāny api tu karmāṇi
saṅgam tyaktvā phalāni ca
kartavyānīti me pārtha
niścitaṁ matam uttamam
(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 18.6)*

"All these activities should be performed without attachment or any expectation of result. They should be performed as a matter of duty, O son of Pṛthā. That is My final opinion."

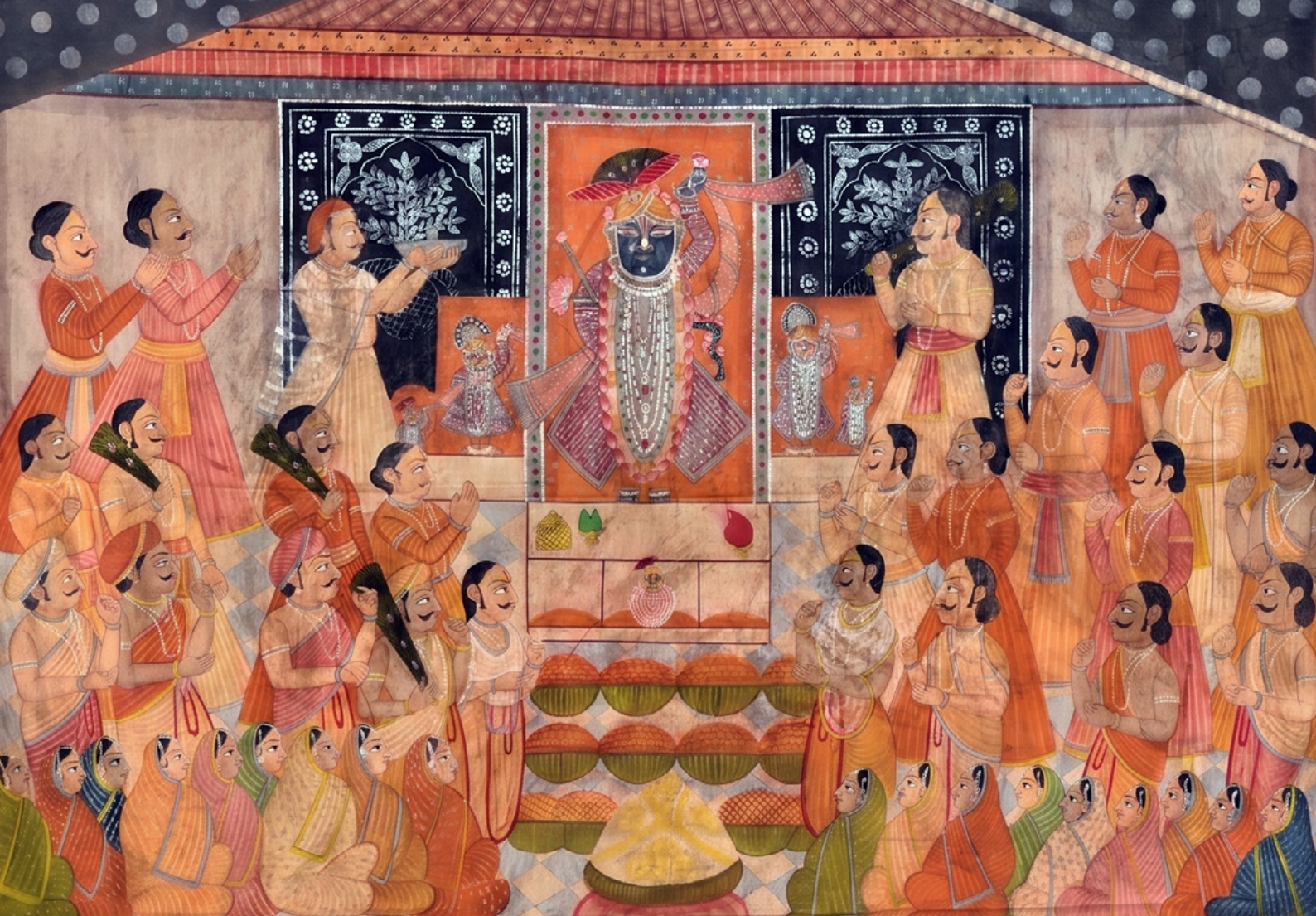
It is necessary to get rid of these troubles. It is necessary not to have any re-

birth. It will be better for us to give all our attention to the search of the Absolute for having constant engagement with the Absolute. We are required to keep ourselves quite aloof from all contrary ideas and thoughts.

*brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā
na śocati na kāṅkṣati
samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu
mad-bhaktiṁ labhate parām
(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 18.54)*

"One who is thus transcendently situated at once realizes the Supreme Brahman and becomes fully joyful. He never laments or desires to have anything. He is equally disposed toward every living entity. In that state he attains pure devotional service unto Me."

It is necessary to offer one hundred per cent *devotion* to the Absolute. We should be true devotees and get rid of these temporal connections. We want to impress upon the people to seek to have a peep of the manifestive features of the Absolute for which we require elimination of these dirt. We need not anthropomorphise all these undesirable features to that sphere. We want to regain our normal position. For this purpose we should find the position of the Object of worship and of our entity. We are now under the conception of space and time. These useless and wrong things are to be eliminated for attaining the eternal life. We are given all facilities for the same if we care to be in touch with the Absolute. We need not rely on the different languages and thoughts of this plane. We are to hear the sound that will be extended to this plane. The present manifestive faces of the phenomena could then be used for serving the *Paramātmā*. We would then be dovetailed with the



Paramātmā instead of being entangled here. We require to cross over these inadequacies. The policy of abstraction as well as that of being entangled in the grossness of this world should be given up. The heterogeneous and alloyed thoughts have to be eliminated. We cannot retain our position here. This is not our original abode and not for our eternal purposes of peace and happiness. Our aim should be for the plenary position, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya has given us certain instructions by which we can progress towards transcendence instead of being confined to particular places or particular languages. This message is to be propagated.

Instead of being victimised by the temporary sounds, we should listen to the transcendental message. People should be made conversant with these thoughts.

The actual function of the unadulterated soul is to offer all activities in the service of the Absolute. The *sāttvika* or *sāttvata* method is followed at Jagadīśa Kṣetra (Purī). The *rājasa* people tell us that they should also have their share, and the *sāttvikas* should not abolish the shares of the *rājasa* and *tāmasika* sections, or, in other words, they should be allowed to incorporate sins instead of being required to practise unalloyed devotion. The *tāmasikas* desire facilities for offering injuries to other entities. *Sāttvika* people are also accused by latitudinarians of encroaching upon the rights of the other sections. *Karma-kāṇḍa* and gnosticism are proposed to be incorporated in devotion. But we require the full opportunity of serving the Absolute. If it is divided in three parts, our fullness of devotion is jeopardised. The gnostics propose neutrality.

*na buddhi-bhedam janayed
ajñānām karma-saṅginām
joṣayet sarva-karmāṇi
vidvān yuktaḥ samācaran*
(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 3.26)

“So as not to disrupt the minds of ignorant men attached to the fruitive results of prescribed duties, a learned person should not induce them to stop work. Rather, by working in the spirit of devotion, he should engage them in all sorts of activities [for the gradual development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness].”

We are, however, assured by the Fountainhead of His complete protection. This is what He says in effect, “Give up all those thoughts. I will dictate to you what interests you are to have. You show your diffidence of Me by not depending on Me. You need not trouble about any conception about religion that you may have imbibed in this world. You simply submit to Me unconditionally and I will rescue you from all sorts of undesirable situations. You need not suppose that when you attend to Me you disregard all those things.” You need not go astray from this sympathetic instruction of the *Gītā*. Whatever acquisitions you have are unnecessary for your purpose. You need carry no candles to the sun. Submission is to be the policy instead of knowledge.

*jñāne prayāsam udapāsyā namanta eva
jīvanti san-mukharitām bhavadīya-vārtām
sthāne sthitāḥ śruti-gatām tanu-vān-manobhir
ye prāyaśo 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyām*
(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 10.14.3)

“Those who, even while remaining situated in their established social positions, throw away the process of speculative knowledge and, with their body, words and mind, offer all respects

to descriptions of Your personality and activities, dedicating their lives to these narrations, which are vibrated by You personally and by Your pure devotees, certainly conquer Your Lordship, although You are otherwise unconquerable by anyone within the three worlds.”

People in India are busy with their *karma-kāṇḍa* affairs. People in China or Europe have their own methods of *karma-kāṇḍa*. They don't want our *karma-kāṇḍa*. Professor Bauver wrote from Czechoslovakia that Europe does not want Indian *karma-kāṇḍa*. I told him that we have very much to give to them. The devotional thought is the special treasure of India. Empiricism will not do. In the case of the Absolute, the whole thing comes to us. If we submit to Him, He will be sending the Transcendental Message to us. Our auditory nerves require to be informed by the transcendental sounds and not by the other sounds. They are equipped with the potencies that can heal all those inadequacies that have been imbibed here. The *Gītā* gives us this instruction. As *sāttvikas* we think that we should predominate over the *rājas* and *tāmas* people. By *viśuddha-sattva* (unalloyed essence) we should cease to be sharers in these worldly affairs; *miśra-sattva* (adulterated quality) has got dealings with *rājas* (utilitarian) and *tāmas* immoral people.



All glories to Śrī Guru & Gaurāṅga

BHĀRATA & RANTIDEVA

(Taken from *The Harmonist* or *Sree Sajjana Toshani* VOL. XXVIII,
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We are sure there are many amongst us who have heard about the anecdotes of the two kings, Bhārata and Rantideva in the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. But it is doubtful, if from a comparative study of the characters of these two great personages the invaluable lessons and instructions to be derived therefrom, have attracted the careful attention of many of us. Our *Ācārya* (spiritual teacher) Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī Prabhu, one of the famous six

Gosvāmīs, has given us a most valuable lesson drawn from the lives of these two persons.

So much absorbed are we in the infatuations of '*Prakṛti*' (*Māyā*) that we are apt to consider as supremely excellent only those things that are favourable for the satisfaction of our mental aptitudes or for the gratification idea that tickles our minds or our senses, we run after him as an '*Avatāra*' (a manifestation of Divinity); and like a flock of sheep blindly following one of

themselves, we accept his idea as gospel truth. If anybody attempts to thwart the perversities of our ever-changing speculations by means of the scriptural doctrines, we do not hesitate to describe him as an orthodox, monotonous and conservative person, quite unacceptable to our circle.

The great man among us says, 'What is the good of specially searching after the Absolute when He is manifested in so many forms before us and that serving the *jīvas* is tantamount to serving Godhead?' We think, 'How magnanimous and high-souled a personage he is!' But we never pause to use our senses. We lack the capacity to accept the lessons of the *Ācāryas* eternally established in the functions of the pure soul, in the light in which they are intended to be seen. This counts for nothing less than misfortune. Too fond of mundane talks, we fail to think over any matter seriously for being established in our natural state. No sooner does a person put forth any novel idea than consider how much magnanimity or liberality is really displayed. Too much attached to the fleshy concerns and the doctrine of our worldly hearths and homes, we recognise magnanimity only in a person who seems to extend his charity to a wider circle. Like virtuous talks to a sinner, moral talks to the libertine, lessons of attachment for a married wife to one addicted to a harlot, and talks about heaven to one in hell, remarks of the above nature readily captivate most worldly people. But if anybody, by the mercy of a teacher who is uninfluenced by mental speculations being well-established in the spiritual state, is enabled to take an impartial view of the same, he will find nothing but Godlessness in every word of those remarks. Duped and fascinated by the hypocritical favour of *Māyā* (illusion), we are apt to consider all Godless talks as identical with magnanimity



and we fail to understand that there can be no 'poverty' in *Nārāyaṇa* (the Lord of the Goddess of all good fortune) and that *Nārāyaṇa* can never be in 'poverty'. Like light and darkness, like God and '*Māyā*', poverty and *Nārāyaṇa* can never keep company. It is a great misfortune if we think that Godhead is subject to the power of *Māyā* and *Nārāyaṇa* can come under the clutches of poverty. It is a great pity that loose thinking in this matter pervades the whole world and the hellish doctrine that affects to regard matter and spirit as coming under one common category has been annihilating the natural function of the spiritual consciousness of the peoples of the twentieth century. A *Jīva* is an infinitesimally small portion of the spiritual Essence of the Full Absolute consciousness and is, therefore, His eternal servant.

In ancient times there lived a king of the name of Bhārata. He was so firmly established in the natural function of the soul that he was called 'Rājarṣi' (saintly king) by the people. The 'Varṣa' (country) in which we live now was originally named 'Ajanābha', but after Mahārāja Bhārata became the king, it came to be called Bhārata-varṣa after his name. After having reigned for a period that was proper Rājarṣi Bhārata renounced his household-er's life and resorting to 'Pulahāśrama' applied himself whole-heartedly to the worship of Godhead. His 'Āśrama' was situated on the bank of the holy river Gaṇḍakī, the best of all resorts for pilgrimage where large numbers of Śrī Nārāyaṇa-śilās are to be found. Living all alone in this sacred place and worshipping Godhead with various flowers, buds, *tulasī*, water, fruits and other appropriate offerings, Bhārata attained the state of the highest bliss. With a heart free from all hankerings after things of this world, he passed his days peacefully in the worship of Godhead. Gradually the '*sāttvika*' symptoms of his sincere devotion of Godhead, in the shape of tears, shivering, and signs of ecstasy manifested themselves on his person.

One day after bathing in the river Gaṇḍakī as he was seated on the bank of the sacred stream chanting the '*praṇava*' (Vedic *mahāmantra*), a thirsty deer in her full pregnancy came to the river side for drink, and, as she was about to drink the water, she heard the terrific roars of a lion nearby. A deer is always timid and easily frightened. The terrific roar of the lion resounding in the lonely forest agitated her in a most violent manner. She had not yet quenched her thirst. But apprehending imminent peril and looking about with fearful eyes, she took a sudden big leap to cross a sheet of water that lay in front of her. It led to abortion of the cub from the

womb and an end of the mother's life. The new-born cub fell into the stream. Bhārata, although engaged in worship of Godhead, could see all this from his position on the riverbank. Is there anyone who can be so hardhearted who would not be moved by such a piteous sight? King Bhārata was not an exception to this rule. To save the cub of the deer, saintly Bhārata stopped in the midst of his worship. He thought that according to the scriptures, the *sādhus* (saints), being naturally the friends of the helpless, ignore even their own interests for showing mercy to the distressed. Thinking in this way he hastened towards the spot and rescued the cub from the current.

Bhārata then applied himself with assiduity to the occupation of rearing the motherless cub. Rājarṣi Bhārata had betaken himself to the forest by renouncing his kingdom, wealth, wife, children and all the pleasures of home life for the purpose of worshipping Godhead. But alas! Now, in place of the service of Godhead, the image of Nārāyaṇa (Godhead) engrossed in the state of utter helplessness, which is but a contrivance of '*Prakṛti*' (Māyā), came upon his vision. The deluding energy of Godhead, finding the golden opportunity, spread her fatal influence upon him. As the result of his erroneous supposition that Godhead can ever be anything but transcendental, he was thrown off from the devotional platform and attachment to desires other than those appertaining to the service of Godhead occupied his heart as a matter of course. Unable to realise the sweetness of that transcendental service of Godhead and falling under the clutches of His deluding energy, he strayed further and further away from the path. 'What's the good of searching after Godhead,' he thought, 'when He is present before us in so many different man-



the grossness of Māyā to Godhead, consider the eternal spiritual pastimes of Godhead to be transitory, and imagine pseudo-‘salvation’ or annihilation of the soul to be the highest attainment of life. But, for the reasons mentioned above, Bhārata had a temporary confusion of judgment. He was not so stony-hearted as to indulge in the Godlessness of the Māyāvādins and pseudo-salvationists. Hence in course of time when the better consciousness — What a fool am I to think that the mind, which formerly actuated me to abandon all my worldly attachments in order whole-heartedly to concentrate on the service of Godhead and on many devotional activities in a lonely forest and after long and incessant devotional endeavours firmly to establish myself in His service — has in consequence of my association with the cub of the deer, ended in snatching me from the Feet of Godhead!’

ifestations?’ Thus the favourite cub came to be looked upon by him as the Form of Godhead and he lost all sense of his real relation with Godhead. Taking prevailed again and he could understand his error arising out of the effect of bad actions of previous births, he repented, saying, ‘Oh, what a trouble! I have been thrown off from the path of true knowledge.’ By considering Māyā to be Godhead, he degraded himself and owing to his constant meditations about the deer persisting on his death-bed, he had to be reborn as a deer.

Rājarsī Bhārata was a righteous person who had been fully engaged in the service of Godhead; but, due to the effect of bad actions of previous births, he could not help cherishing this solitary evil desire. He was not a perpetual and deliberate offender like the Māyāvādins (Pantheists) who ascribe ‘poverty’ to Nārāyaṇa, impute

From this character sketch of Bhārata, Ācārya Śrī Jīva Gosvāmīpāda has drawn the following lessons for our enlightenment. Each and every *Jīva* being the eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa, it is the incumbent duty of everybody to associate themselves in their service of Godhead. If, instead of doing this, one busies himself in ministering to the comforts of others or considers the gratification of his senses to be superior to the service of the Godhead and makes false pretence of thereby serving others or society and is enamoured of such acts of so-called beneficence, he is sure to come under the bondage of this world. Any advice recommending such so-called beneficent activities, as they are in no way in conformity with the service of the Absolute Truth, cannot but lead to most evil consequences, enhance one’s Godlessness and deflect one from the direction of the true objective, viz., the pure devotion of Godhead.



However much such misguided persons may boast of their theistic (?) disposition or pride themselves upon being the benefactors of their country and of humanity, and however much they may be looked upon by their fellows as the most liberal of religious preachers, association with such persons is a bar to the attainment of unalloyed devotion to Godhead.

The real benefactors of humanity are those who are firmly established in the service of Godhead than which there is no other mercy available to the *Jīva*. The Supreme Lord Śrī Caitanya has instructed all persons to show this true mercy to all *Jīvas* and Śrīla Vāsudeva Ṭhākura also acted up to the same ideal when he said, 'O Lord! allow me to take upon myself, the sins of all *Jīvas* and suffer all the tortures of hell, so may Thou let them be relieved of their triple misery without the least delay.'

Let us now turn to the picture of another character on the other side of the canvas. In older times there lived a king of the name of Rantideva, reputed for his generosity and magnanimity. Unlike king Bhārata, he sought the eternal good of their souls by offering to them Śrī Mahāprasāda. His prayer to Godhead was not to attain to the state of the eightfold perfection of the *Yogins*, or the self-annihilation of the pseudo-salvationists, but it was to the effect that the afflictions of all souls due to their aversion to Godhead might be removed if for such a consummation he had to take upon his single shoulder all their sorrows and troubles.

Finding this spirit of benefaction in Rantideva, Viṣṇu-Māyā (the deluding Energy of Godhead), in order to test the stretch of his patience, brought and offered to him objects of temptation covetable even by Brahmā and other high

gods. But Mahārāja Rantideva who was far above all those temptations, honouring them from a distance, quite unattached and free from all other desires, fixed his heart and soul in Vāsudeva, the sole Lord of the pure heart.

In comparing the character of Rājarṣi Bhārata with that of Mahārāja Rantideva Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī Prabhu has observed that although Bhārata renounced his wife, sons, wealth and all, yet for the offence of trying to remove the physical miseries of *Jīvas* he had to fall from the service of Godhead; on the other hand, Mahārāja Rantideva, realising the true nature of *Jīva's* eternal relation to Vāsudeva, tried to secure for them the eternal good of their souls, and thereby the effective removal of their worldly miseries too, by offering them Mahāprasāda in his capacity of a servant of Godhead and was thus enabled to overcome the influence of Māyā. Even the most covetous position of Brahmā, the much-desired 'perfections' of the *Yogins* and the fictitious bliss of the pseudo-salvationists could have no effect upon him. All his actions, being performed fully for the satisfaction of Vāsudeva, had the effect of being transformed into various forms of devotion to Godhead. But the efforts of kindness of Rājarṣi Bhārata being limited within the scope of this mundane world turned out to be the thralldom of Māyā and felled him down from the service of Godhead.

The gist of the conclusion of the *Ācārya* has been summarised thus.

That no one should invite Godlessness by listening to the counsels of those addicted to things other than the service of Godhead; no one should ascribe 'poverty' to the Omnipotent Nārāyaṇa; no one should indulge in the erroneous belief of supposing that mixing of Māyā with Godhead is possible; that scriptures according to these offending persons, though they may pass themselves off as '*Jīvan-muktas*' (persons who even in their present life are free from the bondage of this world) are liable to pass through the cycle of births and deaths. Hence everyone should engage himself in the service of Godhead, the fountain-head of everything, because watering the root of a tree, and not merely its leaves and branches, keeps the tree alive; and the offering of food to the stomach, and not to any other organs of the body, alone may also keep the body alive. Therefore we should look at all sentient beings as the eternal servants of Godhead, serve His devotees whole-heartedly and try to enhance in all who are averse to Godhead their good fortune by the service of Godhead. The gist of the conclusions of the *Ācārya* has been summarised thus. That no one should invite Godlessness offering of *Mahāprasāda* and chanting of *Kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* by which alone they can, in course of time, be enabled to acquire real health and find an end of all their miseries. This is the only true way of showing mercy to all *Jīvas* as well as to oneself.



All glories to Śrī Guru & Gaurāṅga

KARMA, JÑĀNA AND BHAKTI

(From a discourse at Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Delhi on 3.10.35)

Karma, Jñāna and Bhakti have three different goals. They are never meant as one. Karma is thus described in the *Gītā*: "The mundane energy (*prakṛti*) performs all work (*karma*) by means of the *guṇas* (generative, conservative and destructive attributes). The soul infatuated by mundane egoism (*ahaṅkāra*) imagines that he possesses the initiative (*kartā*). As soon as we are confined to phenomenal activity we think we are doers. These activities do not last for a long time. They are also known as *prākṛta karma* (mundane work). We suppose that the actions are done by us. This is *ahaṅkāra*. Karma is really the product of the *guṇas*. But the *Gītā* also cautions us against premature interference with the *karmīs* (1).

The less intelligent need not be divulged the truth of the superiority of *jñāna*. Those who are busy in dealing with phenomenal things need not be told about the futility of *upādhi* by which we seem to be near our object, but are not really so. *Svarūpa* (one's own figure) is distinct from *upādhi* (adjunct). The latter is a deluded impression. True impression is quite different. By *jñāna* we want to know the inner subject. The cover need not be confused with the letter. Take a can of glass bottle with its contents or medicine. If we briefly say, pointing to the bottle, 'this is medicine', we don't mean that the bottle is medicine. This distinction is analogous to that between the apparent and the real. *Upādhis* are incorporations with the *svarūpa*.

Upādhis should be removed. Some sort of gnosticism should predominate. As *karmakāṇḍīs* we do temporary work. They are admitted to be futile. The external body is now incorporated with the real ego — with me. The inanimate objects are meddling with our subjective existence. Phenomenal things are either gross or subtle. When grossness is abstracted, it gives us a subtle taste of grossness. This grossness is transformable. We cannot rely on these gross and subtle impressions. We have now got the gross physical body and the internal animating entity. The ownership lies apart from these in a different entity viz., the soul (*ātmā*). The mind, *buddhi* etc., are all non-soul. These are the properties. The proprietor need not be classed in the same category with property. Creator need not be confused with the created. The existence of the Creator is prior. Ekkahart and other philosophers accordingly say that God was branded to the substratum after creation. Before creation He need not be termed God. In Indian philosophy, inculcated by Śaṅkara, Brahma is the fountain-head and Īśvara and other things are emanations from the Brahma. The conception of devotees is quite different. Īśvara is to lord it over some other things who are not to be regarded as Lords. Īśvara is one and the many are dependants (*bhāśyas*). We think that all phenomenal objects including *pheuma* or *prāṇa* are created by a Creator or Īśvara. This Īśvara transforms the wrapper and not the soul. These wrappers envelope the individual personality. They are two quite different things. The soul is covered by some cognitional faculty in order to meddle with this external world. This covering principle is the mind which is served by five ministerial agents viz., the eye, ear etc. Light waves irritate the ocular nerves, and so on. All these nerves are irritated by the agen-

cies of phenomena. The body is equipped with the senses to receive these irritating predicaments. As a counsel of relief from such irritating experiences, the impersonal view is accepted by us. We suppose that a *tabula rasa* should be allotted at the terminal point; that the reality should be void of all *śakti*. This is the gnostic conception of Brahma devoid of potency. The devotees have a different impression. Brahma is the very fountainhead of all (2).

All will go back to that very thing. They have got their temporary existence here. The gnostics deny the manifestive activity there. They think that they should annihilate their entity by absorption into that very thing. But the *Gītā* says (3).

After we get our salvation we have the function of transcendental devotion (*parābhakti*). When we see our *svarūpa* (own figure), instead of considering the incorporations as our *svarūpa*, we actually get liberty from the shackles, we find that we have some real function there (4).

Then we know we are not the external body, nor do we have much to do with the phenomenal world — nor do we offer any unjust pouncings on others (5).

We are then free from all sorts of jealousies. When we are void of all malice (*nirmatsara*), we regain our proper condition. *Bhakti* is the uniting tie between *bhakta* and Bhagavān.

The seven *vyāhrtis* and the seven lower spheres comprise the mundane world (*Brahmāṇḍa*). When we are not comprised within these fourteen cells, we are liberated; we then regain our function. The function of the soul is *bhakti*. When we are not in need of filling up inadequacies, when we have no appetite for encroaching upon others, that very position will recall to us that we have a very particular function



ing us like the shadow. Then we can get to the Vaikuṅṭha by giving up the measuring activity. We should have the devotional aptitude. When we enter that region we can have free scope for the function of our soul. When we are *jñānins* and *karminins* we have no such opportunity. This *bhakti* is practically received when we pay attention to the instruction of Śrī Kṛṣṇa (8). "You will be given ample instruction if you submit unconditionally to Me. Leave aside whatever conceptions of religion you have got up till now. I will see what is to be done for you. You need not think that some alternative course is to be adopted. I will see to all your interests. You won't have to come in touch with any unwholesomeness. You will not have to repent." Such is the clear assurance that we get from Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

He is Akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrti (the figure of all mellowness). We are interested in *rasa* (mellow taste). We can have an eternal taste of things. When we actually enter the realm of Vaikuṅṭha we set ourselves quite free from entangling in this mundane net. We can then easily transcend. We are different servitors in different *rasas*. In the Matsya Avatāra the Veda was restored. Divine intelligence (Veda) was stolen (kept concealed) by some Asuras. In the Satya Yuga in the reign of Satya-vrata the Veda was stolen.

The Personality of Godhead should be embraced. We must approach Him and get full knowledge of Him. He has His Plenary Position. For us, He is the Ocean of all *rasas*. We shall have our desires fulfilled. There are five and seven *mukhya* (primary) and *gauṇa* (secondary) *rasas*. We are now engaged in culturing these *rasas* with the people of this world. But we should know to be engaged with the Absolute. *Jīvana* is itself *bhakti* when it is Kṛṣṇa-*jñāna* of a Kṛṣṇa. All the twelve *rasas* are in

viz., to serve. Here there can be nothing whom to serve. Everything here is shifting, as also is our position as worshipper. The tie here has got no eternal value. We have a different position from the phenomena (6).

Though we have come down here, our entity need not be classed in the same category with phenomenal objects. These are more or less deluding. If we are not anxious to regain our function, we are liable to be troubled. We should not allow any system of thought which is not *bhakti*. The absolute infinitesimals have no other function but to serve the Absolute Infinity (7).

By the function of the soul we may be familiar with the Absolute Truth, the knowledge can be had only through our devotional aptitude. If we are true to the Absolute Truth we can shake off all these erroneous impressions that are envelop-



Him. If we actually secure little *rasa* here, we shall be deprived of that *rasa* shortly. This temporary acquisition is followed by destitution of that *rasa* again. "When we store up anything here, it evaporates like camphor. As individual souls, we require a very little of the Ocean of *rasa*. He is the Emporium. We shall be amply rewarded, if we submit. If we show our diffidence to serve Him, we shall have these seeming servitors here. There are no servitors there. *Kṛṣṇa-jñāna* is cultured by correlating two epistemological methods viz. (1) that which proceeds from unity to diversity and (2) that which proceeds from diversity to unity. The analytic method is from one to many, while the synthetic is from many to one. We need not carry thither all these things of our present experience. But our souls should go (9).

These sorts of wrong things should be eliminated. We can then know our position. We have ample opportunity of going to that region. The word *viśate* does not mean absorption. By entering the re-

gion of *bhakti*, the three things: Knower, Known and Knowledge are not merged in one. The impersonal school inculcates this wrong impression on an insufficient interpretation of the *Chhāndogya* text (10). Personality is targeted by them in phenomena. Its elimination is quite true. But these *śrutis* do not mean that *tabula rasa* is the final position. The enclouded faces of things have given us this impression. The analytical representation gives us the full thing. By analogy these can be approached very easily. So *bhakti* is the uniting tie between the Absolute Infinite Truth and the absolute infinitesimal truth. The truths are to be united. We need not detach ourselves from Him. Otherwise we shall have a shadowy existence in us.

I am the pencil of ray coming out of the glowing disc of the sun. We are inseparable from the Brahman. There is a quantitative difference. The Gnostics think they should swell like the frog. They rely on the analogy of a pot. When the pot is destroyed the measured space is not demar-



cated; but it has not, therefore, swelled into the whole space. 30 cubic feet is not many cubic miles. Doubting analogies should be abandoned. They lead to henotheistic thoughts (11). The figure should not be ascribed to Him and then taken away. In order to reject the personal face of Godhead, they suppose that personality is born of phenomena. The *bhaktas* never accept such a conclusion.

We shall always receive instruction from *sādhus* who always retain their eternal situation and do not agree with the pantheists who have temporary situations both as teacher and pupil. (12) Pantheistic interpreters of the *Gītā* and *Vedānta* have misinterpreted the system as per view of the *bāhulas*. This is the case with Hegel, Schopenhauer, etc. We are rather tired of their dealings. God-loving aptitude is required. I can witness things. Without the help of light, I cannot exercise optical faculty. Without help, I cannot function. Our animation cannot work unless helped by some other source (13).

In the *Bhāgavatam* we also find similar statements (14).

If we are meant to offer our services to *Adhokṣaja* (Transcendence) and not to *Akṣaja* i.e. what submits to our senses, Godhead need not be obliged to stand in the dock. He is not to be accommodated within our sensuous exploitations. We have got our sentient power for finite things, not for the Infinity. We cannot accommodate 4th to infinite dimensions. At present our senses cannot cope with them. So we need not think that we can compel God to come for our inspection. The proposal of treatment that is based on the diagnosis of the root-cause of disease need not be regarded as irrelevant talk. It becomes necessary to speak with a view to elucidate the position which is the source of contamination.

God remains inaccessible to our mundane senses. But He can come on the scene of our vision, if He likes. He is not created by our fancies. On the contrary, He is the creator.

How to surrender to God?

We are the custodians. We commit theft. By the commercial policy we have got property. We cannot encroach upon the properties of others. We have, got something, — two eyes, two ears etc. I am the owner. I can use and misuse these things. None should try to take away these things from me. If anybody try to do so, I, as custodian should resist. We are independent. If Govinda wishes the custody will change hands. If we go on doing so, we will simply show our silly disposition. Whatever is ordained by Providence we should submit to. But we take undue advantage of taking God's property. The happiness which we are to get as individuals, we shall get. We cannot avoid unhappiness. We are *bhāśya* (dependant). We actually feel it. The trouble comes from outside. We shall submit. People are fond of killing animals at the altar of the Deity for their gastronomical exploitations. They are unethical in the extreme. That can never be the Śāstra. These wrong ideas and thoughts should not have been ushered in the Scripture. We cannot think that Śāstras instruct us for our pleasure (15).

In every figure, there is Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu is fostering every animal. We will then have justification to be devoured by the tiger etc. We are in the habit of enjoying by offering pain to others (16). We must resist these things.

Others will say we have got canine teeth. But in sober thinking, we should not subscribe to such thought. So we find in India religion inculcated by Śhākya Singha, and also the religion of the Jains. They do not offer pain to animate things. They are good so far. They are not sanguine to trace things to their source (17). Let peace come into this world. This is *bhakti*.

Footnotes :

(1)

*na buddhi-bhedam janayed
ajñānām karma-saṅginām
joṣayet sarva-karmāṇi
vidvān yuktaḥ samācāran*
(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 3.26)

"So as not to disturb the minds of ignorant men attached to the fruitive results of prescribed duties, a learned person should not encourage them to give up work. Rather, by performing his own duties in a spirit of *bhakti*, he should engage them in various activities for the gradual development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness."

(2)

*yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante, yena jātāni jīvanti,
yat prayanty abhisamviśanti, tad brahma*
(Taittirīya Upaniṣad 3.1.1)

"That from which all beings are born, by which they live after being born, and into which they enter at death — know that to be *Brahman*."

(3)

*brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā na śocati na kāṅkṣati
samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu mad-bhaktim labhate parām*
(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 18.54)

"One who is situated on the *brahma-bhūta* platform becomes joyful, free from lamentation and hankering. Seeing all beings equally, he attains supreme devotion unto Me."

(4)

na śocati na kāṅkṣati

"He neither laments nor hankers."

(5)

samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu

"He sees all living beings equally."

(6)

*cañcalaṁ hi manaḥ kṛṣṇa pramāthi balavad dṛḍham
tasyāhaṁ nigrahaṁ manye vāyor iva su-duṣkaram*

(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 6.34)

"The mind is indeed restless, turbulent, obstinate, and very strong, O Kṛṣṇa, and

to subdue it, I think, is more difficult than controlling the wind."

(7)

*asamāsayam mahā-bāho mano durnigrahaṁ calam
abhyāsenā tu kaunteya vairāgyeṇa ca grhyate*

(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 6.35)

"O mighty-armed one, undoubtedly the mind is restless and difficult to control, but it can be controlled by practice (*abhyāsa*) and detachment (*vairāgya*)."

(8)

*rāga-dveṣa-viyuktaiḥ tu viṣayān indriyaiś caran
ātma-vaśyair vidheyātmā prasādam adhigacchati*

(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 2.64)

"But a person who is free from attachment and aversion, and who controls the senses through regulated principles, attains the mercy of the Lord (*prasāda*)."

(9)

*nāsti buddhir ayuktasya na cāyuktasya bhāvanā
na cābhāvayataḥ śāntir aśāntasya kutaḥ sukham*

(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 2.66)

"One who is not connected (with the Supreme) has neither steady intelligence nor meditation. Without meditation there is no peace, and without peace how can there be happiness?"

(10)

*kāma eṣa krodha eṣa rajo-guṇa-samudbhavaḥ
mahāśano mahā-pāpmā vidhy enam iha vairiṇam*

(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 3.37)

"It is lust only, Arjuna, which is born of contact with the mode of passion and later transformed into anger, and which is the all-devouring sinful enemy of this world."

(11)

*adveṣṭā sarva-bhūtānāṁ maitraḥ karuṇa eva ca
nirmamo nirahāṅkāraḥ sama-duḥkha-sukhaḥ kṣamī*

(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 12.13)

"One who is not envious of any living being, who is friendly and compassionate, free from possessiveness and false ego, equal in happiness and distress, and forgiving..."

(12)

*tat te 'nukampāṁ su-samīkṣyamāṇo
bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtaṁ vipākam
hrd-vāg-vapurahir vidadhan namas te
jīvetā yo mukti-pade sa dāya-bhāk*

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 10.14.8)

"My Lord, one who earnestly waits for Your mercy while patiently enduring the reactions of his past deeds, offering You respectful obeisances with heart, words, and body, becomes eligible for liberation."

(13)

*yā niśā sarva-bhūtānāṁ tasyām jāgarti samyamī
yasyām jāgrati bhūtāni sā niśā paśyato muneh*

(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 2.69)

"What is night for all beings is the time of awakening for the self-controlled; and what is the time of awakening for all beings is night for the sage who sees."

(14)

*nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo na medhayā na
bahunā śrutena*

*yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas tasya eṣa ātmā vivṛṇute
tanūṁ svām*

(Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 3.2.3)

"The Self is not attained by eloquent speech, nor by intelligence, nor by much hearing. He is attained only by one whom He chooses; to such a person the Self reveals His own form."

(15)

*yato yato niścarati manaś cañcalam asthiram
tatas tato niyamyaitad ātmany eva vaśaṁ nayet*

(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 6.26)

"From wherever the restless and unsteady mind wanders, one should restrain it and bring it back under the control of the self."

(16)

*uddhared ātmanātmānam nātmānam avasādayet
ātmaiva hy ātmano bandhur ātmaiva ripur ātmanaḥ*

(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 6.5)

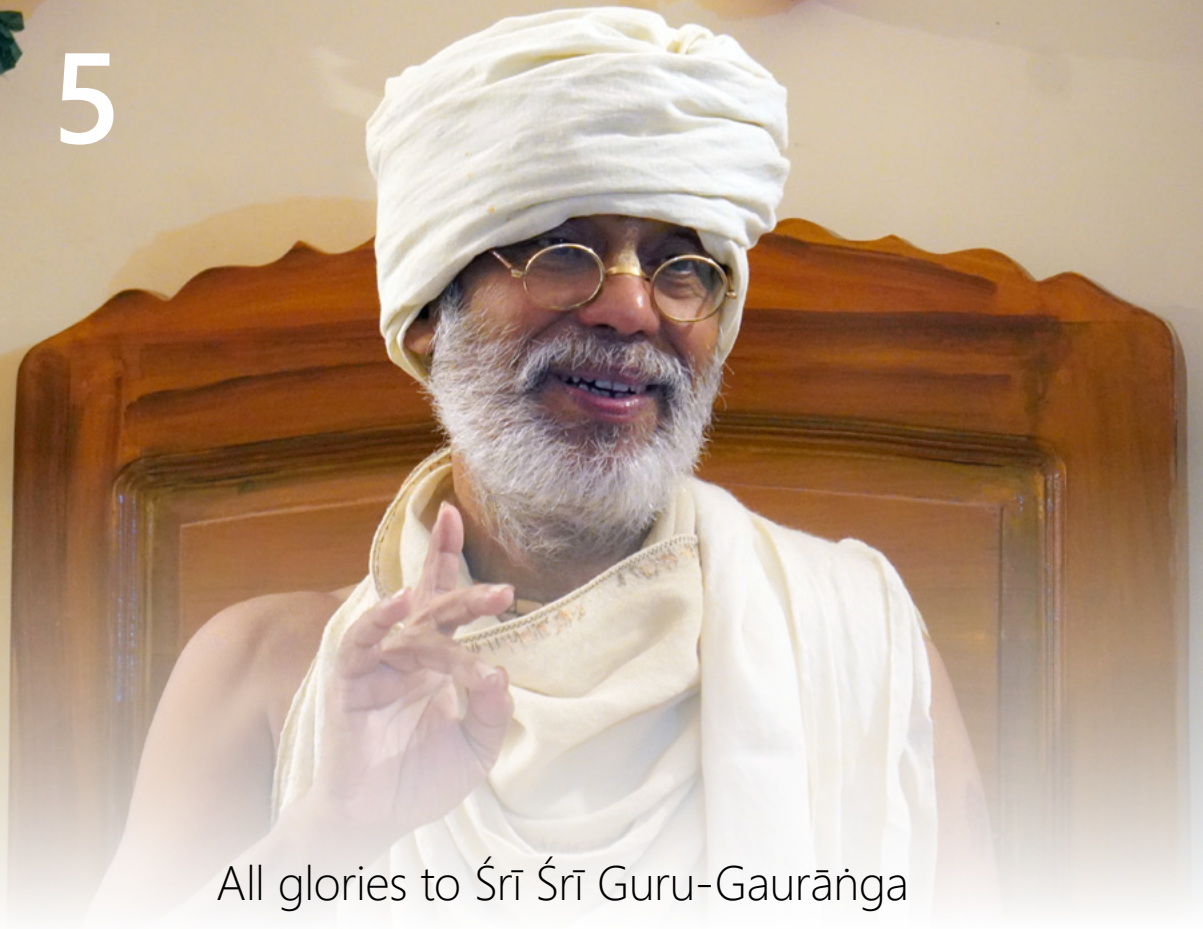
"One must elevate oneself by one's own mind, and not degrade oneself. The mind alone is the friend of the soul, and the mind alone is the enemy."

(17)

*bandhur ātmātmanas tasya yenātmaivātmanā jitaḥ
anātmanas tu śatrutve vartetātmaiva śatru-vat*

(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 6.6)

"For one who has conquered the mind, the mind is the best of friends; but for one who has failed to do so, the mind will remain the greatest enemy."



All glories to Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga

DIFFERENT VARIETIES OF *BHAKTI* — *ĀROPA-SIDDHĀ-BHAKTI*, *SAṄGA-* *SIDDHĀ-BHAKTI*, AND *SVARŪPA-* *SIDDHĀ-BHAKTI*

By Śrī Śrīla Shyām Dās Bābā Mahārāj

From *śāstra* we know that the supreme *dharma* is *bhakti* to Adhokṣaja.

*sa vai puṁsām paro dharmo yato bhaktir
adhokṣaje*

ahaituky apratihātā yayātmā suprasīdati

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 1.2.6)

“The highest duty of all living beings is to awaken *ahaitukī apratihātā bhakti* unto Adhokṣaja — pure devotion that is causeless and uninterrupted.

By such exclusive service, the *jīva* attains true fulfillment, for only in loving service to the Supreme Lord does the soul find its eternal satisfaction.”

There are many varieties of *bhakti*, but the *śāstra* and the *ācāryas* explain that they can be understood in three principal categories:

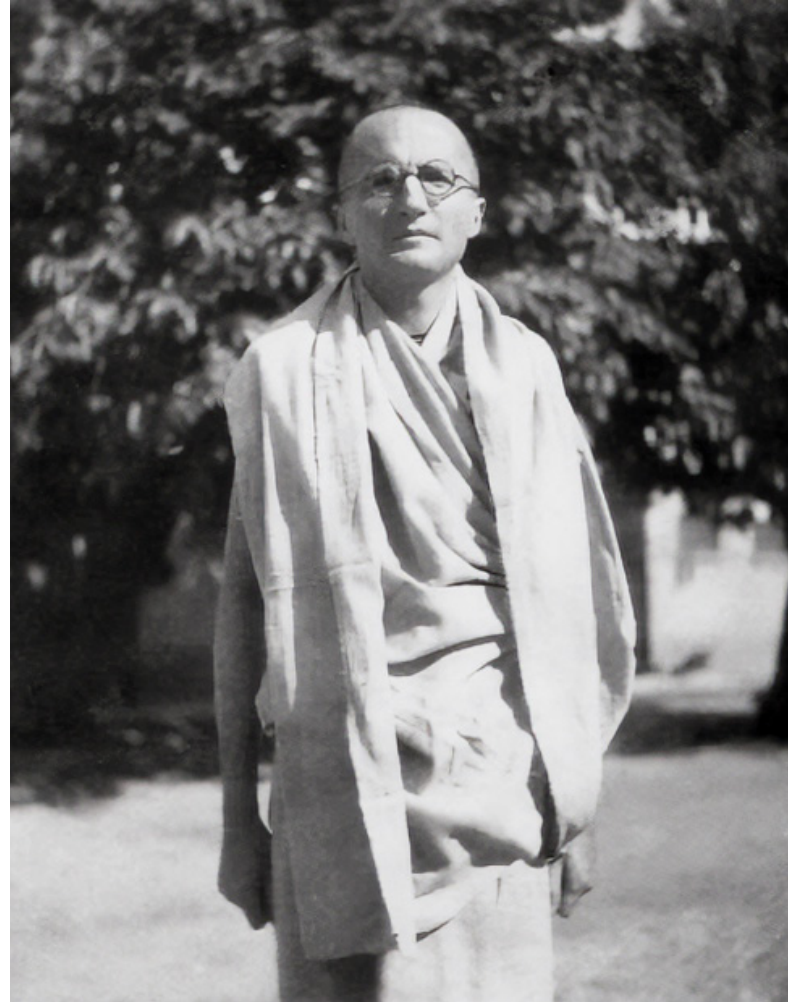
āropa-siddhā-bhakti
saṅga-siddhā-bhakti
svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti

If one cannot understand clearly the distinctions between these three, then even after being far away from them, one may think that “I am practicing *śuddha-bhakti*.” That is the reason for why our first duty is to discover our own position. Śrīla Prabhupāda used to say that: “It is really dangerous to think oneself as *siddha* while in *sādhana* stage.”

I can give one simple example to clarify that point. If an airplane crashes down in a dense forest, and if somehow someone can survive, then maybe in one sense he is lucky, but his problem is not over. Why? Because first of all, he has no information about his own position. Being in such a helpless condition, he is almost lost. Only proper information can give him some hope for his life. If by some good fortune he can understand his actual position, then he may be able to understand where to go and where not to go. In the same way, in our devotional life, discovering our own position should be given the first priority. Most people in devotional life are unable to identify properly their own position, and that is why they become very confused, so their progress becomes very slow. That’s why it is absolutely necessary to be under the strict guidance of *śuddha guru-vaiṣṇava*, because only by their *kṛpā can jīva* actually understand her position and then that *jīva* can proceed safely on the path of *bhakti*. Only if we know our own position can our next step be perfect.

Now let us try to understand the difference between *āropa-siddhā-bhakti*, *saṅga-siddhā-bhakti*, and *svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti*. If we have no *adhikāra* (right) then our mispreaching can destroy the devotional world. All that glitters is not gold — this proverb is going on in society.

Svāmī Sadananda Dāsa used to say that: “To walk the path of *bhakti*, it is



not enough to merely believe that God exists and that what the *Śāstrams* say about Him is true. There is only one criterion for admission: a strong conviction coupled with a firm determination to act accordingly that serving Bhagavan is the eternal purpose of life; serving those who serve Him; serving as a means and as an end, irrespective of one’s own happiness or sorrow. To turn to God with the desire to serve Him as the aim and centre of all thought and action — that is true liberation from the iron fetters of selfishness, liberation from being a slave to one’s own desires.”

He further said that: “Neither God nor the *avatara* ever wanted to turn the world or even India into a paradise, but they wanted society to be set up in such a way that it would be possible for man to rise above the beast [in him]. People, however, prefer to remain beasts and consequently the society is not arranged



according to God's principles. God, the *avatara* and the *bhaktas* taught and practised true love for God, which only one or two among millions can have. Teaching about the Absolute for those who want to remain beasts is like casting pearls before swine." (Letter 1955)

Pure devotion is so rare, so rare that we cannot even imagine.

*manuṣyāṇāṃ sahasreṣu
kaścīd yatati siddhaye
yatatām api siddhānām
kaścīn mām vetti tattvataḥ*
(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 7.3)

"Out of many thousands among men, one may endeavour for perfection, and of those who have achieved perfection, hardly one knows Me in truth."

*bahūnām janmanām ante
jñānavān mām prapadyate
vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti
sa mahātmā su-durlabhaḥ*
(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 7.19)

"After many births and deaths, he who is actually in knowledge surrenders unto Me, knowing Me to be the cause of all causes and all that is. Such a great soul is very rare."

Now let's consider *Āropa-siddhā-bhakti* which actually means imposed nature of *bhakti* or devotion. The word *āropa* refers to superimposing an idea upon something which does not exist at all. One may perform any activity — like business or maintaining a garden or earning money etc. — and then can offer the result to Kṛṣṇa by thinking that — "This is pure *bhakti*." However, this is not at all pure *bhakti* because if any activity itself is driven by material motivation, then the offering becomes secondary, so this can never come under the category of pure *bhakti*.

Saṅga-siddhā-bhakti means, as the word '*sanga*' already indicates, to associate with something or somebody. Here, *bhakti* is present, but only as a subordinate factor, not as the principal factor. One may

understand that without the backing of *bhakti*, no activity can ever bear any fruit, and therefore one can take shelter of devotional practices. However if the intention remains self-centred, then one is surely using *bhakti* like a servant (or instrument) to get something done by Her. Even the association of those pure *Guru-Vaiṣṇavas* may be treated that way. The Prabhupada used to say that: “We always like to misuse *guru-vaishnavas-shastra-bhagavan-nama* for our personal benefit.” But in this way surely we will be cheated of our absolute *mangal*. *Bhakti Devi* can ultimately disappear from our heart. In *saṅga-siddhā-bhakti*, *bhakti* backing is there but it cannot be seen as the real means to attain the absolute goal of life.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmīpad writes:

*anyabhilasita-sunyam jnana-karmadyanavrtam
anukulyena krsnanusilanam bhaktir-uttama*

(*Sri Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* 1.1.11)

“Perpetual, ardent endeavour meant exclusively for Sri Kṛṣṇa and performed out of genuine love to Him, when neither prone to any selfish, ulterior desires nor eclipsed by impersonal knowledge, fruitive work, or any other occupation, is known as *uttama-bhakti*.”

Pure devotion means that all the activities by the help of the senses, mind, and intelligence are engaged favourably for the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which must be free off all other desires, surely not and not covered up *karma* or *jñāna* etc. This kind of engagement must be continuous (uninterrupted).

In *svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti* one must engage all his senses in devotional activities such as *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*, *smaraṇam* etc. which are the main limbs of *na-*

vadhā-bhakti. These are the most prominent limbs of *bhakti*. Without these essential limbs, devotion can never be considered *svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti*.

But even here in this stage the propensity of cheating can still be there, that is why *svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti* can be divided into *sakaitava svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti* or *akaitava svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti*. If one performs these pure devotional activities with some hidden motives (*lābha-pūjā-pratiṣṭhā* or *kanaka & kāmīnī*) — then it becomes *sakaitava svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti*. Such practice may give some material benefit only, but nothing more than that. It is said that *guru-vaiṣṇava-bhagavān* always like to cheat us. If one approaches *guru-vaiṣṇava-bhagavān* with duplicity, then surely they can cheat us. Therefore absolute *maṅgala* is only possible through *akaitava svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti* — pure devotion or *bhakti* which is completely free from any smell of selfish desire. Here, *bhakti* is not covered up by *karma* or *jñāna* (*anāvṛta*), nor *Bhakti Devī* treated here as a servant.

The foundation of this pure devotion can bring realization about the true identity of *jīvātmā*: *jīvera svarūpa haya* — *kṛṣṇera nitya-dāsa* — the living entity is the eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa. Here it is important to notice that it is written '*kṛṣṇa nitya dāsa*' and not '*kṛṣṇa nitya bhakta*.' It is only when we can realize that we are '*kṛṣṇa nitya dāsa*' that finally by the *kṛpā* of *Guru-vaiṣṇava* we can become '*kṛṣṇa nitya bhakta*.'

Svāmī Sadananda Dāsa writes that: “It is completely wrong to say that ‘the love for God slumbers in every heart’. To his nature the *ātmā* is meant to serve God, but he is not a servant of God by nature. He becomes what he is meant to be only when he has received *bhakti*, which is not

present in him, but comes to him through the grace of the *bhakta*."

We also know the following *śloka*:

*bhaktis tu bhagavad-bhakta-saṅgena pariḷāyate
sat-saṅgaḥ prāpyate puṁbhiḥ sukṛtaiḥ pūrva-saṁcītaiḥ*
(*Bṛhan-nāradya Purāṇa* 4.33)

"*Bhakti* becomes manifested by the association of the Lord's devotees. The association of devotees is obtained by previous accumulated piety."

The process to be adopted is of the gradual promotional procedure of purification. When one become more and more free from *anarthas*, then deep realization can naturally awaken — but not by artificial effort, only by divine *kṛpā* of *guru-vaiṣṇava-bhagavān*. One must first realize oneself as the servant of Kṛṣṇa, and after onwards higher realisations may come.

In our present condition however, we are filled up with all different kinds of material desires, that's why it is not possible to practice pure *svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti*. But if we can practice under the guidance of pure *Guru-Vaiṣṇava* and can sincerely follow all their instructions, then quickly we can progress toward that idealism.

The essence of all those teachings of our *Gauḍīya Guru varga* is to understand the gradations of *bhakti*. Not all that which looks like *bhakti* is *bhakti*. One may sit the whole day to chant *Harināma*, which appears externally like *bhakti*, but this is not *bhakti*, because some ulterior motives are hidden inside heart in the name of *Harināma-japa*. On the other hand, pure devotees like Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja may go for Kṛṣṇa *sevā* to court — which externally looks like material activity, but still this can be counted as pure *bhakti*. That is why Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja used to say that: "It takes life times to understand what is *bhakti* and what is not *bhakti*."

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