

His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī Mahārāja

81.12.12.A

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: ...and if we want our shelter, that will be overhead, *āśraya*, shelter, shelter not below the leg, but shelter should be over the head. The Vedic *mantra*, the principal *R̥g Veda mantra* (1.22.20) says: *tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padaṁ sadā paśyanti sūrayaḥ divīva cakṣur ātatam.*

[*om tad viṣṇo paramaṁ padaṁ sadā, paśyanti suraya divīva cakṣur ātatam
tad viprāso vipanyavo jāgrvāmśāḥ, samindhate viṣṇor yat paramaṁ padam*]

[“As the sun and sunlight is continuous over the skies as light-giver to us (for that sunlight is the universal form of the Lord) similarly, the Divine Lotus Feet of the Lord Śrī Viṣṇu is always spread widely (like a canopy) over our head.”] [*R̥g Veda*, 1.22.20]

The holy feet of Viṣṇu, *yaḥ idam viṣṇuḥ vyāpnotīti*, who is pervading everywhere, His feet, His lowest portion towards us, *paramaṁ*, that is not to be neglected. That is very highly qualified from all standpoints, from the standpoint of fine existence, knowledge, as well as sweetness, *paramaṁ padaṁ*. *Sadā paśyanti suraya*, the scholars they’re always conscious of that fact, their real basis of life is there. Not an animal wandering in the forest, or on the earth, or mountain, or jungle. But the real man is in his consciousness, and conscious of some higher entity, always. *Sadā paśyanti suraya*, always seeing that, looking at that, conscious of that idea, ideal. *Divīva cakṣur ātatam*, vaguely or in a mystic way? No. As we see the sun in the sky so conspicuous, so clear, and so real. *Tad viṣṇo paramaṁ padaṁ*. So we shall really live and move in that higher consciousness, we are a child of that conscious world. So at the conclusion of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Śukadeva is giving warning to Parīkṣit Mahārāja, “The last, what I have got, what I have told to you so long, the firm basis you must be conscious of. What is that?”

[*tvaṁ tu rājan mariṣyeti, paśu-buddhim imāṁ jahi
[na jātaḥ prāg abhūto 'dya, deha-vat tvaṁ na nañkṣyasi]*]

[“O King, give up the animalistic mentality of thinking: ‘I am going to die.’ Unlike the body, you have not taken birth. There was not a time in the past when you did not exist, and you are not about to be destroyed.”] [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 12.5.2]

The serpent, that is the cheating, deception, serpent is the type of deception, stealthily it comes to bite and kills. Stealthily the ignorance has come and taken you down to the world of animal consciousness, and we are all moving under the deception we are this heavy flesh and blood, and for that, heavier earth is necessary to lift us above, on its lap. *Ke?*

Vidagdha-Mādhava: Guru Mahārāja, Vidagdha Dāsa.

Akṣayānanda Mahārāja: Vidagdha-Mādhava.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: And?

Vidagdha-Mādhava: And Kṛṣṇa Vallabha Prabhu, a new...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: *Divīva cakṣur ātatam, so our, mariṣyeti paśu-buddhim imām jahi, do away with your animal consciousness that you are flesh and blood. No, you are not limited within flesh and blood, but you are a conscious unit and you won't die. You are not a member of this dying world where everything is sure to die. Only for this misidentification this has come as a necessary truth on you, 'that you are to die, you are to become infirm, you are to be born, you are to suffer from disease,' all for misidentification of yourself with this body. So mariṣyeti, paśu-buddhim imām jahi, this is animal consciousness that you are an animal.*

But you are not so, you are a conscious unit, you are spirit, you are soul. Not only is the soul immortal, not only does God exist, not only He is the dispenser of good and bad, everything - but we, ourselves, are units of the conscious world. So *paśu-buddhim imām jahi*, separate yourself eternally from that mania, from that misconception, misidentification, false identity with this material aspect, which is the result of your degraded life. Be reinstated to your glorious position that you are soul. And at the same time how it is possible? You are *taṭastha* by constitution, so you cannot stand on your own legs, you must have some shelter, either this mundane, considering yourself identified with the mundane world, or you must have some shelter above your head. Above your head, *taṭastha*, you must have shelter from the *śvarūpa-śakti* land, final land.

Paramaṁ padaṁ sadā, paśyanti suraya divīva cakṣur ātatam, cakṣur, viṣṇo paramaṁ pada, how His divine feet, the conception of the divine feet of Viṣṇu, of Nārāyaṇa, of Kṛṣṇa, that is, *paramaṁ padaṁ*, like sun to you in the material comparison. That is seer, that possible seeing, feeling, if He is withdrawn everything is dark. If Viṣṇu's *paramaṁ pada* is withdrawn then everything will be dark. That is the light of light. And you must have a continuous eternal consciousness that above you there is another soil and your shelter is there, and you are a soul unit. This diabolical change you must have to adjust within you. That is your shelter. This is not your shelter; this is a prison house for you. So this broad and graphic comprehensive consideration must be at the basis of spiritual understanding. Otherwise we'll have to be *sahajiyā*, imitationist. Imitationist, we are to cross this Hindenburg line.

Then, *tad viṣṇo paramaṁ padaṁ*, this is the basic advice of *Ṛg-Veda*, the first *Veda* that comes down from the upper world to this world. The primary conception which is needed from you all is that you must think that there's a world above, and that 'above' means in the line of consciousness. Your highest acquaintance is that you are conscious, and that conscious world is above you on your head. You must have to adopt that as your shelter. You'll move and live there. The diabolical change, here, you are in the atmosphere of exploitation, but that is the land of service. There, you are to think in terms of service. That is on your head. That is the superior region, more superior than you are made of. So do you want that connection? Or you will be better to reign in hell? Do you like to reign in hell or to serve in heaven? What do you like? You consider and then come out. If you do such, then you will have a land, you have got prospect, you have got everything up to Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute, you can reach. Otherwise you are to have eighty-four *lakhs* [8,400,000] of species.

*jalajā nava lakṣāni, sthāvarā lakṣa viṁśati
kṛmayo rudra-saṅkhyakāḥ, pakṣiṇām daśa lakṣaṇam
triṁsal lakṣāni paśavaḥ, catur lakṣāni mānuṣaḥ*

[In the laws of Manu, it is written: "There are 900,000 kinds of aquatics, 2,000,000 kinds of trees and plants, 1,100,000 kinds of insects and reptiles, 1,000,000 kinds of birds, 3,000,000 kinds of four-legged beasts, and 400,000 kinds of human species."] [*Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*]

These are the eighty-four *lakhs* of classification under which you are to wander, action reaction, in this way. You are to select what you want to do. Do you want to be a member of the land of mortality, *janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhī* [birth, death, old age and infirmity - [*Bhagavad-gītā*, 13.9] - or immortality? Then you are to pay for such ticket. And you are to take the visa. You will have to be prepared for such categorical beginning. And creed, the bond, you are to sign. That cause, that slavery.

jīvera 'svarūpa' haya-kṛṣṇera 'nitya-dāsa' [kṛṣṇera 'taṭasthā-śakti' bhedābheda-prakāśa']

[“The constitutional nature of the *jīva* soul is that of an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa; the *jīva* soul is a manifestation of divinity which is one with Kṛṣṇa and different from Him. The *jīva* souls are the marginal potency of the Lord.”] [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā*, 20.108]

That mystic land, the land of infinite hope and prosperity and prospect, if you want to go you will have to go as a slave, as a slave, because that is made of higher stuff than you yourselves are.

vaikuṅṭhara pṛthivy ādi sakala cinmaya, māyika bhūtera tathi janma nāhi haya

[“The earth, water, fire, air and ether of Vaikuṅṭha are all spiritual. Material elements are not found there.”] [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā*, 5.53]

They're all consciousness, everything made of consciousness, spirit. And again, upper, that is *ānandam*, made of not only consciousness, but it is endowed with - just as medicine in the beginning it may be bitter, but in the higher stage the sweetness is added in the medicine. So in *rāga-mārga*, in Kṛṣṇaloka, there is not only consciousness, but there's sweetness, the beauty, that is the prevailing element there.

So, ideal - when a ship without a rudder is moving distance, this way, that way, in the ocean. But if a particular ideal we have got, the Kṛṣṇa, Mahāprabhu, *Bhāgavatam*, then I am captivated, captured. This tuft of hair is tied with the feet of Guru Mahārāja and the divine grace. The tuft of hair captured, the head is captured there, and everything will be done through the head, the most reverential part of my body in this material world. So, one who has got a good ideal, he is in possession of a valuable wealth. Otherwise, these things, this *kanak, kāmīnī, pratiṣṭhā* - the popularity, then the materials of sense pleasure, and the money - all these things, but they're all animal consciousness. They're all properties in the land of animal consciousness. A diabolical change must be effected within us if we want really a life to be worth living.

So, ideal - a man should be judged by his ideal. What sort of ideal, how great an ideal has he got? And he's trying to realise that. The man of the future, the man of tomorrow, should be judged by his ideal. If his ideal is great, he is great, because if he's sincere, tomorrow he'll reach there. After a few days he will reach there. So we should be judged by our ideal. I may not attain it. It is not very easy. It is not rotten goods that are to be very cheaply sold in the market. It is costly. But whatever may be the cost it does not matter.

I want not less than that highest thing, that *advaya-jñāna*, that Autocrat, that Goodness Autocrat, that Absolute Autocrat, that Supreme Most Commander of everything. I want that, nothing less than that. And I should live and move and feel myself, or whatever I shall do, at every second I shall have to realise that I am meant for that, I am meant for my ideal. I have no time to waste to hesitate, or this or that. Every moment, if with the ideal in our heart we move,

every way, every minute I shall make some progress towards it if I can keep intact my relationship with my ideal. So that will control, that will inspire me, to any and every action, whatever I shall do, or undo, take rest, but that is on my head. And that will gradually take me out of all these entanglements and enticements, and one day or other I shall be able to reach there.

*jāto-śraddho mat kathāsu, nirviṇṇaḥ sarvva-karmmasu
veda-duḥkhātmakān kāmān, parityāge 'py anīśvaraḥ*

[“He who has imbibed heart’s faith in the tidings of My Name, nature and pastimes; who has become indifferent to all kinds of fruitive work and its rewards; who has learned that all forms of enjoyment of sensual passions ultimately transform into misery, yet he is unable to fully abandon such passions - such a faithful devotee, being determined that his shortcomings will be dispelled by the potency of devotion, gradually comes to abhor those evil passions that enslave him, knowing the havoc they wreak - and he serves Me with love: When his object is pure and sincere, I give him My mercy.”] [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 11.20.27]

“One who has by chance, has got a taste for Me, *jāto-śraddho mat kathāsu*, he has anyhow acquired some taste, *mat kathāsu*, in My talk, in My activities, in My movement, in Me, anyhow got some attraction, *jāto-śraddho mat kathāsu, nirviṇṇaḥ sarvva-karmmasu*. So necessarily, no other temptation can catch him and keep him under it any longer. *Nirviṇṇaḥ sarvva-karmmasu*, indifferent to all other activities and the results and outcome of that. *Veda-duḥkhātmakān kāmān*, he can understand within that all other things they bear some unpleasant reaction. ‘I’m in the midst of so many things already acquired. It is not very easy to leave them at once at my sweet will. Previously I had some obligation, I incurred it consciously, and abruptly I cannot cut off their connection. They won’t let me loose, get free.’ So *veda-duḥkhātmakān kāmān*, he can conceive that these are all pain producing. *Parityāge 'py anīśvaraḥ*, but helpless, can’t make himself free at once from their clutches. Because already incurred debt the Shylocks won’t allow him to get out.”

*tato bhajeta mām prītaḥ śraddhānur dṛḍha-nīscayaḥ
[juṣamāṇas ca tān kāmān duḥkhodarkāmś ca garhayan]*
[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 11.20.28]

“But what *śraddhā*, the pure attraction he has acquired for Me, that is of eternal nature. That cannot be subdued, or that cannot be cut off by any mundane, ordinary attempt. *Tato bhajeta mām prītaḥ śraddhānur dṛḍha-nīscayaḥ*, though undergoing so many different ways and types of suffering, but he goes on with My memory, thinking, aspiration, earnestness for Me. *Śraddhānur dṛḍha-nīscayaḥ*, and as much as he’s compelled to suffer from the pressure of the environment, the firmness in Me becomes more and more sure, invulnerable. And by the tests of all these stands beyond, and grows beyond the jurisdiction of these mundane forces. *Bhajeta mām prītaḥ śraddhānur dṛḍha-nīscayaḥ*, as much pressure comes from outside, so much firmness he feels in the necessity of My help to him. *Tato bhajeta mām prītaḥ śraddhānur dṛḍha-nīscayaḥ*.

Juṣamāṇas ca tān kāmān duḥkhodarkāmś ca garhayan, at the same time he gives his back towards all these pains of the world, and keeps Me in the front, and begins to move onward. *Juṣamāṇas ca tān kāmān duḥkhodarkāmś ca garhayan*. ‘Whatever You like, You can do, will do. I can’t say anything if my Master looks at it. It is His jurisdiction. But I won’t leave my new ideal, I can’t. Whatever may come, it may happen, no mind.’ *Juṣamāṇas ca tān kāmān duḥkhodarkāmś*

ca garhayan. And at the same time he's abusing himself, 'What have I done? What have I done? It is rather the justice that I should be tormented; I should be troubled, in such ways. It is not wrong. It is not wrong. It is the just thing; just dealings have come over me. Because why should I have committed? I entered this wrong alliance, entered into the tribe of the *guṇḍās* for exploitation. The reaction that is coming on over me that is well and good.' Blaming himself, not to blame the environment, not to blame the agents that are causing trouble to us, but the concentration comes within that. *Garhayan*, he's blaming his own self, his own free will, own fate, in this way. That should be, that becomes the nature of his temperament at that time. He does not try to look and place the fault on the shoulders of others, but the whole burden he takes on his shoulders. 'Yes, and the nature, the environment is doing justice to me, the traitor, the ambitious, the oppressor of the environment.' *Duḥkhodarkāś ca garhayan*.

*proktena bhakti-yogena [bhajato mā 'sakṛn muneḥ
kāmā hṛdayā naśyanti sarvve mayi hṛdi sthite]*

[“When an intelligent person engages constantly in worshipping Me through loving devotional service as described by Me, his heart becomes firmly situated in Me. Thus all material desires within his heart are destroyed.”] [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 11.20.29]

When he's in the mood of such consciousness the *bhakti-yoga* becomes *dr̥ḍha*, it is more and more intense, more and more intense. When he began to blame himself, then the intensity of his progress...ke?

Vidagdha-Mādhava: We are going to catch a train to Calcutta, Mahārāja.

Akṣayānanda Mahārāja: Going now?

Vidagdha-Mādhava: Yes, unfortunately.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Vidagdha-Mādhava?

Akṣayānanda Mahārāja: Yes, and Kṛṣṇa Vallabha.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: All right. You have taken *prasādam*? No?

Akṣayānanda Mahārāja: Some urgency to go.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: All right. *Proktena bhakti-yogena bhajato mā 'sakṛn muneḥ*, then his attempt to make progress, to increase his progress, *bhajato mā 'sakṛn muneḥ*, more and more with accelerated motion his intensity grows. *Kāmā hṛdayā naśyanti sarvve mayi hṛdi sthite*, then, by My appearance, gradually, all his internal and external discrepancies, *naśyanti*, gradually destroyed, evaporates. *Sarvve mayi hṛdi sthite*, when by such type of approach he reaches My domain, or rather, I come down, I extend My existence to his heart, then everything disappears, *sarvve mayi hṛdi sthite*. Then:

*bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiś, [chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ
kṣīyante cāśya karmāṇi, mayi dṛṣṭe 'khilātmani]*

["The knot in the heart is pierced, all misgivings are cut to pieces and the chain of fruitive actions is terminated when I am seen as the Supreme Personality of Godhead."]

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 11.20.30]

All the ties and entanglements, corners, angles, all vanish, crookedness vanishes. Straight, plain, graphic, spacious, all-embracing temperament he finds in the midst of; his atmosphere changes.

In the meantime I want to mention a practical experience. One day I was sitting in that chair, suddenly was thinking something, I felt some higher subjective sphere has come down and surrounded my existence. I felt, what is this? I never experienced, I had some peep from far off, but a new conscious atmosphere has come down and it has covered, surrounded my whole existence, whole knowledge. What is this? There was perhaps Arjunabhodi [?] and other gentleman, I could not but tell them, 'Just now I feel the higher, I consider myself to be some subjective existence, but some higher subjective existence has come and surrounded my whole existence, whole feeling. Is it the *ratha* that came for Ajāmila? This next suggestion came to me, that the soul enters into a *ratha* and if this atmosphere, how it is covering my whole existence, conception of existence, take me anywhere; I shall have to go there. My whole conception of my own self is surrounded. And wherever it will go I have no other way but to go within, I'm within that. And I find that it is a living thing. It has got its choice. It has got its freedom. Then I had some new experience, the *svarūpa-śakti* atmosphere, and I am, just when the earth moves, the tree, anything also, automatically has to move, so, new soil.

Bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiś, all the ties, with so many attractions, so many things of different type of things of different promise, different achievement, at once dissolved. At once dissolved, no necessity, no necessity of them in this land. *Hṛdaya-granthiś, chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ*. *Hṛdayenābhyanujñāto* [*Manu*, 2.1] Internal approval comes to ensure that where you have come this is your land. *Chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ*, no room of any doubt, all your hankerings are more than fulfilled here you'll find, *sarva-saṁśayāḥ*. 'I was searching, my whole body was searching only for me.'

In *Vaiṣṇava-padāvali* [Anthology of Vaiṣṇava Songs, by Jñāna Dāsa], there is an expression: *prati aṅga lāge kānde prati aṅga mora*. In *mādhurya-rasa*, where Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is *Śakti* She says that, "My every limb is crying for the respective limb of My Lord. Not only My Self, but every part of My body earnestly aspiring for the other corresponding part of My Master's."

So, *bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiś, chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ*, every part stands as witness, 'Yes, we have come, have attained which we were searching after; the whole body and whole unit of the body; wholesale satisfaction. That this is my soil, this is my home; this is my home. The every atom of my body will say like that, that *chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ*. No trace of any doubt will be found, no room for that. But every atom they will find their fulfilment. 'It is my home, it is my home. I am in home comfort I find.' *Kṣīyante cāsya karmāṇi*, and also the force of reaction won't come to trouble him, to drag him down, or attract him towards the back. That is also cut off. *Mayi dṛṣṭe 'khilātmani*. "And I am the fullest of the full perfection, and he will be able to feel everywhere My help, My assistance, My friendship. Wherever he will cast his glance, or move, or live, My friendship he will be able to trace. I am here, his friend is here. The friend is there, *mayi dṛṣṭe 'khilātmani*."

That should be the course of our life, the direction towards which we want to go. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says like that. Sweet, sweet home, sweet home; home, you are the child of that soil. This is, in one word that is the goal. Why is that the goal, highest goal? Because that is your home; *svarūpe sabāra haya, golokete sthiti*, this one word is sufficient to attract you. You are wandering in the foreign land, and that is your home. Home comfort you will get there and you won't be able to deny that. So back to God, back to home, back to Godhead.

To avoid the Christian conception of God, the Godhead, our Guru Mahārāja Prabhupāda used the word Godhead, because *bhagavatā*. God means a particular conception of the same. So Godhead, what is at the back of the conception of God, that is Godhead; that is Svayaṁ Bhagavān - Bhagavān Himself, the highest conception, highest conception of God, that is Godhead, it is meant by that. So not back to God, but back to Godhead. That is the necessity of the name of the paper was given from such consideration. Back to God, back to home, it is a proverb perhaps, it is coming from previous time. But Back to Godhead that means that Svayaṁ Bhagavān which is the highest conception of God. So back to Godhead, and that is the home is there, home is there.

So, we are running hither and thither, we have got no principle, no principle of life, unsettled, so our position is very sad, no rest from here, from one, two, three, five, six. In this way, but that is a troublesome life. I can't put my faith anywhere. That means I can't find any friend anywhere. Friendless, I am moving friendless. I am moving amongst the foreigners, enemies, sometimes. But I must have some friend, some friendly atmosphere. I must attain such a position that I can fetch full faith; I can believe, I can trust, such company, such company. Otherwise my life will be miserable, miserable. Everywhere, what direction I shall cast my glance I can't trust, I can't trust, all inimical. That is a particular prison house to live in that atmosphere, to live in a prison house, all uncertain, all untrustworthy. That is a very deplorable position. So, by God's grace it should come to us, that *śraddhā*. Not only I can trust, believe, but I shall have to, cannot but show my regard. Such a higher positioned life; that is *gurum evābhigachet*.

When we suffer from this uncertainty to the extreme, then we hanker after Guru, reliable source. Not only I can put something to him, we can trust him, but Guru means guardian who is a well-wisher of me more than I am of myself. Guardian means a friend who thinks more about me than I myself think about me, who knows about my welfare more than I do, to have a guardian, friend, Guru.

So Narottama Thākura says, *āśraya laiya bhaje tānre kṛṣṇa nāhi tyaje*: "If I get a bona fide guardian then my future is assured." Kṛṣṇa cannot dismiss him so easily, because my guardian has some solid position there; and if I can enter into the domain of his care, that of my guardian, then my position is assured. So, *āśraya laiya bhaje tānre kṛṣṇa nāhi tyaje, āra saba mare akāraṇa*: The others who have not yet been able to tie himself with the holy feet of his guardian, Guru, then his position is uncertain, and he may be enticed by any agent to any direction, his future is deplorable.

So to have a real ideal in life, and also a living guardian, that is real guardian, to have, if we can catch through our *śraddhā*, then almost, our future is more or less assured. Only my duty towards my guardian, my Gurudeva; that will be my lookout and the others will be done automatically. So, to run through the length and breadth of this wide world of this land of exploitation, nothing but exploitation of different natures, of different planes is visible, is existing. So only through *śraddhā* can we connect us with our highest goal and achievement and fulfilment; that should be solved. Then, real life begins. Otherwise like a ship without rudder that can be drifted away by the sea storm this side, that side, no end, endless, no meaning; no value. Hare Kṛṣṇa. Gaura Hari. Nitāi. Any question?

Devotee: Guru Mahārāja, you mentioned that the material world is like a prison house. Are the demigods such as Brahmā and Indra, are they also prisoners?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: They are also prisoners, just as there are officers in the prison house. The prisoner also may become an officer in that jail government. Prison government, senior and qualified prisoners they are also given some chance of a post. Is it not?

Akṣayānanda Mahārāja: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: So they are like that. They are also imprisoned but their position is a little higher and so they are given some duty. Just as a cowboy keeps his cow, or a horseman keeps his horse, in that way. But they are also prisoners.

Gaura Hari. Gaura Hari. Gaura Hari. Gaura Hari. Gaura Hari. Nitāi Caitanya. Nitāi Caitanya. Nitāi Caitanya. Nitāi Caitanya. Dayāl. Nitāi Gaura Haribol. Nitāi Gaura Haribol.

The man who went away with Vidagdha, was he a newcomer?

Akṣayānanda Mahārāja: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Newcomer, for the first time he came here?

Akṣayānanda Mahārāja: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: What is his name?

Akṣayānanda Mahārāja: Kṛṣṇa Vallabha.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Kṛṣṇa Vallabha, yes. Who's disciple? Swāmī Mahārāja?

Akṣayānanda Mahārāja: That we do not know Mahārāja; new to us also.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Gaura Sundara. And what part he comes from you also don't know?
Nitāi Gaura Haribol. Nitāi Gaura Hari. Nitāi Gaura Haribol. Nitāi Gaura Haribol.

Devotee: Mahārāja, in *Bhāgavatam* it says there are fourteen planetary systems.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Fourteen planetary systems.

Devotee: And yet...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: *Caudda bhuvan* ?

Akṣayānanda Mahārāja: *Caudda bhuvan*. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā*, 12.16]

Devotee: ...when we see the sky at night we see so many stars and planets that it seems as though the number is unlimited...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: It is not that, not of that type.

Devotee: Not of that type?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: No. Not all physical, but from physical to subtle, from consciousness towards this matter. The gradation from finer to finer, in this way it is going to consciousness, the gap between soul and matter, to fill up the gap from gross to subtle, then that is gross, further, subtle. In this way it is going to vanish in the conscious idea, from consciousness and unconsciousness, the hierarchy, the steps, from *jara* to *cetana*, from matter to spirit. So many steps, fine, finer, finest, in this way the conception is there. Bhūr, Bhuvar, Svar, Mahar, Janar, Tapar, Satya, then Virajā, then Brahmaloaka: in Brahman we find the real existence of soul. And from Virajā this material consciousness...

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