

His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Deva Goswāmī Mahārāja

81.12.22.C_81.12.23.A

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: So near, so near, it is impossible for us even to dream of. But it is possible by the grace of Mahāprabhu and Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*. What more we can expect for our prospect. Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol.

Mahāprabhu says, “Don’t bother yourself with the enquiry in knowledge.”

Or to become master as in the present scientific civilisation, that you want everything under your control, the whole must come under your control; you will be the biggest controller, that is *karmī*. But the *jñānī* he wants to know every corner, nook and corner, where it is, what it is. No necessity of that. No charm for that, but only heartfelt service there of the most loving Lord; that is what is our prayer. So Mahāprabhu has eliminated the *karmī*, the *jñānī*, and *jñāna sunya bhakti*, that is a peculiar thing, *jñāna sunya bhakti*, no enquiry, no doubt. To satisfy, to relieve the doubt, knowledge is necessary to relieve the doubt. But doubt is unreal to the straight service. That should be left outside.

Faith, faith should guide us, or protect us. Under the protection of the faith we shall live and move, optimistic. Faith is optimistic. Knowledge is suspicious. Knowledge is suspicious, apprehension. Hare Kṛṣṇa. Scepticism, background is scepticism, knowledge. Faith is natural. Knowledge is indirect. Faith is direct. Knowledge, enquiry, is indirect, negative side, and not faith. Negative side of faith is knowledge: wants to verify the faith, verification of the faith. That we don’t like. We want to be born and die in faith, in the area of faith. In faith, a gentleman never deceives anyone. He won’t like to live in the plane of scepticism, doubts, and enquiring satisfaction, or this calculation. The normal tendency in faith, the normal tendency is not to deceive anyone. And that land we want to live in, where in dream also deception is impossible, can’t enter into that area, deception, verification, knowing everything, all these things. Everything automatic: in that plane we want to live, *jñāna sunya bhakti*, *śraddhā – śraddhā ratir bhaktir anukramiṣyati*.

[*sataṁ prasaṅgān mama vīrya-saṁvido, bhavanti hṛt-karṇa-rasāyanāḥ kathāḥ
taj-joṣaṅād āśv apavarga-vartmani, śraddhā ratir bhaktir anukramiṣyati*]

[“One will rapidly progress on the path of liberation, and naturally will develop firm faith, attraction and devotion, when he cultivates the activity of engaging in discussions about My glorious pastimes in the association of pure devotees. Such activities are very nourishing to the ear and heart.”] [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 3.25.25]

The real good lives in that quarter. He does not allow himself to be a victim of your doubt and enquiry and scepticism. He does not want. He does not like that he’ll behold a position to you of your scepticism, “Whether I am, or whether I am not, You will be deceived, all these.” This poverty of heart! Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol. Nitāi Gaura Haribol. So generous, in the deceiving plane: *mahā-vadanyāya*.

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

Nitāi Gaura Haribol. Nitāi Gaura Haribol. Nitāi Gaura Haribol. Nitāi Gaura Haribol.

Acyutānanda wrote an article hearing from me and that was outed, published in *Back to Godhead*, and that was again further published in *Back to Godhead*, and again published in our *Gauḍīya Darśana*, the last, Govinda Mahārāja. _____ [?]

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāja: _____ [?]

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: _____ [?] That was very much appreciated in America I was told. Gaura Haribol. Gaura Haribol. _____ [?]
Nitāi. Nitāi. Nitāi. Nitāi. Nitāi. Nitāi. Nitāi. Nitāi Gaura Haribol. _____ [?]

...

Any question?

Devotee: Mahārāja, you said something yesterday about *jñāna miśrā bhakti*. So one devotee told me that Prahāda Mahārāja he's a *jñāna miśrā bhakta*, but we thought from reading *Bhāgavatam* that he is pure devotee.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: No, he's *śuddha-bhakta*, Prahāda. In *Bṛhat-Bhāgavatāmṛta* we find that in the course of the realization of *śuddha bhakti*, a devotee is visiting different places.

First, *karma-miśrā bhakti* in Allahabad, a *brāhmaṇa*, moneyed man, on the occasion of Kumbha Mela, arranged for services of the different types of *sādhus*, then *yajña*, and finally with *saṅkīrtana* he finished his function there. And the devotee began his life there, he saw, mainly *karma-kāṇḍa*, but *sādhu sevā*, and ultimately the finishing touch with *Nāma-saṅkīrtana*, approached that gentleman, "You are very fortunate you are doing such and such things, utilization of your money and your caste, engaged in such holy engagement. Very fortunate you are."

And then he told, "What I am doing? This is nothing. You just go to see the fortune of Indradyumna Mahārāja. He's distributing the *prasādam* of Jagannātha in a great style. And how grand is the process worshipping of Nārāyaṇa there. Go and you appreciate."

He went there, and also found the king extensively engaged with all his resources for the worship of Nārāyaṇa there; Jagannātha, and approached him, "You are so fortunate in this world."

"What we can do *brāhmaṇa*? This is nothing. But if you just want to see how devotion should be practised, you go to Brahmā there."

And he went to Brahmā, and there also this *karma miśrā bhakti* in its highest campaign he found, Indra and Brahmā, to Indra and then to Brahmā. So in *śruti* also in praise of Brahmā, "You are most fortunate."

Brahmā guided him. And then perhaps it is the position of Nārada. Nārada approached Brahmā. Nārada was Brahmā's son and also disciple. He told, "How great you are. How fortunate you are. You are entrusted by Nārāyaṇa Himself for the management of the whole of the *brahmāṇḍa*. And sometimes you are visiting Him for the guidance of the administration of the *brahmāṇḍa*. You are so fortunate. In *śruti* also we find some portion which is engaged in singing your glories."

Then Brahmā felt a little disturbed. "What do you say Nārada? You are pumping me, my false pride. Did I not say to you that I am nothing? I am a small creature in the hand of Nārāyaṇa. Rather, I am engaged in external activity. I have no time that I can give to my devotional aspect

or self in the interest of my devotional life. My Lord has rather deceived me, engaging me in such a busy matter. I am unfortunate. Rather you go to Mahādeva, Śiva, he does not care for anything of this world. He is aloof, indifferent, and he has got his aim toward Nārāyaṇa. His devotion is towards Rāmacandra, he's very fond of Rāma *Nāma*. Parvatī Devī, she's also helping him in discharging his devotional life, very happy."

And then he went to Mahādeva. Nārada began to chant in praise of Śiva, that, "He's the master of the world, and the *Vedas* also sing glories to him, so he holds the highest position, in this way."

Then Śiva he was rather very excited, and a little angry, "What do you say Nārada? I am more indifference and knowledge, and penance, these holds my better portion. What little I have got for devotional service to Nārāyaṇa that is very negligible. Sometimes even I have got such apathetic spirit to Nārāyaṇa that I go to fight with Him, in favour of my favourite disciples. So I am disgusted with my position. Penance, power, *siddhi*, then indifference to the world, that is my fate."

So up to this, this is *jñāna miśrā bhakti*. Brahmā is the ideal of *karma miśrā*, and Mahādeva is the type of *jñāna miśrā bhakti*. Some sort of affinity for an independent position. Not cent percent acceptance of the slavery of Nārāyaṇa, that is the service of Nārāyaṇa.

"If you really want to experience what is *śuddha bhakti* go to Prahlāda. There you will find *śuddha-bhakti*."

In this way it has been directed to us to trace *śuddha-bhakti* beginning with Prahlāda, because Prahlāda does not want anything, *na sa bhṛtyaḥ sa vai vaṇik*, he says.

[*nānyathā te 'khila-guro, ghaṭeta karuṇātmanah
yas ta āśiṣa āśāste, na sa bhṛtyaḥ sa vai vaṇik*]

[Prahāda Mahārāja states: "Otherwise, O my Lord, O supreme instructor of the entire world, You are so kind to Your devotee that You could not induce him to do something un-beneficial for him. On the other hand, one who desires some material benefit in exchange for devotional service cannot be Your pure devotee. Indeed, he is no better than a merchant who wants profit in exchange for service."] [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 7.10.4]

"Whoever is doing something for the satisfaction of Nārāyaṇa wants anything in return, he's not a servant. He's a merchant, giving and taking, giving something and to take some price for that."

So, Prahlāda is a *śuddha bhakti*, and only through the devotee of Nārāyaṇa one can have *śuddha bhakti*. All these peculiar achievements in the devotional world we can find from Prahlāda Mahārāja, *śuddha bhakta*. But that is of *śanta rasa*: not actual service, but perfect adherence to Nārāyaṇa under all circumstances. Whatever be the unfavourable condition in the environment, but he's standing to the faith that Nārāyaṇa is all in all, and He's our master. So, Prahlāda, *śanta rasa*, and the *catuḥsana* also to be reckoned there, *śanta rasa bhakti*.

Then when Nārada went to Prahlāda, Prahlāda is Nārada's disciple; still to test, Nārada was

approaching, to give us the measurement of the standard in the devotional world. Nārada approaching Prahlāda, says that, “I have come to see you Prahlāda. Mahādeva also he appreciates your position. You are really the devotee of Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa. So you are very fortunate. I have come to see how you are.”

Prahlāda told, “Gurudeva, you are all in all. You have come to test me. What you say, I have got by your grace. I am born in a demon family, so the demoniac qualities have not left me exclusively. Don’t you know that in Naimiṣāraṇya I went to fight with Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu? I repent for that. But what to do? He has given me such position. I can’t have the privilege of direct service to Him; only mentally I think of Him, that He’s everything. But I am devoid of rendering practical service to Him. That fortune I have not got. Hanumān, he’s really a devotee. How fortunate he is; what grace he has, he gave to Rāmacandra. I envy his situation, but what to do? His dispensing must be absolute. That must be accepted by us. But Hanumān’s position is really an enviable one. How attached to his master he is, and what magnitude of service he has done for his master.”

Then from there, Nārada went to visit Hanumān in _____ [?] When Nārada approached towards Hanumān’s residence, taking _____ [?] Rāma Rāma Rāma Rāma Rāma, Hanumān suddenly hearing the Name of his Master from some other quarter, he jumped towards that direction, and even in the sky, he embraced Nārada. “O! Who is helping me to hear the Rāma *Nāma* after so long a time? The song Rāma *Nāma* is enlivening me. I was dying without hearing Rāma *Nāma*.”

And tears were running down from the eyes of both of them. And then Nārada came to Hanumān’s quarters, and began to praise his fortune. “How fortunate you are Hanumān. You serve Rāmacandra so much intimately and you do not know anything but your master Rāmacandra. How great service you render to Rāmacandra. That has become an ideal for the whole of the world, in this way.”

Hanumān he told, “Yes, Rāmacandra, by His grace, I was able to do something, but it is all His grace. I am nothing. No worth. But now that Rāmacandra has come as Kṛṣṇa. But I can’t like any other incarnation but Rāmacandra. But I hear from a distance that how Kṛṣṇa, who is Rāmacandra Himself, He is showing His favour to the Pāṇḍavas. Pāṇḍavas are very fortunate. Like an intimate friend He’s dealing with the Pāṇḍavas. So, I have great appreciation for the fortune of the Pāṇḍavas.” In this way, he began to praise the Pāṇḍavas’ fortune.

Then Nārada, leaving him, went to the Pāṇḍavas, and there found Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja on the throne, and began to sing the glories of the devotees and the Pāṇḍavas; how they are friendly in their relationship with Kṛṣṇa; how fortunate they are.

Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja came out, “What do you say Devarṣi? Of course Kṛṣṇa favours us, we can’t deny that, but what is our position? We have no position at all. On the other hand, this I feel every now and then, that for us, by looking at the example of us, the Pāṇḍavas, the people won’t come to serve Kṛṣṇa, because they will calculate that being such intimate friends of Kṛṣṇa, the Pāṇḍavas, the whole of their life they had to pass through different troubles and dangers. So to become Kṛṣṇa *bhakta* means the whole life to suffer under trouble. So I am afraid that thinking of us, one will not venture to approach Kṛṣṇa, that, “Devotion to Kṛṣṇa means suffering like the Pāṇḍavas in the whole of their life.”

Devaṛṣi Nārada told, “No, no, we don’t look from that angle of vision. But what is danger or affliction to Pāṇḍava, what is the meaning of that? That is the messenger that Kṛṣṇa is coming. When there is danger with the Pāṇḍava is nothing but the messenger to say that Kṛṣṇa is coming to you. So your mother also told:

*vipadaḥ santu tāḥ śaśvat, tatra tatra jagad-guro
bhavato darśanam yat syād, apunar bhava-darśanam*

[Queen Kuntī Devī prayed to Kṛṣṇa: “I wish that all those calamities (poisoning, arson, cannibalism, the vicious assembly, exile in the forest, the battle), would occur again and again so that we could have Your *darśana* again and again, for seeing You means that we will no longer see repeated births and deaths.”] [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 1.8.25]

“That famous statement of Kuntī Devī, your mother, stands there. She says, Let those dangers come, may visit me always. I don’t care for that, because that brings Kṛṣṇa very closer towards us. So, we rather like the danger which brings Kṛṣṇa to our intimate and closer position.”

So, Pāṇḍava Yudhiṣṭhira says, “Yes, Kṛṣṇa visits us now and then, in the time of our dire need. But how the Yadus they are fortunate. Kṛṣṇa is always with them. How they do not care for any other power in the world. So, they are so proud of their Master Kṛṣṇa and how closely connected with them, very fortunate.”

Then, Nārada went to the Yadus and then began to chant many things in their praise.

They told, “What do you say, Devaṛṣi Nārada? He is with us of course, and at any time of great danger, He wants relief for us, but how much do we care for Him? We are living independently, careless about His existence. But among us, Uddhava, he is really His favourite. Whatever Kṛṣṇa does He consults with Uddhava, and whatever His very confidential things, Uddhava is present there; and in every case, He is very thick and thin with Uddhava. We envy his fortune, Uddhava.”

Then Nārada went to Uddhava, Uddhava hearing, “You are the most favourite of Kṛṣṇa; Kṛṣṇa says, ‘Even, what to speak of other devotees, even He holds you higher than His own life. You are in such higher position, so intimate, even more than His own life,’ He says.”

“Yes, of course, out of His causeless benevolence, He might have said like that. But I don’t think that I am His real devotee, especially after visiting Vṛndāvana, all my pride has been melted away by that sort of devotee. The serving spirit, the intensity of the love towards Kṛṣṇa I found in Vṛndāvana. Devaṛṣi I am nowhere. You know that statement. It is recorded in *Bhāgavatam*, where I disclosed my heart fully. What quality of love I found in the damsels of Vṛndāvana towards Kṛṣṇa, that I could not but aspire, that I want to be born in Vṛndāvana in the form of a shrub or a grass so that the feet dust of those divine damsels may easily touch my head. So, what do you say Devaṛṣi? If you would like to see real devotion, real love divine, you go to Vṛndāvana. Don’t put us in awkward position saying that we possess devotion to Kṛṣṇa. This is rather a mockery. That we are devotees of Kṛṣṇa, this is - to hear this, to say this - that is a mockery, a foundation-less utterance. A devotee proper of Lord Kṛṣṇa I found in Vṛndāvana.”

In this way, Sanātana Goswāmī tries his best to take us to the path; and the gradual development of devotion towards Kṛṣṇa.

So, what was your question? Prahlāda. Prahlāda has been accepted as the basis of *śuddha bhakti*, the beginning of *śuddha bhakti*, because there is *śanta rasa*. Above that there is *dāsyā rasa*. Above that there is *dāsyā rasa*, Hanumān, *sākhya rasa*, Pāṇḍavas, and Uddhava, somewhat *sākhya* connecting with *vātsalya* and *mādhurya*. In this way, the adherence, the devotion, our near adherence towards Kṛṣṇa runs in this way, to Vṛndāvana, and the acme is there. In *Rāmānanda-saṁvāda* also we find. *Tebhyas tāḥ paśu-pāla-paṅkaja-dṛśas-tābhyo 'pi sā rādhikā*.

[*karmibhyaḥ parito hareḥ priyatayā vyaktim yayur jñāninas*
tebhyo jñāna-vimukta-bhakti-paramāḥ premaika-niṣṭhās tataḥ
tebhyas tāḥ paśu-pāla-paṅkaja-dṛśas tābhyo 'pi sā rādhikā
preṣṭhā tadvad iyaṁ tadīya-sarasī tām nāśrayet kaḥ kṛtī]

[“There are those in the world who regulate their tendency for exploitation in accordance with the scriptural rules and thereby seek gradual elevation to the spiritual domain. However, superior to them are those wise men who, having given up the tendency to lord over others, attempt to dive deep into the realm of consciousness. But far superior to them are the pure devotees who are free from any mundane ambitions and are liberated from knowledge, not by knowledge, having achieved divine love. They have gained entrance into the land of dedication and are engaged there spontaneously in the Lord’s loving service. Among all devotees, however, the *gopīs* are the highest, for they have forsaken everyone, including their families, and everything, including the strictures of the *Vedas*, and have taken complete shelter at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, accepting Him as their only protection. But among all the *gopīs*, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī reigns supreme. For Kṛṣṇa left the company of millions of *gopīs* during the *rasa* dance to search for Her alone. She is so dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa that the pond in which She bathes is His very favourite place. Who but a madman would not aspire to render service, under the shelter of superior devotees, in that most exalted of all holy places.”] [*Upadeśāmṛta*, 10]

And Rādhārāṇī’s devotional service is categorically different from that of the *gopīs*. Then what type of serving spirit is to be found there, that is unaccountable, inconceivable.

Śrutibhir vimṛgyām [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 10.47.61] The *Vedas*, the *ṛṣīs* that saw the *Veda mantram*, that is eternal, they are not creators of *mantram*, of *Veda*, they’re only seers. They are feelers of the current, and they are noting. That is *śruti*, the knowledge which is contained in the *śruti*, in the *Veda*, that is not created by anything, that is eternal; and passing, they are onlookers, and they are recorders. *Śrutibhir vimṛgyām*. Those *śruti*, *Veda* that have come to reveal the fundamental truth underlying the whole creation, they are only inquisitive of something, they’re inquiring about something. What is that thing they do not know. The highest revelation whatever, so long come down in the world, they are only seeking, searching for reality, but they have not come in connection with. *Śrutibhir vimṛgyām*.

That is Kṛṣṇa *bhakti*, Vraja *bhakti*. And Mahāprabhu came, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* came with the quality of that type of adherence to the truth. Unconditional surrender and adherence and searching and a serving attitude, seeking that fortune of serving the truth. Such a higher type of truth is existence, that if we can be a seeker after that we may consider ourselves to be the holders of the highest fortune, the possessors of the highest fortune. We can really post themselves in the path leading to that truth.

And self-surrender, that is the very basis and the degree of surrender. Surrender, *ātma-nivedanam*, whatever beautiful and valuable thing we come across, we cannot but surrender

ourselves to that. That is the criterion. If anything higher we come across within our vicinity, our appreciation means our surrendering to that. So according to the degree of surrender, we are to measure that what sort of quality of the truth we have come across. That can be traced, that can be measured only according to the degree of our surrender. That what sort of truth we have come in connection with? That can be measured only by the intensity of our surrender, how much we could surrender to what I have come in connection with.

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

Nitāi Gaura Haribol. Nitāi Gaura Haribol. Nitāi Gaura Haribol.

Can't come back: and they know that no satisfaction one can feel that I have got. No trace of such satisfaction that I have achieved. Never! Degree and magnitude! The sweetness, the inner sweetness of the truth and its infinite characteristic is such, it can attract to the highest degree.

The *yajña patnis*, when the wives of the *brāhmaṇas* in the *yajña* some ladies are going to have *darśana* of Kṛṣṇa and one *brāhmaṇa* came and opposed this, stopped his wife. "No. I won't allow you to go to see Kṛṣṇa." He stopped her body but the life expired. The life expired, the dead body remained there, life ran, so much attraction she felt to have a *darśana* of Kṛṣṇa. Immediately lifeless body stood there and the life vanished.

Gaura Hari. Beauty, Reality the Beautiful, beauty absorbs us. Māyāvādīs, they say that the Brahman absorbs the individual soul so much that we cannot have any trace of that. But this is artificial conception of absorption. The real idea of absorption, the reality, the existence of the seer of the truth is not done away with. It is there but with life he's absorbed, so absorbed and such attraction that maintaining separate existence also always one full of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the highest degree, maintaining; showing to the world. Hare Kṛṣṇa. That oneness of Māyāvādī, that is of course crossed in the beginning.

brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā, na śocati na kāṅkṣati
[*samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu, mad-bhaktim labhate parām*]

["The spotlessly pure-hearted and self-satisfied soul who has attained to his conscious divine nature neither grieves nor craves for anything. Seeing all beings equally (in the conception of My supreme energy), he gradually achieves supreme devotion (*prema-bhakti*) unto Me."]

[*Bhagavad-gītā*, 18.54]

There it is eliminated, 'that I am one with Brahman.' But here the attraction, union and separation, and different *līlā* pastimes, but still oneness cannot but think anything else. The *līlā* to maintain the stage and the process of *līlā* is – can be kept, can be maintained. No complete absorption and oneness and everything finished. Not that thing. *Līlā* is also eternal. His Name, His *rūpa*, His *guṇa*, His *parikara*, His *līlā*, all eternal, it is a dynamic thing not a static one. Union in separation also we are in union. In every stage the unity is there. But still because the *līlā*, the pastimes, the dynamic character requires this to be such. Otherwise, His self-giving, and devotees' God-attainment would have been impossible.

Gaura Haribol. Nitāi. Nitāi Gaura Haribol. Nitāi Gaura Haribol. Nitāi Gaura Haribol.

Nitāi Gaura Haribol. Nitāi Gaura Haribol. Nitāi Gaura Haribol. Nitāi Gaura Haribol.

Akṣayānanda Mahārāja, how is your health? Some trouble in the ear?

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

Śaraṇāgati. When I entered Gauḍīya Maṭha first I got *Śaraṇāgati* and that was so sweet to

me that I purchased some copies and distributed amongst my friends. Only four *paisa* price, small booklet, four *paisa*, and I distributed amongst my friends.

Akṣayānanda Mahārāja: *Śaraṇāgati* for four *paisa*.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: *Śaraṇāgati* compiled by Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in Bengali, *Śaraṇāgati*, a small booklet, four *paisa* price at that time, I distributed amongst my friends. So sweet it touched my heart. Here is Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa *kathā* is Kṛṣṇa Himself. Who can speak about Kṛṣṇa, *Adhokṣaja*, *Śaraṇāgati*.

Akṣayānanda Mahārāja: We have your book also with *tikā*; that you have given some *tikā*. I have that book also of *Śaraṇāgati*, with your own comments there.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura one *bhāṣya*.

Akṣayānanda Mahārāja: Yes. It's very helpful.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: I composed it in Nandagram where Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābājī was there. I lived...

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