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REJECTING SUKRACHARYA

*His Divine Grace A. C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*



Regarding Bali Maharaja, he was born in the same atheistic family as Maharaja Prahlad. He happened to be the grandson of Maharaja Prahlad, and just like his great grand-father, Hiranyakasipu, he was very powerful. As there was animosity between the demigods and the demons, Bali Maharaja also defeated the demigods several times, and was occupying all the planets. At that time, Vamanadev appeared as the son of Kasyapa Muni. Bali Maharaja was very charitably disposed. Sometimes atheists are also charitable.... Bali Maharaja was that type of man. Under certain circumstances he was not averse to giving charity and performing other pious activities. He was being guided by his spiritual master, Sukracharya. "Śukra" means "semen". In other words, one who claims to be an *ācārya* on the principle of being born of a brahmin father may be called *śukrācārya* — an *ācārya* or preacher on the right of heredity,

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not by disciplic succession. In India there are still superstitions that one should be initiated by someone from such a *śukrācārya* family. They are generally called *jāti-gosāñi*. *Jāti-gosāñi* means "caste spiritual master". All over India, especially in Bengal, this *jāti-gosāñi* spiritual mastership is very prevalent. But a *gosvāmī* [*gosāñi*] really means one who is the master of the influence of the different senses, namely the influence of the tongue, the influence of the mind, the influence of anger, the influence of the belly, the influence of the genital, and the influence of talking. So one who is the master of these influential webs of sense gratification is called a *gosvāmī*. One does not become a *gosvāmī* by heredity. So Sukracharya put himself forward as such a *gosvāmī* spiritual master. And because he had many mystic powers he was a very influential spiritual master among the demons.

When Vamanadev appeared, Bali Maharaja was attracted by the beauty of that dwarf brahmin, and as he was charitably disposed he wanted to give him some charity. But Sukracharya, being elevated in mystic yogic powers, could understand that Vamanadev was Vishnu. In order to favor the demigods,



he had come there to cheat Bali Maharaja in the form of begging charity. Bali Maharaja was puffed up with material vanity, and Vamanadev — as he is Vishnu, who is all-peaceful — without interrupting his attitude, approached him in the form of a brahmin, who has a right to beg something from the princely order. The princely order is always disposed to give charity to the brahmins.

As the spiritual master of Bali, Sukracharya taught him that everything should be offered to Vishnu. But when Vishnu actually appeared before Bali, Sukracharya was afraid of Bali Maharaja's charitable disposition. He warned Bali Maharaja that this Vamanadev had come there to take everything from him in the form of charity; therefore he should not promise to give him anything. Bali Maharaja rejected this advice because he was formerly instructed that everything should be offered to Vishnu. So why is Sukracharya now asking him not to act upon his previous instructions? Sukracharya was afraid for his own position. He was living at the cost of Bali Maharaja, so if Vamanadev took everything away from Bali Maharaja, he was thinking, how would he live? The materialist does not want to serve or give to Vishnu because he thinks that by giving to Vishnu he will be put into a poverty-stricken condition. This is a materialistic estimation. But actually it is not a fact, as it will be evidenced by the dealings between Bali Maharaja and Vamanadev.

Materialists, although they profess to be devotees of Vishnu, are always careful to maintain their material status quo first, and then please Vishnu.... Therefore persons in Krishna consciousness are greater than such materialistic worshipers. Materialistic persons perform all pious activities or devotional activities for some material gain, and as soon as there is any hindrance in the path of material gain, they at once become demons. Therefore *bhakti* means without any material desires. That is the sign of a pure devotee. He has no motive to satisfy his material desires by devotional service....

Why is Bali Maharaja considered a *mahājana*? Because he wanted to serve Vishnu by disobeying his spiritual master. As explained above, Sukracharya was an hereditary spiritual master by seminal discharge. But Bali Maharaja revolted against this stereotyped seminal-succession spiritual master,

and therefore he is a *mahājana*. Srila Jiva Goswami has described in his *Krama-sandarbha* that one should be anxious to accept a spiritual master who is bona fide in spiritual knowledge. And if need be, one should relinquish the connection of a hereditary spiritual master and accept a real, bona fide spiritual master.

So when Sukracharya advised him contrary to his previous instructions — specifically he checked Bali Maharaja in the matter of worshipping Vishnu — Sukracharya at once fell down from the position of spiritual master. One who is not a devotee of Vishnu cannot become a spiritual master. A brahmin may be very expert in the matter of performing Vedic rituals, accepting charity, and distributing wealth. All these are the exalted qualities of the brahmins. But the Vedic injunction is that in spite of possessing all these qualifications, if one is against Lord Vishnu, he cannot be a spiritual master.

So when Sukracharya advised Bali Maharaja against Vishnu, Sukracharya at once became unqualified as a spiritual master. Bali Maharaja disobeyed such an unqualified spiritual master, and therefore he is accepted as a *mahājana*. *Mahājana* means a personality whose footsteps should be followed. So, his exemplary behavior in rejecting a non-*vaiṣṇava* spiritual master is ideal, and he is therefore considered a *mahājana*. ❀

— Letter to Satsvarup Das. 3 July 1968.

A NEWSPAPER EVERY SECOND

*From the Life of
Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
Thakur Prabhupada*

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur established many presses and printed thousands of books. In 1928 he even established a daily newspaper called the Nadia Prakash. When challenged how it was possible to publish a daily newspaper about God, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur explained how this world was a small place, only one quarter of the creation, compared to the spiritual world, which comprises the other three quarters. He further replied, "Here in this world there are thousands of newspapers and magazines reporting the stale, repetitious happenings of this limited space. So for reporting the news of the unlimited spiritual realm, concerning the eternal, ever-fresh Supreme Personality of Godhead,

we could publish a newspaper at every second, what to speak of daily.” ❀

—Rupa Vilas Das. *A Ray of Vishnu*. New Jaipur Press. Washington MS, USA. 1988. (p. 158)

THE PREVIOUS BIRTH OF HARIDAS THAKUR

*Srila Murari Gupta's
Śrī Caitanya-carita 1.4.8-12*

*śrīmat-śrī-haridāso 'bhūn muner aṁśaḥ śṛṇuṣva tat
kathitam nāga-daṣṭena brāhmaṇena yathā-purā*

As described by the brahmin Nagadashta, Sri Haridas Thakur was the expansion of a sage from an ancient time. Please hear of this.

*ādaḥ muni-varaḥ śrīmān-rāmo nāma mahā-tapāḥ
drāviḍe vaiṣṇava-kṣetre so 'vātsīt putra-vatsalāḥ*

The exalted sage and great ascetic of the name Sriman Rama lived in a place of pilgrimage for *vaiṣṇavas* in the southern part of India. He was very affectionate to his son.

*tasya putreṇa tulasīm prakṣālyā bhājane śubhe
sthāpitā sā 'patad bhūmāv aprakṣālyā punaś ca tām
pitre 'dadāt punaḥ so 'pi śrī-rāmākhyo mahā-muniḥ
dadau bhagavate tena jāto 'sau yavane kule*

Once, his son washed a *tulasī* leaf and placed it on the auspicious foodstuffs, which had been prepared for offering to the family deity. That leaf fell to the ground, but without washing it, the boy replaced it on the offering and gave it to his father. Sri Rama Mahamuni then offered it to the Supreme Lord. For this reason, the *muni* was later obliged to take birth in a family of Yavanas.

*sa dharmātmā sudhīḥ śāntaḥ sarva-jñāna-vicakṣaṇaḥ
brahmānīso 'pi tataḥ śrīmān bhakta eva suniścitaḥ*

Sri Haridas was the very breath of dharma. He was extremely intelligent, peaceful, perceptive, and learned in all spiritual matters. Moreover, it is positively ascertained that this glorious devotee was also a plenary portion of Lord Brahma.

— Translated by Bhaktivedanta Bhagavata Swami. Gaura Vani Press. Distributed by Nectar Books, Union City, Georgia, USA. 1998.

TWO TYPES OF FAITH

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

There are two types of faith: *śāstrīya-śraddhā*, faith in *sādhu-śāstra-guru*, and *laukika-śraddhā*, faith in what general, materialistic

people say. For example, suppose the inhabitants of this place say that there is a ghost in a particular tree. Based on what they said, you have faith. So when you come to that tree, you immediately think, “Oh, there is a ghost here!” This is *laukika-śraddhā*.

Vaiṣṇavas are not concerned with *laukika-śraddhā*. We are only concerned with *śāstrīya-śraddhā*, faith based on the Vedic conclusion. *Sādhu-guru* quotes from *śāstra*. By hearing that, one first develops *śraddhā*. *ādaḥ śraddhā diyā* — *sadhu* inculcates *śraddhā*. *Sādhu-guru* will then watch to see whether that disciple has developed complete faith in the holy name, complete faith in Krishna, complete faith in *śāstric* injunctions. That is *guru's* test. When the *guru* is satisfied that the disciple has developed faith, that he is eligible for initiation, then he will initiate him.

One who has not developed faith has no right to accept the holy name. If the *guru* gives him the holy name, the *guru* becomes an offender. *śraddhā-hīna-jane nāmopadeśa* — instructing a faithless person about the holy name is one of the ten offences. Therefore, in our society we have this one-year waiting period during which a prospective disciple associates and hears, and the *guru* tests whether he has developed faith or not. On both the *guru's* side and the disciple's side, there is testing — then there may be initiation. Sanatana Goswami and our *ācāryas* have said this in their writings.

Sadhu inculcates *śraddhā* by loud congregational chanting of *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*. When this transcendental sound vibration enters the ear, one becomes awakened, “Ah, yes.” It has such effect. When my *guru maharaja* came to the West, he first chanted loudly in the park with a pair of *karatālas*. The hippies were rolling on the ground, half-naked, with long hairs and beards, taking LSD and marijuana, and becoming mad.

Prabhupada told them, “Wake up!”

“Oh, what is that?”

Then they came. “Yes, yes.”

Then my *guru maharaja* said, “All right. Chant! Chant! Chant!”

This is the process. *Sadhu* inculcates *śraddhā*. Then you understand. Then comes initiation.

Devotee: It seems like complete faith is a very high level to come to...

Gour Govinda Maharaja: You have to come to that standard, otherwise you are not eligible. Nothing else is there in *Kali-yuga*, *harer nāmaiva kevalam*. The holy name will give you protection. The holy name will maintain you. The holy name will give you everything, up to the last thing, *kṛṣṇa-prema*. You will get Krishna. Unless you have this faith, you are not eligible for initiation. If guru accepts someone who has no faith then he commits *aparādha* and becomes an offender. By accepting such disciples he will surely fall down.

Adau śraddhā — the first thing is faith. And then, *sādhu-saṅga*, *bhajana-kriyā*, *anartha-nivṛttiḥ*, *niṣṭhā*. Faith is the base, the foundation, which builds up to association with devotees, devotional activities, purification of the heart, and steadiness, etc. [*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.4.15] If there is no *śraddhā*, no base, then it will collapse. How will it stand without a base? You should understand this. This is very serious. It is most confidential and important.

— Evening program. New Govardhana, Australia. 28 September 1992.

THE POSITION OF SRI VAMANADEV

Srila Rupa Goswami

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 4.8.46-50

*prodyanvibhāvanotkarṣāt puṣṭim mukhyena lambhitaḥ
kuñcatā nija-nāthena gauṇo 'py aṅgitvam aśnute
mukhyas tv aṅgatvam āsādy puṣṭann indram upendravat
gauṇam evāṅginam kṛtvā nigūḍha-nija-vaibhavaḥ
anādi-vāsanodbhāsa-vāsita bhakta-cetasi
bhāty eva na tu līnaḥ syād eṣa sañcāri-gauṇavat
aṅgī mukhyaḥ svam atrāṅgair bhāvais tair abhivardhayan
svajātīyair vijātīyaiḥ svatantraḥ san virājate
yasya mukhyasya yo bhakto bhaven nitya-nijāśrayaḥ
aṅgī sa eva tatra syān mukhyo 'py anyo 'ṅgatām vrajat*

Lord Vamanadev is actually the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but he appeared to have been “born” as one of the brothers of Indra. Although Vamanadev is sometimes taken as a less important demigod, he is actually the maintainer of Indra, the king of the demigods. Thus, although sometimes Vamanadev is considered to be a subordinate demigod, his actual position is that of the supreme whole, the source of the entire demigod system. In the same way, a *rasa* that is actually prominent may sometimes appear to be manifested in a subordinate way, although its actual position is as the main or prominent loving feeling of a devotee.

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CHANT IN EVERY SITUATION

Srila Sanatan Goswami's

Śrī Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 11.312

*kānane naraśiṃhaṁ ca parvate raghunandanam
duḥsvapne smara govindam viśuddhau madhusūdanam
māyāsu vāmanam devam sarva-kāryeṣu mādhavam*

In a forest one should chant the name Narasimha. On a mountain one should chant the name Raghunandan. In a nightmare one should chant the name Govinda. To become purified one should chant the name Madhusudan. In a bewildering situation one should chant the name Vamanadev. In all activities one should chant the name Madhav.

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