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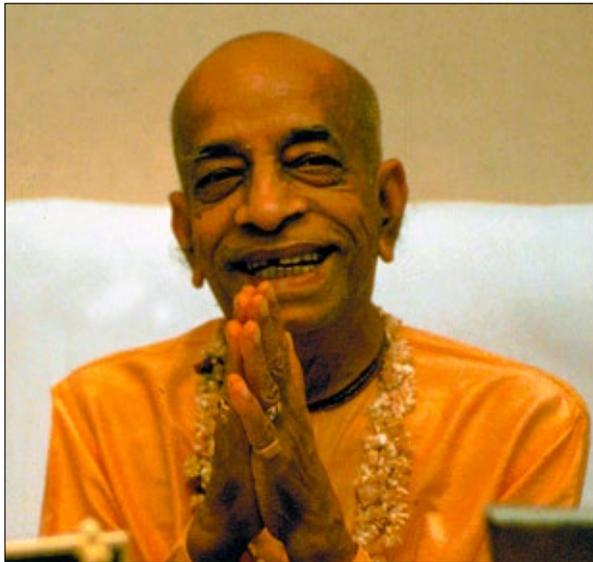
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THE PATH OF DESCENDING KNOWLEDGE

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam is recognized Vedic wisdom, and the system of receiving Vedic knowledge is called *avaroha-panthā*, the process of receiving transcendental knowledge through a bona fide disciplic succession.

For advancement of material knowledge there is a need for personal ability and researching aptitude, but in the case of spiritual knowledge, all progress depends more or less on the mercy of the spiritual master. The spiritual master must be satisfied with the disciple; only then is knowledge automatically manifest before the student of spiritual science. The process should not, however, be misunderstood to be something like magical feats whereby the spiritual master acts like a magician and injects spiritual knowledge into his disciple, as if surcharging him with an electrical current. The bona fide spiritual master reasonably explains everything to the disciple on the authority of Vedic wisdom. The disciple can receive such teachings not exactly intellectually, but by submissive inquiries and a service attitude. The idea is that both the spiritual master and the disciple must be bona fide.

... The professional reciter of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and the pseudodevotees whose faith is based on one week's hearing are different from Sukadev Goswami and Maharaja Parikshit. Srila Vyasadev explained Śrīmad Bhāgavatam unto Sukadev Goswami from the very beginning of the *janmādy asya* [SB 1.1.1] verse, and so Sukadev Goswami also explained it to the king.



Unknown artist

Gambhīrāya Śrī Gaurāṅga — Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu in the Gambhīra

three abodes of Vraja, Nabadwip and Nilachal, he
conquered the three worlds.

dekha dekha aparūpa gaura-carita
so gokula-pati, aba parakāśala
puna kiye vāmana rīta

Just see, just see the most wonderful pastimes of
Gaura! We wonder if the Lord of Gokula has now
re-manifested his previous acts that he performed
as Vamanadeva.

nirakhi pratāpa, pratāparudra balī
tanū mana saravasa dela
jaḡāi mādhai, ādi asurāvali
caraṇe śaraṇa saba nela

Seeing the tremendous might of this Gaura
Vamana, King Pratapudra has become Maharaja Bali
and has offered his body, mind and everything else to
the Lord. All the other demons such as Jagai, Madhai,
etc., have now taken complete shelter of the Lord.

yachu pada sañe, advaita bhagīratha
bhakati-garīgā paravāha
nityānanda girīśa, āśa dei ānala
teji hima marata māha

Advaita Acharya has become Bhagirath Muni, and has caused the Ganges of *bhakti* to flow from the Lord's feet towards the earth. Nityananda Prabhu himself has taken upon the role of Shiva. He gave hope to everyone and caused the Ganges of *bhakti* to give up the high altitudes of the Himalayas and come down among the mortals.

yachu avagāhane, akhila bhakata-gaṇe
vilasa-i prema-ānanda
pāmara patita, parama pada pāyala
vañcita balarāma mānda

After bathing in this Ganges of *bhakti*, all the devotees in the world rejoiced in the joy of *prema*, and even the fallen, wicked individuals attained the highest destination. Only the dull-headed Balaram Das remained deprived of such mercy. 🍌

— Translated from *Vaiṣṇava Padāvalī*, fourth edition, April 2010. Compiled and edited by Hare Krishna Mukhopadhyay. Published by Shishu Sahitya Sansad Pvt. Ltd., Kolkata.



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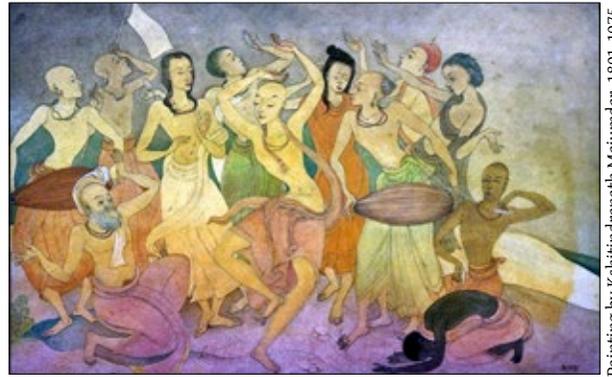
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Painting by Kshitindranath Majumdar. 1891-1975

Gaura-kīrtana

BEGGING AT A DOG-EATER'S HOME

**Srila Prabodhananda Saraswati's
Vṛndāvana-mahimāmṛtam (13.51)**

vṛndāranyam aṅaṅya-puṣpa-nivahair dhanyāgra-ganyair hrḍā
dhyeyaṁ prāpya batānyato hi kudhiyo yad yūyam ādhāv atha
tac cintāmaṇim eva pāda-hatibhir dūraṁ nirasya svayaṁ
hastāgre patita-śvapāka-bhavane bhakṣyāśayā bhrāmyatha

The forest of Vrindavan is decorated with infinite multitudes of beautiful flowers. The most fortunate topmost individuals in the universe meditate upon this forest within their hearts. However, all of you faulty-minded individuals run away from this forest to other places. By doing so, you voluntarily kick away a touchstone that you had held in your hands, and instead you start roaming around, begging at the doors of the most fallen dog-eaters. 🍌

— Translated from the Sanskrit available at Gaudiya Grantha Mandira (www.granthamandira.net)

WORSHIPING KRISHNA WITHOUT GAURA

Gopāla-sahasranāma-stotram (17)

gaura-tejo vinā yas tu śyāma-tejaḥ samarcayet
japed vā dhyāyate vāpi sa bhavet pātakī śive

O Parvati! A person who worships, chants about or meditates upon *śyāma-teja* (the personality with a dark effulgence, Krishna) without engaging in similar worship, chanting or meditation upon *gaura-teja* (the personality with a golden effulgence, Gaura or Radha) becomes extremely fallen.

[Translator's Note: The import of the verse is that one should always worship Krishna with Gaura or Radha.] 🍌

— Translated from *Gopāla-sahasranāma-stotram*. Critically edited by Dr. N.S.R. Tatacharya and Dr. M.D. Balasubrahmanyam. Published by Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam. Tirupati. 1986 A.D.