



तवकथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtam tapta-jīvanam

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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.

... In the *Padma Purāṇa*, it is mentioned that Gautama Muni advised Maharaja Ambarish to hear regularly *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* as it was recited by Sukadev Goswami, and herein it is confirmed that Maharaja Ambarish heard *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* from the very beginning to the end, as it was spoken by Sukadev Goswami. One who is actually interested in the *Bhāgavatam*, therefore, must not play with it by reading or hearing a portion from here and a portion from there. One must follow in the footsteps of great kings like Maharaja Ambarish or Maharaja Parikshit and hear it from a bona fide representative of Sukadev Goswami. 🍌

— Purport to *Bhāg.* 2.1.10

RARITY OF INTEREST IN PURE HARI-KATHA

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

Many of our friends have forgotten the subjects pertaining to the Supreme Lord. They imagine Krishna to be an angel or a historical personality and thus they speak in a way that is not fit for hearing and they paint pictures that are not fit for seeing. In this way they are ruining themselves and others as well. These people have distorted Jayadev's and Chandidas' writings, which Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu relished in the company of his most intimate associates. They have thus transformed these transcendental books into objects of their sense gratification. It is very unfortunate and unjust that subject matters meant for discussion by high class personalities are now talked about among ordinary people that lack the necessary qualifications. By proudly attempting to discuss these topics, such people have brought about their own ruination and also that of others. Nowadays, people are only interested in hearing things that appear pleasing to them. For this reason they like to hear the teachings of impersonalists. It is very difficult to find people who are truly interested in hearing *hari-kathā*. People who are averse to devotional service and yet advertise themselves as devotees, as learned scholars, as great renunciates, as qualified Brahmins, or as *māyāvādīs*, simply deceive people. By claiming to be devotees or learned scholars, they bring inauspiciousness upon the ordinary people. Unfortunate people fall into their snare. 🍌

— Excerpt from Lecture 7. *Śrīmad-bhāgavata-tātparya*. Translated by Bhumipati Das. Edited by Purnaprajna Das. Rasbihari Lal and Sons. Vrindavan. 2005.

GAURA'S VAMANA-LILA

The medieval poet Balaram Das

[*Kāmoda Rāga*]

This song glorifies the pastimes of Gaura by drawing parallels with the pastimes of Vamanadeva.

vraja navadvīpa, nilagiri-pūra
tīna dhāme pada tīna āpi
saṅkīrtana-maya, bhāva-rasa-vigraha
e tīna bhuvana veyāpi

He is the personification of *bhāva* and *rasa*, and has a bodily form replete with the mellows of *saṅkīrtana*. By walking three steps, each one on the



Nāma-tattva

THE DUAL ROLE OF KIRTAN

Sātvata-tantram (5.48)

*kṛtādiṣv api viprendra hari-nāmānukīrtanam
tapādi-sādhyam tad bhūyaḥ kalāv ubhayatām gataḥ*

O best among the Brahmins! In the previous ages beginning with Satya, the constant *kīrtana* of *harināma* was the goal to be attained by austerities and other practices. However, in the age of Kali such constant *kīrtana* is both the means and the goal.

[Translator's Note: The verse says that in the previous ages, chanting of *harināma* was the goal to be attained by the respective processes of those ages. Thus, in *satya-yuga* the goal of all austerities was to attain the stage of constant *kīrtana* of *harināma*. Similarly, in *tretā-yuga* and *dvāpara-yuga*, the goal of all fire sacrifices and deity worship was to attain the stage of constant *kīrtana* of *harināma*. In this way, the various processes led to the same goal of constant *kīrtana*. However, since all these processes are impossible to properly execute in the age of Kali, constant *kīrtana* is now the means as well as the goal.]

— Translated from *Sātvata Tantram* — Revealed by Narayana and Communicated to Narada by Siva. Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series #427. Edited by Pandit Ananta Shastri Phadke. Printed by Jai Krishna Das Gupta. Vidya Vilas Press. Benares. 1934 A.D.





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 manda

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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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.