



Nityam Bhagavata-sebaya
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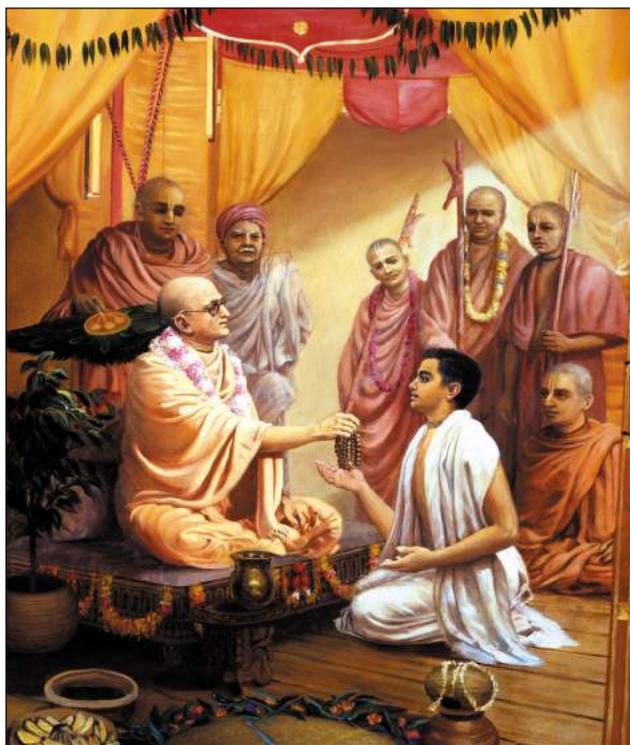
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VIDURA LEAVES FOR HASTINAPURA
Sri Sukadeva Goswami

After hearing the transcendental messages of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His devotees from the great sage Maitreya, Vidura was overwhelmed with ecstasy. With tears in his eyes, he immediately fell at the lotus feet of his spiritual master to show his respect and gratitude. He then fixed the Supreme Personality of Godhead within the core of his heart.

Sri Vidura said: O great mystic, O greatest of all devotees, by your causeless mercy I have been shown the path of liberation from this world of darkness. By following this path, a person will become liberated from the material world and return home, back to Godhead.

Vidura thus offered obeisance unto the great sage Maitreya and, taking his permission, started for the city of Hastinapura. Although he had no material desires, he wished to see his own kinsmen for their benefit.

*etad yah śṛṇuyād rājan
rājñāṁ hary-arpitātmanām
āyur dhanam yaśaḥ svasti
gatim aiśvaryam āpnuyāt*

O King, those who hear these topics about kings

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

who are completely surrendered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead without difficulty achieve a long life, wealth, good reputation, good fortune and, ultimately, the opportunity to return home, back to Godhead.

—Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (BhāgavataPurāṇa) » Canto 4 » Chapter 31:
Nārada Instructs the Pracetās » Verses: 28-31.

THE ACTIVITIES OF MAHARAJA PRIYAVRATA

*Conversation between
Sukadeva Goswami and Maharaja Pariksit*

Sukadeva Goswami said: O best of kings [King Pariksit], I have now finished telling about the descendants of the first son of Svayambhuva Manu, Uttanapada. Now I shall relate the activities of the descendants of Priyavrata, the second son of Svayambhuva Manu. Please hear about them attentively. Although Maharaja Priyavrata received instructions from the great sage Narada, he still went on to rule the earth. After fully enjoying material possessions, he divided his property among his sons. By this renunciation He attained a position from which he could return home, back to Godhead.

Maharaja Pariksit inquired: King Priyavrata was a great, self-realized devotee of the Lord. Why then did he, remain in household life, which is the root cause of the bondage of *karma* [fruitive activities] and which defeats the mission of human life? Devotees are certainly liberated persons. Therefore, O greatest of the *brāhmaṇas*, they cannot possibly become absorbed in family affairs. Elevated *mahātmās* who have taken shelter of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are fully satiated by the shade of those lotus feet. Their consciousness cannot possibly become attached to family members. O great *brāhmaṇa*, this is my doubt: How was it possible for a person like King Priyavrata, who was so attached to wife, children and home, to achieve the topmost and infallible perfection in Krishna consciousness?

GLORIES OF KING PRIYAVRATA

Sri Sukadeva Goswami said: O king, what you have said is quite correct. The glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is praised in eloquent, transcendental verses by such exalted personalities as Brahma, are very pleasing to elevated devotees and liberated persons. One who is attached to the nectarean honey from the Lord's lotus feet, and whose mind is always absorbed in His glories, may sometimes be checked by some impediment, but still he never gives up the exalted position he has acquired. Prince Priyavrata was a great devotee because he sought shelter at the lotus feet of Narada, his spiritual master, and thus achieved the highest perfection in transcendental knowledge. Due to his advanced knowledge, he always engaged in discussing spiritual subjects and never directed his attention to anything

else. The Prince's father then asked him to take charge of ruling the world. He tried to convince Priyavrata that this was his duty indicated in the revealed scriptures. Prince Priyavrata, however, was continuously practicing *bhakti-yoga* by always remembering the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and engaging all his senses in His service. Therefore, although the order of his father could not be rejected, the Prince did not welcome it. Thus he very conscientiously raised the question of whether he might be distracted from devotional service by accepting the responsibility of ruling over the world.

The first created being and most powerful demigod in this universe is Lord Brahma, who is responsible for developing universal affairs. Born directly from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he dedicates his activities to the welfare of the entire universe, for he knows the purpose of the universal creation. This supremely powerful Lord Brahma, accompanied by his associates and the personified Vedas, left his abode in the highest planetary system and descended to the place where Prince Priyavrata's was in meditation. As Lord Brahma descended on his carrier, the great swan, all the residents of the planets named Siddhaloka, Gandharvaloka, Sadhyaloka and Caranaloka, as well as great sages and demigods flying in their different airplanes, assembled to receive and duly worship Lord Brahma. As he received their respect and adoration, Lord Brahma appeared just like the full moon surrounded by illuminating stars. Lord Brahma's great swan then arrived at Gandhamadana Hill and approached Prince Priyavrata, who was sitting there. Lord Brahma, the father of Narada Muni, is the supreme person within this universe. As soon as

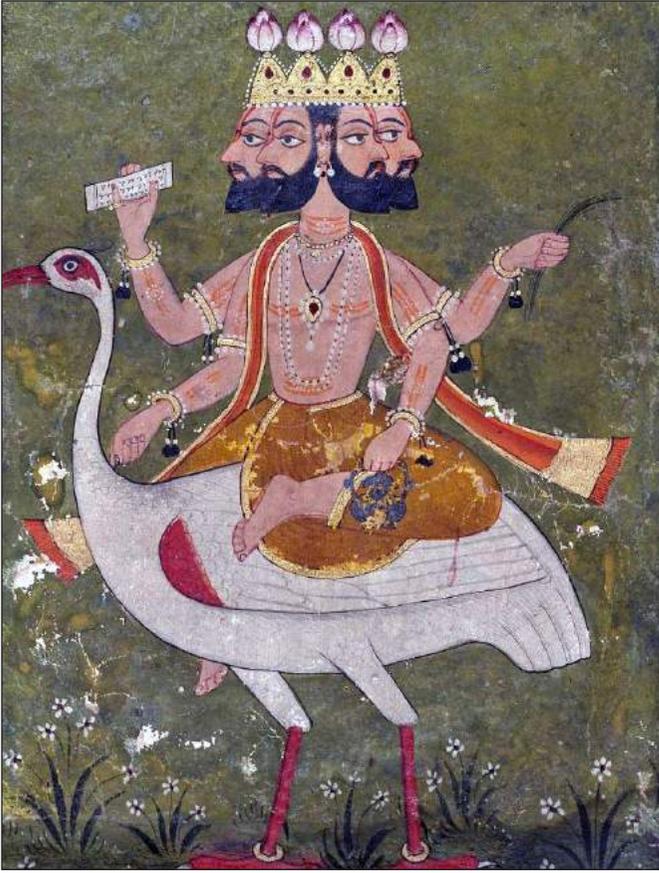
Narada saw the great swan, he could understand that Lord Brahma had arrived. Therefore he immediately stood up, along with Svayambhuva Manu and his son Priyavrata, whom Narada was instructing. Then they all folded their hands and began to worship Lord Brahma with great respect. Because Lord Brahma had descended from Satyaloka to Bhuloka, Narada Muni, Prince Priyavrata and Svayambhuva Manu came forward to offer him objects of worship and to praise him in highly eloquent language, in accordance with Vedic etiquette. At that time, Lord Brahma, the original person of this universe, felt compassion for Priyavrata and, looking upon him with a smiling face, spoke to him as follows.

Lord Brahma, the supreme person within this universe, said: My dear Priyavrata, kindly hear attentively what I shall say to you. Do not be jealous of the Supreme Lord, who is beyond our experimental measurements. All of us, including Lord Shiva, your father and the great sage *Mahārṣi* Narada, must carry out the order of the Supreme. We cannot deviate from His order. One cannot avoid the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in any manner not by the strength of severe austerities, an exalted Vedic education, or the power of mystic *yoga*, physical prowess or intellectual activities. Nor can one use his power of religion, his material opulence or any other means, either by himself or with the help of others, to defy the orders of the Supreme Lord. That is not possible for any living being, from Brahma down to the tiny ant. My dear Priyavrata, by the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, all living entities accept different types of bodies for birth and death, activity, lamentation, illusion, fear of future dangers, and happiness and distress. My dear boy, all of us are bound by the Vedic injunctions to the divisions of *varṇāśrama* according to our qualities and work. These divisions are difficult to avoid because they are scientifically arranged. We must therefore carry out our duties of *varṇāśrama-dharma*, like bulls obliged to move according to the direction of a driver pulling on ropes knotted to their noses. My dear Priyavrata, according to our association with different modes of material nature, the Supreme Personality of Godhead gives us our specific bodies and the happiness and distress we achieve. One must therefore remain situated as he is and be conducted by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, exactly as a blind man is led by a person who has eyesight.

LIVING WITH SIX CO-WIVES

Even if one is liberated in perfect knowledge, he nevertheless accepts the body he has received according to his past *karma*. However, without misconceptions, he regards his enjoyment and suffering due to that previous *karma* the way an awakened person regards a dream he had while sleeping. He thus remains steadfast and never acts in such a way to achieve another material body under the influence of the three modes





of material nature. Even if he lives in the forest, one who is not self-controlled must always fear material bondage because he is living with six co-wives the mind and knowledge-acquiring senses. However even householder life, cannot harm a self-satisfied, learned man who has conquered his senses. One who is situated in household life and who systematically conquers his mind and five sense organs is like a king in his fortress who conquers his powerful enemies. One has been trained for household life and whose material desires have diminished, can move or stay anywhere without danger. My dear Priyavrata, seek shelter at the lotus of the feet of the Lord, whose navel is also like a lotus. Thus conquer the six sense organs [the mind and knowledge-acquiring senses]. Accept material enjoyment because, extraordinarily, the Lord has ordered you to do so. In this way you will always be free from material association and be able to carry out the Lord's orders in your constitutional position.

MAHARAJA PRIYAVRATA RULES THE UNIVERSE

Sri Sukadeva Goswami continued: After being fully instructed thus by Lord Brahma, who is the spiritual master of the three worlds, Priyavrata, who was naturally his junior, offered obeisance, accepted that order and carried it out with great respect. Manu then worshiped Lord Brahma to the best of his capacity. Priyavrata and Narada also looked upon Brahma with great respect and no tinges of resentment. Having engaged Priyavrata in accepting his father's request, Lord Brahma returned to his abode, Satyaloka, which

is indescribable by the endeavor of the material mind or words.

With the assistance of Lord Brahma, Svayambhuva Manu thus had his desire fulfilled. Taking permission from the great sage Narada, he bequeathed to his son the governmental responsibility of maintaining and protecting all the planets of the universe. He thus achieved relief from the most dangerous, poisonous ocean of material involvement. Following the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Maharaja Priyavrata fully engaged in worldly affairs, yet he always thought of the lotus feet of the Lord, which are the cause of liberation from all material attachment. Priyavrata Maharaja was completely free from all material contamination, and so he ruled the universe just to honor the orders of his superiors. Thereafter, Maharaja Priyavrata married Barhismati, the daughter of the *prajāpati* named Vishvakarma. Through her he fathered ten sons equal to him in beauty, character, magnanimity and other qualities. He also fathered a daughter, the youngest of all, named Urjasvati. The ten sons of Maharaja Priyavrata were named Agnidhra, Idhmajihva, Yajñabahu, Mahavira, Hiranyareta, Ghr̥tapr̥stha, Savana, Medhatithi, Vitihotra and Kavi. These are also names of Agni, the fire-god. Three among these ten—namely Kavi, Mahavira and Savana lived in complete celibacy. Thus trained in *brahmacārī* life from the beginning of childhood, they were very conversant with the highest perfectional stage, known as the *paramahansa-āśrama*. Being situated in the renounced order from the beginning of their lives, all three of them completely controlled the activities of their senses and thus became great saints. They constantly fixed their minds always upon the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the resting place of the totality of living entities and is therefore celebrated as Vasudeva. Lord Vasudeva is the only shelter of those who are truly afraid of material existence. Constantly thinking of His lotus feet, these three sons of Maharaja Priyavrata became advanced in pure devotional service. By the prowess of their devotional service, they could directly perceive the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is situated in everyone's heart as the Supersoul. They realized that there was qualitatively no difference between Him and themselves. Through his second wife, Maharaja Priyavrata begot three sons, named Uttama, Tamasa and Raivata. All of them later took charge of manvantara millenniums.

After Kavi, Mahavira and Savana were fully trained in the *paramahansa* stage of life, Maharaja Priyavrata ruled the universe for eleven arbuda years. Whenever he was determined to fix his arrow upon his bowstring with his two powerful arms, all opponents of the regulative principles of religious life would flee in fear of his unparalleled prowess. He greatly loved his wife Barhismati, and as time went on, their exchange of nuptial love developed. By her feminine behavior



in dressing, walking, rising, smiling, laughing, and glancing about, Queen Barhismati increased his energy. Thus although he was a great soul, he appeared lost in the feminine charms of his wife. Even though he was a great soul he behaved with his wife just like an ordinary man.

SEVEN ISLANDS IN Bhū-maṇḍala

While so excellently ruling the universe, King Priyavrata one time became dissatisfied with the illumination of the most powerful sun-god. Encircling Sumeru Hill on his chariot, the sun-god illuminates all the surrounding planetary systems. However, when the sun is on the northern side of the hill, the south receives less light. And when the sun is in the south, the north receives less. King Priyavrata disliked this situation and therefore decided to make daylight in the part of the universe where there was night. He mimicked the orbit of the sun-god on his own brilliant chariot and thus fulfilled his desire. King Priyavrata could perform such wonderful activities because of the power he had achieved by worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When Priyavrata drove his chariot behind the sun, the rims of his chariot wheels created impressions that later became seven oceans, dividing the planetary system known as *Bhū-maṇḍala* into seven islands. The names of the islands are Jambu, Plaksa, Salmali, Kusha, Krausca, Saka and Puskara. Each island is twice as large as the one preceding it, and each is surrounded by a liquid substance, beyond which is the next island. The seven oceans respectively contain salt water, sugarcane juice, liquor, clarified butter, milk, emulsified yogurt, and sweet drinking water. All the islands are completely surrounded by these oceans, and each ocean is equal in breadth to the island it surrounds. Maharaja Priyavrata, the husband of Queen Barhismati, gave sovereignty over these islands to his respective sons, namely Agnidhra, Idhmajihva, Yajrabahu, Hiranyareta, Ghrtaprstha, Medhatithi and Vīlhotra. Thus they all became kings by the order of their father. King Priyavrata then gave his daughter,

Urjasvati, in marriage to Sukracarya, who through her begot a daughter named Devayani.

MAHARAJA PRIYAVRATA'S RENUNCIATION

My dear King, a devotee who has taken shelter of the dust from the lotus feet of the Lord can transcend the influence of the six material waves—namely hunger, thirst, lamentation, illusion, old age and death and he can conquer the mind and five senses. However, this is not very wonderful for a pure devotee of the Lord because even a person beyond the jurisdiction of the four castes; in other words, an untouchable is immediately relieved of bondage to material existence if he utters the holy name of the Lord even once.

While enjoying his material opulence with full strength and influence, Maharaja Priyavrata once began to consider that although previously he had fully surrendered to the great saint Narada and was actually on the path of Krishna consciousness, now he had surprisingly again become entangled in material activities. Thus his mind now became restless, and he began to speak in a spirit of renunciation. The King thus began criticizing himself:

*aho asādhy anuṣṭhitam yad abhiniveśito 'ham
indriyair avidyā-racita-viṣama-viṣayāndha-kūpe tad
alam alam amuṣyā vanitāyā vinoda-mṛgaṁ mām dhig
dhig iti garhayām cakāra.*

“Alas, how condemned I have become because of my sense gratification! I have now fallen into material enjoyment, which is exactly like a covered well. I have had enough! I am not going to enjoy any more. Just see how I have become like a dancing monkey in the hands of my wife. Because of this, I am condemned!”

By the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Maharaja Priyavrata again came to his senses. He divided all his earthly possessions among his obedient sons. Giving up everything, including his wife, with whom he had enjoyed so much sense gratification, and his great and opulent kingdom, he completely renounced all attachment. His heart, having thus been cleansed, became a place of pastimes for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus he was able to return to the path of Krishna consciousness, spiritual life, and resume the position he had attained by the grace of the great saint Narada.

There are many famous verses regarding Maharaja Priyavrata's activities:

*tasya ha vā ete ślokāḥ —
priyavrata-kṛtam karma
ko nu kuryād vineśvaram
yo nemi-nimnair akaroc
chāyām ghan sapta vāridhīm*

No one but the Supreme Personality of Godhead



could do what Maharaja Priyavrata has done. Maharaja Priyavrata dissipated the darkness of night, and with the rims of his great chariot, he excavated seven oceans.

*bhū-saṁsthānam kṛtam yena
sarid-giri-vanādibhiḥ
sīmā ca bhūta-nirvṛtyai
dvīpe dvīpe vibhāgaśaḥ*

To stop the quarreling among different peoples, Maharaja Priyavrata marked boundaries at rivers and at the edges of mountains and forests so that no one would trespass upon another's property.

*bhaumam divyam mānuṣam ca
mahitvam karma-yogajam
yaś cakre nirayaupamyam
puruṣānujana-priyaḥ*

As a great follower and devotee of the sage Narada, Maharaja Priyavrata considered the opulences he had achieved by dint of fruitive activities and mystic power, whether in the lower or heavenly planetary systems or in human society as simply hellish.

— Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 5: The Creative Impetus
» Chapter 1: The Activities of Maharaja Priyavrata » Verses: 1-41.

THE METHOD OF BONA FIDE INITIATION

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Sukadeva Goswami was speaking to Maharaja Parikṣit about the activities of King Priyavrata, and since the King might have had doubts about these wonderful, uncommon activities, Sukadeva Goswami reassured him. "My dear King," he said, "don't be doubtful about the wonderful activities of Priyavrata. For a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, everything is possible because of his connection with the Lord who is also known as Urukrama."

Urukrama is a name for Lord Vamanadeva, who performed the wonderful act of occupying the three worlds with three footsteps. Lord Vamanadeva requested three paces of land from Maharaja Bali, and when Maharaja Bali agreed to grant them, the Lord immediately covered the entire world with two footsteps, and for His third step He placed His foot upon Bali Maharaja's head. Śrī Jayadeva Goswami says:

*chalayasi vikramaṇe balim adbhuta-vāmana
pada-nakha-nūra-janita-jana-pāvana
keśava dhṛta-vāmana-rūpa jaya jagadīśa hare*

"All glories to Lord Keshava, who assumed the form of a dwarf. O Lord of the universe, who take

nityam bhāgavata-sevayā

away everything inauspicious for the devotees! O wonderful Vamanadeva! You tricked the great demon Bali Maharaja by Your steps. The water that touched the nails of Your lotus feet when You pierced through the covering of the universe, purifies all living entities in the form of the river Ganges."

Since the Supreme Lord is all-powerful, He can do things that seem wonderful for a common man. Similarly, a devotee who has taken shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord can also do wonderful things, unimaginable to a common man, by the grace of the dust of those lotus feet. Chaitanya Mahāprabhu therefore teaches us to take shelter of the Lord's lotus feet [Cc. Antya 20.32, Śikṣāṣṭaka 5]:

*ayi nanda-tanuja kinkaram
patitam mām viṣame bhavāmbudhau
kṛpayā tava pāda-paṅkaja-
sthita-dhūli-sadrśam vicintaya*

"O son of Nanda Maharaja, I am Your eternal servant, yet somehow or other I have fallen into the ocean of birth and death. Please pick me up from this ocean of death and place me as one of the atoms of Your lotus feet." Lord Chaitanya teaches us to come in touch with the dust of the Lord's lotus feet, for then there will undoubtedly be all success.

Because of the material body, every living entity in material existence is always disturbed by *ṣaḍ-guṇa*, six waves—hunger, thirst, lamentation, illusion, invalidity and death. Furthermore, another *ṣaḍ-guṇa* are the mind and five sense organs. What to speak of a sanctified devotee, even a *caṇḍāla*, an outcaste, who is untouchable, is immediately freed from material bondage if he utters the holy name of the Lord even once. Sometimes caste *brāhmaṇas* argue that unless one changes his body he cannot be accepted as a *brāhmaṇa*, for since the present body is obtained as a result of past actions, one who has in the past acted as a *brāhmaṇa* takes birth in a *brāhmaṇa* family. Therefore, they contend, without such a brahminical body, one cannot be accepted as a *brāhmaṇa*. Herein it is said, however, that even a *vidura-vigata*, a *caṇḍāla*—a fifth-class untouchable—is freed if he utters the holy name even once. Being freed means that he immediately changes his body. Śānātana Goswami confirms this [Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 2.12]:

*yathā kāñcanatām yāti
kāmsyam rasa-vidhānataḥ
tathā dīkṣā-vidhānena
dvijatvam jāyate nṛṇām*

When a person, even though a *caṇḍāla*, is initiated by a pure devotee into chanting the holy name of the Lord, his body changes as he follows the instructions

of the spiritual master. Although one cannot see how his body has changed, we must accept, on the grounds of the authoritative statements of the *śāstras*, that he changes his body. This is to be understood without arguments. This verse clearly says, *sa jahāti bandham*: "He gives up his material bondage." The body is a symbolic representation of material bondage according to one's karma. Although sometimes we cannot see the gross body changing, chanting the holy name of the Supreme Lord immediately changes the subtle body, and because the subtle body changes, the living entity is immediately freed from material bondage. After all, changes of the gross body are conducted by the subtle body. After the destruction of the gross body, the subtle body takes the living entity from his present gross body to another. In the subtle body, the mind is predominant, and therefore if one's mind is always absorbed in remembering the lotus feet of the Lord or His activities, he is to be understood to have already changed his present body and become purified. Therefore it is irrefutable that a *caṇḍāla*, or any fallen or lowborn person, can become a *brāhmaṇa* simply by the method of bona fide initiation.

—Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (BhāgavataPurāṇa) » Canto 5: The Creative Impetus
» Chapter 1: The Activities of Maharaja Priyavrata » Verse:35

AFTER FINDING A QUALIFIED GURU

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura

After finding a qualified guru, a faithful disciple should serve him with firm conviction and without duplicity. One should accept initiation and *kṛṣṇa-mantra* after pleasing the *guru*. Those who are averse to taking initiation and only make a drama of pseudo *kīrtana* while advertising themselves as Vaisnavas are certainly cheaters. It is not advised for materialistic persons to renounce the process of initiation just because a few great souls like Jada Bharata did not take initiation. Spiritual initiation is a constitutional injunction for every birth of the living entity. If initiation is not seen in the life of a perfected soul, it should not be taken as an example. General rules are not changed because something happens to a particular person in a special situation. Sri Dhruva Maharaja went to Dhruvaloka in his material body; seeing that, should one waste time hoping for the same? The general rule is a living entity gives up his material body and goes to Vaikuntha in his spiritual body. General rules should be accepted by people in general. Whenever and whatever is desired by the Lord, who is full of inconceivable potencies, certainly takes place. Therefore we should never transgress the general rules. After pleasing the guru by serving him without duplicity, one should receive from him instructions on the Absolute Truth and initiation into chanting the holy name of the Lord.

After receiving initiation and instructions from a bona fide *guru*, a fortunate disciple should follow the

path of the previous *sadhus*. Those who are proud neglect the previous *mahājanas* and create new paths. As a result, they proceed on an inauspicious path and ruin themselves. It is said in the *Skanda Purāṇa*:

*sa mṛgyaḥ śreyasām hetuḥ
panthāḥ santāpa-varjitaḥ
anavāpta-śramam pūrve
yena santaḥ pratasthira*

"One should strictly follow the easy path which the previous *mahājanas* have accepted. That path bestows great auspiciousness and is devoid of all misery."

By discussing the path of the previous *sadhus*, one gets determination, courage, and satisfaction. When we discuss the path of devotional service exhibited by Sri Rupa, Sri Sanatana, Sri Raghunatha, and Sri Haridasa Thakura, then we feel such happiness that it cannot be described. When the miscreant Mohammedans tortured Haridasa Thakura, he said:

*khaṇḍa khaṇḍa hai' deha yāya yadi prāṇa
tabu āmi vadane nā chāḍi hari-nāma
e saba jīvere kṛṣṇa! karaha prasāda
mora drohe nahu e sabāra aparādha*

"Even if my body is cut into pieces and I loose my life, I will never give up chanting the Lord's holy name. O Krishna, please be merciful upon these poor souls, kindly excuse them for their offense of torturing me."

Maintaining this type of determination and being compassionate to all living entities while always chanting the holy name of Krishna is the path of devotional service exhibited by the previous *mahājanas*. A path cannot be manufactured. Whatever path is there should be accepted by *sadhakas*. People who are proud and desire fame try vigorously to discover new paths. However, those who have good fortune from past lives give up pride and respect the established path. People who are unfortunate promenade on a new path and thus cheat the world. Regarding such persons the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.46-47) quotes the *Brahma-yāmala* as follows:

*śruti-smṛti-purāṇādi-
pañcarātra-vidhiṁ vinā
aikāntikī harer bhaktir
utpātāyaiva kalpate
bhaktir aikāntikīveyam
avicārāt pratīyate
vastu tastu tathā naiva
yad aśāstrīyatekṣyate*

"Devotional service of the Lord that ignores the authorized Vedic literatures like the *Upaniṣads*,



Purāṇas, and *Narada Pañcarātra* is simply an unnecessary disturbance in society. Such activities are born out of speculation and therefore they only superficially resemble unalloyed devotion because they are disrespectful to the Vedic injunctions. Disrespecting Vedic injunctions falls in the category of atheism. Whenever there is disrespect for the scriptures, which are the Lord's instructions, that cannot be true devotional service."

The purport is that although the path of devotion is of two kinds - *vaidhi* and *rāgānugā* - the previous *mahājanas* have clearly prescribed them according to one's qualification. These paths are explained in the scriptures such as the *śruti*, *smṛti*, and *pañcarātra*. Rejecting these paths, the new paths discovered by Lord Buddha and Dattatreya ultimately create disturbance in the world. Due to improper consideration these new paths are advertised as unalloyed devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, although they are not actually so. The proper path is explained by the Vedic literatures. Nowadays many new paths are discovered, and they ultimately disappear along with their propounders.

— *Śrī Bhaktyāloka - The Six Faults and Qualities of Bhakti* » *Six Qualities that Enhance Bhakti* » *Tat-tat-karma-pravartana - Various activities favorable for devotional service* » *Writings of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura*.

CAN ONE BE ATTACHED TO SENSE GRATIFICATION EVEN AFTER TAKING INITIATION?

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thākura

The process of attaining transcendental knowledge

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

is called Initiation. We should know that the Supreme Lord is the transcendental Absolute Truth, we are His eternal servants, and we have no duty other than to serve Him. Knowing this is actual initiation. The absence of this understanding is ignorance. At present, there is a controversy about the word "initiation". People proudly claim that they have taken initiation from a bona fide spiritual master, but how can they maintain material attachment even after taking initiation? How can they desire to make advancement in material life? If they don't learn about their relationship with the Lord, independent and proud people uselessly brag about their initiations. Rather than treating their spiritual master as if he were as good as God, they treat him as their disciple, fit to be their order-supplier. Considering the *guru* an ordinary mortal being, these persons become offenders at his lotus feet.

The spiritual master is worshipable. There is no one more worshipable to us than *guru*. Serving the *guru* is superior to serving the Lord. There is no greater religious principle than serving the spiritual master. Even though we repeatedly hear this message, due to our strong attachment for body and house, we forget it and think that serving our family members and ourselves is more important. Our position is similar to that of the boy who forgets his duty and absorbs himself in play rather than study.

If after accepting initiation we do not awaken our propensity to serve the Lord, then we must be cultivating a desire for fame, wealth, and serving our family members. It is only by good fortune that one receives the opportunity to serve the Lord, but we foolishly waste that opportunity. The results of our folly are so poisonous that we are left only with disappointment. Do not doubt my words. If we do not follow the *guru* and the Vaisnavas' orders, what can they do to help us?

— *AmṛtaVāṇī: Nectar of Instructions of Immortality* by *Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī*.
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!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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