



तवकथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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Highlights

• **WHO IS GURU?**

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

• **BY THE LORD'S MERCY**

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

• **RESPECT ALL JIVAS**

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

• **NAMA-TATTVA: OBEISANCES TO CHANTERS OF KRISHNA'S NAMES**

Srila Sanatan Goswami's Hari-bhakti-vilāsa

• **THE OCEAN PRAYS FOR MAHAPRABHU'S DARSHAN**

Srila Narahari Chakravarti Thakur's Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara



WHO IS GURU?

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

The best devotee is the spiritual master. Unless one is a pure devotee, how he can be spiritual master? Spiritual master means representative of God.

So who can become the representative of God? Unless he is twenty-four hours engaged in the service of God, Krishna, how he can be spiritual master?

This is also explained by Vishwanath Chakravarti Thakur, *sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstraiḥ* — “The spiritual master is described to be as good as Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” Because the spiritual master is the representative of Krishna he is the most confidential servant of Krishna — *kintu prabhor ya priya eva tasya*.

Sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair uktas tathā bhāvayata eva sadbhiḥ — the spiritual master is worshiped as good as the Supreme Person. This is not artificial; it is recommended in all the śāstras. Those who are learned, advanced devotees, they also accept that the spiritual master should be treated as good as Hari, the Supreme Person.

The spiritual master does not think of himself as Hari. Although he's offered the respect of Hari, he thinks himself as the humble servant of Hari and of all others. A spiritual master takes his disciples as his spiritual master. That is the position. He thinks that, “Krishna has sent me so many spiritual masters.” He does not think himself as a spiritual master; he thinks himself their servant. Because they have to be trained. Krishna has appointed him to train them. Therefore, he thinks of himself as the servant of the disciples.

This is the position. So when one is advanced, he can see the importance of the devotee. ❀

— From a lecture in Vrindavan on *Nectar of Devotion*. 23 October 1972.

BY THE LORD'S MERCY

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

Only that person whom Lord Krishna sends us as spiritual master will manifest before us as our guru. By the Lord's mercy we attain a spiritual master, and by the spiritual master's mercy we attain Krishna. We are given a spiritual master according to our fortune. Different people have different mentalities, and the omniscient Lord sends each an appropriate spiritual master. There are those who desire the Lord's non-duplicitous mercy and who completely depend on him for their success. These souls please the Lord with their simple sincerity. To bestow his mercy upon them, he appears before them personally. To those who want something else from the Lord, who are not actually aspiring for his complete mercy, the Lord sends through his illusory energy a spiritual master appropriate to their mentality. A sincere person never faces difficulty but quickly finds a bona fide guru. ❀

— From *Amṛta Vani*, collected teachings of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. Compiled in Bengali by Sri Bhakti Bhagavat Mayukha Maharaja. Adapted and translated into English by Bhumipati Das and Isvara Das. Touchstone Media. Mumbai. 2004. Page 28.

RESPECT ALL JIVAS

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Devotee: How can I learn to have more esteem for devotees, to be inclined to serve them and treat them properly?

Gour Govinda Swami: Pay respect to one and all. Mahaprabhu says, *amāninā mānadena* — “Don't demand respect. Rather, pay respect to one and all.” You should respect all *jīvas*. Offer respect to *paramātmā* inside, not to the body. What harm is there? A real *sādhu* never disrespects any soul, not even an ant, because the ant is a soul and *paramātmā* is also there. The *sādhu* offers respect to one and all, but he does it in his mind. Others pay respect publicly. It is your gain to offer respect. There is no loss or harm to you. Actually you are paying respect to *paramātmā*.

Devotee: So I should practice offering respect to everyone?

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes, this is Mahaprabhu's teaching — *trṇād api sunīcena*. What does he mean?

“I am much humbler and more insignificant than a blade of grass lying on the street. I am the lowest of the low. All are *vaiṣṇavas* but I am not a *vaiṣṇava*.” This should be our mood, otherwise we cannot do *hari-bhajana*. Pride will come. We will become demons instead of devotees. Our attitude should be, “If a list is prepared with everyone's name in order of their importance, my name will come at the last. Nobody is below me. This is my position.” This is the mood of a real *vaiṣṇava*.

Devotee: I shouldn't ask for any respect for myself but I should give respect to everyone else.

Gour Govinda Swami: We should respect everyone. “All are *vaiṣṇavas*, but I am not. I am not a devotee.” This is the proper mood. This is *trṇād api sunīcena-bhāva*. A *vaiṣṇava* is humble. He is not puffed up. ❀

— Excerpted from chapter seven of *The Process of Inquiry*. Gopal Jiu Publications. Bhubanesewar, Orissa, India. 1998.


THE OCEAN PRAYS FOR MAHAPRABHU'S DARSHAN

Srila Narahari Chakravarti Thakur's

Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara chapter 12

*eka-dina samudra kahena gaṅgā-prati
“jagate tomāra sama nāi bhāgyavati”*

One day, Samudra, the ocean, addressed Ganga Devi and said, “There is no one as fortunate as you in all the world. (text 406)



Nāma-tattva


**OBEISANCES TO CHANTERS OF
KRISHNA'S NAMES**

Bṛhan-nāradiya Purāṇa
Quoted in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 11.404

*svapan bhañjan vrajaṁs tiṣṭhan uttiṣṭhaṁś ca vadaṁs tathā
ye vandanti harer nāma tebhyo nityaṁ namo namaḥ*

I offer my repeated obeisances unto those who chant the holy name of Lord Hari while sleeping, eating, walking, standing, or speaking,

— Translation by Bhumipati Das. Rasbihari Lal & Sons. Vrindavan. 2006.





Painting by Kartick Biswas

Mahaprabhu near the ocean in Jagannath Puri

*pūrṇabrahma śrī gaurasundara nadīyāya
karibena prakṛta-vihāra sabe gāya*

“It is said that Sri Gaurasundar, who is *pūrṇabrahma bhagavan* himself, will appear in Nadia and perform many sports on your banks. (407)

*tomāra tīrete na’be aśeṣa ānanda
gaṇasaha sadā vilasiba gauracandra*

*vraje jalakrīḍā yaiche kare yamunāya
caitache krīḍā karibena prabhu gaura-rāya”*

“With unlimited bliss, Gaurachandra and his companions will sport in your waters just like Krishna played in the waters of the Yamuna.” (408-409)

*śuniyā jāhnavī nija-antara prakāśe
samudrera prati kahe sumadhura bhāṣe —*

*“mora ye durbhāgya tā’ kahiba kārā kāche
sukha giyā prabhu mahāduḥkha diba pāche*

Hearing these words, Jahnavi, Ganga Devi, sweetly replied to Samudra saying, “To whom shall I tell my miseries? Though at first I will get much pleasure from Prabhu (by having his association), later I will get great misery. (410-411)

*kariba sannyāsa prabhu, chāḍḍiba nadīyā
tomāra tīrete vāsa karibena giyā*

“When Mahaprabhu takes *sannyāsa*, he will leave and go stay by your side. (412)

*parama adbhuta līlā tathā prakāśiba
nirantara tomāra ānanda bāṭāiba*

“He will manifest his topmost astonishing pastimes there and will thus unlimitedly increase your bliss. (413)

*tomāra saubhāgya gāibeka sarvajana
tāhā nā kahiyā karo more viḍambana”*

“Everyone will sing about your good fortune. Don’t cheat me and speak about my happiness.” (414)

*samudra kahena, — “tathā ye kahilā baṭe
dekhiba sannyāsi-veṣa yā’te prāṇa phāṭe*

*soṅarite se veṣa ki kare jāni hiyā
tomāra āśraya teṅi la-inu āsiyā*

*tumi dekhāibā ei nadīyā-nagare
bhuvanmohana gauracandra naṭavare*

Samudra replied, “What are you saying? I have to see him in the dress of a *sannyāsi*, which will break my heart. I don’t know how I will be able to tolerate that dress of his. For this reason I have come to take shelter of you under your kindness because you can show me the pastimes of Nadia, and reveal to me Lord Gaurachandra, the greatest dancer, whose beauty charms the entire universe. (415-417)

*tile tile priyagaṇe raciba suveśa
kebā nā bhuliba dekhi se cāncara keśa*

“There I will be able to see the intimate associates beautifully dress him. Who can forget seeing his curly hair?” (418)

*yaiche prabhu taiche tān’ra priyasāṅga-gaṇa
tomā haite ha’be tān’ — sabāra sandarśana*

“There, with your help, I will see Prabhu and his associates all the time. (419)

In this way they constantly thought about the imminent appearance of Prabhu and became very impatient. Gradually they realized that the time had come for the appearance of Prabhu.

At the time of the Lord’s appearance, everything was extremely auspicious, as that day coincided with a lunar eclipse and performance of *nāma-kīrtana*. Nabadwip and the home of Jagannath Mishra became effulgent and beautiful. All the people began to float in the ocean of extreme happiness. All the great sages and Brahmins began to worship Prabhu, while the gods began to shower flowers from heaven. When the son of Sachi appeared, auspicious sounds pervaded the universe.

Observing the pastimes of Prabhu’s appearance, Samudra became perplexed and took shelter of the Ganga. Every day the ocean was coming with the Ganga and watching the pastimes of Gaurachandra.

One day, Samudra saw Gaurachandra with his associates under a tree on the spotless banks of the Ganga. Sitting on a celestial throne, Gaurahari’s beauty defeated cupid. All the world became charmed seeing his beautiful curly hair. The beauty of his face defeated millions of moons. His continual gentle smiling showered nectar on everyone. His eyes were broad and went to his ears. His hands were long and reached to his



Painting by Indra Sharma, Lithograph 1960s.

Lord Jagannath and Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

knees, while his chest was remarkably broad. He looked very beautiful with his well-shaped naval, knees and legs. He wore a white silk *dhoti* with red borders. His body was smeared with sandal paste and was decorated by many scented flowers and ornaments. He shone with his intimate associates on all four sides of him. Sri Nityananda was on his right side and Gadadhar was on his left. Adwaita was in front of him with Srivas and others. Seeing all this, Samudra became ecstatic and gazed at Gaurachandra with unblinking eyes.

While observing the companions serving Prabhu, Samudra began to cherish many desires in his mind. Prabhu, who is the Lord in the heart, understood his mind and granted his wishes. Mad in ecstasy, Samudra relished watching the pastimes of Prabhu. He admired the good fortune of Ganga with whom he was coming every day to watch the pastimes of Prabhu. This place where the ocean came together with the Ganga is known as Samudragadi, [now known as Samudragarh].

*e samudragadi-grāma-vāsa darśanete
upaje nirmala-bhakti śrī gauracandrete*

Seeing this place known as Samudragadi increases pure devotion in the minds of the devotees of Sri Gaurachandra. (446) 🙏

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