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FLAME, NOT SMOKE

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

If you still cannot understand what is my instruction, then how can I help you? In our movement the beginning of spiritual life is to surrender. If there is no surrender, then there is no advancement. Krishna says, “sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja — Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me.” [Bg. 18.66]. This is the



beginning. If surrender is lacking then there is no beginning even, what to speak of advancement. *na sa siddhim avāpnoti na sukham na parām gatim* — Such a person attains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the supreme destination. This is the beginning of spiritual life. The word is disciple. Disciple means one who accepts discipline. If there is no discipline, how is one a disciple? That discipline is continued by disciplic succession. That is perfect. As soon as the disciplic succession is missing, then everything is lost.

*evam paramparā-prāptam imāṁ rājarṣayo viduḥ
sa kālēna mahatā yogo naṣṭaḥ parantapa*

This supreme science was thus received through the chain of disciplic succession and the saintly kings understood it in that way. But in course of

time the succession was broken, and therefore the science as it appears to be lost. [Bg. 4.2]

The word *naṣṭa* is used. As soon as the discipline is broken, then everything is lost. You can dance like a dog but that will not have any affect. No one can dance enthusiastically unless there is spiritual strength. Last night Madhudvisha Maharaja was singing, and so many men became enthused to dance. So unless there is spiritual strength, it cannot be done. Unless there is spiritual strength, you cannot enthuse others. We should acquire spiritual strength by following the regulative principles. Sanatan Goswami has therefore forbidden us to hear from non-devotees. *avaiṣṇava-mukhodgīrṇam pūtam-hari-kathāṃṛtam śraṇanām naiva kartavyam* — One should not hear from those who are not following *vaiṣṇava* principles.” One may say, “Why? It’s *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, Krishna’s words?” *sarpocchiṣṭa-payo yathā* — Milk is very good, but as soon as it is touched by a serpent it is no longer good. It is harmful. Unless the speaker is a *vaiṣṇava*, there is injunction, “Don’t hear from him. It will be poisonous.” One who is not following the *vaiṣṇava* principles cannot speak about *vaiṣṇava* principles. It is harmful. That is forbidden by our *ācāryas* like Sanatan Goswami. If someone says, “What is the harm? He is chanting Hare Krishna...” He

cannot chant. That is show-bottle chanting. It is not effective. One may say that, "Let me hear anyone who is chanting." No. Sanatan Goswami says, "Don't hear." It will be harmful. If they are not following the *vaiṣṇava* principles then hearing them will not be effective.

As far as gathering men, if you do not gather intelligent men, then what is the use? *Ekaś candras tamo hanti na ca tārā sahasraśaḥ* — "If there is one moon, that is sufficient. What is the use of millions of stars?" (Chanakya Pandit) If one is a perfect *vaiṣṇava*, that is sufficient. Still, we recommend, "Go on chanting." This will help you anywhere. It is also good.

If you want to ignite wood and the wood is dry, then the fire takes place immediately, but if it is moist, only smoke will come. Smoke is not what we want. We want a blazing fire. If only smoke comes from the wood you cannot take any use of it. It is not useful. It is only good for troubling your eyes. Smoke also means fire, but you require a blazing fire, not a smoky fire. A blazing fire immediately takes place if the wood is dry. Otherwise, you will go on enjoying smoke. One may say, "Be satisfied. Where there is smoke there is fire." But it will not be useful. Gradually the wood will dry, but it takes a long time. You require flame. But that flame cannot be produced if the wood is wet. Wet means materially contaminated. Pure devotional service is the flame and all other things are smoke. You must get the flame. Otherwise, your business will not get done. When there is smoke we naturally fan, "*Phat, phat, phat.*" Then as soon as the flame comes, there is no smoke. So fan it. Let the flame come. Then everything will be all right. Otherwise be satisfied with only smoke. You may cook with smoke for three hundred years.

One big man approached a yogi. People are very inquisitive to see some yogic magic, so the rich man asked the yogi, "What you have learned about yogic perfection?"

The yogi replied, "In the severe winter season I can dip myself in the water up to this and practice yoga."

"How long can you remain?"

"I can remain the whole night."

"All right, if you can remain within severe cold water overnight then I shall give you such and such presentation."

So the yogi agreed, and did it. Then in the morning, when the man came, he said, "Oh, you are successful?"

Either he had no money or he did not want to give it. So he asked his advisor, "What shall I do?"

"No, no sir, you cannot give money." "Why?" "There was some heat."

"How was there heat?"

In India during the month of Kārttika month they burn some *ākāśa-pradīpa*, a lamp on top of the roof. On the roof there is some bamboo, and on top of the bamboo there was a lamp. His advisor said, "You could see the lamp there, and you took heat from it." That lamp was three miles away, but still he said, "Yes, there was heat. Therefore he could tolerate."

The yogi appealed to another servant of that big man, "I took so much trouble and he did not pay me anything."

The servant replied, "Don't worry. I shall see that you are paid." Shortly after that there was some urgent business and the rich man told that servant, "Tomorrow I am going. You must come with me." He planned to leave at ten o'clock. At nine o'clock the rich man sent a messenger to the servant, "Are you ready?"

"No, I am cooking. As soon as I finish my cooking and take my meal then we shall go."

After some time the rich man became angry and, going there, he inquired, "So what are you doing?"

"I am cooking."

"Where you are cooking?"

That servant had made a device out of three bamboos, on the top there was a pot of rice, and the fire was far below on the ground. The rich man said, "What kind of cooking is this?"

The servant said, "No, there is heat. It is going on."

"How can you cook like this. It is nonsense."

"No, if the temperature from a lamp on a roof could protect that man, then why won't it work for cooking?"

Then the rich man could understand, and the yogi was paid. So this kind of cooking, a

pot three miles above a little fire will not act. There must be proper adjustment of cooking. Then you can cook food and eat. Cooking is a useless attempt with only a little smoke or a little fire three miles away from the cooking pot. One must be serious to cook. There is method how to do it. If you don't adopt that method and if you cook in your whimsical way, then you will never be able to eat. If you say, "I shall cook in my own way," and if you adopt that process, will it help? *Na siddhiṃ sa avāpnoti na sukhaṃ na paraṃ gatim.* ❀

— Room Conversation 1 July 1974, Melbourne.

POPCORN BONDAGE

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur

*"lājābandhanā nyāya" Chapter 50 of
Upākhyāne Upadeśa*

Upākhyāne Upadeśa is a collection of short stories with explanations that were commonly used by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. Upākhyāne Upadeśa was compiled by Sri Sundarananda Prabhu, a prominent disciple of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta, and was first published in 1940.

Being extremely tired due to hunger, a poor man was leaning against a pillar in a travellers' rest house. A wealthy merchant happened to pass by after taking his daily bath in the holy Ganges. Seeing the hungry person, he felt compassionate and purchased some popcorn from a nearby shop to give to him.

Anxious to accept the food, the hungry person reached out both of his hands. However due to either fatigue or lack of intelligence he did not undo his embrace around the pillar.

Realizing that the hungry person wouldn't be able to eat the food while embracing the pillar, the compassionate gentlemen advised him to remove his arms from the pillar before accepting the popcorn. Unfortunately, the foolish person insisted upon accepting the popcorn while still embracing the wide pillar.

Most reluctantly, the kind-hearted merchant poured the popcorn into the hands of the hungry person and went away. The wretched person then started making all sorts of attempts to eat the popcorn but as his mouth could not

reach his hands around the wide pillar. He remained as hungry and dejected as before.

PURPORT

All atheists suffer like this. Foolish conditioned souls prefer to embrace the pillar of the material world and take rest, while refusing to accept anything worthwhile. They would greatly benefit if they would accept the valuable instructions of the pure devotees so that they could train themselves how to give up the allurements of taking useless rest upon the pillar of this mundane world. ❀

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Śrī Nityānanda-candrasya

THE MOONLIKE NITYANANDA PRABHU

By Shankar Ghosh
maṅgala-rāga

*śrīvāsa aṅgane vinoda bandhāne
nāce nityānanda rāya
manuja daivata puruṣa yoṣita
sabāi dekhite dhāya (1)*

*bhakata-maṅḍala gāota maṅgala
bāje khola karatāla
mājhe unamata nitāi nācata
bhāyāra bhāve mātōyāla (2)*

*hema stambha jini bāhu subalāni
simha jini kaṭi-deśa
candra-vadana kamala-nayana
madana-mohana veśa (3)*

*garaje puna puna lampha ghana-ghana
malla-veśa dhari nāca-i
aruṇa-locane prema-varikhane
avanī-maṅḍala siñca-i (4)*

*dharaṇī-maṅḍale premera vādara
karala avadhūta-cānda
nā jāne nara-nārī bhuvana daśa-cāri
rūpa heri heri kānda (5)*

*śāntipura-nātha garaje avirata
dekhiyā premera vikāra
dhariyā śrī-caraṇa karaye rodana
paṇḍita śrīvāsa udāra (6)*

*mukunda kutūhalī kāndaye phuli-phuli
dhariyā gadādhara kora
nayane vahe prema ṭhākura abhirāma
saghane hari hari bola (7)*

*nā jāne dibā-niśi prema-rase bhāsi
sakala sahacara-ṛṇde
śaṅkara-ghoṣa dāsa karata prati-āśa
nitāi-caraṇāravinde (8)*

(1) In Srivasa's delightful courtyard Lord Nityananda Raya dances. Humans and demigods, men and women, everyone runs to see Him.

(2) The circle of devotees sings auspicious songs. The *karatālas* and *kholas* sound. In the midst of it all, Lord Nitai dances madly with ecstatic spiritual love.

(3) His graceful arms surpass the beauty of golden pillars, and His slender waist defeats the lion's waist. His moon-like face and lotus eyes enchant even Cupid.

(4) Again and again he roars. He leaps and leaps with the agility of a great athlete. All around, the earth is sprinkled with tears from His reddish eyes.

(5) Lord Nitai, the moon of *avadhūtas*, drowns the whole world with divine love. The men and women of the fourteen

worlds, not understanding Him, simply gaze and gaze at His wonderful handsome form, and cry.

(6) Seeing Lord Nitai's spiritual transformations, Lord Adwaita, the master of Santipur, roars incessantly. Noble Srivas Pandit grasps Lord Nitai's feet and weeps.

(7) Mukunda cries out in joy. Overcome, he embraces Gadadhar. Tears of spiritual love flow from Abhiram Thakur's eyes. He calls out, "Hari! Hari!"

(8) Everyone floats in the nectar of ecstatic love. No one knows if it is day or night. Shankar Ghosh yearns to attain Lord Nitai's lotus feet. ❀

OUR GENUINE RELATIONS

From Srila Lochan Das Thakur's

Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala, Madhya Chapter 12

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to Sachi-mata:

*yasyāsti vaiṣṇavaḥ putraḥ putriṇī sā vidhīyate
avaīṣṇava-śata-putra-jananī śūkarī samā*

That mother whose son is a pure devotee is a real mother. But that mother who produces one hundred non-devotee sons is no better than a she-hog. (164)

*ki nārī, puruṣa āra kebā kāra pati
śrī-kṛṣṇa-caraṇa vīnu āra nāhi gati*

Who is really one's husband? Who is one's wife? There is no shelter but the lotus feet of Krishna. (183)

*sei pitā, sei mātā, sei bandhu-jana
sei hartā, sei kartā, sei mātra dhana*

Krishna is the only father, mother and friend of all. He is the only destroyer, doer and real wealth. (184)

*sei se parama-bandhu, sei mātā-pitā
śrī-kṛṣṇa-caraṇe yei prema-bhakti-dātā*

That person who gives you *prema-bhakti* at the lotus feet of Sri Krishna is the supreme friend, mother and father. (195)

*sakala janame pitā, mātā sabhe pāya
kṛṣṇa-guru nāhi mile bujhiha hiyāya*

In every birth one gets a father and mother. Very rarely however does one get guru and Krishna. (204) ❀

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