

## His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja

83.10.25-27

**Guru Mahārāja:** ..... and they are considered in *śuddha*, pure devotion, Narottama Ṭhākura, up to the point and also too much fervour, sentiment, hopeful and also commenting on the special religious of the time and the outer layer to the highest peak of realisation we found in Narottama Ṭhākura, all in the form of song.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and our Guru Mahārāja (Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura) they accepted Narottama Ṭhākura's composition in sum as in toto, but could not accept many ancient compositions, even that *Caitanya-Maṅgāla*, or other things, so many other songs in meaning connecting Śrī Caitanya, Nityānanda, could not be accepted. But Narottama Ṭhākura's production fully selected, *śuddha-bhakti*. Elimination of the, as Rūpa Goswāmī told: *anyābhilāṣa, karma, jñāna*, will be eliminated, and also awakenment of the acme, high realisation, realised that, Narottama Ṭhākura.

He has accepted Nityānanda as Balarāma, as in Kavirāja Goswāmī, Rūpa and Sanātana also. And not, though this (Samaj Madikesu ?) claims they're descent from Narottama's line but they did not accept this.

Another thing we find in Narottama Ṭhākura, he accepted Lokanātha Goswāmī, in the truth, following the path of *śuddha-bhakti* and (..... *śraddhā* ?) But still he accepts in his highest realised stage:

*kavi lokanātha pram hati ki boliya ..... (?)*

A relative and absolute consideration: "When the day will come my Gurudeva Lokanātha Goswāmī will take me by my hand and put me, produce me near Rūpa Goswāmī ..... who is the general director to sanction *rūpānuga-bhajana*, give admission? When my Gurudeva will put me there, *rūpānuga* ?"

That also we find in him.

*Jñāna-sunya-bhakti*, knowledge-less devotion, something natural. Mahāprabhu told: "*eho bāhya āge kaha āra*, ("This is superficial; go further.") (see *Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā*, 8.51-313). Nityānanda Prabhu was not a great scholar. It was easy for this society to accept Śrī Caitanyadeva for His high scholarly life, or expression. But Nityānanda Prabhu was not outwardly a very educated person but He had His fervour, His deep sentiment for Kṛṣṇa, Vṛndāvana, Mahāprabhu ..... Narottama Ṭhākura appreciated that very much.

I think some of the followers of Advaita School did not like Nityānanda at that time. So in that *śloka*:

*sri pasubala dulacar nitai navailyam prema loka bidyate rsi keloka (?)*

"We may have the noble lineage, food, and there may be sufficient education, scholarly life, but those are useless. Still it is to be considered as a (member?) as a (aloof?), nothing more than that." So strongly pushing, Narottama Ṭhākura, if they do not have any appreciation for Nityānanda, cannot understand what is love, what is faith, what is devotion. If they cannot appreciate Nityānanda then their scholarship, their lineage has got no value and they should be considered as (this?)."

I think to make the section of the followers of Advaita, they discouraged Nityānanda, did not like His preaching. Nityānanda Prabhu's preaching was to the masses and so we are told that Mahāprabhu had some private talk in Puruṣottama, none knows what was the subject of the talk, of the private conversation and Nityānanda Prabhu came and accepted married life. Because He had to move through the masses and He was guest in the ordinary family, He's there as the guest, so if not married people will say this thing that thing against Him, so He accepted married life. After long time of renounced life He accepted married life. In order to mix with the ordinary masses He would be guest to any home and every home and began preaching about specially Gaurāṅga, *bhaja gaurāṅga, kaha gaurāṅga*:

*bhaja gaurāṅga, kaha gaurāṅga laha gauranger nāma,  
yei jana gaurāṅga bhaje sei amāra prāna:*

("Worship Gaurāṅga, speak of Gaurāṅga, chant Gaurāṅga's Name. Whoever worships Śrī Gaurāṅga is My life and soul. Come straight to the campaign of Śrī Caitanya and you will safely attain Vṛndāvana.")

"You don't recognise who Gaurāṅga is. What type of highly valuable thing is passing through your door you can't estimate. Accept Gaurāṅga and you'll get the highest thing." That was the tenor, the nature of the preaching of Nityānanda. "Anyhow you come to the feet of Gaurāṅga. Accept Him and you'll be taken to the highest position you can ever conceive as our highest destination." That was the tenor of His preaching. And going door to door He approached with fervent appeal. Sometimes He rolled on the door of the parties.

*thake bhuli nityananda dhumi bhedi jai (?)*

The appealing was so intense, but not high ..... , wandered and rolling on the outer door: "Accept Gaurāṅga. You can't know what a great thing, noble thing that has come down here."

And Narottama Ṭhākura supported Him fully. "Your learning and your high lineage has no value if you can't, if you fail to appreciate what Nityānanda Prabhu has come to give you." And also he says:

*Nitāiyer korunā habe, braje rādhā-kṛṣṇa pābe, (Narottama's Manaḥ-śikṣā )*

"Don't venture to approach direct to Vṛndāvana to have entrance into the group of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, that is very, very high. Go through Nityānanda."

*Nitāiyer korunā habe, braje rādhā-kṛṣṇa pābe.*

"If you get the higher education, if you, the student, if they give not much attention in the primary education then they'll have to suffer in the higher education. So we try to get the lessons of Nityānanda, His grace. Get a good foundation, strong, an instant foundation from Nityānanda, then you approach towards Vṛndāvana, you'll not have to come back, fall back, your progress will be solid and happy and no mistake, solid. So don't neglect Nityānanda Prabhu."

In this way Narottama Ṭhākura is trying his best to draw our attention towards Nityānanda Prabhu, the very foundation. Nityānanda is Balarāma and the *vātsalya*, *sakhya*, *dāsya*, *śanta* under His command, only with the exception of *mādhurya-rasa*. But Narottama Ṭhākura says if you can have a good foundation in these *rasas* that will be higher, high. And in comparison that is complete but don't neglect all this service. Service is the first thing necessary otherwise if you cross them, neglect them and take a jump, you'll have to fall or you'll have to earn something which is not gaining, constantly you'll have to have that.

End of side A, start of side B, 25/27.10.83

**Guru Mahārāja:** ..... that comes from mind, a form of thought, production of mind, as you may say. Universal mind and then from there the personal mind.

The play of *līlā* that is no beginning no end and nothing can oppose it. It is there and you have got that eye, that particular special eye to test it, then you can find it. It is to be read by the experts .....

So Narottama Ṭhākura's coming and going, that is there and his activities and he was known to that quarter. So Mahāprabhu before Narottama Ṭhākura's appearance He took the name of Narottama. Anyhow, Narottama was born in Malda (?) District, Kheturi and he was the son of a rich family. In his childhood he was indifferent to the worldly life. His elder brother, Krishnananda, Krishna, he was a big *zamindar* (landowner), so much so that they're called the kings of the locality, Raja Krishnananda.

Narottama Ṭhākura was a bachelor and at the age of about fourteen or so we find that Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and Narottama they came to Navadvīpa. Inner attraction, hearing the Name of Śrī Caitanyadeva they surrendered. So that type of devotion it is not, that was inborn in them, they could appreciate that, "This is our own soil, our own friends, our own relatives, our own destination." Their internal heart could have recognition of the plane Śrī Caitanyadeva came to give us, or show us.

So Śrī Caitanyadeva was at that time in Purī, Puruṣottama Kṣetra, Jagannātha Kṣetra. They came and the second circumambulation of the Dhāma took place. First Nityānanda Prabhu along with Jīva Goswāmī, He began Dhāma *parikramā*, Navadvīpa Dhāma *parikramā*, every temple, the different parts of the *līlā* to see and to show, to appreciate

and understand the parts of Mahāprabhu's *līlā*. First Nityānanda Prabhu began with Jīva Goswāmī and the second is Narottama and Śrīnivāsa. One old *brāhmaṇa*, he took them, travelled to the different parts of the *līlā* of Mahāprabhu. Young then, and Narottama was grown up by this time Mahāprabhu disappeared. Anyhow he managed to get to Vṛndāvana accompanied by Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and Śyāmānanda Prabhu he went to Vṛndāvana. When going on the way they heard that Sanātana Goswāmī had disappeared. Broken-hearted they wandered on towards Vṛndāvana. When they reached Mathurā they heard that Rūpa Goswāmī had disappeared as well. They considered themselves to be very unfortunate and anyhow reached Vṛndāvana in the evening.

At that time with great pomp and splendour the *ārati* of Govindaji in the temple of Rūpa Goswāmī continuing at that time. And specially because Rūpa Goswāmī disappeared there was a great gathering and it was visited, that old temple of Rūpa Goswāmī, in a grand fashion. The upper portion broken by Aurangzeb, still, you can guess how grand and beautiful a temple, beautiful and grand, such combination is very rare. Grand as in the Vaikuṅṭha grand and beauty is Goloka ..... Beauty harmonising the *aiśvarya*, grandeur, or controlled by beauty, that is very specially found.

There they first met the Goswāmī's, Jīva Goswāmī took care of them and they remained nearly a year in Vṛndāvana. At that time without Rūpa and Sanātana, other Goswāmīs they were still appeared. And gradually Śrīnivāsa took initiation from Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, Śyāmānanda from Jīva Goswāmī and Narottama Ṭhākura took initiation from Lokanātha Goswāmī.

And there is also a story. Lokanātha Goswāmī, he was very friendly and also devoted to Śrī Caitanyadeva from his early life. He was born in Yashohara, next to Nadia (he stayed?) and he's a *brāhmaṇa*. And he went to Vṛndāvana to live with the Goswāmīs. There, very strictly his abnegation, *vairagya*, indifference to the world was so much ..... It is told he did not keep a class of water within his quarter because if anyone comes and begs for some water it cannot be avoided, so he did not store any water. If anyone comes and seeks for some water, begs, then it cannot be avoided. So in order to avoid any outsider entering into his compound he lived in such a way, no obligation, cut off from the society.

Always taking the Name ..... won't make any disciples ..... But anyhow Narottama Ṭhākura's heart was captured by his personality, and he determined that: "I must take initiation from him." He thought, "All the wealth is reserved here, in his store, that store of grace is here, that must be looted."

He was so strict, no door to enter. What did he do? He ran and found out where he goes in the jungle to pass stool and he began to cleanse that place. After a few days it attracted the attention of Lokanātha Goswāmī. "I come here to pass stool but nowadays I find that this place is being cleansed by somebody." So after detecting he tried to watch whose doing all this and how it is going on. One day he caught Narottama, in the later part of the night, caught him red-handed. "Why do you do this?"

Narottama fell flat on his feet: "I want your grace, your blessings. Please forgive me. No other alternative have I got. I can't give my heart anywhere else."

Anyhow .....

After a year or so they thought and they were requested by the Goswāmī's to go back to Bengal and there preach the doctrine of Mahāprabhu. "These are the scriptures ready for that. Sanātana, Rūpa, they have left many things in book form. Though that should be preached in every nook and corner of the world but now peculiarly we'll have to try in Bengal because the influence of Śrī Caitanyadeva and also Advaita Prabhu, Gadādhara. To preach that is more special thing there, *gaura-līlā*. So first you try to make them accepted there and try only from there it will go."

So all the books at that time, no printing press, so all hand written. Those books were carefully put in a big box, two or three maybe. And Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu sent for a bullock cart to carry them from Vṛndāvana to Bengal. And those three they are coming with the cart. Śyāmānanda also took initiation from Jīva Goswāmī, (that is old story told?)

Anyhow, when they reached the district of (Vana Malla Pura ?) near Vishnupura there was an *ādivāsī* (indigenous) chief, the *zamindar* (landowner) of the Santhal section, aborigines. Their occupation was somewhat looting, lived on looting.

We find when Sanātana Goswāmī was going to Vṛndāvana he also met a chief of those aborigines, the Santhal. He had an astrologer who found out that eight golden coins were with Sanātana and he will be killed and those coins will be taken off.

And here also we find they're taking each wooden box from bullock cart and their astrologer, they had also an astrologer. He foretold that there are many jewels and gems in those boxes, that was his reading. And so the chief ordered them: "Get them in my house." And at night they're sleeping nearby, but anyhow, stealthily, they managed to take those boxes and carried to the house. Chief Birhambir was his name.

Then in the early morning they found to their big disappointment the book boxes were missing. They tried their best to enquire all around but failed, no trace. Then what to do? Śyāmānanda went to his countryside (Ambika Kalna). Narottama Ṭhākura also went away (to Kheturi Gram) to work. But Śrīnivāsa who was supposed to be the leader, he could not go. He began to wander in the locality half mad in search of those gems and diamonds.

Then anyhow one day, that Birhambir he was a type of Vaiṣṇava, he use to hear *bhāgavata-kāṭha*, *Bhāgavata* discourse from one of his *guru*, or some priest or *brāhmaṇa* whose name was Vyāsa. And Śrīnivāsa he also now and then joined the class. A young man, beautiful figure, half mad, indifferent, he used to join the class. And he tried his best to conceal his feature, who is he, but anyhow unconsciously he was caught. When the Vyāsa was explaining *Bhāgavata* he committed some mistake and unconsciously Śrīnivāsa he interjected, "oh, this is not so, it should be this." Then he attracted the notice, the attention of the whole audience.

"What is this? This half mad boy has got such deep knowledge in *Bhāgavata*. So much so that he's slighting our *brāhmaṇa*'s explanation of that." Then he was caught by the audience, "Who are you? You must speak up."

Then he had to give out the whole history. Then Birhambir he was present there, the local chief, "I'm fully conscious that I have taken and that is all kept here ..... Then Śrīnivāsa went there and saw and even made some *pūjā*, *ārati*, all these things. And Birhambir became his disciple and that was a big centre for preaching there.

And Narottama Ṭhākura was informed that those books had been recovered and they all rejoiced and began to sing. Narottama Ṭhākura anyhow influencing his elder brother, he made arrangement to install Deities in his home on a grand scale. About five Śrī Mūrti's were installed there, I forget the Names. And even that installation, a great festival took place. All the Vaiṣṇava's of the time were invited.

Jāhnavā Devī she herself went there with all her husband's, with all the paraphernalia of Nityānanda Prabhu. Śrīnivāsa Ācārya he was the leader of the function, in possession, the ceremony conducted by Śrīnivāsa Ācārya. And other Vaiṣṇava's, (Śrī Advaita *paṇḍit* ?) so many others joined.

And such a big *saṅkīrtana* was performed there that attracted Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda Prabhu Themselves. And it is told, (some think like impossible?) that both, it is mentioned both (*prakat* and *aprakat* ?) different groups of *saṅkīrtana* parties took, participated there, participation. Mahāprabhu with His own group He was also seen singing and dancing and the then living group also mixing with that group, it was seen sometimes there. So intense invocation of the high divinity was found there that it has been described in this way. The original group cannot avoid this chance of *saṅkīrtana* as it was done in Śrīvāsa Angan (the place where the house of Śrīvāsa used to be) in the time of Mahāprabhu. So that was also taken down, drawn down by these devotees combined, the devotional method.

Then Narottama Ṭhākura began extensive preaching. He was very lenient. Went up to Manipur and he was very successful there. Even the king and queen of Manipur (with their?) subjects they accepted Narottama Ṭhākura. But he had the relatives, lineage. In the Manipur we see that two kinds of generations reckoned (*patri tantric* and *matri tantric* ?) The area here they're (*patri tantric* ?) The lineage is considered from the father's side. And in Manipur and in the Southern area someplace there is (*matri tantric* ?), the lineage counted from mother, daughter, in this way, mother's side, this line. The Manipur is more or less that *matri tantric*, mother is the chief, mother, daughter, she will keep there in the (body? *gaudi*?) and the husband will come and go just like wife as in the (Aryan? ..... ) from different (parts?)

So that custom was taken into account. So he was very liberal in his preaching there and was very much successful. The whole of Northern Bengal extended far East from Manipur was attracted by Narottama Ṭhākura. Of course he has written also many poems and they are considered as representing *śuddha-bhakti*, pure devotion. Up to the point and also too much fervour, sentiment .....

End of recording, 25/27.10.83

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