

82.11.07.B

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja:

*śreyah sṛtīm bhaktim udasya te vibho, klīśyanti ye kevala-bodha-labdhave
[teṣām asau kleśala eva śīśyate, nānyad yathā sthūla-tuṣāvaghātinām]*

["My dear Lord, devotional service unto You is the only auspicious path. If one gives it up simply for speculative knowledge or the understanding that these living beings are spirit souls and the material world is false, he undergoes a great deal of trouble. He only gains troublesome and inauspicious activities. His endeavours are like beating a husk that is already devoid of rice. One's labour becomes fruitless."]

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 10.14.4] & [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā*, 22.22]

So,

*nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo, na medhayā na bahunā śrutena
yam evaiṣa vṛnute tena labhyas, [tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛnute tanūṁ svām]*

["One cannot understand the substance of the Paramātmā, the Super-soul residing within everyone's heart, by means of expertise in logic, intelligence or learning. When the living entity begs the Lord for His mercy, being desirous of His transcendental loving service, then the Supreme Lord reveals His self-manifest form directly before him."] [*Kaṭha-Upaniṣad*, 1.2.23] & [*Muṇḍaka-Upaniṣad*, 2.3.2]

Everything is finished here. When He likes to make Himself known to anybody, only that body can know, through His grace. And here, from this plane, they may dash their head to pieces, but no trace of that higher thing. Do you follow?

Vidagdha-Mādhava: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Akṣayānanda Mahārāja?

Akṣayānanda Mahārāja: Yes Mahārāja.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: You please explain that, little elaborately. That *śrauta-panthā*, *avaroha-panthā*, it is coming down. Truth can come down, and come at His pleasure. Whomever He will select, he will know Him. In the same place, He wants to make Himself known to one, the others cannot know. They can know differently.

*mallānām aśanir nṛṇām naravaraḥ strīṇām smaro mūrttimān
[gopānām svajano 'satām kṣitibhujām śāstā svapitro śīśuḥ
mṛtyur bhojapater virāḍ aviduṣām tattvaṁ param yuginām
vṛṣṇīnām paradevateti vidito raṅgam gataḥ sāgrajāḥ]*

["O King, Śrī Kṛṣṇa then appeared as a thunderbolt to the wrestlers, as the supreme male to the men, as Cupid incarnate to the ladies, as a friend to the cow-herdsmen; as an emperor to the wicked kings, as a child to His father and mother, as death to Kaṁsa, as the universal form of the

world to the ignorant; as the Supreme Truth to the *yogīs*, as the Supreme Worshipful Lord to the Vṛṣṇis - and along with Baladeva He entered the arena."] [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 10.43.17]

Kṛṣṇa entering the arena of Kāmsa, and different sections of people are seeing Him in different ways. Whomever He wants to make Himself known, in that way, he can know Him only, in that way. It is His will, and not the will of the knower, who wants to know.

Anyhow, to influence Him, that He comes down, and this is the devotion of *bhakti*, *śaraṇāgatī*, etc. Otherwise, we shall know, with this attitude, none can know, what to speak of establish by their discussion, or logic, he may give impression. Have you all understood this method?

Devotee: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Or more explanation necessary?

Then Akṣayānanda Mahārāja will speak something elaborately.

Vidagdha-Mādhava: Guru Mahārāja, can I rephrase some of that question?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Yes.

Vidagdha-Mādhava: As Napoleon, his presence, created a situation for the opposition party, which practically made him invincible...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: After all, Napoleon is a man of this mundane world.

Vidagdha-Mādhava: Yes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: One good logician can suppress another one of lower capacity. It is here. But no Napoleon by the dint of his own genius can enter into the transcendental world. Which, the transcendental truth is so fine, and of subjective nature, and never of any objective nature. He's all subject. The whole - He can take only initiative, of all the actions, especially about Him. So subtle, that the human consciousness cannot enquire and capture Him. As a subject that cannot be dealt with. Super subjective area, transcendental, *adhokṣaja*, means super subjective.

My, myself is so gross, my self, my knowledge, my self and its knowledge is so gross, that cannot enter. Just as earth cannot enter electricity. Electricity can enter anywhere, but iron cannot enter into electricity. Electricity will pass through iron _____ [?] electricity non conductor it cannot pierce through. Just as some ether, that can pass through anything, the iron work, the wooden work, it will pass through anything and everything. But wood cannot enter into it, it is so fine. Something like that.

Super subjective, all subject, all subjective existence, and very, very fine. And *jīva* consciousness is too gross to conceive that thing. Just as an eye cannot see so many things. Microscopic worms are there, but it is beyond the reach of human eyes. Only through microscope we can trace, something. So, this gross, subjective character, which the individual souls possess, that is so gross that cannot have any, cannot trace any existence of that most subtle thing in the conscious world. So, *nāyam ātmā pravacanena*, only when that fine thing descends into this gross plane, then the gross plane in a passive way feels something, that something is encroaching me, and he cannot oppose. So fine, that is entering into this gross plane of human consciousness. So fine knowledge, and so peculiar type, he just wonders.

"Such a wonderful touch of a very blissful, how I find extraordinary bliss touching my mind, my consciousness?" Then if that is withdrawn, "Oh, no trace of that wonderful blissful touch in me again."

So that is of another type, so *yam evaiṣa vṛnute*. Whomever He will select to be caught by Him, he can get trace, otherwise none can trace Him. It is very easy thing. So many things existing beyond the jurisdiction of our sight. So many sounds are there which our ear cannot hear. All limited. So human consciousness is limited to make enquiry, or understand about that thing. But when that thing comes to us we can feel only possibly. That sort of, transcendental, supra-mental, these are the terms given by the philosophers about His attributes and existence.

Sat-cit-ānandam. The Vallabha *sampradāya* says, *sat* is what exists, what is the matter. *Cit, sat cit*, both in *jīva* soul. And *sat-cit-ānanda* only in the higher thing, that is Lord, God. *Jīva* has consciousness but not *ānanda*, mere consciousness. And *ānanda* is there, *sat-cit-ānanda*, in full-fledged is there in the God.

But Mahāprabhu says that *jīva* is an atom of consciousness, and with very negligible point of blissfulness. *Sat-cit-ānanda*, three things, only in a very meagre way, of a most negligent degree, in *jīva*.

I could not make it clear? Eh?

Akṣayānanda Mahārāja: No, very clear.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Very clear. But our Vidagdha-Mādhava Prabhu he's not satisfied perhaps? More elaboration he wants, eh?

Vidagdha-Mādhava: I think that, I'm coming from such a low position, and entering in such an exalted process...

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: No. You have brought the example of Napoleon. And I sometimes used it for some other topics. But why you have taken Napoleon here? Napoleon is a hero in the material world, but no spiritual reference.

Devotee: _____ [?]

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: _____ [?]

A mundane example of Napoleon, he could conquer any force. So, someone is endowed with - empowered, a delegated power of the Lord, then he can conquer anyone. Something like that. A genius, and spiritual genius, one favourite of the Lord. Lord is backing whom? Such is your Ācārya. He can conquer anyone and everyone. He's backed by the Supreme Lord, Supreme Authority, such a devotee can face every, any eventuality.

Jagāi, Mādhāi, the greatest rogues of the time, attacked Nityānanda Prabhu, and were easily converted. But an ordinary devotee would not be able to do that. Nityānanda Prabhu could do so.

Something like that I might have told in the example of Napoleon, to make it clear. Napoleon could defeat any force, if he was present, independent of the magnitude or the efficiency of the opposite party.

Vidagdha-Mādhava: So, Guru Mahārāja, when those that are flying, at least in name, the banner of Mahāprabhu, they have some disagreement, and even sometimes to the point of attacking the other side, how is that to be considered?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: What does he say?

Akṣayananda Mahārāja: There may be two parties, both are professing to hold the flag of Mahāprabhu, the banner of Mahāprabhu. But they may even attack each other, to the war, to the end. So what is the position here? What is the explanation given?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja: Then? This is the leading question _____ [?] Gauḍīya Maṭha _____ [?] *sahajiyā* party? Our Guru Mahārāja dismissed them all by quoting one _____ [?]

āula, bāula, karttābhajā, neḍā, daraveśa, sāñi
sahajiyā, sakhībhekī, smārta, jāta-gosāñi
[ativāḍī, cūḍādhārī, gaurāṅga-nāgarī
tato kahe, ei terara saṅga nāhi kari]

[“The names of the *sahajiyā sampradāyas* are as follows: *āula* (a mendicant sect following a very easy course of worship), *bāula* (a sect of mendicants who wander about singing sweet melodies about the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa while engaging in abominable activities), *karttābhajā* (a sect of “followers” of Śrī Gaurāṅga in Bengal), *neḍā* (literally means: “shaven-headed.” Refers to devotees whose greatest religious principle is their shaven heads. The word also means bald or barren and connotes someone who represents himself as a devotee while his so-called religious life is barren of genuine realisation), *daraveśa* (a Muslim mendicant. This word has also been used by Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī to mean “hippy”), *sāñi* (literally means: “religious instructor”), *sahajiyā* (literally means: “easy-ist.” Indicates one who takes the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana cheaply), *sakhībhekī* (one who imagines himself to be a *gopī*, and adopts the dress of a woman), *smārta* (formalistic and materialistic *brāhmaṇas*), *jāta-gosāñi* (caste *goswāmīs*), *ativāḍī* (proud devotees), *cūḍādhārī* (those whose only religious principle consists in shaving the head and maintaining a tuft of hair, marking themselves as Vaiṣṇavas), and *gaurāṅga-nāgarī* (those who consider that it is the position of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to be the enjoyer of women, when in fact as a *sannyāsī* in His Ācārya *līlā* He avoided all association with women). One should avoid associating with these different classes of imitation devotees.] [*Gauḍīya Kaṅṭhahāra*, 13.111]

In this way, exposed them. *Gaura-nāgarī* they claim that “We’re followers of Mahāprabhu.”
Āula, bāula, so many others they say, “We’re followers of Mahāprabhu.”

But our Guru Mahārāja had to expose them, and clearly he discarded them and preached his own thing. And all, still there are so many others in their camp, they do not take the *sahajiyā* section, do not take the opinion of Gauḍīya Maṭha. So the subtle points there are, and it depends upon the sincerity of the soul, he can know.

ācārya kahe, - vastu-viṣaye haya vastu-jñāna / vastu-tattva-jñāna haya kṛpāte pramāṇa

[“It is evident that I have the grace of the Lord, because I know Him, and that you have not, because you deny Him.”] [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā*, 6.89]

Gopinātha Ācārya and Sārvabhauma were discussing about Mahāprabhu. Sārvabhauma was not converted, so far. When, before his conversion, the talk between Gopinātha Ācārya and Sārvabhauma, and his students.

Gopinātha Ācārya told, "That only through the grace of God, one can know God, no other alternative."

Then Sārvabhauma put this question.

[sārvabhauma kahe, — ācārya, kaha sāvadhāne] tomāte īśvara-kṛpā ithe ki pramāṇe

[Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya replied, "My dear Gopinātha Ācārya, please speak with great care. What is the proof that you have received the mercy of the Lord?"] [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 6.88*]

"You have got the grace, and I have not got the grace. What is the guarantee there? How to decide, that you have got the grace of God, what you say about God that is true? But I have not got the grace, so my words are not real."

ācārya kahe, - vastu-viśaye haya vastu-jñāna / vastu-tattva-jñāna haya kṛpāte pramāṇa

A very subtle point, to know what is what. There is a position to know the reality, and those that do not know the reality, they cannot understand, so it is, just as the other day I told.

*ātmā parijñāna-mayo vivādo, hy astīti nāstīti bhidārtha-niṣṭhaḥ
[vyartha 'pi naivoparameta puṁsām, mattaḥ parāvṛtta-dhiyām sva-lokāt]*

[One party says: "God exists!" The other says: "God does not exist!" *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says that the *ātmā* is self effulgent, but still we find that one class of men say, "He exists, we see Him, He can be seen," and another says: "He has never existed." This quarrel has no end because one of the parties hasn't got the eye to see what is self-evident. This quarrel is a useless waste of time, but still it will never stop; it will continue forever.] [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 11.22.34*]

A party says that, "There is no God." Another party says, "There is God." All the differences, how they can be unified? The real fact is one thing, and disqualification is another thing. So there will be so many parties, who have realised no truth, who have realised one per cent, fifty per cent, fifty five per cent, in this way the difference will go on. Still, in the perfect plane of truth there is also difference. *Yei rasa, sei sarvottama.*

[kintu yāñra yei rasa, sei sarvottama / taṭa-stha hañā vicāriḥ, āche tara-tama]

["It is true that whatever relationship a particular devotee has with the Lord is the best for him; still, when we study all the different methods from a neutral position, we can understand that there are higher and lower degrees of love."] [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 8.83*]

The *vātsalya-rasa* says, "Mine is the highest." *Sākhya-rasa* says, "Mine is the highest." *Taṭa-stha hañā vicāriḥ, āche tara-tama.* But there is possibility of withdrawing from the relative position and understand and give judgement about that non party decision, and thereby we can know the gradation. And who has got that inner most understanding capacity to catch that fine thing, they come and accept that. But sometimes the relative positions have to surrender, to submit to the absolute point. The *vātsalya-rasa* can realise sometimes that, "No, *mādhurya-rasa* is more powerful." So there is a clash, a fight, and *vātsalya-rasa* is defeated by *mādhurya-rasa*, then they

have got that bitter experience. But still, they do not like to admit it, whole time in the public. It goes so far. The differentiation, the hierarchy, everywhere it is. And it is not very easy to understand. The *śanta-rasa* devotees, it is not very easy to - very exceptional cases...

*[tasyāravinda-nayanasya padāravinda-,] kiñjalka-mīśra-tulasī-makaranda-vāyuh
antar-gataḥ sva-vivareṇa cakāra teṣāṃ, sañkṣobham akṣara-juṣāṃ api citta-tanvoḥ*

["When the breeze carrying the aroma of *tulasī* leaves from the toes of the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead entered the nostrils of those sages, they experienced a change both in body and in mind, even though they were attached to the impersonal Brahman understanding."] [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 3.15.43]

Ātmārāma, they're [the four Kumāras] self-satisfied, but suddenly on one occasion some *tulasī gandha*, scent, divine scent disturbed their balance of mind that they're self-sufficient. They're tasting the *rasa* of their own *ātmā*, and that is last point of realisation. Śukadeva, he was also in such a position, and fully satisfied he thought himself, but,

*pariniṣṭhito 'pi nairguṇye, uttamaḥ-śloka-līlayā
grhīta-cetā rājarṣe, ākhyānaṃ yad adhītavān*

["O saintly King, I was certainly situated perfectly in transcendence, yet I was still attracted by the delineation of the pastimes of the Lord, who is described by enlightened verses."] [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 2.1.9]

*nivr̥tta-tarṣair upagīyamānād, bhavauṣadhāc chrotra-mano 'bhirāmāt
ka uttamaḥ-śloka-guṇānuvādāt, pumān virajyeta vinā paśughnāt*

["Glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is performed in the *paramparā* system; that is, it is conveyed from spiritual master to disciple. Such glorification is relished by those no longer interest in the false, temporary glorification of this cosmic manifestation. Descriptions of the Lord are the right medicine for the conditioned soul undergoing repeated birth and death. Therefore, who will cease hearing glorification of the Lord except a butcher or one who is killing his own self?"] [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 10.1.4]

The *brahma-jñāna*, the *bhāgavat-jñāna* is above *brahma-jñāna*. Ordinarily *brahma-jñānīs* do not admit this. But there are exceptional cases, special cases who come to prove this. In this way, there are so many sections. One section, they may assert that, "Mine is the highest realisation." This *yogī*, this *Vedāntic*, this *karmī*, so many sections in the thoughts of the world we find. But generally they won't admit that 'mine is lower than another.' But still a comparison is possible, and it depends upon the fitness, upon the capacity, the inner taste, *ruci*, to have the higher thing. *Ātmā parijñāna-mayo vivādo hy*. Just as differentiation from theist and atheist, in a gross way, so among the theist there are also gradational differences. And one party cannot generally admit the higher position of the other. But still it is there, and the taste to accept the higher, the inner taste, that is the guarantee, to that.

One who has passed through all these stages to the highest, when he comes to give evidence he will say, "For this, this is higher. For this, again, this is higher."

Sanātana Goswāmī has proved that through that *gopa* boy, that first he's thinking 'this is the highest end.' Then again, dissatisfaction. Again getting the chance the next higher, next higher, next higher, in this way he's going up. How, from our present position we can rise up, and up. That has been shown in his *Bṛhat-Bhāgavatāmṛta*, by the example of that Gopa Kumāra. It is possible. It is within our understanding. But all may not understand, of the truth of any and everything.

Just as there is gradation in truth itself, Himself, so also there is gradation among the knower, among those that have come to realise, there is also gradation. And the fit will gather to his own place. And there is a tendency always, 'that where I am, it is the best place.' And we're to get out of that.

trṇād api sunīcena, taror api sahiṣṇunā / amāninā mānadena, [kīrtaniyaḥ sadā hariḥ]

["One who is humbler than a blade of grass, more forbearing than a tree, who gives due honour to others without desiring it for himself is qualified to always chant the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa."] [*Śikṣāṣṭakam*, 3]

The *śaraṇāgati* and this sort of attitude will help us to receive higher vibration of the truth, finest vibration of the truth. If we disown our self, our ego, generally opposes to catch the fine vibration. But if we can disown that ego, and very, very open, *amāninā mānadena*, and be, self-abnegation, and self-forbearance, and no assertion of our self, and to give honour to every vibration of the environment. With this attitude we can go up. It will help us to catch the higher truth, and go up. *Śaraṇāgati*. He will come down to reveal Himself. First, this sort of principle we have to accept. The truth is higher. I cannot force Him to come to serve me, my sweet pleasure. He's higher. And of His own accord He may come to me. So with what attitude should we search after Him?

Mahāprabhu says, "In this way you can attract Him towards you. And as much as He will make Himself known to you, you'll be able to know that, that part of Him. So no end."

So no necessity of conquering a kingdom. The kingdom will come himself, itself.

Rāmānuja Ācārya says, once he had to enter into discussion with a *māyāvādī paṇḍita*, and fourteen or fifteen days continuously discussed, the hard discussion was going on. And he thought himself unfit, and came to the temple of _____ [?] and prayed.

"How is this? That to establish Your devotion, dignity of Your devotion, I feel I'm worthless. I can't defeat that *māyāvādī paṇḍita* to establish Your devotion as the supreme. So helpless am I."

But after that Rāmānuja approached that man again as prearranged. Whenever Rāmānuja was present that man came and submitted to him. "Now I recapitulate and assimilate what you said and I say what you told that is true. I submit to that." The ways of Vallabha Ācārya.

So it is like that. The victory is like that. It is not in the fist of any person. It is there.

Mahāprabhu - there is an art of jujitsu, an art of conquering the enemy, not by force but by negative withdraw. So in many places it has been done like that. Mahāprabhu approached Sārvabhauma, Prakāśānanda, and conquered them almost negatively, by negative attitude.

"I do not know anything much. I'm a fool, stupid, no idea in the *śāstra*. You are big men." In this way. "But I have heard from My Guru in this way, this way. I do that."

mūrkhā tumi, tomāra nāhika vedāntādhikāra, 'kṛṣṇa-mantra' japa sadā, — ei mantra-sāra

[“ ‘You are a fool,’ he said. ‘You are not qualified to study *Vedānta* philosophy, and therefore You must always chant the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa. This is the essence of all mantras, or Vedic hymns.”]
[*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 7.72*]

“You are a stupid person. You have got no capacity to enter into the high knowledge of *Vedānta*. You take the Name of the Lord and that will help You to the utmost.”

“I do that anyhow.” He entered into the discussion with Prakāśānanda, *māyāvādī paṇḍita*, in such a way, “That I’m a fool.” And Guru _____ [?] But the achievement that disarmed him, that opponent. This attitude disarmed the opponent, and he came with sincere search, and then finding all these things he was converted.

It is His will. Always we should invite His attention, His grace, before we go to do anything and everything. We remember Him. We throw ourselves in His mercy, what is His decision. That will be all right. Otherwise I’ll hunt after my name and fame and self glory.

All won’t accept in this world of *māyā*. *Bhagavad-gītā* is there, *Bhāgavata* is there, so many devotees are there, but still, all are not converted. So many examples, Prahāda’s example, Dhruva’s example, so many examples, but still there is atheist. The *karma* of *jīva* is there. There is sun, but no eye. Then?

Vivado yastiki nastiki catmanis [?] In gross, and so in subtle matters also like that.

So that ascertained, past has been given the name of *bhāgya*, fortune.

brahmāṇḍa brhamite kona bhāgyavān jīva [guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja]

[“Wandering throughout the material universe, the very fortunate living entity who receives the grace of Guru and Kṛṣṇa receives the seed of the creeper of devotional service.”]

[*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 19.151*]

A particular section who have come up to the point where from they can be able to understand, to see the truth, in that section. It is not for all. The real argument will be pushed forward but they won’t understand that argument. They have no capacity to understand. It is useless to them. But some will see the justice in the argument. “Oh. This is true.” So this is *bhāgya*, or inner capacity to catch the truth, the subtle things within.

Brahmā explaining *Veda*, Indra, Viracandra, so many students, they understood in different way according to their stage. From the same source, *prakṛti-vaicitryāt* and *pāramparyeṇa*, from the same source coming, flowing, and one can understand, and another cannot. So according to the capacity of the hearer they will be ranked in different clans and sections.

Bhagavad-gītā is there, and apparently many sections accept the *Bhagavad-gītā* as most authentic. But still _____ [?] their understanding, *adhikāra*, *vicāra*. So in the *śāstra*,

parokṣa-vādo vedo 'yaṁ, [bālānām anuśāsanam / karma-mokṣāya karmāṇi, vidhatte hy agadaṁ yathā]

[“Childish and foolish people are attached to materialistic, fruitive activities, although the actual goal of life is to become free from such activities. Therefore, the Vedic injunctions indirectly lead

one to the path of ultimate liberation by first prescribing fruitive religious activities, just as a father promises his child candy so that the child will take his medicine.”] [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 11.3.44]

*[śreyān sva-dharmo viguṇaḥ, para-dharmāt sv-anuṣṭhitāt]
sva-dharme nidhanam śreyaḥ, para-dharmo bhayāvahaḥ*

["It is better to carry out one's own duties a little imperfectly rather than faultlessly perform another's duties. Know that even death is auspicious in the discharge of one's duties appropriate to his natural position in the ordained socio-religious system, because to pursue another's path is perilous."] [*Bhagavad-gītā*, 3.35]

Very forcefully it is placed there. Rather die, don't leave your present position. And then,

*sarva-dharmān parityajya, mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja
[ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo, mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ]*

["Totally abandoning all kinds of religion, surrender exclusively unto Me. I will liberate you from all kinds of sins, so do not despair."] [*Bhagavad-gītā*, 18.66]

"Go ahead." The General says. First the General says, "Don't leave your position, whatever severe attack comes to your line, don't come back. Die there, don't come back." Then again he says, "No, march on."

And one may think, 'Oh, you already told don't move an inch. Now you say, give up your position. What is this?'

Parokṣa-vādo vedo 'yaṁ, bālānām anuśāsanam.

Kṛṣṇa Himself says,

*na tathā me priyatama ātmanyonir na śaṅkaraḥ
na ca saṅkarṣaṇo na śrīr naivātmā ca yathā bhavān*

["Neither Brahmā nor Śiva are as dear to Me as you; My elder brother Saṅkarṣaṇa is not as dear to Me as you, nor even Lakṣmī Devī. Even My own Self is not as dear to Me as you."] [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 11.14.15]

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 11.14.15]

Brahmā's position is not less, not to be ignored, to be disregarded, Brahmā. He's giving so many boons to so many demons. Then Mahādeva he's sometimes competing with Nārāyaṇa. Then Baladeva. Then Lakṣmī Devī. Every one of them is a standard of some highest realisation. But still, gradation is there, and it is unbelievable, that gradation, still it is there.

Every chief in his state gets the absolute position, but when there is a meeting of all the chiefs of the states in one place, who will get the honoured position, how much to be ascertained there?

Sometimes here by seniority it is judged easily, but not always. The merit is there, not seniority but question of merit is there. That is more abstract and difficult. It's difficult, but still it is there, the gradation. Brahmā, Śiva, Baladeva, Lakṣmī, Uddhava, Nārada _____ [?] *gopī*, in this way going on.

And it is puzzling, that the *gopīs* say, "No, we have none." They're worshipping so many gods, and from another quarter it is said that the *gopīs* their worship is better than whom they worship. A

most puzzling thing. And how we're to understand? The one who is worshipping a god his position is better than the god he's worshipping. Most puzzling. How we're to know this?

Jñāna-śūnya-bhakti. By the volume of the body, that is one consideration, that one will be given honour. But if we take the understanding of the intellect, intelligence into account, then body consideration will go down. Then, so many intellectuals, but when honesty is taken into account, then intellectual standards, and these big bodies, they will go lower. The question of energy, the *karmī*, there are so many great Generals, Hannibal, Alexander, all things things. And the scholars, Newton, Einstein, that is there, in this way.

The highest criterion is devotion, submission to the Absolute One. He's one, and affinity, faith towards Him that is the highest criterion of measurement. Highest criterion of measurement is considered our sincere surrender, our sincere attachment, devotion to the highest centre. And not our knowing, inquisitiveness, and what to speak of this raw energy.

*karmibhyaḥ parito hareḥ priyatayā vyaktim yayur jñāninas
tebhyo jñāna-vimukta-bhakti-paramāḥ premaika-niṣṭhās tataḥ
[tebhyas tāḥ paśu-pāla-pankaja-dṛśas tābhyo 'pi sā rādhikā
preṣṭhā tadvad iyaṁ tadīya-sarasī tām nāśrayet kaḥ kṛtī]*

["There are those in the world who regulate their tendency for exploitation in accordance with the scriptural rules and thereby seek gradual elevation to the spiritual domain. However, superior to them are those wise men who, having given up the tendency to lord over others, attempt to dive deep into the realm of consciousness. But far superior to them are the pure devotees who are free from any mundane ambitions and are liberated from knowledge, not by knowledge, having achieved divine love. They have gained entrance into the land of dedication and are engaged there spontaneously in the Lord's loving service. Among all devotees, however, the *gopīs* are the highest, for they have forsaken everyone, including their families, and everything, including the strictures of the *Vedas*, and have taken complete shelter at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, accepting Him as their only protection. But among all the *gopīs*, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī reigns supreme. For Kṛṣṇa left the company of millions of *gopīs* during the *rasa* dance to search for Her alone. She is so dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa that the pond in which She bathes is His very favourite place. Who but a madman would not aspire to render service, under the shelter of superior devotees, in that most exalted of all holy places."]

[*Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*, 10]

In this way it is going, different standpoints, and the difference *in* the standpoints of calculation is there. From the standpoint of energy, from the standpoint of understanding, and from the standpoint of our affinity, our regard, our attraction, our taste, our service.

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