

Dear Maharajas, Prabhus and Didis,

Dandavat pranamas. Jaya Sri Sri Guru and Gauranga.

As you know, Srila Narayana Maharaja is now in Russia, at the Unost Campsite, one hour from Moscow. This woodland campsite is very peaceful, and even when the children play, that is also peaceful. The atmosphere is like a fairyland of peace and plenty, although with material vision the facilities may appear poor. Srila Maharaja commented that it reminds him of Vraja-mandala parikrama.

Every day Srila Maharaja has meetings with the new initiates, (about 150 devotees, old and new, received harinama and diksa initiations), private darsanas with individual devotees, and small, group darsanas with groups of devotees from the various Russian states and European countries. In one of such meetings Sripad Urukrama Prabhu introduced Srila Maharaja to devotees from the Baltic countries like Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia, and especially to very senior devotees from the pioneer days when devotees were imprisoned. Srila Maharaja thanked them all and said, "When I was in India I heard that there would be 200 devotees in Russia, but now I see that there are over 300." Urukrama Prabhu related to Srila Maharaja how the devotees from Tashkent City in the Republic of Uzbekistan left their Republic without enough money to afford their return journey, and three of the eight-person group did not even have passports or any other documents. Thus depending fully on Krsna, they left with only a great yearning to meet a resident of Goloka Vrndavana, their new spiritual master, whom they would be seeing for the first time. Somehow, without notice, they managed to get on the train, and then they held a beautiful kirtana in their compartment, replete with tables and karatalas, and attended by many curious passengers from the other train cars. During the kirtana, the militia, who always check the passengers for documents, passed by them three times. By the influence of the kirtana, and the mercy of Sri Sri Guru and Gauranga, they finally stopped and said, "Oh, you are from Tashkent. Your documents are in order."

In each consecutive class, knowing that most of the devotees had to relearn the meanings of practically each word of their Vaisnava vocabulary, from guru, to bhakti, to sankirtana, Srila Maharaja carefully brought them from "you are not your body; you are part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead", to guru-tattva, to the unlimited value of the chanting of the Hare Krsna mantra, to Damodara-lila, to the various levels of advancement of devotion, and ultimately to the prayojana, the ultimate goal of life, Radha-dasyam.

On the sunny morning of August 3, a fire sacrifice was performed for the new initiates. It was presided over by Sri Sri Radha-Vinodabihariji and Tulasidevi, and lead by Pujyapada Madhava Maharaja and Pujyapada Aranya Maharaja.

Your aspiring servant, Syamarani dasi

Tridandi Gosvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

GURU TATTVA: REAL AND APPARENT

Moscow, 30 July 2000

I offer my humble obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master, Om Visnupada Sri Srimad Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja; and the same thousands and thousands of humble obeisances unto the lotus feet of my siksa-guru, Om Visnupada Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja.

Just now we have finished singing the kirtana, 'sri guru-carana-padma, kevala bhakati-sadma vando mui savadhana mate.' What is the meaning? We should try to understand the meaning and realize what Srila Narottama dasa Thakura is telling here—how he is giving honor and how he is presenting his mood to his Gurudeva. 'Sri guru-carana-padma, kevala bhakati sadma.' Syamarani should explain.

Syamarani: 'Sri guru-carana-padma, kevala bhakati sadma.' In this song Srila Narottama dasa Thakura is glorifying his Guru Maharaja, Sri Lokanatha dasa Gosvami, and all the gurus in the guru parampara. With one's carana, with one's feet, one takes steps. So our immediate diksa and siksa gurus are the first steps to our connection with the entire guru parampara. Sri guru-carana-padma, kevala bhakati sadma. Sadma means 'abode', and kevala means 'only'. He is the only abode of bhakti. Of what kind of bhakti is he the abode? There are three kinds of bhakti: sadhana-bhakti, bhava-bhakti, and prema-bhakti. And of what kind of prema-bhakti is he the abode? Madanakya maha-bhava. This is the highest possible prema, and the only prema by which one can serve Sri Radha-Krsna Conjugal. People wonder about the omnipotency and omniscience of the bona fide guru. Here, Srila Narottama dasa Thakura is leaving no doubt about his omnipotency. By his mercy alone one can become free from millions of births of past sins and offenses, and can cross over the ocean of material existence and obtain the abode of Krsna.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: You should understand who is a real guru. He is the abode of bhakti, and he has all kinds of serving moods towards Radha-Krsna Conjugal or Mahaprabhu. He can give sadhana bhakti, and he can also give rati—a high class of rati. If he is qualified to even give prema-bhakti in Goloka Vrindavan, and the love and affection of Conjugal Radha-Krsna, can he fall down? Never. How much qualified must that guru be, that he can take all ignorant persons to Krsna? If he himself is falling down, then he is actually not guru. You are intelligent enough to reconcile all these things, and to understand who is the real guru.

The scriptures, especially Srimad Bhagavatam, have told, 'tasmad gurun prapadyeta...' What is the meaning? The bona fide guru can give conjugal love to Sri Sri Radha-Krsna. He will be expert and realized in the moods of all the Vedas, Upanisads, Srimad Bhagavatam, Gita, and all Puranas -- everything. He will be expert in all kinds of knowledge, and he will have realized all that knowledge. In addition, he will be detached from worldly desires and sense gratification. He will only be engaged in serving Krsna with all his senses --with body, mind, soul, mood, and everything.

He is the abode of bhakti and he has no doubts. No doubts at all. Also, he will never go to all these atheistic universities. Never. Why? He has full confidence in his Guru's words, and therefore he will join Srila Haridasa Thakura's University -- by always chanting and remembering.

A person like this has full faith in the Name, full faith in his guru's words, and he has full faith in the words of scriptures like Srimad Bhagavatam. How can he join these universities? What would be the use? These universities are nonsense and, in the words of your Gurudeva, their teachers are rascals. Why should we join them? These universities are like slaughter-houses and they are full of mayavadis. Srila Swami Maharaja came and cut down all the arguments of the mayavadis and nirvesesavadis. Why should his disciples join all these things? It is because they have no faith in their Guru's words, and because they themselves are not guru at all. They are fallen from the beginning. There is no position from which they would fall down. Those who cannot chant the Name day and night, those who cannot realize what is the mood of the gopis,

the Vrajavasis and Krsna, and those who are not engaging all their senses in the pastimes of Krsna, are actually not guru. They have no qualification to be guru. They cannot help us. They cannot take us to Krsna – never, never and never.

Now we see that persons who had previously taken shelter of a very bona fide Guru, an actual Guru like Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja, are now giving him up and are going to Radha Kunda to associate with sahajiyas there. These sahajiyas are still greater rascals. They cannot take anyone to Krsna because they are not following the principles of bhakti. They are not detached from worldly desires and sense gratification, they are living with widows and engaging in immoral activities. How can they help real devotees? In this way you should consider what are the qualifications of a guru.

It has been told in sastra that we may have selected any guru before knowing all these qualifications, and thus knowingly, unknowingly, or in ignorance, we have accepted a guru who is not actually guru. Therefore, after hearing from a siksa-guru, from other gurus, and from scriptures, we should decide whether what we have done is wrong or right. If it is wrong, we should give up that guru and come to a realized guru. He can then help you, and you can develop your Krsna consciousness; otherwise it will never be possible.

If these bogus gurus cannot give bhakti, then how can such a fallen guru, who is now coming in the bogus ritvic system, help devotees? Fallen gurus are now becoming ritvics. You should do pranama to them from very far away. Don't mix with them, and always boycott them. The ritvic system cannot help because it is only related to performance of sacrifices. [In Srila Maharaja's *The True Conception of Guru Tattva* it is stated: "Beginning from the Vedic period up to Dvapara-yuga, it is seen that many great emperors have obtained their desired fruits by flawless performance of sacrifices...Generally; all of these sacrifices were performed for fulfilling material desires, the chief of which was the attainment of heavenly planets...After the completion of yajnas, the yajman (employer) pays the appropriate remunerations to the ritviks and sends them away. The yajman and the ritvik have no mutual eternal relationships."]

In our line there is guru, there is siksa guru, there is caitya guru, there is sravana guru, there is patha pradarsaka guru—so many gurus. Why go to these bogus ritvics? Be very far away from them. Be careful about them. We should be very careful about mayavadis, sahajiyas, and all nirvesesavadis. You know that in our guru parampara line Brahma has never fallen down, Narada has never fallen down, and Sri Vyasa and Sri Sukadeva Gosvami have also never fallen down. You know Madhavendra Puri and Isvara Puripada; they never fell down. You know that Srila Rupa Gosvami, Srila Sanatana Gosvami, Srila Jiva Gosvami and all the other six Gosvamis, Srila Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami, Srila Narottama Dasa Thakura, and after that Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati, my Gurudeva Om Visnupada Sri Srimad Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja, and my siksa-guru Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja -- none of them ever fell down. They cannot fall down. They are actual gurus. One should select a guru like them. However, even if you have not as yet done so, you can think about it more and more.

We have not come for joining any society. We have come to serve Radha-Krsna Conjugal and Mahaprabhu. This is our aim and object. Why remain where the object is not fulfilled? Srila Swami Maharaja came with a mission, and at that time the mission was fulfilled in all ways. All joined, but those who neglected his teachings fell down. We should try to know all these truths.

The real guru is an uttama maha-bhagavata -- like Narada Gosvami and Sukadeva Gosvami. They can hold up their hand to bless you with the words, "Bhakti should come at once." And bhakti will come. There are three kinds of uttama bhagavats. The first is

Narada in his first stage (in his previous birth, after Lord Visnu gave him His momentary darshan). He realized Krsna in his heart, and at once all kinds of anarthas and imperfections disappeared. He realized Krsna, his relationship with Krsna, and his service to Krsna. However, at that time his body was still composed of past activities. He is therefore known as a murcit kasaya maha-bhagavata. What is the meaning of murcit kasaya? There is some imperfection, but it is now sleeping; not active.

Sri Sukadeva Gosvami is an example of the second kind of uttama bhagavata. He is nirdutta kasaya. What is nirdutta kasaya? All impurities and imperfections have been washed away. Ignorance and anarthas are all gone.

[Some devotees were falling asleep, and so Srila Maharaja addressed them] Don't sleep please. Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare. Sit straight like this, old persons and everyone else, and chant: Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Hare Hare. Chant more loudly. Don't sleep. Otherwise you will lose everything.]

[Devotees chanted and then Srila Maharaja resumed the class:] The third kind of uttama bhagavata is still more elevated. The example is Sri Narada Gosvami in his second stage, when he attained the body of an associate of Krsna. At this stage he has no mortal body. He has a body to serve Krsna -- a siddha sarira, transcendental body. If these kinds of gurus will place hands on anyone's head, or somehow they will glance at anyone and bless him, then prema bhakti will come at once and the disciple will go to Goloka Vrindavan. They are so powerful.

You may know that Sri Narada Gosvami has thousands and thousands of disciples: Dhruva, Prahlada, Citraketu, Valmiki, Vyasa, and Rahugana -- so many. Just by sprinkling his mercy, they became qualified. And you know Sri Sukadeva Gosvami. Practically everyone in the world was his disciple, but he never initiated anyone. Why? Because he realized that, "All are serving Krsna, but I myself am not." He is a high class of maha-bhagavata. By his mercy, all the persons who were hearing his hari-katha in the assembly of Pariksit Maharaja were liberated. This is very marvelous; but such gurus are very rare, especially in Kali yuga.

What is then the remedy for us? Who will help us? Only the madhyama adhikari. Sri Gurudeva should actually be acting in the stage of madhyama adhikari. "Prema maitri krpopeksa ya karoti sa madhyama." Madhyama adhikaris are of three categories: madhyama kanistha, madhyama madhyama, and madhyama uttama. The madhama kanistha cannot act as guru. The madhyama madhyama and madhyama uttama can, however, because they are in the line of their guru, always chanting and remembering the pastimes of Krsna, chanting Hare Krsna with rasa and taste, and their anarthas have practically disappeared. There remains only a very little scent of anarthas, and there is no offense at all: no Vaisnava-aparadha, nama-aparadha, seva-aparadha, or dhama-aparadha. They are chanting and remembering, and always in the line of their own Gurudeva. Though they are not so realized, still they can help us. We have these kinds of devotees in this world, and they can help us. But you should know that a maha-bhagavata can descend in the madhyama adhikari stage, and then he can preach and accept disciples. In this way we can accept two kinds of gurus, and they can help us. The madhyama adhikari gurus will take us to the uttama adhikari, and thus the madhyama gurus and their disciples will develop their Krsna consciousness.

We cannot say that Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Gosvami Thakura is a madhyama adhikari. We cannot say that my Gurudeva was a madhyama adhikari. We cannot accept that Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja was a madhyama adhikari. They were really uttama adhikaris. They have simply descended and accepted disciples -- only to help devotees. They can come to the level of madhyama adhikari and then they can preach. Otherwise they cannot preach and they cannot initiate anyone. They are therefore very, very kind. Ordered by Srimati Radhika to fulfill the desire of Radhika and Krsna, they have accepted this position; otherwise they never would have done so. None of the gurus in our line who have accepted disciples are madhyama adhikari. All are uttama adhikari, but they have descended for the time being, for the benefit of the whole world.

In sastra it has been told very clearly and strongly what a disciple should do if he has accepted a guru who is not in the line of devotion, who is not a realized soul, and who is not even a madhyama adhikari, and afterwards that disciple realizes that his guru cannot help him in devotion, in the service of Krsna and Radhika Conjugal. If that guru is fallen, not actually chanting and remembering, and if he is not in the line of his Gurudeva, the disciple should give him up at once and accept a real guru. If anyone wants to serve Krsna, and has no other motive than to develop his Krsna consciousness, he should do pranama and say, "O Gurudeva, I want to associate with a high-class Vaisnava. Please allow me." If his gurudeva allows, as did the gurus of Sri Syamananda prabhu, Sri Narottama dasa Thakura and others, then that guru is a madhyama adhikari. However, if he says, "No, you cannot associate with high-class Vaisnavas. If you do, you will go to hell", then that class of guru is not guru. He is like a kan-guru (kangaroo). He may say, "If you disobey me and go to another high-class Vaisnava, then you will go to hell." I think that such a false guru will go to hell first, and after him the disciple will go.

We have come only for this, and some of the devotees who have come to us have left their wives, wealth, and aristocratic families. And so many are very learned. We should think about this matter and try to develop our Krsna consciousness. If you do not follow this process and you do not know all these truths, you cannot develop your Krsna consciousness in lakhs and lakhs or thousands and thousands of births. You will lose everything. So I think that you should consider what to do about this.

Bhakti is like a river, a current. No one can remain for twenty or thirty years at the same stage. If we think that we are not developing our Krsna consciousness, we should inquire why our current has stopped. I should realize whether anything is wrong in my guru or in me. If guru is right, then there is something wrong in me, and I should try to repair it. And, if there is a hole in guru, then I should do this pranama to him forever: "O gurudeva, I don't want your mercy. I want the mercy of a high-class of devotee."

If a guru does not know the meaning of the mantras, like brahma-gayatri -- if he does not know who is the istadeva, deity, of this mantra, if he does not know upon whom we should meditate, who should pracodayat, come in our heart, if he does not know the meaning of gopal-mantra, kama-gayatri, gaura-mantra, and he does not practice it in the morning, at midday, and in the evening, and if he is not realizing anything, how can he be guru? He should realize all these things. If he has bhakti in his heart, he can donate it to others. But if he is not really doing all

these things, and there is no bhakti in his heart, then how can he donate that bhakti to others? This is the thing. That is why we are not developing. But for this, the current will go further, further, further to Krsna.

I think that now our class-time is over, and I want you to first digest all these things. Tomorrow we will proceed to explain the other lines of that song, "Sri guru carana-padma."