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from Syamarani - Gurudeva's important newsworthy lecture

Tridandi Gosvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

THEY ACCUSE SRILA BHAKTISIDDHANTA SARASVATI THAKURA

Germany: Dec. 16, 2001 (eve)

[The following is a lecture given by Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja on the morning of December 16th in Paderborn, Germany, during the first festival of his Winter-2001 Preaching Tour. The lecture was given to his audience of two hundred fifty devotees who had come there from various European countries to hear his hari-katha. In this lecture, Srila Maharaja is defending and protecting the glory of the Sarasvata-Gaudiya lineage, the foremost member of that lineage being Srila Prabhupada Bhaktivedanta Svami Maharaja. - Submitted by Vasanti dasi]

In a couple of years, by the grace of his Guru, Srila Bhaktivedanta Svami Maharaja preached the mission of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Srila Rupa Gosvami throughout the universe. He did this very quickly, especially by translating and writing books, and also by distributing books. Even those who never personally met him came to Iskcon, and to this line, only by his name, fame, and glory. I have also come here only by his grace. I came by the grace of my Gurudeva, but especially by the grace of Srila Svami Maharaja. Therefore, I am also travelling to the places in which he preached, and I am also achieving very rapid success.

I had the curiosity to take darsana of the lands where Srila Svami Maharaja preached so effectively in such a short time, because those places had become tirthas, very sacred pilgrimage places. That is why I came for the first time, in 1996, and at that time I saw his glory everywhere. Now, however, for certain reasons, devotees are becoming weak. Some of them left because after him there was no good nourishment. There was no sweet behavior, and no good training. Devotees quarreled with each other, and many of them became like rtviks. They are not really rtviks, [according to sastra, rtviks are actually professional priests who perform fire sacrifices] but when they realized they had no faith in their 'leaders', they did not know what to do. They tried to organize something, but their activities also turned out to be against the bhakti cult.

Some became sahajiya babajis under the influence of other sahajiya babajis, some became Buddhists, and others became 'nothing.' They became materialistic householders and engaged in very wretched activities, eating and drinking the same abominable things they took before they joined. It was to help all such persons that Srila Svami Maharaja called me in his last days. He also called for me when he first began his Western

preaching, and at that time he requested me, "Oh, come and help in my preaching." At that time I could not come, but I came very soon after. His Prabhupada ordered him to preach in the Western countries, and he began his mission there after forty-three years. Your Prabhupada called me, and I came after only twenty years. I came sooner.

Now, everywhere, devotees are again being inspired, and life is again coming in them. I am very happy. The acaryas in our guru-varga (disciplic succession) have said that if one person follows a devotee preaching Krsna consciousness, his preaching is successful, and Srila Swami Maharaja has also said this. I am happy that by his grace we are moving everywhere.

Now we have a 'school team', in which there are some principles, some professors, and some teachers of many various qualifications. They are all part of our college or school training camp. So many persons, with so many diseases, are coming, and we have many kinds of treatments, operations, and medicines. So many senior and sincere devotees of Srila Swami Maharaja are helping us, and by their help we are doing something tangible and getting good response. Without their help it would have been impossible to preach.

I want you to be steady. Don't be weak. At present there are many modern conveniences. Therefore, if there is any doubt, you can phone me in a moment and say, "Narayana Maharaja, I have this doubt." I will at once respond. For example, a devotee may ask me, "Why did Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura introduce yajna-upavit (sacred thread) as a new scheme in our Mahaprabhu line? There was no yajna-upavit previously, but Srila Sarasvati Thakura came and introduced tridandi sannyasa, saffron cloth, and yajna-upavit upanayana (brahminical initiation). Why did he do so?"

This question is asked by ignorant persons - those who don't know anything. The sacred thread was introduced at the beginning of our creation. This is the verdict of sruti sastra, and evidence of this is also found in the Gautamopanisad, Javalopanisad, Yajnavalkyopanisad, and Paramahansa Parivrajakopanisad.

[In Srila Narayana Maharaja's book, Five Essential Essays, it is stated in the following quote from Sruti: "The saintly king Janaka Maharaja inquired from the great sage Yajnavalkya, 'O Bhagavan! Please explain to me the qualifications and regulations governing the acceptance of sannyasa.' Yajnavalkya replied, 'First of all, strictly observing the vow of brahmacarya, one should study the Vedas in the home of one's guru. Then, after appropriately observing the occupational duties of the grhastha-asrama, one should accept vanaprastha. Finally, after vanaprastha one should accept sannyasa. Before entering the grhastha-asrama, if one develops a powerful sense of detachment from material life while still in the stage of brahmacarya, then one should accept sannyasa directly from the brahmacarya-asrama. Otherwise, as soon as one's vairagya is very strong, it is quite appropriate to accept sannyasa from the stages of grhastha or vanaprastha. In other words, the principle is that one may accept sannyasa from the position of any asrama, upon developing genuine detachment." (p.6)]

We see that at the time of Ramacandra, Vasista Muni was giving sannyasa to all those who were qualified. This included even those who were not born as brahmanas, ksatriyas, or vaisyas. Even sudras were given sannyasa if they were qualified.

Krsna Himself says in Bhagavad-gita:

catur-varnyam maya srstam  
guna-karma-vibhagasah  
tasya kartaram api mam  
viddhy akartaram avyayam

"According to the three modes of material nature and the work associated with them, the four divisions of human society are created by Me. And although I am the creator of this system, you should know that I am yet the non-doer, being unchangeable."  
(Bhagavad-gita 4.13)

Madhavendra Puripada was a tridandi sannyasi, as were Isvara Puripada, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu Himself, Svarupa Damodara, Nityananda Prabhu, and so many of their associates. Most of them wore saffron cloth and sacred thread. After Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, however, we see that a few, like Srila Rupa Gosvami and Srila Sanatana Gosvami, out of regard for Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, thought, "Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the Supreme Lord, has taken the position of a sannyasi. We should therefore not take that position. Never, never, never. Because we have had the association of Muslims, we are like Muslims. A Muslim has no right to take sannyasa." This was their humility. Actually they were brahmanas. They could have easily taken the sacred thread, but they refused. They very humbly said, "Oh, we are the dasanudasa of Caitanya Mahaprabhu." Those mahabhagavats thought themselves unqualified for yajna-upavit and sannyasa, and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu never forced them to take it. He knew that they were paramahamsas.

[It is further stated in Five Essential Essays: "After Sriman Mahaprabhu, His lila-parikaras (eternal pastime associates) such as the six Gosvamis, Sri Lokanatha and Bhugarbha, and later Sri Krsnadas Kaviraja, Sri Narottama Thakura and Sri Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura were naturally niskincana paramahamsa Vaisnavas. There was no need for them to wear sannyasa-vesa or saffron cloth. Secondly, Sriman Mahaprabhu had performed the lila of wearing sannyasa-vesa and saffron cloth. Thus considering themselves to be worthless, lowly and unqualified, these mahatmas did not wear sannyasa-vesa and saffron cloth, in order to show honor and respect to the vesa of Sriman Mahaprabhu and also to maintain their identities as servants under the shelter of His lotus feet." (p.22)]

Another consideration is that their white cloth was the paramahamsa-vesa. Actually, a paramahamsa has no vesa (cloth). He can also be naked, like the avadhutas Sri Sukadeva Gosvami and Sri Nityananda Prabhu. Such transcendental personalities are not under any rules and regulations. The Vedas cannot control mahabhagavatas, who are outside the jurisdiction of all the rules of etiquette. They themselves can create etiquette, and in fact,

etiquette runs after them. Srila Rupa Gosvami, Srila Sanatana Gosvami, and Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami have no need of rules.

In all the scriptures, like the Vedas, Upanisads, and Puranas, that there is no word, 'babaji'. No one was ever called 'babaji'. Babaji was only referred to as a father, a grandfather, or another family elder. Those who wanted to show regard for their fathers or grandfathers used to call them, "Baba, baba." This word was only for that purpose. Neither in Hari-Bhakti Vilasa nor in the thousands of books written by our Gosvamis, has the word babaji been used. I don't know from where the word has come. Srila Rupa Gosvami was affectionately called 'chota baba', young father, and Srila Sanatana Gosvami was called 'bada baba', old father. Gradually, with the passing of time, the term 'Babaji Maharaja' developed.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura saw that during his time it was very hard to preach Krsna consciousness in society. All respectable persons hated the word 'babaji,' because each babaji had two or more widow girlfriends and thought, "We are doing upapati-bhava and parakiya-bhajana. [In other words, they were trying to imitate the paramour love of Krsna and the gopis.] The sahajiya babajis were engaged in so much immoral conduct that it was very difficult for an actual Gaudiya Vaisnava to give his identification, in decent and cultured society, as a Vaisnava in the line of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. It is for this reason that Srila Sarasvati Thakura again introduced tridandi sannyasa.

[It is further stated in Five Essential Essays: "On the other hand, in order to express veneration for the niskincana paramahansa-vesa of the associates of Sriman Mahaprabhu and, under their guidance, to preach His message throughout the entire world, many akincana Vaisnavas on the path of raganuga-bhajana, holding the paramahansa-vesa upon their heads, have accepted a position below their worshipable superiors by wearing the vesa and saffron cloth of the sannyasa asrama which is included within the system of varnasrama dharma. These two customs, each having their own place, are both exquisitely beautiful and also completely in accordance with siddhanta. Today suddha-hari-bhakti has been, is being, and will continue to be, preached and spread throughout the world by these mahapurusa, great perfected saints, who wear this second type of niskincana sannyasa-vesa."(p.23)]

Srila Sarasvati Thakura saw that he would have to preach the mission of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in a real sense. He therefore gave sannyasa, the fourth order of the varnasrama system. First one will have to be a brahmachari, and after that, if he is married, he should be a vanaprastha, and after that a sannyasi. We should not jump to try to be gopis at once. We should try to maintain all the rules and regulations which have been chalked out in Hari-bhakti Vilasa and other bona fide sastras. First you should fully obey brahmacharya. When you are trained in all subjects of brahmacharya, if you want to be grhasta, you can become so. Then, after some time you should enter the vanaprastha asrama, and those who want to directly come from brahmacharya can also take the renounced order sannyasa from there.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura established a matha in Mayapura, and from there his mission spread all over Bengal. He created a revolution everywhere in Bengal, and all were attracted - especially the young generation. Thus, all over Bengal, and then all over India, people began to join him. Now, by his grace, this Gaudiya Vaisnava cult is spreading throughout the world, and this is our pride.

First be a brahmacari, and follow the rules and regulations. Be qualified in all tattva, like krsna-tattva, jiva-tattva, maya-tattva, and all other philosophical truths, and then if you want to be married, you can become a qualified grhastha. After that, if you like, you can enter the life of vanaprastha or sannyasa, or you can go directly from brahmacari to sannyasa. This is the legal process. If you don't know ABCD of tattva, and at once you want to enter paramahansa and be situated in a gopi mood, it is absurd. If you try to do so, you are bound to engage in so many illicit activities.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura saved the whole world by his revolution, and thus we are now hearing something about transcendental life in the real sense. The babajis, those who have five or six widows and are engaged in immoral nonsense, will also try to speak before the public, but no one in respectable, civilized society will listen to them.

Who are the babajis of the present time? Those who were rejected by Gaudiya society due to their bad character became babajis. These babajis want perfection very easily and very cheaply. They want a short cut.

Srila Sarasvati Thakura has saved us, and we should try to follow him correctly. I request the Western devotees not to change their husbands daily. They should be together even after sixty or one hundred years. What is done is done, but now, don't change any further. Now you should try to follow all the aspects of Vedic culture that are favorable for bhakti. Otherwise, there will be no bhakti. If you have already divorced, then be renounced now. Don't try to marry again. If you are in grhastha life, remain there, and from there you should do bhakti.

jnane prayasam udapasya namanta eva  
jivanti san-mukharitam bhavadiya-vartam  
sthane sthitah sruti-gatam tanu-van-manobhir  
ye prayaso 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyam

"Those who, even while remaining situated in their established social positions, throw away the process of speculative knowledge and with their body, words and mind offer all respects to descriptions of Your personality and activities, dedicating their lives to these narrations that are vibrated by You personally and by Your pure devotees, certainly conquer Your Lordship, although You are otherwise unconquerable by anyone within the three worlds." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.14.3)

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