

The Ring of Nathan the Wise

Letter from Sadananda

2 July 1955

Into English, within square brackets and

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Dear Vamandas, dear Hella, [...]

I have been confined to my bed for some days and do not know when I can come out from the house – a stupid lumbago in the spine and a carbuncle in the neck. Today I sit up for the first time, so that I can answer Your letter quickly. – Please, do *not* use the circle with Radha and Krishna [for the book cover]. Better use a conch, which is the symbol of the Vedas and the Word, as You know from the Bhagavatam. [...]

You seem to be unaware of my situation, that I have been living completely isolated for a long time. I do not visit anyone and no one visits me, apart from the noble Ghoshe Babu and a commercial traveller, who day and night reads the Bhagavatam, also when he is travelling. I lack the ring of Nathan the wise, “who had the power to be pleasant before God and the people”. I have nothing but the wire brush, otherwise I had already been in high favour with “Times of India” and “Illustrated Weekly”, like the one who escaped from the camp, *Harrer*, with his book about Tibet, or Gauri-Bala, alias W. Schönfeld, *The Really Happy Man*, or Govinda with his wife, the renowned Tibetan princess.

My situation is a bit like Thakur Bhaktivinod’s, the author of *Jaiva-Dharma* etc., the father of my Guru. In 1885 a certain Nrsinha Babu brought Thakura Bhaktivinod to his home, at the same time as Ramakrishna Paramahansa came there. When Ramakrishna saw Bhaktivinoda, he sang “Ja’ der Hari bolte nayan jhure, tara du-i Bhai eseche re” (“Whose eyes, while They are singing ‘Hari’, are flooded with tears, the two Brothers – i.e. Nimai and Nityananda – there they come”) and fainted. After that, Thakur Bhaktivinod wrote in his own [periodical] publication “Sajjana-Toshini”, 2nd year, in reference to Rupa Goswami’s definition of the mere reflection and shadow of

true rati [the rosy dawn of prema] (in Bhakti Rasamrita Sindhu), that murcha or losing of consciousness in those who confuse cit [cetanam, pure consciousness] with jara [jada, that which is a-cit, a-cetanam, consisting of Maya's prakriti, that which is inert, lifeless and motionless in itself] and in reality are nirvishesha-vadis [who profess themselves adherents of the creed that the supreme Brahma is without form and attributes] has nothing whatsoever to do with real murcha or the state of being unconscious [of the "outer", mental and physical world of Maha-maya; while being fully absorbed in seva in the eternal, non-visible realm], which follows as a consequence of true rati, which is Bhagavan's Own potency, characterised as being free from karma, jnana and yoga and only wish to give joy to Krishna.

The sentimentalists were highly offended by Bhaktivinoda's words. Unfortunately, posterity has avoided to mention Ramakrishna Paramahansa's opponents in his biography. Please note that the maya-vadi-s' have written stotra-s etc. to Krishna etc.! To them, and according to Shankara's Brahmasutra Bhashya [commentary], Bhagavan is "utkrishta upadhi-yukta Brahma", i.e. Brahma, that appear in noble coverings, in contrast to "heya-upadhi-sampanna Brahma", the jiva, who appears in lowlier coverings. As soon as the upadhi-s [coverings] are discarded, only Brahma remains. Consequently, Bhagavan is only "vyavaharika satya" or "paribhashika satya" [relative truth] and not "paramarthika satya" [supreme truth] and the Shruti-s that deal with Bhagavan are a-para vidya [lower knowledge]. This shows that there can be no question of nitya-bhakti and nitya sthaya-bhava. And additionally – to divide the Shruti-s in para and apara vidya is completely arbitrary; simply invented by Shankara to be able to create his own system.

When Prabhupad was requested by Maharaja Shrimanicandra Nandi Bahadur to come to a great assembly of Vaishnava-s, Gaurakishora Das Babaji said to Prabhupad: "Haribhakti in an assembly of Vaishnava-s? – This is simply not possible. There is hardly *one* Krishna-bhakta in million of *universes*. An assembly of hundreds of Vaishnava-s at one place is only possible when Mahaprabhu plays His lila with His parishada-s. Then one can find hundreds of Vaishnava-s at one place – otherwise this is not possible." Gaurakishor Das Babaji took four bamboo canes, fastened an old cloth on top

of them, pointing out: “This is the Vaishnava assembly”. Then He danced and made kirtana.

Now I have got into a sweat – a sign of old age. I know about Stella Kramrisch. A lot of speculation. Just note one thing! All real temples keep the Divinity in a shrine, at a sacred place, where it is almost dark, which makes it difficult to see the Divinity from the outside. Only the pujari in there can see clearly. People offered their obeisances, and bowed down so that HE could see the bhakta-s. Modern temple are *godless*, built so that *we* can see (?) the Divinity.

Regarding the book cover: Neither God nor the avatara have ever thought of transforming the world or even India into a paradise, but they wanted society to be set up in such a way that it would be possible for man to rise above the beast [in him]. But people prefer to remain beasts and consequently the society is not arranged according to God’s principles.

God, the avatara and the bhakta-s taught and practised true love for God, which only one or two out of millions can have. The Everlasting is caviar for the people, who *want* to remain beast.

Heartily,
Sadananda