

# Om Vishnupad Sreela Gaur-Kishore Das

By Prof. Nishikanta Sanyal, MA

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The infinitesimal dissociated particle of the power of the Absolute, that manifests himself at the border-line between the spiritual and the mundane spheres, is all-spirit in essence. In other words, he has his own unalloyed spiritual body and senses which are identical with his entity. It is both natural as well as easy for him to seek incorporation in the spiritual sphere. He may or may not be incorporated in the realm of the spirit when he seeks for the same. He may also seek to function in the mundane sphere. But he may not obtain the automatic fulfilment of his wish also for this purpose. Nevertheless, it is far easier for him to obtain a footing in the spiritual than in the mundane realm.

The infinitesimal particle has perfect freedom of choice between two incompatible and alternative courses of conduct. He may choose to serve the Absolute, or, in the alternative, to dominate over (measure) the non-absolutes. He is unable to realise either of those wishes till he is prepared to undergo a process of progressive acclimatisation to either sphere under proper guidance. It is only by strenuous whole-hearted endeavour, backed by the guidance of a power far superior to himself, that the infinitesimal entity is gradually to find his footing and function in the respective sphere.

The mundane is not independent of the spiritual sphere. It consists of two distinct constituents, viz., semi-conscious and unconscious entities. The semi-

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<sup>1</sup> Prof. Nishi Kanta Sanyal (Narayan das Bhakti Sudhakar) wrote several texts on Gaudiya Vaishnavism, among others his monumental work, *Sri Krsna Caitanya*, which was crucial to Svami Sadananda Dasa after his encounter with Svami Bon in Berlin, 1933. For several years, under the editorship of his Spiritual Master, Shrila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati, Prof. Sanyal conducted "The Harmonist", Gaudiya Math's fortnightly English journal. See also other related articles in this journal, for instance, "Thakur Bhaktivinode" (dec. 1931), "Sree Radhika" (Dec. 1931), "Sree Radhika" (Nov. 1932) and "Transcendental Amour" (Dec. 1935), Sanyal's "Spiritual Progress" (Sept. 1934) "Love in Separation" (May 1935) and his booklet, *The Erotic Principle and Unalloyed Devotion*, Gaudiya Math, 1932; also published in "The Harmonist" (Nov. 1928).

conscious entities, dwelling in the mundane sphere, do not possess real consciousness. They possess only shadowy or deceptive consciousness. The apparently semi-conscious entities are termed 'jiva-maya' while the unconscious entities are 'jada-maya'. 'Jiva-maya' is related to 'jada-maya' as enjoyer and enjoyed, measurer and measured, lord and servant.

The term 'to measure' and 'to enjoy' are in the above sense synonymous. They denote the activity of the mundane mind misidentified by the soul in the conditioned state as his own. The infinitesimal Absolute is said to wish for a footing in the spiritual sphere when he is inclined to learn to serve the Absolute Infinity under His unconditional guidance. He is said to wish to function in the mundane sphere if he is inclined to learn to lord it over the entities of this material world. This latter function is, however, not practicable till he is endowed with a second ego and material organs by means of which he is enabled to establish contact with mundane entities. This second ego is 'jiva-maya'. It is so constituted that the soul can identify himself with its entity and through its means establish the relation of lord, enjoyer, or 'measurer' with entities of this world.

By the above process this mundane civilisation has been built up. It should be possible to retrace our steps, by a system of corresponding activities, towards the service of the Absolute Infinity. But so long as a person continues to be enamoured of the state of lordship over 'Nature', he is not likely to go in for the alternative course.

Sreela Gaur-Kishore Das Babaji was known to the Gaudiya-Vaishnava communities of both Nabadwip and Braja as a self-realised soul and for his severe asceticism. He was utterly lacking in all those qualifications that are valued by worldly people.

A Vaishnava ascetic does not belong to the category of the destitute, unemployed, and stupid people of this world. Sreela Gaur-Kishore Das Babaji had also nothing in common with that objectionable type of the Babajis of Nabadwip and Brindavan who are the very worst specimens of fallen humanity. Sreela Gaur-Kishore Das Babaji did not also belong to the category of the infinitesimal Absolutes. He belonged to the Divine category of plenary power and as such it was never possible for the conditions of the physical or mental spheres of this mundane world to exercise any control over him. But he chose to appear to the perverted view of worldly people in the likeness of a mortal being destitute of all good and bad qualities and given to the severest ascetic practices.

It was to this Vaishnava ascetic that the Editor of this journal was directed by Sreela Thakur Bhaktivinode for receiving his spiritual enlightenment. The Editor was then passing as a young man of high lineage possessing a handsome physical appearance, a keen and trained intellect, and the purest morals. From the worldly

point of view, he was thus the exact contrast of the person to whom he was sent for his spiritual guidance.

Sreela Gaur-Kishore Das Babaji promptly refused to have anything to do with the deputed supplicant of his mercy on the ground that Krishna would never accept a person so utterly unfitted for His service. It seems that the earthly merits of Editor were his spiritual drawback. But as Editor was not prepared for such a rude jerk to his vanity, it was with the greatest difficulty that he could retain his better judgement and rightly guess the hidden purpose of Sreela Thakur Bhaktivinode in sending him to a person who is not to be captivated by his good morals and high intellectual equipment.

To his worldly contemporaries Sreela Gaur-Kishore Das Babaji appeared to have had very few and simple occupations. He passed all his time in a tiny shed, ate raw earth and similar food, dispensed with all covering for his body and seldom spoke to any visitor.

The Editor on meeting with the above rebuff did not give up the attempt of obtaining his mercy. His sincerity was tested and rewarded after due trial of his perseverance. He happened to be the only disciple that Babaji Maharaj ever had.

After having received the mercy of Babaji Maharaj, Editor experienced such a complete upsetting of his outlook on life that for a year he could feel no interest in any other affair. His days and nights were fully devoted to living communion with the Divine Personality of the Guru in the privacy of a solitary room which he had built for himself at Sreedam Mayapur.

From this time to the disappearance of Babaji Maharaj, Editor seldom met his saviour at the latter's shed and, when he met Babaji Maharaj at his place, did not spend much time in his company. But there were a number of persons who stayed at all time with Babaji Maharaj and practised austerities in imitation of his conduct. These persons regarded themselves as the intimate associates and elected recipients of the special mercy of Sreela Gaura-Kishore. But it so happened that none of them could long retain intact their artificial modes of living, and all of them fell away even from the path of ordinary morality.

These persons had not and as a matter of fact very few persons of this world have any idea of the real nature of spiritual communion with the Divine Master. Spiritual discipleship is realised by the disciple being raised to the plane of spiritual communion with the Divine Master. This communion is not interruptible by any interval of time or space, and is practised on a plane and by means of instrumentals whose nature and existence are utterly incomprehensible to the uninitiated.

I was not, therefore, surprised on going through the letter of Professor Bauver of Zeko-Slovakia to the Editor requesting information about the number of disciples, the details of publications and other particulars about the Gaudiya Mission, in order

to be enabled to form an idea of the nature of the purpose, method and popularity of the cause. It is the most illogical of blunders to seek to be acquainted with the activities of a religious Mission by the statistical method. No human ingenuity can enable a person to force an entry into the realm of the Absolute. The causeless mercy of the pure devotee can alone acquaint us with his real personality.

There is no worldly means of understanding the ways of the soul on his own plane of unalloyed cognition.

When Babaji Maharaj was pleased to disappear from the view of the people of this world, an attempt was made by those very persons who used to be in attendance upon him to commit a horrible offence against his holy transcendental body, which appeared to them to be a corpse, by causing it to be dragged along the streets of Nabadwip by a rope fastened to the neck, in pursuance of a verbal instruction to that effect left to them by Babaji Maharaja himself. It appeared that Babaji Maharaj had told them that as he never served God his body would be purified by contact with the pure dust of Holy Nabadwip if his body was dragged through its streets by the hands of scavengers pulling it by a cord fastened round his neck. Editor who was at Sreedham Mayapur at the time of the disappearance of Babaji Maharaj arrived just in time to be able to prevent those rascals from carrying out their terrible sacrilege. He told them that Babaji Maharaj had lamented the fate of bad men like themselves by such instructions regarding the disposal of his own transcendental body and that none among them according to the Shastras was eligible to touch his body unless they had been uncontaminated by carnal association with loose women at least the previous night. This statement produced the strange effect to dissuading all those persons from laying their hands on the transcendental remains of the great saint.

Editor was enjoined by Sreela Babaji Maharaj not to stay in Calcutta which place was described by him as the seat of Discord (Kali), as nobody there possessed any spiritual inclination. The busy life of a great modern city absorbed in the pursuit of wealth is particularly unsuited for fostering spiritual interest.

But Editor did not receive the advice in its literal sense. He could understand that those words were expressive of the most profound concern for the spiritual well-being of the citizens of the premier city of India, who had no time or inclination for giving their thoughts to the needs of their souls. He accordingly conceived the resolution of preaching the tidings of the Transcendental Service of Krishna to the peoples of all the great cities of the world and to make Calcutta the head-quarters of this propaganda. He has worked for the realisation of this idea in the face of the greatest public indifference to the concern of the soul.

The utterances from the press and the platform of the Editor have since been carried to the remotest parts of India, to Burma and Europe, by the agency of the large number of dedicated souls who have joined the Mission.

It is not possible to bring out in detail the bearings of the doings of Sreela Babaji Maharaj on these activities of the Editor within the limits of a short article, nor to explain their connection with the conduct and writings of Thakur Bhaktivinode who initiated the movement for the propagation of the Teaching of Mahaprabhu Sree-Krishna-Chaitanya. Empiric critics have not failed to detect serious discrepancies between the doings and sayings of the Editor and the words and conduct of Sreela Babaji Maharaj and Thakur Bhaktivinode. But such misunderstanding is only one more instance of the failure of the attempt of worldly-minded people to understand the transcendental careers of pure devotees with the resources of their limited misguided judgement.

Sree Krishna-Chaitanya stresses the supreme necessity of serving the Transcendental Name of Krishna appearing on the lips of His pure devotees for the purpose of attaining to the transcendental plane of unclouded judgement of our awakened souls. On that plane there is activity of the cognitive energy of Krishna, which is an undivided whole, so that the Name on that plane is identical with the object itself. Every activity of the pure devotee is characterized by both fullness as well as individuality. By taking the Name of Krishna the devotee serves Krishna in every way. The devotee is constantly engaged in chanting the Name of Krishna as he does nothing but the Service of Krishna and as the performance of every form of His Service is a performance of all its forms, it is to this transcendental plane of the activities of the plenary cognitive energy of Krishna that the performances of Sreela Babaji Maharaj as well as those of Sreela Thakur Bhaktivinode belong. It is not possible to understand how both of them are constantly engaged in the service of Krishna in every possible way, till one is admitted to the very highest plane of the transcendental service by their special mercy.

It is not possible to understand the real nature of the practice of austerities by Sreela Babaji Maharaj unless we are lifted to the plane of his transcendental activities by being inclined to submit unconditionally to the guidance of the plenary power of Krishna or the Divine Master (sat-guru) by his special mercy. This is the result of spiritual initiation.

The eligibility to confer the fullest measure of enlightenment is certainly a large claim to be made on behalf of any empiric teacher. But it is the irreducible minimum claim on behalf of a real teacher of religion. It is meaningless for any person to pose as a teacher of religion unless he is in a position to lift the pupil to the plane of his transcendental discourse. This function can be performed only by the power of Krishna or God Himself. Krishna is the Supreme World-teacher. He teaches all souls by appearing in the form of the Divine Sound on the lips of His Power or the Saviour Guru. The Name is the Supreme Teacher. The power of the Name, by means of whose agency the Name manifests itself, is the Guru. The Guru or power of Krishna

lifts the soul to the plane of the Transcendental Name and also establishes and maintains contact of the soul with Krishna.