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All glories to Sri Guru and Gauranga

A FEW IMPORTANT WORDS

[I pay my most humble obeisances at the lotus feet of my Spiritual Master who mercifully reveals the spiritual insights that guide and keep me on the right path.]

In Vedic civilization the Guru is worshiped as good as God. This is a very appealing opportunity for anyone who may want to take advantage of the innocent general public. Dr. Deepak Seth, the chairman of our society, Bhagavat Dharma Samaj, requested me to write a book on how to recognize a real Guru. For this reason we decided to write this book for the innocent people to use as an eye opener to distinguish who should be worshiped as good as God. We decided to name the book GURU NIRNAYA DIPIKA, or THE SCRIPTURAL DECISION ON WHO CAN BECOME GURU AND WHO CANNOT.

Our gift of this human body is very difficult to obtain again, and whatever time we waste from it cannot be retrieved. Therefore, it is the duty of all mankind to spend whatever remaining life he or she has to achieve the highest destination, self-realization of God. As Lord Krsna says to Garuda in Garuda Purana:

"An intelligent person should take to spiritual life when he is physically fit, when he is young, and old age is at a distance. With young energetic senses one should endeavor with mind and intelligence to achieve perfection. At a later age there may not be enough time to achieve perfection, just as it is too late to dig a well for water to extinguish an already burning house. What is the use of digging such a well?"

People are confused about this material nature, things are always changing. Everyone has to die in due course, so what should one do to break the cycle of birth and death? They must take to a lifestyle, which will bring them to a permanent platform, or beyond death. Although people search for this in every sphere, they remain unsuccessful because they search in the wrong places. The answer starts from within. There is no logic or material scientific proof that we truly remain after this physical body is finished, yet a person honest with himself knows he does. But who can be trusted to answer such questions? Only an external manifestation of the Supreme power within each of us can answer such questions. This perfect spiritual teacher is an incarnation of Caitya Guru, or the Supersoul seated within the heart of every living entity. But unseen to the material eyes, how can Chaitya-guru be contacted by a person who is in a physical body? The Lord (Caitya Guru) reveals from within to the sincerely searching living entity how to act in certain situations, but without an external guide representing the Caitya Guru, he is unable to

follow His statements. That same Lord then manifests to the sincere seeker of the truth as the Spiritual Master to guide him. If one follows such a Spiritual Master word for word, liberation from this temporary material world is sure.

There are many Spiritual Masters, and each states that he is genuine and perfect, a direct link with God and everyone should follow him. In this scenario how can one determine who is genuine and who is not? This is a world of duality where there will always be two standards, the right and the wrong, the good and the bad, and the perfect and the imperfect. This is confirmed by Lord Krsna speaking to Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita: "There are two categories of living entities in this creation." There is a good and bad side to everyone and everything in this material world, as there are qualified and unqualified Gurus, teachers and cheaters. The symptoms and qualifications of both are clearly described in the ancient scriptures of India.

According to civilized human standards, respect is given to all entities, even an ant, what to speak of fellow human beings. The duty of the human being is to be respectful towards everyone. As it is stated in the Srimad Bhagavatam (11.29.16)

"Without regard for the criticism of peers, and rejecting the idea of 'I am great', without shame one should pay homage even to a dog, a dog-eater, a cow, and unto an ass by falling to the ground."

Sripada Madhvacharya comments on this verse in the following way:

"When one sees a BRAHMANA, one must pay obeisances by falling to the ground. But to others, like the dog-eater, one should pay respects in one's mind by meditating on their Supersoul. This difference of giving respect is to be understood and obeyed carefully."

With this understanding, upon seeing an unqualified spiritual teacher, we should extend respect within our mind from a distance. But if we have the good fortune of meeting a qualified Spiritual Master, we extend him our full respect and stay under his teachings.

By good fortune and pious deeds from one's past life, the nectarine association of a real saint is given to a person by the Lord.

As Bhartr Hari says:

"The association of a real devotee removes the stupidity (dullness) from the intellect, increases the rhetoric of truth, removes the conditioning of the mind, frees one from sins, pleases the heart and encourages one to act spiritually for liberation. What more is left to reward a person?"

All success is gotten by the blessings of a saintly person, and all losses are certain by offending a saint. Service to a real saint, and performing sacrifice are two guaranteed rewarding things in this dark age of Kali Yuga. As it is said in the Niti Sastra, "Understanding the meaning of all knowledge is gotten through the correct association of a saintly person."

The unchallengeable statements presented in this book about the Guru are only a fraction of the scriptural information available on the subject in the ancient Vedas. While trying to overcome my own faults as well as my engagement on working on Srimad Bhagavatam, I have managed to find time to present these ancient Vedic statements about who can become Guru and who cannot. It hurts me to see innocent people following unqualified and unauthorized people who accept service from others. The scriptures condemn this. The Hitopadesa states, "Those who are intelligent have the power of discrimination, but how can one without sufficient intelligence choose the right thing?" Considering these points I have tried to present a summary to help guide the serious candidates to a proper teacher. If mistakes are seen in this writing, I shoulder the burden while begging pardon from the reader. Jai Sri Radhe.

Mahant Krsna Balaram Swami
Completed in Baltimore, USA
On the day of Lord Jagannatha's
Chariot festival held in India 1993.

All glories to Sri Guru and Gauranga
GURU NIRNAYA DIPIKA

THE SCRIPTURAL DECISION ON WHO CAN BECOME GURU AND WHO CANNOT

Chapter One WHO CAN BE A GURU

There are many ancient Vedic literatures written in Sanskrit by the incarnation of God, Sri Krsna Dvaipayana, also known as Vyasadeva. One may question, why blindly accept Vyāsa's opinion, who is He? All the great Acharyas of India accept the ancient scriptures written by Vyasadeva as truth, and they accepted Him as God in their writings. We follow His teachings. Lord Siva is quoted in the Visnu Sahasra Nama Stotra stating, "Vyasa is the direct form of Lord Sri Visnu." Also in the Siddhanta Darpana it is stated, "The opinion of Vyasa is found in all Vedic literatures, including histories." Vyasa means one who presents eternally true knowledge. The Lord has incarnated and taken this name Vyasa to record the truth. In the Puranantara it is further stated, "Krsna Dvaipayana Vyasa must be understood to be Lord Narayana Himself."

The four great Acharyas; Sripada Ramanuja, Sripada Madhva, Sripada Nimbarka and Sripada Vinusvami regard Vyasa as God. As do all other highly regarded personalities including Sripada Sridhara Swami, Sripada Madhusudana Sarasvati, Sripada Ballabhacharya, Srila Rupa Goswami, Srila Sanatana Goswami, Srila Jiva Goswami, Srila Vamsidhara Goswami, Srila Visvanatha Chakravarti Thakura, and Srila Valadeva. Even the impersonalist leader Sripada Sankaracharya accepts Vyasa as an incarnation of God. We have quoted these, and other great Acharyas in this book to prove who can become Guru, and who cannot. Vyasa wrote only in Sanskrit to standardize His authoritative word. As all the accepted great teachers referenced His writings in their

Vedic writings, we also abide by this standard in this publication as well as our release of Srimad Bhagavad-Gita Gita, The Song Of God. Through the ages it has been found that these Sanskrit literatures cannot misguide, therefore every Vaisnava Acharya and his faithful followers follow them to the word. These Sanskrit scriptures are actual guidelines for everyone to march safely towards liberation, the Kingdom of God.

It is well known that unless the ancient Vedas emphatically foretell of a Sampradaya (spiritual tradition), no real spiritual teacher will ever say that spiritual life begins from him.

As Padma Purana says:

"The purity of mantras received by spiritual paths not connected to the age old tradition of successive connection remains futile. Therefore there will only be four authorized Vaisnava Sampradayas (spiritual traditions) on Earth, namely Sripada Ramanuja descending from Laxmi, the Goddess of Fortune; Sripada Madhvacarya from the four headed Lord Brahma; Sripada Visnusvami descending from Lord Siva; and Sripada Nimbarka from the four Kumaras."

Any spiritual faith following these great teachers through the written word of Srila Vyasadeva is authorized. Even after the departure of a spiritual teacher, his followers are required to follow the same age-old tradition as their initiating Spiritual Master had followed. To establish a new standard in the name of their initiating master breaks the age-old spiritual tradition and creates an Upa-Sampradaya or man made sect or an artificial religion. Every spiritual teacher establishes a spiritual practice on the basis of Vedic scriptures and the previous great teachers. Even the Lord descending as the devotee Chaitanya Mahaprabhu did not deviate from the previous great teachers. He claimed that Sridhara Swami's commentary on the Srimad Bhagavatam is the best. It is the disciple's duty to be disciplined in his Guru's teachings and not create anything new which will bring his or her Guru an unwanted reputation.

Nowhere in Vedic scriptures is it ever said that a Spiritual Master can be appointed by the votes of any type of assembly, it is not a material post. The position of Spiritual Master is by the qualification of both inherited spiritual qualities and through thorough training in scriptural knowledge with its etiquette. Such a person is recognized when he can remove the darkness of ignorance of a surrendered soul due to his direct connection with the Lord. Such a Spiritual Master is considered a via media God, no one else. One should never accept a Guru without knowing if the Guru has thorough scriptural knowledge with its etiquettes and inherited spiritual qualities. A Guru should not be chosen like sugar candy in the market, but one has to be very selective and fortunate to find the perfect Guru who can remove the darkness of ignorance and open the path to liberation.

The Vaisnava-Kanth-Hara clears the fog of the position "Guru" thus:

"The word "GU" signifies darkness, and "RU" signifies one who removes it. Due to his ability to remove the darkness of ignorance, a transcendentalist is addressed as a Guru."

In Vedic civilization the Spiritual Master is compared with eyeglasses to the weak eyed person. If the glasses are not properly prescribed, whatever eyesight the person originally had, is lost. Therefore, the prescription to correct the eyes is more important than the eyeglasses themselves. Similarly, the qualifications of the Spiritual Master as prescribed in the scriptures are more important than the Spiritual Master himself. Material qualities are not to be considered when selecting a Guru. Regardless of who appoints or votes for a person to accept the position of Guru, if he does not have the inherited spiritual qualities and perfect training in the Vaisnava scriptures, following its etiquettes, he cannot be a Spiritual Master.

KALI YUGA'S INFLUENCE

The influence of Kali Yuga (the present dark age) will degrade so much that people will have practically no interest in spiritual life. Those who do adopt it will speculate on whether or not Vedic knowledge has any validity. The real Vedic people will be persecuted and the practicing spiritualists will secretly eat meat and drink wine.

As Lord Siva says in Varaha Purana:

"In Kali Yuga there will be many duplicitous spiritualists who will spread their speculation on the scriptures. They will be violent, drink wine and eat meat."

Gautama Rishi states the following way:

"In the word `pakhandā' (unorthodox) the syllable `Pä' stands for Vedic religious principles, and the syllable `KHANDA' stands for one who misrepresents them. Those who misrepresent real Vedic religious principles and establish their own are called heretics."

The influence of Kali Yuga has become so strong that it is difficult to recognize a real Brahmana devotee of the Lord. The symptoms of Kali Yuga are explained in the Sanat Kumara Samhita thus;

"The Brahmanas (religious leaders) will work like Sudras (working class men), and the Sudras will function as Brahmanas."

It is further said:

"Sudras will become devotees of god and will live and act like austere saints. Although they are irreligious in their hearts, they will teach their concoction of spiritual life to others. With such disturbances real religion will be destroyed, and ignorance will prevail on earth."

Furthermore it is said in the Satakam:

"The influence of Kali Yuga will bewilder even greatly learned people on the real injunctions of the scriptures. In such a confused state, they will follow the heretic spiritualists who misrepresent the scriptural injunctions with their fallacious arguments."

We see these foretold predictions today. So should we give up our faith of understanding God and become agnostic, or should we keep our faith in the scriptures and live according to God's law? The Brahman Purana states that until the complete annihilation of this universe real Brahmanas will exist on the earth. Such real Brahmanas are called 'BHUSURA', the demigods on earth. Only such perfect traditionally born qualified Brahmanas can act as Gurus for human society. If all the original Brahmanas leave the earth, she will sink into the Garbhodaka Ocean (located at the bottom of the universe). As life still exists on this planet, it is to be understood that there are still real Brahmanas existing on the earth. By studying the Vedic scriptures we can become qualified to recognize the real Brahmanas and get 'MUKTI' (liberation). If we are not fortunate enough to find such a saint, the Padma Purana recommends thus:

"If a qualified Guru is not found, one can learn the chanting of Mantras from the ancient scriptures."

But this verse should not be misinterpreted as a license to chant Mantras for those unwilling to search for a proper Guru.

THE REQUIREMENTS TO BECOME A GURU

To claim to be a devotee one has to abide by the standard scriptural rules and etiquettes. There are two categories of rules in the scriptures i.e., the major rules and the minor rules. The major rules remain unchangeable axioms, while the minor rules can be compromised till the proper standard is met. The Vedic axioms are to be followed from the beginning of spiritual life to the last breath. One major rule of Vedic civilization is who can become a Guru and take charge of liberating others. By systematically following the Vedic path one can easily get liberated. But to be qualified to guide others one must successfully pass all the requirement tests of the Vedic system. One cannot take charge of another's liberation by ignoring any of the major or minor rules of Vedic civilization. By knowingly misguiding others in the name of Vedic life, or knowingly supporting misguiders, one cannot receive the Lord's blessings, just as the sun does not rise at midnight. Therefore to guide people spiritually there is no substitute for following the Vedic rules and standards to the word.

Some of the qualities of a true Spiritual Master are stated in the Hari Bhakti Vilasa:
"A devotee is an ocean of mercy who feels pain by seeing the unhappiness of others; who is always self satisfied and who works for the welfare of everyone; who does not desire sense gratification; who is expert in all scriptural knowledge; who removes the doubts of his followers, and who is not lazy should be accepted as a Spiritual Master."

The Vayu Purana states:

"One who understands the essence of Vedic literatures and teaches this standard to others by his words and his personal example is to be accepted as an Acharya (Spiritual Master)."

An unqualified person may adopt these qualities to better himself, but a short adoption of a spiritual lifestyle cannot change one's heart, one's nature will prevail in due course. Sometimes the Lord's close associates incarnate to assist the Lord in a particular pastime. They may even take birth in a low class family, but unless one is accompanying the Lord, it is to be understood that his low birth is his bad karma. All devotees who incarnate to assist the Lord are foretold in the Gaura-Ganoddesa Dipika. Such devotees remain followers of spiritual life for their whole life, and do not accept the position of initiating Guru. For example, Arjuna incarnated as Ramananda Raya appearing in the house of a Suda to perform a particular pastime with Lord Chaitanya. But he did not initiate anyone. Lord Brahma incarnated as Hari Dasa Thakura in a Muslim house in a pastime of Lord Chaitanya, he also did not initiate. The hunter Dharma also did not initiate anyone, but due to his Guru's illness, acted as his instrument to bathe the Saligrama Sila Deity.

If every social order could become a Spiritual Master it would be stated in the scriptures as such. Rather, the Vedic authorities state emphatically that only a Brahmana can become an initiating Guru. Anyone who desires to be liberated and claims to be real devotee must follow all the Vedic standards of life.

Lord Krsna who is accepted as God by all the Vedic authorities and scriptures states in the tenth Canto of Srimad Bhagavatam:

"I pay my salutations to the Brahmanas whose forms include the Trinity i.e. Lord Brahma, Lord Visnu and Lord Siva."

One may question, were these original Brahmanas, or were they converted Brahmanas? The conversion of non-Brahmanas into the Brahmana order began in the early twentieth century by Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakura to encourage everyone to take to spiritual life. Even though such conversions are accepted by the scriptures to allow one to advance in spiritual life, it does not allow converted Brahmanas to function as Gurus (Spiritual Masters).

As Srimad Bhagavatam 7.11.35 says:

"The symptoms stated here designate a person into a particular order, if those symptoms are found in a person, he should be considered equal to that order."

Srila Visvanatha Chakravarti Thakura clears this point in his commentary on the above verse stating, "If Brāhminical qualities are found in a person of another order he should be respected as a Brahmana, but he cannot claim to be a Brahmana, as the Lord clearly states, 'to follow another's duty even perfectly is more dangerous than following one's own imperfectly'."

Anyone who is sincerely serious to make spiritual advancement should humbly follow the Vedic order in which they were born according to their past karma. Claiming to be humble means to follow what the Lord and the scriptures say, and not misinterpreting them in the name of devotional service. In the beginning stage of devotional service one should follow scriptural rules as stated, and after one advances on

the spiritual path these rules become automatic. The fools and the ignorant put their faith in mortal men and follow their hearsay, whereas the intelligent man follows the divine evidence found in the scriptures.

In the Merutantra literature it is found from where a true Brahmana comes:

"A true BRAHMANA is conceived by a BRAHMANA woman from a BRAHMANA man, and gets fully trained with BRAHMINICAL qualities. Whereas one only trained as a BRAHMANA coming from low birth can only be addressed as a BRAHMANA."

The adopted Brahminical qualities are only for one's own spiritual improvement and not to take responsibility for others' liberation. The position of Guru is not ordinary, as that of a king is not. Only by birthright can one grow to be a worthy king, as only by birthright can a BRAHMANA become a genuine Guru. The BRAHMANA must know and follow the scriptures inside out to become Guru, as a king must know all the workings of the kingdom to run the kingdom properly. A president is elected by a majority vote whether qualified or not, but a Guru's position is not, he must have exact Vedic qualities to take responsibility for another's liberation successfully. In the scriptures God has written the way on how to come to Him, if not followed properly, the leader, as well as his followers will surely fall from the spiritual path.

In the Puranantara it is found:

"If one takes initiation from one other than the Vedic BRAHMANA, they both (Guru and disciple) remain bereft of spiritual result. Therefore initiation should only be taken from a qualified BRAHMANA, no one else."

In the Manu Smruti the qualifications of a born BRAHMANA who can perform purificatory functions are stated thus:

"A person born in a BRAHMANA family is addressed as BRAHMANA by birthright. After he accepts the sacred thread ceremony he is called Dvija or twice born. By studying the scriptures he becomes a Vipra, or wise BRAHMANA. Only when he has met all three qualifications is he addressed as Srotriya BRAHMANA, or the qualified performer of all purificatory functions."

In the Durghata-Bhava Dipika the following verse is written to show the mutual respect that the Lord, the demigods, and the BRAHMANAs have for each other.

"The presiding deities of the universe, Lord Brahma, Lord Visnu, and Lord Siva, as well as all other demigods worship the BRAHMANA, and are also worshipped by the BRAHMANA. Their various pastimes of praising each other is to establish the difference among them."

In the Adya Padya Vyaksa Satakam commentary on Srimad Bhagavatam it is said:

"Just by seeing a person who envies the Vipra (learned BRAHMANA), Lord Visnu immediately runs to a distance. But for anyone who serves such a BRAHMANA with respect, Lord Hari resides in his heart."

Therefore to serve such BRAHMANA is all rewarding, but one who envies them is doomed. The titles `BRAHMANA' and `Dvija' can be applied to both the converted BRAHMANA and the real BRAHMANA. But the title `Vipra' can only be addressed to a qualified learned BRAHMANA born in that dynasty. Such age old dynasties carry the etiquette and the karma from their past devotional life that keep the traditional Vedic system pure. In India such pure dynasties still exist, but in very small numbers. Therefore the Vedic standards say that the Spiritual Master should only come from such a BRAHMANA family.

In this regard the Sutrarnava states:

"The Acharya (Spiritual Master) can only come from a BRAHMANA dynasty."
Even if a BRAHMANA has some unwanted habit, still he is to be respected because Lord Sri Visnu is represented by the BRAHMANA on earth. As it is said in the Agni Purana, "The BRAHMANA is the hidden form of Lord Visnu on earth."

It is further said in the Satakam 6:

"Even a BRAHMANA whose senses are not under control is worshipable, but not a Sudra even if his senses are under control. Where in the world is that person who milks a female donkey and leaves a cow because she is naughty."

THE RESULT OF UNBONAFIDE INITIATION

It is stated in Kausika Samhita:

"If some one is spiritually initiated by a non-BRAHMANA he is undoubtedly called fallen. Therefore initiation should not be taken from a person of any other Varna except from the BRAHMANA devotee of the Lord."

It is found in the Chandogya Upanisad:

"After being converted into the BRAHMANA order, if one poses to be a Vipra BRAHMANA and gives Mantra initiation, performs sacrifices, teaches such things or permits one to perform such functions, he implicates himself into grievous sin."

It is also found in the Agastya Samhita:

"It is the permanent rule that spiritual initiation must only be taken from a real BRAHMANA, no one else."

The Padma Purana states:

"A greatly advanced qualified BRAHMANA is the only Guru for all human beings. He is as worshipable by all as is Lord Hari Himself. The Acharya must be a non-jealous devotee of God and fully conversant in all Vedic knowledge."

In the Satakam 86 it is stated:

"Specifically, the main Spiritual Master of all Varnas (social orders; BRAHMANA Ksatriya, Vaisya and Sudras) and Asramas (spiritual orders; Brahmachari, Grhastha, Vanaprastha and Sanyasi) is an original BRAHMANA born devotee."

Lord Varaha (An Incarnation of Lord Krsna) says in the Varaha Purana:
"O dear Earth! For spiritual advancement a householder should take initiation only from a BRAHMANA born devotee, no one else. I have personally established this rule that the Acharya (Spiritual Master) can only be from the first Varna (or from the BRAHMANA dynasty)."

In Sri Hari Bhakti Rasayana it is stated:
"To achieve Hari Bhakti (devotion to God) one must accept initiation only from a BRAHMANA born Spiritual Master who is honestly attached to the Lord."

Sripada Madhusudana Sarasvati comments on the above verse stating:
"Here the position `BRAHMANA' is addressed to a particular caste which is authorized to learn the Vedas. He must be expert in performing sacrifices and fixed in devotion to the Lord. Only after possessing such qualities is he distinguished as BRAHMANA and should be accepted as Spiritual Master, no one else."

It is stated in the Bhavisya Purana:
"The original BRAHMANA is the Spiritual Master of everyone. Certainly no one else other than him can be Spiritual Master. Such a BRAHMANA is the Spiritual Master for all the Varnas (social orders) and Asramas (spiritual orders), therefore everyone, including saintly kings should always serve such a BRAHMANA."

THE RESULT OF TAKING INITIATION FROM A CONVERTED BRAHMANA

In the Brahma Purana it is stated:
"If anyone, due to illusion, takes initiation from anyone other than an original BRAHMANA he surely falls into a grievous hell, afterward he must take birth as a snake."

It is found in the Skanda Purana:
"Anyone who takes Mantra-Diksa (spiritual Mantra initiation) from a lower Varna than the BRAHMANA, even though practicing properly, receives no results from the Mantra, and after death takes birth as a dog."

It is stated in the Bhavisya Purana:
"Oh lion amongst the kings, listen, I shall tell you the best procedure of accepting Mantra initiation. It should be accepted from a pure BRAHMANA who is very learned and dedicated to Lord Sri Narayana. If someone, due to illusion accepts the Mantras from someone of another Varna (social order), there is no auspiciousness for him, even though he changes his spiritual status and residence."

Even if one changes his status from a householder to a Sanyasi (renouncient), or moves from the city to the forest to live as a mendicant, his degradation is sure if he takes initiation from a converted BRAHMANA.

It is stated in the Visvami triya Samhita:

"If due to madness one ignores a high born Guru and accepts a low born Guru, he should first atone for his mistake, then accept a fully qualified Guru. Otherwise both the Guru and disciple fall into hell. That is why one should have the correct understanding before taking initiation and making the Guru-disciple connection."

Lord Siva says in the Varaha Purana:

"Without doubt the disciple and Guru will live in hell for the disciple's accepting a Sudra or a low-born Spiritual Master. Such a low-born Spiritual Master is said to be an adverse Acharya."

THE RESULT OF GIVING INITIATION ALTHOUGH UNQUALIFIED

It is stated in the Varaha Purana:

"If one being low-born gives initiation to a person of a higher order he falls into hell, and thereafter takes birth as a dog or a dog-eater."

NECESSITY OF FOLLOWING THE VEDIC RULES OF INITIATION

Srila Vamsidhara Goswami comments in the first Verse of the Srimad Bhagavatam (1.1.1) thus:

"Anyone who explains the process of atonement, medical prescription, astrological calculations or spiritual Mantras without following the proper scriptural injunctions is said to be the killer of a BRAHMANA."

By killing a BRAHMANA one will surely go to hell. Therefore following exact scriptural rules of spiritual life is necessary. The initiator and the initiate must abide by the laws of scripture. The Guru-disciple connection is Vedic, and the Vedic rules of initiation must be followed. If a real BRAHMANA Guru can be found and accepted, the Lord says spiritual advancement is sure. As the Nyaya Sastra of Gautama says, as a magnet naturally attracts iron, similarly a iron like seeker of the truth becomes attracted to Vedic evidence and follows high quality spiritual life.

In the Mahabharata it is stated:

"It is imperative for one to accept a BRAHMANA born Guru. It is important to look at both sides of the Guru i.e., his pure BRAHMANA dynasty, and his disciplic succession. If one accepts such a peaceful speaker, who has a Tilaka mark going upwards as his Spiritual Master, Krsna becomes very dear to him."

Nanda Maharaja confirmed this to Gargamuni in the Srimad Bhagavatam (10.8.6) thus:

"The very BRAHMANA birth makes the Brahmana become the Gurü for every one on earth."

Sripada Vamsidhara Goswami gives his commentary on the above verse stating:

"A devotee born in the BRAHMANA order who is austere and has scriptural knowledge must be accepted as Guru, not one from another order such as the Ksatriya etc. Only an original BRAHMANA must be accepted as Guru, not anyone from other Varnas."

Srila Jiva Goswami also comments on the above verse of Srimad Bhagavatam (10.8.6) stating:

"What more can be said, the meaning here is that not only due to his knowledge, but also just by his birthright a BRAHMANA is the Spiritual Master of everyone."

Srila Visvanatha Chakravarti Thakura comments on the above stated verse of Srimad Bhagavatam (10.8.6) saying:

"The meaning here is because a sincere BRAHMANA has both high birth and Guru succession, and knowledge of mantras and devotion to Krsna, he should be accepted as Spiritual Master. Indeed he is certainly the only Spiritual Master to be accepted, no one else."

Sri Baladeva Vidyabhusana comments on the above verse of the Srimad Bhagavatam (10.8.6) thus:

"Indeed by their birth right a born BRAHMANA is said to be the Guru of all human beings, what to speak of if he is well versed in the Vedic knowledge."

Sripada Ballabhacharya also says on the above verse of the Srimad Bhagavatam (10.8.6) thus:

"When this verse says, 'by their birthright a BRAHMANA is the Gurü for all', it means that just by taking birth in the house of a BRAHMANA he becomes the Guru for everyone."

Furthermore the father of mankind, Manu Maharaja says;

"Manu Maharaja said that no one other than an original BRAHMANA with his qualifications can initiate and teach the science of God."

If a BRAHMANA is not a Vaisnava, is not functioning as per the duty of a BRAHMANA, or is working as a non-BRAHMANA, then he is to be paid respects from a distance and not to be accepted as a spiritual guide.

If anyone claims that a converted BRAHMANA can become an initiating Guru, he either does not know of the previous Acharya's comments, or he is knowingly misleading his followers.

THE REASON FOR ACCEPTING INITIATION FROM A BRAHMANA DEVOTEE

In the Visnu Purana in the Varatamta section it is stated:

"The original BRAHMANA is the main Guru for all the Varnas and Asramas. Oh BRAHMANA! If someone says there can be another Guru other than the BRAHMANA, I will rebut saying there cannot be another Guru besides him (the original BRAHMANA)."

In the Skanda Purana it is stated:

"(Lord Siva told his wife Parvati) O wife! Lord Brahma, Lord Visnu, and I live in the existing body of a traditional real BRAHMANA."

THE VALUE OF ORIGINAL BRAHMANA

The following verse is from the Twelfth Canto of Srimad Bhagavatam (12.10.25) where Lord Siva tells Markandeya Muni of the glories of him being born in a BRAHMANA family. (For more detail please refer to verses 20 and 24 of the same chapter of the same Canto).

"Just by hearing about you or just by seeing you, even the grievously sinful and low born become purified. What to speak of the purity received by conversing etc. with great personalities like you."

Lord Krsna speaking with His wife Rukmini Devi:

"The original BRAHMANA who is satisfied with what he gets should be paid obeisances with one's head down on the ground."

The following is the statement made by Narada Muni to Yudhisthira Maharaja in the Srimad Bhāgavatam 7.14. 42:

"O king, what to speak of us (you and I), the BRAHMANA are worshipable even by the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna, the soul of all, because the dust of their lotus feet purifies the three worlds."

We have to keep in mind that just up until recently there was no conversion from non-BRAHMANA to BRAHMANA, there was only original perfectly qualified Vedic BRAHMANA.

ACCEPTING A REAL GURU

It is stated in the Yajna Sutra who should perform the purificatory ceremonies:

"The authority to act as a priest and perform Yajna is given to the best of the BRAHMANA. No one, including Ksatriya or Vaisya, but only the BRAHMANA can be the priest. This is the rule and meaning of Yajna."

Sripa Vira Raghavacharya of the Ramanuja Sampradaya quotes from the Bhagavad-Ramayana thus:

"If a warrior, or specifically an ex-dog-eater is acting as the performer of one's sacrificial function, how can the demigods and sages accept his offerings?"

Sripad Vira Raghavacharya further says that there are two categories of Ksatriyas in Vedic civilization. One is dominated by passion and acts as a ruler warrior type, the other is dominated by a mixture of passion and goodness and can act as the BRAHMANA type if no qualified BRAHMANA's can be found. Only the latter Ksatriya is allowed to function as a priest.

A qualified Spiritual Master knows the spiritual standards, as Srimad Bhagavatam (11.3.21) says:

"Therefore anyone who is inquisitive about one's highest benefit must approach a perfect Spiritual Master who is fully realized on the conclusion of the scriptures, and able to convince others to act rightly. He must be exclusively devoted to the Supreme Lord, very peaceful and not entangled in worldly affairs."

Sripad Vira Raghavacharya of the Ramanuja Sampradaya comments on the above verse of the Srimad Bhagavatam (11.3.21) thus:

"If one is seated on an immobile boat tied to the shoreline, he cannot cross the water. Similarly if one is initiated by a Spiritual Master not well versed in knowledge, how can he get liberation from this world?"

Srila Vamsidhara Goswami comments on the Srimad Bhagavatam (11.17.26) thus:

"A BRAHMANA who systematically performs the ceremonies that purify the unwanted karma of a person, and has equal vision, is the only one said to be Spiritual Master of all."

THE PURITY RECEIVED BY CHANTING AND SERVING THE LORD

One may say that by chanting the Hare Krsna Maha Mantra and taking spiritual initiation from a bonafide Spiritual Master, a lowborn person becomes equal to a perfect BRAHMANA who is qualified to perform sacrifice.

As Srimad Bhagavatam (3.33.6) states:

"O Lord, what to speak of the spiritual purity a person receives who sees You directly, just by hearing or repeating Your Name, offering obeisances unto You or remembering You, even a dog-eater immediately becomes purified and equally respectable like that of a BRAHMANA who performs sacrifice."

Becoming purified equal to a perfect BRAHMANA and becoming a perfect BRAHMANA are two different things. Just as becoming equal to the king of heaven and being the king of heaven is two different things. The Vedic scriptures encourage everyone to become and remain a devotee of God so that liberation can be received. But in adopting spiritual life, if a lowborn person occupies the post of an original BRAHMANA, it breaks the law of Vedic scriptures.

Sripad Madhvacarya comments on the above verse of the Srimad Bhagavatam (3.33.6) thus:

"A dog-eater, by chanting the holy name of the Lord etc. becomes purified and qualified to help in the performance of sacrifice by carrying wood and leaves for the sacrifice, but he cannot perform the sacrifice."

Srila Visvanatha Chakravarti Thakura comments on the above verse of Srimad Bhagavatam (3.33.6) saying:

" `By chanting the holy name of the Lord a dog-eater immediately becomes purified' means he becomes respectable like that of a BRAHMANA who performs sacrifices, not that he becomes the same as a BRAHMANA."

Srila Jiva Goswami comments on the above verse of the Srimad Bhagavatam (3.33.6) saying:

"This verse means that by chanting the holy name of the Lord a dog-eater begins to acquire purity. If he is desirous to perform the Vedic rites, even if he is pure, he must take another birth in the house of a BRAHMANA to do so."

Being egoistic and claiming to be a BRAHMANA while ignoring the real BRAHMANA is not Vedic civilized life. But humbly recognizing one's low birth and acting accordingly is all glorious. A real devotee must accept glorification and infamy equally. A fully qualified BRAHMANA is scripturally obligated to teach others, as the other orders are obligated to follow. The different classes of devotees must follow their own prescribed duty, this is true humility.

As it is said in the Vedas,

"Spiritual life, if not followed properly gives bad results, as a razor will cut when mishandled while shaving."

AVOIDING THE UNQUALIFIED, AND HONORING THE REAL SPIRITUAL MASTER

Accepting a qualified Spiritual Master is essential for everyone, but accepting an unqualified Guru cannot give any good result, as it is said.

"If a shackled person approaches another shackled person for help, how can he be freed? Therefore one should serve a liberated devotee who can immediately free him from the material world."

To approach a shackled man for help would be ridiculous, if he knew the gate to freedom, he would himself be free. Therefore it is very important to recognize if the Guru is liberated himself or not.

THE QUALIFICATIONS TO BE GURU

Anyone with vast spiritual knowledge can be a Vartma Pradarsaka Guru, or Siksa Guru (one who directs or instructs one on the path of spiritual life). To be a Diksa Guru (initiating Spiritual Master) one must have the following qualities: He must be peaceful, purified in mind, scripturally expert in the process of initiation, in deity installation, and in temple inauguration with Mantras. He must be always enthusiastic and strictly devoted to his own Guru. He must be free from greed and false prestige. He must be fearless in speaking the Vedic statements directly. He must not be too hasty, and must speak from his unfathomable realizations through the scriptures.

THE DUTY OF THE SPIRITUALLY INCLINED CANDIDATE

A person should be very serious about perfecting his life and entering the Kingdom of God. He should be very careful whom he accepts initiation from. Stones can be carried across the ocean by the help of a boat, but if the boat itself is made of stone, how can it cross the ocean? Let alone filled with stones. Similarly, if the Spiritual Master is not qualified to enter the Kingdom of God, how can he take others?

THE POSITION OF GURU

A perfect Spiritual Master has realized the scriptures, is filled with an ocean of knowledge, and respected equal to God. His position is not ordinary. The Supreme Lord Himself speaks on the qualified Spiritual Master in the Srimad Bhagavatam (11.17.27) thus:

"One should know the Acharya as Myself and never disrespect him in any way. One should not envy him, thinking him as an ordinary man, for he is the representative of all the demigods."

Furthermore, the qualities of a Guru as the external manifestation of God is stated in the Bengali verse of Sri Chaitanya Charitāmṛta Adilila¹⁴⁵ thus:

"According to the revealed scriptures, the Spiritual Master is said to be an external appearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa who delivers the fallen souls from their conditioned state."

Srila Visvanatha Chakravarti Thakura states in the Gurvastakam-7 thus:

"All the revealed scriptures and all the realized spiritual authorities state that the Spiritual Master is the direct representation of Lord Sri Hari. Because he is very dear to Him, and His most confidential servant. Therefore, I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a Spiritual Master."

Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa is accepted as the Supreme Lord by all the revealed scriptures and great Acharyas. If Lord Kṛṣṇa is the unlimited God and knows everything, and if the Guru is accepted as good as God or equal to Him, how much knowledge must the Guru possess? A Spiritual Master must be well versed in all the scriptures and also realized in the science of God. A qualified Spiritual Master must know the complete standard of deity worship, deity installation, and Vaisnava etiquettes. He must know if and when the deity Personality no longer lives within the deity form. He must know what to do if the deity was broken, cracked, burnt, or not worshiped up to the promised standard, or if He has been touched by a four legged animal, or worshiped with the wrong Mantras. These are the minimum requirements to become a Guru.

Thus ends the first chapter of the
GURU NIRNAYA DIPIKA.
Hari Om Tat Sat

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GURU NIRNAYA DIPIKA

Chapter Two

NATURAL DESIRE TO BE A GURU

In this world everyone wants to be a leader, practically no one wants to be a follower. This is the natural artificial inclination of the conditioned soul in this material world. The desire of being worshipped lies within the heart of every conditioned soul. With the false ego covering the soul, convincing the person he is great, the person forgets he came to this world with nothing and will leave with nothing in a short period of time. The false ego is led by the wandering mind, which allows the senses to act according to the modes of material nature. This false ego, which covers the soul, is actually a separated energy of the Lord.

As the Lord says in the Bhagavad Gita,

"The false ego is a separated energy of Mine."

As long as the false ego remains in the heart, one cannot be a real follower. If he acts as a leader, he misguides people.

One may question, what is the definition of humility? Humility is the natural action of the soul acting on the basis of scriptures. He sees others as greater than himself.

As it is said in the Niti Sastra:

"Just as a tree whose limbs filled with fruit hang down to the ground, similarly a person who is learned in the scriptures acts very humbly."

If a person is learned in the scriptures, does that mean he should remain silent and outwardly accepts the statements of heretics? A learned devotee's desire is to enlighten the ignorant souls of the world. If he has to speak against the majority vote on the understanding of the scriptures to present them correctly, the real devotee surely will. This seemingly offensive attitude may not seem humble to those ignorant to the scriptural injunctions, but this is real humility. There is no offense considered while exposing imposters by using Vedic evidence.

A realized learned person never compromises the statements of the scriptures. One may question, what if the correct spiritual standard of leadership is not met, what should be done? It may also be argued that you have your realizations and I have mine. I am correct and you are speculating on the true meaning of the Vedic literatures. In either case neither party is to be believed, but the previous great spiritual authorities who have left their genuine commentaries to guide us should be followed. There is no room for speculation.

It may also be asked that by chanting the Holy Name of the Lord as stated in Srimad Bhagavatam (3.33.6) even a dog eater becomes purified and equally respectable like that of a Brahmana who performs sacrifice. Does it mean such a person has become a Brahmana, or does he become equally respectable like that of a Brahmana?

In this regard, Sripada Sridhara Swami says,

"By accepting the spiritual practices of hearing and chanting the Lord's glories, a dog eater resembles the purified Brahmana who performs purificatory ceremonies."

In the Bhavartha Dipika a Commentary on the Srimad Bhagavatam (3.33.7) the following is stated:

"By chanting the Holy Name of the Lord a dog-eater becomes like a civilized person who has performed austerities, sacrifices, who has bathed in the holy places, and has the good qualities described in Vedic literatures. This is so because of his great fortune in engaging in the chanting of the Holy Name in this life. By chanting the Holy Name of the Lord he becomes purified, but only if he takes another birth is he able to perform all purificatory ceremonies."

It is stated in the Dipika Prakasa (3.33.6):

"Attaining the maximum purifying stage of devotional service to the Lord as stated, 'Devotion executed with attachment to Me purifies even a dog-eater', is the culmination of devotion for such a devotee. Therefore a lowborn still remains unqualified to perform any purificatory function because of his previously acquired sins. Just as a Brahmana's son, although qualified to perform sacrifice, waits to complete the sacred thread ceremony before functioning as a priest. Similarly the lowborn has to wait for his next birth to function as a priest. By accepting devotional service he does not become qualified to perform the Vedic rights, but becomes qualified to be respected as much as the performer."

It is further stated in the Dipika Prakasa (3.33.7)

"Sri Narada Muni said, 'Only the Brahmana is assigned to give initiation with Mantras, no one else'."

It is stated in the Krama Sandarbha (3.33.6):

"The understanding here is that when a low-born person takes to spiritual life seriously he begins to develop the qualifications to perform Vedic rights, but only after his next birth in the house of a Brahmana does he become qualified to perform such rights."

It is stated in the Sarartha Darsini (3.33.6)

"`After adopting a pure life style one becomes qualified to receive equal respect as the Brahmana who is authorized to perform the Vedic ceremonies."

Some may argue that these statements are meant for the ceremonies found in the Karma-Kanda section of the Vedas, for them the Dipika Prakasa gives an example of the necessity of following the Lord's standard, as the pure devotee Vidura Mahārāja himself follows.

The Commentary on Srimad Bhagavatam on 4.7.14 the following is stated:

"Only the Brahmana is authorized to initiate on the path of self-realization, no one else. Even Vidura maharaj, a direct incarnation of Lord Yamarāj (the superintendent of death) did not initiate King Dhrtarastra because he knew he was unqualified, therefore he brought Sanatsujata to initiate Dhrtarastra in the science of self-realization."

It is stated in the Mahabharata Udyoga Parva:

"In every spiritual matter, only the Brahmana is authorized to initiate and perform other spiritual functions. If one is initiated by someone other than a Brahmana, his spiritual practice will bring no result."

While commenting of the Srimad Bhagavatam (7.11.13) the Dipika Prakasa states the following:

"From the beginning of creation Lord Brahma gave the right to perform the purificatory functions to the Brahmana. From their birth (from Brahmana parentage) he gave them this as their main symptom to purify others."

It is stated in the Pulastya Samhita by Pulastya Muni:

"A Brahmana who is born out of a Brahmana is the person who must perform all the Vedic rights."

Srila Vyasadeva says in the Vyasa Gita:

"One should accept a Guru who is expert in performing purificatory ceremonies, attached to the Vedic way of life, very meritorious, not lazy, born in a Brahmana dynasty, and learned in every manner."

Srila Rupa Goswami says in his Bhakti-Rasamrta-Sindhu (1.1.22) = (The Nectar of Devotion):

"The only reason to remain unauthorized to initiate, install deities, or perform any sacrifices is a devotee's taking a low birth. This low birth is the symptom of his past acquired sinful deeds."

Srila Jiva Goswami, the back-bone of Gaudiya Vaisnavism states in his Durgama-Sangamani (1.16)

"Even though born in a Brahmana dynasty and are not of low birth, still they remain unqualified to perform any purificatory ceremonies like initiation or fire sacrifices. They have to wait until their purificatory thread ceremony of Brahmana initiation to perform such services. Similarly, those born in untouchable low class families have their impurities removed by initiation into Bhakti-yoga. However, due to spiritual regulation, just as a Brahmana's son has to wait for his thread ceremony (Brahmana's initiation), the lowborn devotee, although initiated, has to take another birth to perform such purificatory functions. Regardless of the scriptural statement, `A low born becomes purified by embracing spiritual life', means he is considered pure, but not entitled to perform purificatory ceremonies like initiation or deity installation."

Srila Visvanatha Chakravarti Thakura writes in his Sarartha-Pradarsini (1.1.22)

"A low-born out-caste, when initiated, becomes like a purified person, but this does not mean he is able to perform purificatory ceremonies such as initiation or deity installation etc."

The devotee Sripād Mukunda Dasa also comments on verse (1.1.22) of Srila Rupa Goswami's Bhakti-Rasamrta-Sindhu saying that a lowborn devotee's sins are destroyed in the reverse order, i.e. starting from the last sin he committed to the first lifetimes ago. On the other hand, the Brahmana born devotee, recognized by high birth has a small amount of sin, and are destroyed from the first sin he had committed. Therefore, lowborn devotees have to take another birth to perform purificatory ceremonies. They should focus solely on their own liberation, as they do not have any way to determine the amount of sin they have.

In Brahma Vaivarta Purana it is stated;

(Lord Narayana told Nārada Muni), "Oh best of the Brahmanas, only those who are born in the qualified original Brahmana order in the system of Manu is qualified to become a Spiritual Master. Not those who initiate by giving a japa-mala (chanting beads) followed by some rituals."

The symptom of a Spiritual Master is stated in the Apastambha Sruti:

"The symptoms of the perfect Spiritual Master are that he teaches his disciples by practical example, is the best of all the Gurus, is well versed in scriptural knowledge, has realized knowledge, he must be parented by the highest order, have a gentle but chastising nature, very approachable by all and naturally strait forward in his dealing with everyone."

The Visnu Purana (5.2.4) tells how one develops the spiritual vision to identify the perfect Spiritual Master thus:

"One should accept a perfect Spiritual Master to learn the spiritual science perfectly so when the Lord appears in this world, one can recognize and serve Him correctly."

It is further said in the same Visnu Purana:

"Only when one becomes free from the influence of ignorance can one understand the transcendental form and powers of the Lord when he incarnates in this world. While in the physical body it is impossible for a conditioned soul to understand the non-physical while influenced by the material coverings."

Thus ends the second chapter of the
GURU NIRNAYA DIPIKA
Hari Om Tat Sat

GURU NIRNAYA DIPIKA

Chapter Three

UNDERSTANDING THE GURU AND THE LORD

Only by the mercy of the Supreme Lord, by positive association with devotees, by execution of devotional service, and by knowledge of scriptures can one recognize a qualified Spiritual Master. Only after complete surrender to a pure Spiritual Master is

one able to understand the Supreme Lord. After unlimited births one achieves this valuable, but temporary human birth. If one seriously takes to spiritual life now, he or she can be freed from the cycle of birth and death. Sense gratification is available even to the animals, but a sincere soul must endeavor to attain a pure Spiritual Master and serve the Supreme Lord through him until he goes back to Godhead.

In the Vedic scriptures there are no examples of anyone who became self-realized without being initiated by a genuine Spiritual Master. An uninitiated person can only illusion others as he himself is in illusion. The mercy of the Spiritual Master is understood to be beyond the mantras. Only one who sincerely follows the orders of his Spiritual Master and chants the prescribed Mantras is qualified to achieve God's mercy. Otherwise the disciple will not realize the Gurü's teachings.

It is said in the Visnu-Yamala:

"If a person is not properly initiated all of his activities remain futile and he descends into the animal kingdom."

Those situated in knowledge will surely serve the Spiritual Master properly. Egoistic persons who say, "I know better," and do not take proper initiation are unable to achieve the Supreme Lord. Those types of people have the illusory idea that the Lord will see them unaccompanied by His pure devotee (Spiritual Master). They have a misconception of the `Master servant relationship' required to enter into the Kingdom of God. The scriptures exactly define the real standards of happiness and distress; there is no room for speculation. If someone faithfully follows the scriptures, real knowledge will manifest in his heart. But to an unfaithful person, those same scriptures turn him against God. Those who are intelligent and pious become eager to know God and enjoy transcendental bliss, but those who are against the scriptures are like hunters who kill their own souls.

Lord Krsna tells Uddhava about the position of Guru in the Srimad Bhagavatam 11.17.27 thus:

"One should understand the Acharya to be identical to Me, and not in any other way. Never disrespect him, never think him to be an ordinary man, never find fault in him or envy him in any way because the Guru represents all the demigods."

Here the Lord claims the Guru to be equal to Himself. Even though people receive absolute knowledge from the Spiritual Master, due to ignorance they think the Guru to be a mortal man. This type of person takes God's message from the Guru not considering it's great importance. Although such people seem to be performing devotional service seriously, they are compared to an elephant's bathing. The elephant takes a very nice bath, and afterward covers himself with dirt. Therefore a serious devotee must understand the Spiritual Master thus, "The Spiritual Master includes all the demigods within him." And must understand him contrary to the logic of the atheist Charvaka Muni, "He is exactly like me, how can I consider him to be different?" If one follows such logic regarding the Spiritual Master he is committing a great offense.

THE GOAL OF HUMAN LIFE

Without faith nothing can be done in this world. Unless we have faith that an activity will give some result, we would not do it. One may question, we have physical bodies, how can we have faith in something non-physical? Everything we see or do not see works on faith. The definition of faith on some thing that we cannot understand through

material logic is defined in the Sanskrit Vyakarana (the Grammar) book thus, "Having complete confidence in the words of a qualified Guru and the Vedic scriptures is called faith." If anyone decides to follow something materially illogical he must trust the words of a perfect Guru and the Vedic scriptures if he wants a guaranteed result. Accepting a part of the scriptures that one likes and avoiding parts he dislikes gives no result. If one desires liberation from birth and death every scriptural injunction must be followed word for word. The logic of (a blind man attempting to catch a sparrow) helps us illustrate how having the proper vision is imperative to bring the desired result. A blind man may be very strong, but because he does not have eyesight his attempt to catch a bird is useless. Similarly those who do not properly follow THE ORIGINAL GURU DISCIPLE laws of spiritual life waste their time in the name of religion.

In this material world everyone is result conscious. Unless some result is seen, enthusiasm is reduced. Similarly some result on the spiritual path is necessary to enforce our faith. This result is experienced through achieving transcendental realizations and the nearness to God. There is only one disease in the world, thinking that we are these material bodies. The cure is to free the patient from birth, death, old age, disease, and guide him to the eternal Kingdom of God. But what medicine should be taken for such a disease? Srila Vansidhara Goswami answers this question in his Dipika Prakasa thus, "There is but one great medicine in this creation, accepting and keeping close association with the right Spiritual Master who can remove all diseases."

Here we have quoted mainly from the Kularnava-Rahasya, where Lord Siva and the goddess Parvati are conversing about the qualifications of the perfect Spiritual Master. "Lord Siva says to his wife: O Devi ! Just as in every house there is a lamp, so there are also many Gurus throughout the world. It is, however, very rare to find a Guru who is likened to the sun, who is the sum total of all lamp like Gurus. O Devi! There are many Gurus who are expert and well versed in Vedic scriptures, but the Guru who is both well versed and realized in the science of the Supreme Truth is very rare. O Devi! There are many Gurus who accept disciples just to usurp their wealth, but the Guru who removes the miseries of birth and death from his disciples is very rare"

"A Spiritual Master must be expert in Vedic knowledge. He must systematically know the traditional rituals of spiritual life. His appearance is very pleasing like a demigod, and attracts everyone by his speech. He speaks sweetly with a smiling face and he is easily approachable."

The Spiritual Master is an ocean of mercy. He is very kind, and has appeared in this world only to benefit others. His wealth of knowledge is unfathomably deep, like an ocean filled with all kinds of wealth.

It is further stated in the Kularnava-Rahasya 13:

"One whose physical appearance reveals his internal consciousness, who is very expert and wise, who does not destroy any- one's spiritual feelings, who perceives a person's internal consciousness by looking at him externally, who properly understands everything according to time and place, who can perfectly understand the past, present, and future, who controls his senses, who is very kind and forgiving, who reminds others about the hellish conditions of life, and who is always peaceful and very merciful to all living entities is qualified to be a Spiritual Master."

THE REAL GURU DEALS VERY PERSONALLY AND CHARMINGLY

A bona-fide Spiritual Master is not mechanical or impersonal in his dealings. His personality charms and changes the hearts and minds of those who associate with him. His association intensifies one's spiritual attitude toward devotional service to Krsna and himself. Since he is expert in the Pancha Ratriki Vidhi (scriptural procedure for giving mantra initiation), he reforms sincere people from their varna to Vaisnava by rewarding them Mantra initiation. He is very peaceful, satisfied, and pure in heart, and he knows the complete standard of spiritualism.

The Kularnava-Rahasya 13 states, "Lord Siva said to his wife: O Devi, one who is pleased with a real devotee, who is merciful, who smiles when he speaks, who is charming to the devotees and is equal to everyone, who is fixed in his daily devotional service, who is free from greed and bad association, who does not take sides, who is clear-sighted, who is unselfish, who does not make compromises, who is fixed in the self, and who is very pious should be accepted as the Spiritual Master."

A REAL GURU DOES NOT BOAST ABOUT HIS KNOWLEDGE

A Spiritual Master does not argue with others just to make a show of his knowledge, but speaks only to remove the material consciousness or spiritual misunderstanding from the sincere soul. He humbly uses his scriptural knowledge and realizations to convince all, of the glories of the Lord.

It is further stated in the Kularnava-Rahasya, "The Spiritual Master who can be pleased in half a moment is very rare because he delivers one from material existence by instructing him on one of the most valuable processes of liberation. Just as a hungry person feels satisfied by eating, so the hunger for spiritual knowledge is satisfied by hearing the instructions of the Guru whose association is very rare."

THE CATEGORIES OF SPIRITUAL MASTERS

Whether the Spiritual Master born in the Brahmana family is Nitya-siddha (eternally perfect or directly descended from the spiritual world), Sadhana-siddha (became perfect by following spiritual life very rigidly), or Kripa-siddha (became perfect by receiving the mercy of another perfect devotee of the Lord), he is always situated in spiritual consciousness, therefore impartial. Due to his sense control, he is never miserable or frustrated. He does not maintain grudges against others, even towards a grievously mistaken person who wants to correct him. He is very tolerant with persons whom he feels can be corrected, and is easily pleased.

The Kularnava-Rahasya 13 states, "Just as butter melts in the presence of fire, similarly by the company of a real Spiritual Master all the sins of a person get destroyed."

The ghost like doubts about the existence of God is haunting all people. A real Spiritual Master removes those ghost like doubts. The rare human form of life, which can award all benefit, is very special and if guided properly can give liberation. It can be compared to a boat, if guided properly by a real Spiritual Master as the captain, following the instructions of God likened as favorable winds propelling the boat, one is sure to reach the ultimate destination. A person who does not approach a genuine Spiritual Master due to some doubt and does not take this golden opportunity for liberation is considered to be

the killer of his own soul. As it is said, " whoever thinks that a genuine Spiritual Master is an ordinary person has a hellish mentality." Therefore one should carefully deal with a qualified Spiritual Master."

THE QUALITY OF WORSHIP AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE QUALIFIED GURU

It is stated in the Brahma-vaivarta Purana

"If one finds a dispassionate speaker who is well versed in the scriptures and speaks them very charmingly, one should accept him as his Spiritual Master after considering his birth dynasty and character. If by hearing such a speaker, one becomes free from lust, anger, and greed, and becomes joyful, the speaker should be understood to be the topmost Spiritual Master." 1

(1- This above verse is quoted from our Vaisnava Kantha Hara where it is mis edited. Please forgive us for the editing mistakes, as in page 100 of the Vaisnava- Kantha-Hara where this verse was misinterpreted by the editor and undiscovered before publishing. This is the correct translation of the verse.)

Even if such a Spiritual Master lacks some social etiquette, but knows the science of God in truth, he should be accepted as a Guru. It is confirmed in Nyaya-Sastra: "Everyone must free himself from the repetition of birth and death. Therefore, it is necessary to accept a liberated soul as one's Spiritual Master, without considering his social qualifications."

The integrity of the Spiritual Master and how to see him is stated in the Srimad Bhagavatam 7.15.26 thus:

"It is because the Spiritual Master lights the lamp of knowledge within the heart of the candidate that he must be considered the direct representative of the Lord. For those fools who consider him an ordinary human, all their knowledge, listening to the scriptures and religious activities become useless, like that of an elephant who after bathing covers himself with dirt."

Srila Jiva Goswami comments on the above verse referencing the Sveta Svatara Upanisad thus:

"Whatever quality of devotion one has for God, the same quality of devotion must be extended to the Spiritual Master. If it is done in this way, then all the knowledge of the scriptures are automatically revealed unto him."

Furthermore the Brahmavaivarta Purana states:

"By extending the right quality of devotion to the Spiritual Master, the Lord can be gotten. Those who are intelligent follow this rule. But those who are egoistic and think, 'I am great', do not serve the Guru properly. Even if they have the mercy of the Lord, they lose it."

Furthermore the Lord states in the Padma Purana:

"If someone thinks, 'whatever quality of devotion I have for God, I must have better for the Guru', such a person actually has real love for Me. Through this consciousness he knows that I will appear before him."

THE CATEGORIES OF INITIATIONS

In regard to initiation it is explained in the Kularnava Tantra thus:

"Lord Siva told his wife Parvati of the three classifications of initiations, namely initiation by touch, initiation by meditation, and initiation by sight. O dear one! Just as a bird brings up its offspring by the touch of its wings, similarly by touch initiation of a perfect master advances his disciples. As a turtle hatches its eggs buried in the sand on the beach through meditation while in the water, similarly a Spiritual Master initiates and elevates his disciples by meditating on them, although distanced apart. And just as a fish maintains and raises its offspring by looking at them, similarly initiation by sight advances the disciples on the spiritual path."

The Guru may choose to use any or all of the above types of initiation processes to advance his disciples. These initiation processes are only successful if performed in pure goodness. A real Guru calls upon the presiding deities of initiation by using their proper Mantras (hymns) prior to the time of initiation. In this way he installs the seed of devotion in the heart of the candidate, which through proper spiritual practice will grow into pure love of God. A person realizes the Lord when he is purified by spiritual practice under a perfect Spiritual Master.

THE ETIQUETTE NEAR THE SPIRITUAL MASTER

A disciple's duty is to follow his bonafide Spiritual Master under all circumstances. Whatever instructions he receives should be followed unconditionally. As Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, "A disciple should take the instructions of his Spiritual Master as his life and soul. He should not think, "my Spiritual Master is not present, I need not follow his instructions now."

The Visnu Purana 3.9.4 states:

"When the Spiritual Master stands up, the disciple should stand up. If the Spiritual Master begins walking, the disciple should walk behind him. If he sits on a seat, the disciple should sit lower than him. Oh king, the disciple should never oppose his perfect Spiritual Master in any way."

It is stated in the Narada-Pancaratra:

"If one's Spiritual Master is present before him, and the disciple worships someone else, he is very unfortunate as all of his worship becomes fruitless."

If another elevated Vaisnava is present, a disciple awaits an order from his Spiritual Master to serve that devotee. While serving him, the disciple does not ignore his own Spiritual Master or put him in any discomfort.

Srila Jiva Gosvami states in Bhakti-Sandarbha (714) thus:

"If ordered by his own Spiritual Master, it is auspicious for the disciple to serve other respectable Vaisnavas without interfering in the service to his Guru. If one disobeys this rule of receiving others he is implicated in sin."

The Kularnava-Rahasya 12 states:

"A bona-fide Spiritual Master is the father, mother, the sum total of all the demigods, and the ultimate shelter of the disciple. If the all-auspicious Lord becomes angry with the disciple, the Guru can protect him; but if the Guru becomes angry with him, he has no other shelter."

The Kularnava-Rahasya 11 states:

"An intelligent person should always glorify his pure Spiritual Master and never reveal the secret hymns given to him. If he keeps his Spiritual Master secretly and reveals the secret hymns to others, his wealth, purity, and duration of life become reduced."

A disciple wants suffering souls to know of his Spiritual Master so that they may be enlightened. He glorifies his Spiritual Master everywhere, but does not reveal the secret Mantras to others. These Mantras are only revealed by the authority, the Spiritual Master, not by an unauthorized disciple.

The Kularnava-Rahasya 11 further states:

Lord Siva told Parvati, "O goddess, if the Spiritual Master instructs the disciple three times on how to act properly, but the disciple still does not accept his instructions, the Spiritual Master incurs no sin, but the disciple does."

One should know that the real Spiritual Master is non-different from the Supreme Lord. Since one cannot see the Supersoul directly, He appears in this world as a liberated devotee. By initiation one's material designations are completely and immediately removed. Lord Krsna instructs externally as the Acharya and internally as the Supersoul to help deliver the embodied soul from this material world. On the other hand, one who cannot deliver his dependents from the path of repeated birth and death should never become a Spiritual Master, a father, a husband, a mother, or a worshipable demigod.

The Agama-Sastra states:

"That which systematically awards transcendental knowledge and frees one from all sinful activities is called the initiation process by the learned souls. Therefore, after paying obeisances to the Spiritual Master and offering him everything one has, one should take initiation from him with a Vaisnava Mantra."

The Tattva-Sagara states:

"Just as bell metal and mercury when combined in an alchemical process can produce gold, so when a disciple is properly initiated by a bona fide Spiritual Master, he develops the qualities of the twice born."

The Mundaka Upanishad (1.2.12) states:

"To learn the science of transcendental devotional service to the Supreme Lord a person should approach, with folded hands, a self realized Spiritual Master who is expert in Vedic literatures and fixed in devotional service directly to the Lord."

WHO IS QUALIFIED AND WHO IS UNQUALIFIED TO BE A DISCIPLE

A candidate who says he knows Vedic philosophy, but who has no common sense, who is a thief, who glorifies himself, who cannot tolerate another's good qualities, who wants to harm others, and who is always angry is not qualified to become a disciple. On the other hand one who chants Japa for the Supreme Lord, who is always enthusiastic and charming, who always tries to follow the orders of his superiors, who feels pleasure in studying the devotional scriptures and avoids other books---such a good person is qualified to be a disciple.

The Kularnava-Rahasya 17 states:

"Anyone who offers his body, money, and obeisances to a genuine Spiritual Master, and thus learns the transcendental process of spiritual life is called a disciple."

THE BASICS OF INITIATION

After finding a perfect Spiritual Master one should surrender to him fully, keeping no reservations.

As the Visnu-Yamala says:

"Therefore, after properly paying obeisances to the Spiritual Master and offering him everything one has, one should accept Mantra initiation according to Vaisnava tradition from him."

Srila-Sanatana Goswami writes in his Digdarsini Commentary, "When the Spiritual Master has seen over several months that a candidate has developed the proper attitude he initiates him onto the spiritual path. A disciple, after bathing and dressing in clean clothes according to his Asrama, should take Acamana and properly and fully apply the Tilaka marks according to his specific Vaisnava tradition. He should put on neck beads and a garland. Next, after performing Mudras (hand gestures) with devotion to Lord Krsna, he should again take Acamana. He should then pay his prostrate obeisances to his Spiritual Master and chant prayers to him before receiving initiation. This initiation frees the disciple from his past karma and opens his transcendental vision. From that time on, the disciple perceives the Supreme Lord Krsna through the eyes of his Spiritual Master. The disciple worships the Spiritual Master with donations and by singing his glories with musical instruments." (Digdarsini, 2.127)

This giving of donations and glorifying the Spiritual Master at the time of the initiations is only the beginning. The disciple, throughout his life, should continue to glorify his Spiritual Master and dedicate everything in his service.

ATTITUDE OF A DISCIPLE

An initiated devotee is a representative of his Guru. A disciple should always glorify his perfect Spiritual Master, but should be very careful where and how he speaks about him. Because whatever criticisms come to him due to his shortcomings, ultimately go to the Guru.

One should always be careful not to become overly familiar with his Spiritual Master. Familiarity breeds contempt. To help his disciples and followers develop and maintain respect towards him, the Spiritual Master accepts a respected position. The disciples should respectfully address him when speaking to him or about him. Even the relatively small offense of reciting the Guru's name with an improper attitude can easily lead one to commit serious Guru Aparadhas (offenses against Guru), and destroy his devotional creeper.

After accepting a bona-fide Spiritual Master one should follow his instructions without any alteration. One should never give up following a pure Spiritual Master, disrespect him in any way or think of him as an ordinary person. As it is stated in the Padma Purana, "Anyone who thinks the perfect Spiritual Master is an ordinary person has a hellish mentality."

By serving the pure Spiritual Master the disciple becomes free from sin, increases his merits, and achieves success in all activities. While chanting Japa he should remember his Guru's name. The disciple should not sit on the same seat as the Guru or as high as him. In his every activity, the disciple should remember the orders of his Spiritual Master.

For the uninitiated devotee, becoming free from illusion means that he can determine who is a bonafide Guru and who is not. For him, becoming free from false ego means to understand his insignificant position in relation to a bona fide Guru and thereby becoming humble and submissive. He must develop these qualities before accepting spiritual initiation. By being initiated and continuing to perform devotional service under the guidance of his bonafide Guru, he gradually becomes one hundred percent free from even subtle forms of illusion and false ego and goes back to Godhead. It is important to understand that by serving a bonafide Spiritual Master the serious devotee attains realized knowledge, like a person digging the ground to obtain water.

A disciple should submissively learn transcendental knowledge from such a pure Spiritual Master with a proper service attitude. One who tries to learn transcendental knowledge without a perfect Spiritual Master is actually doing himself a disservice because he is breaking Vedic law.

The devotee should never feel intimidated, nervous, humiliated or uncomfortable when approaching his Spiritual Master. The devotee should always feel free to humbly approach his Spiritual Master to remove his doubts. The real Spiritual Master is always easily approachable by any sincere seeker.

Thus ends the third chapter of the
GURU NIRNAYA DIPIKA
Hari Om Tat Sat

GURU NIRNAYA DIPIKA
Chapter Four

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(These questions and answers were taken from letters and a discussion between guests and followers of Bhagavat Dharma Samaj, and His Divine Grace Mahant Sri Krsna Balaram Swami Maharaj on the grounds of The University of Maryland, Baltimore County, USA, in May of 1993).

Guest--I do not quite understand what is a Guru; can you please speak a little on the subject?

Swamiji--A Guru is a perfect devotee of God who helps opens the spiritual vision of a conditioned soul by rewarding transcendental knowledge selflessly. He must be in an unbroken chain of succession descending from God, and an expert in the knowledge and etiquettes of Vedic civilization.

Guest--What are the symptoms of a real Guru and how should one surrender unto him if he is found?

Swamiji-- (quotes a Sanskrit verse) "A personality who is filled with vast knowledge of scriptures and vividly able to explain about the cause of the living entity's entanglement into this material world, and the way to get out of it, is accepted as the Spiritual Master, but not a person who shows only his cleverness, manipulation and external features." Also Srimad Bhagavatam says, "Whatever one has or achieves in this life should be offered unto his/her qualified and authentic Spiritual Master to receive his blessings." Although a qualified Spiritual Master is not interested to receive anything in exchange for teaching or initiating his disciples, still the duty of a real disciple is to offer everything he or she has. This is the Vedic injunction.

Student--All teachers say that what they speak is correct and is the exact Vedic standard, so how do we know that what you speak is the correct Vedic standard?

Swamiji--On the spiritual platform whatever we read, listen to or speak should be confirmed by Guru, Sadhu and Sastra. This means the original Spiritual Master, the original saints and the original Vedic literatures must fully coincide with the statements made. The original Spiritual Master is Lord Krsna who agreed that the Brahmana should be the Guru for all the social and spiritual orders on earth. And all the original teachers state in their commentaries on the Vedic scriptures that only a qualified Brahmana born devotee can function as the Spiritual Master of the whole world. We follow the Lord and the previous great teachers without adding or subtracting anything.

Spiritual life is for everyone. But to guide one on the spiritual path one must find a perfect Spiritual Master in the chain of disciplic succession and serve God through him. As Lord Krsna says, *evam parampara praptam*, one Gurü can guide many people to the spiritual world if properly followed. This is God's direction to keep people from being misled by imposters. Lord Krsna also says in the Chapter Four of the Gita, "To receive this knowledge one should approach a qualified Spiritual Master with sublime inquiries and render service unto him. Such self realized souls will impart knowledge unto you because they know the truth perfectly."

Take to spiritual life rightly before it becomes too late.

Guest--How can I identify a real Guru from an imposter?

Swamiji--You can know who is Guru and who is not by seeing if he has the following scriptural qualifications, the proper traditional birth succession, sound knowledge of Vedic scriptures, initiation in the traditional succession, and full dedication to the Lord.

Guest--I have read your Guru's books where this succession of birth is criticized. I personally think that this high birth was written into the scriptures to keep others from taking the upper classes respected positions in society. Can you please explain this?

Swamiji--By being born in a Brahmana family and being spiritually trained to the scriptural standard identifies the past spiritual life of a person. As Lord Krsna says in the Sixth Chapter of the Srimad Bhagavad-Gita, a spiritualist who did not finish his spiritual training in that life, takes his next birth in a qualified Brahmana's family where he learns all the spiritual rules and etiquettes properly. It is understood in Vedic civilization that

children born in the house of such an Acharya are also addressed as Gurüs from their birth. It is the duty of all parents to teach their children how to be liberated from this world. Parents without the exact knowledge to guide their children to liberation must at least guide them to the correct spiritual authorities. But those born in the learned Brahmana house are very fortunate as they are born into the Gurü-disciple environment. You say you have read my Guru's books. My Guru only wrote the First Canto of the Srimad Bhagavatam, which he brought from India.

Our Spiritual Master recorded the information for his books on the Dictaphone, not on paper. I suggest you listen to his dictated tapes on the Srimad Bhagavatam and Chaitanya Charitamrta. These books were printed very quickly without referring back with our Guru to relay the proper message. English was his second language, and to understand his exact meaning one would have to refer back with him. The message given in these books is altered because of this lack of communication between the author and the editors.

The law of Kali Yuga makes the poor envious of the rich, the sick envious of the healthy, and the ignorant envious of the learned.

Devotee--There are many examples in the Teachings of Lord Chaitanya that many non-Brahmana born devotees initiated disciples. What about them?

Swamiji--There are not many, but very few, and they were all the Lord's eternal associates. Anyone who accompanies the Lord in his pastimes is foretold in the Gaura-Ganoddesa-Dipika. As Srila Narottama dasa Thakura sings, "It is evident that Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's associates were all eternally liberated souls." Who is such a quality devotee now? If we claim to be Vaisnavas, how is it that we must fight for something that the scriptures state is unauthorized?

Devotee--What about Lord Sri Chaitanya's statement to Ramananda Roy:

Quotes a Bengali verse from the Chaitanya Charitamrta Madhya Lila 8.128, "Whether one is a Brahmana, a Sanyasi, or a Sudra-- regardless of what he is he can become a Guru if he knows the science of Krsna."

Swamiji--This quote is written in Bengali language. Sanskrit is the timeless, changeless, language of God. Nowhere in Sanskrit literatures is such a statement written pertaining to the initiating Guru. Knowing this, how can one think this statement refers to the initiating Guru and not the instructing Guru? In Bengali, every category of teacher is called Guru. Here Krsna Dasa Kaviraja Goswami is referring to a teacher and not an initiating Guru. Ramananda Roy is not initiating Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, but he is teaching the Lord by His order. Even though Ramananda Roy was Arjuna, still he did not initiate anyone. In the same literature prior to the verse that you are referring to, Lord Chaitanya ordered Kurma Brahmana to initiate everyone. (quotes a verse from Sri Chaitanya Charitamrta Madhya Lila 7.128) "By My order be a Spiritual Master and initiate whomever you meet in Krsna consciousness, and liberate the people of this land." The words used here in these Bengali verses, "tattva-vetta" and "krsna-upadesa", are Sanskrit words that are very significant. Using the help of a Sanskrit dictionary we can

see grammatically that "tattva-vetta" means one who speaks the essence of Krsna consciousness or one who knows the science of Krsna in truth, and "krsna-upadesa" means giving Krsna Mantra initiation or to initiate in Krsna consciousness. There is a difference between suggesting something and giving an order. Lord Chaitanya made a statement to Ramananda Roy, whereas He ordered Kürma Brahmana to initiate. The translations and purports of my Guru Maharaja were dictated on a Dictaphone, unless the tapes are produced, we must believe that the purports have been altered making it look as if anyone can become Guru. My Guru did not want to start an upa-sampradaya or a cult, but wanted to continue the age-old spiritual tradition that dates back to Lord Krsna, unchanged.

Lord Chaitanya instructed Srila Rupa Goswami, His direct disciple to write books on devotional service. Krsna Dasa Kaviraja Goswami the great grand-disciple of Lord Chaitanya also wrote books on devotional service. How could Krsna Dasa Kaviraja Goswami have meant that the statement "Whether one is a Brahmana, a Sanyasi, or a Sudra-- regardless of what he is he can become a Guru if he knows the science of Krsna", refers to the Diksa Guru when Srila Rupa Goswami, under the direct guidance of Lord Chaitanya wrote in his Bhakti-Rasamrta- Sindhu (Nectar of Devotion): (quotes a Sanskrit verse from the Bhakti Rasamrta Sindhu 1.1.22) "The only reason to remain unauthorized to initiate, install deities, or perform any sacrifices is a devotee's taking a low birth. This low birth is the symptom of his past acquired sinful deeds."

Letter--Swamiji, you always quote scriptures, therefore you know of the verse, "janmana jayate sudra samskarad bhaved dvijah veda-pathi bhaved vipra brahman janati iti brahmanah, this means that everyone is a sudra by birth, only by purificatory processes one becomes twice born, and when he progresses further by studying the Vedas he becomes Vipra. Then ultimately one who understands Brahman is called a Brahmana." How can you deny this?

Swamiji--Your translation of the Sanskrit verse is incorrect, nowhere in this verse does it state that everyone is born a Sudra. The correct translation is when a Brahmana is born; he is equal to a Sudra. When he accepts the sacred thread ceremony he is called Dvija, or twice born. I am not one of those ignorant people who believe what you say; I am a Sanskrit scholar who cannot be fooled by your incorrect Sanskrit translation. This verse is found in the Sarva-Bhauma- Dharma, a book of codes on how to act piously in the world. If you read it completely you would understand that this verse indeed refers to the Brahmana boy, not just anyone. Even now only the Brahmana is authorized to study the Vedas, so even if a Sudra performed a Brahmana's duty of studying the Vedas, he would be breaking God's law. If you break the law you do not get rewarded, you are punished. For example, there is a history in the Bhavisya-Uttara-Purana that in Satyayuga under the rule of King Mandhata a Sudra performed Tapasya, Angira Rishi advised the king to kill him, but he did not, the punishment was that not a single drop of rain fell in the kingdom for three years. In the Valmiki-Ramayana it is stated that in Tretayuga a Sudra performed Tapasya under the rule of Lord Rama and no rain fell until Lord Rama found and killed the Sudra. In no ancient scripture is it stated that other than for spiritual initiation, any other Samskara (purificatory ceremony) is performed for a Sudra. A Sudra can become a devotee and be respected as a Brahmana, but cannot become a Brahmana. Why are you

helping to destroy the age old Sanatana Dharma? Samskaras are only for the upper classes, not for the Sudra.

Letter--It is written in Srila Prabhupada's books that anyone can become Guru; therefore you are speaking against your own Guru.

Swamiji--No real Acharya ever conflicts with the established rules of spiritual tradition. My Guru Maharaja did not contradict the previous teachers. This is his culture, how could he differ with all the previous great authorities? The proof of my Guru's true message lies in the tapes he dictated his books on. Find these tapes and you will find that my Guru did not deviate from the previous Acharayas. I have tried to get these tapes, they are either being hidden, or they must have been destroyed. What rules we see in Srila Prabhupada's books are the desire of those who wanted to become Guru after his departure. We are faithfully trying to serve our Gurudeva, but we want to let people know who has distorted the principles of Sanatana Dharma and my Spiritual Master.

Devotee--I think because you are born in a Brahmana family you think that no one else should initiate.

Swamiji--It is not that I am born in a Brahmana family and you are born in a family of a different caste that the scriptural laws should be compromised, this would be unjust. Even in the Vedic schools of civilization the Brahmanas were appointed to teach. For example, teachers of the Vedic military arts were Parasuram, Dronacharya and Kripacharya who were all Brahmana. The teachers Gargamuni and Sandipani Muni were also Brahmana. If ordinary Vedic teachings (military arts) were done by Brahmana, how can you think that a Brahmana would not do spiritual teaching? Please do not be envious of me teaching the real Vedic standard, I am not manufacturing these laws, but the scriptures dictate this. Try to follow the real thing and get real results. A non-Brahmana devotee, if he seriously follows the spiritual path, can become a pure devotee, but as per Vedic rules he cannot initiate in any circumstance.

Guest--It looks to me that you are caste conscious?

Swamiji--No I am not caste conscious. Vedic civilization does not permit this. Previously every social order, the Brahmanas, Ksatriyas, Vaisyas, and the Sudras performed their prescribed duties and did not become envious of one another. I am neither promoting caste consciousness, nor do I claim to be superior to the other orders. I am simply following the Vedic standard. Your question is like asking a person to eat, and when he starts eating through his mouth you say, "Oh! You are mouth conscious." There is no question of caste consciousness because we are propagating the exact Vedic standard as it has been followed since time immemorial. We follow the Vedic scriptures and the previous great teachers. If you believe they are right, you must follow their teachings also.

Letter--What about you taking initiation from your Guru who was not Brahmana born? Why have you not taken initiation from a Brahmana born Guru? I know you have no answer for this.

Swamiji--You say I have no answer for this, but the previous Acharyas do. Our Guru Maharaja appeared in the chain of the Brahma-kayastha family in the Dalabhya dynasty. I know this after learning of his father's last name and Gotra. In Vedic civilization the Brahma-kayastha caste is equal to Brahmana in every way. There is a great history at the time of Lord Parasuram clarifying this point.

The wife of King Chandrasena was impregnated by the Brahmana, Dalabhya Muni. She latter came to visit Dalabhya Muni at his Ashrama. At the same time, Lord Parasuram arrived at the ashram on his mission to rid the world of all Ksatriyas. In fear of his son's life, Dalabhya Muni requested Parasuram not to kill the unborn child, although conceived in the womb of a Ksatriya woman. Dalabhya Muni also requested Parasuram not to give bad intelligence to his child. Lord Parasuram agreed, but stated the child is forbidden to act as a Ksatriya. Such children will always have the Dalabhya Gotra (blood dynasty) and will always perform purifying fire sacrifices and worship Lord Hari. Another history found in the same literature, the Adya Padya Vyaksa 36, states that Chitragupta, a Brahma-kayastha was married to a Brahma-kayastha girl. She was the child of the Brahmana, Dhrama Sharma, and a Ksatriya woman. Chitragupta had eight sons born through her; latter Mandavya Muni cursed four of them to engage in eating meat and drinking wine. From this history the Kayastha dynasty is divided into two, the Brahma-kayastha, and the Sudra-kayastha.

It is written in the Padma Purana that when Dharmaraja (Yamaraja) was appointed to his position in Yamaloka he was given a secretary named Chitragupta. It was questioned what caste Chitragupta belonged to, there it is stated: "Because he sees through the eyes of everyone he is named Chitragupta, and belonging to the Brahma-kayastha caste he is equal to the Brahmana." Furthermore the Padma Purana states that Chitragupta produced eight sons, four acted as Brahma-kayasthas, and four acted as Sudra-kayasthas. It is found in the Bhavisya Purana, "Chitragupta is accepted equal to a Brahmana."

The history of Srila Vyasadeva's birth from the high quality Brahmana, Parasara Muni, and a boatman's daughter is written in the Mahabharat. Parasara Muni, wanting to cross a river came upon a boatman's daughter named Satyavati. She agreed to take him across the river, but while crossing Parasara Muni got attracted to the woman. She resisted saying you come from a high birth and I am Sudra born, this will not work. Parasara Muni told the woman not to worry, as a child coming from a high class Brahmana man will be a high class Brahma-kayastha. They agreed and Vyasadeva was conceived on the boat. Parasara Muni's statement to the woman assuring her that the child will be of high birth can be likened to a mango tree. Wherever the mango seed is planted, only a mango tree will grow.

Srila Suta Goswami was born from the sacrificial arena, but some say that Suta Goswami was born in the mixed order i.e. from a Brahmana father and a Ksatriya mother. The learned sage Romaharsana Suta was also born from a Brahmana father and a Ksatriya mother. When Lord Balaram killed Romaharsana Suta, He performed the Brahma-hatya atonement, or the process of atonement for killing a Brahmana. The history is explained in the Tenth Canto of Srimad Bhagavatam. Also the Yajnavalkya-Smriti says, "The

word Suta refers to the order who expertly knows and speaks the ancient scriptures. These quality Sutas were given a special caste by the ancient sages naming them the Kayastha Dynasty, which is prevalent in India today. They are considered to be equal to the Brahmana and qualified to perform purificatory ceremonies. Here the previous Acharya's prove my Guru Maharaja is qualified to be Guru and an eternally perfect devotee.

No one but a Brahmana born person, or one sanctioned by God and the previous authorities can act as the initiating Spiritual Master of all the social and spiritual orders. One cannot claim to be a Vaisnava if he or she rejects any part of Vedic instruction. When the bonafide biography of Srila Prabhupada is written, he will be proven to be an Acharya through the eyes of the scriptures. To present an Acharya to be an ordinary devotee is very offensive.

Letter--A son born in the Brahmana family is not a Brahmana, just as a son of a doctor is not called a doctor unless he has been trained. If anyone studies and gets his degree, he becomes a doctor. How is it that a faithful follower on the spiritual path who is scripturally learned cannot become a Guru?

Swamiji--Actually the son of a Brahmana has to have the qualifications of scriptural knowledge and etiquettes to become Guru. Others can become good quality devotees and achieve liberation, but cannot become Gurus.

There is the example of a Brahmana named Birabal and the emperor Akbar of India. Upon seeing all the honor the Brahmana was given by all, the emperor asked, "Birabal! I want to become a Hindu." Birabal replied, "I am sorry it is not possible for you to become a Hindu, you are not sincere." Akbar then asked, "Why is it not possible?" Birabal replied, "I shall answer you tomorrow." The next morning Birabal took a donkey, many new towels, soaps, oils and perfumes to the holy river Yamuna to change the donkey into a bull by giving him a nice bath. He and the donkey entered the Yamuna River where he began giving the donkey a bath. Half the day had passed and Birabal did not return to the assembly. Akbar sent some messengers to find the whereabouts of Birabal. They found him inside the river bathing a donkey. The messengers told Birabal the Emperor requested his company. Birabal replied, "Please tell the Emperor I am busy with my mission. Until I finish, I shall not move." The messengers relayed the news to the Emperor. The Emperor then proceeded to the Yamuna river where he found Birabal and asked of the importance of his mission and why he failed to accompany him in the assembly. Birabal replied, "I am attempting to change this donkey into a bull. I have spent so much time, used many soaps, oils, and perfumes, but still no signs of this donkey changing into a bull." Hearing this, Akbar replied, "You fool! How can a donkey turn into a bull, it is not possible?" Upon hearing this Birabal said, "Sir, if this donkey cannot be turned into a bull, how can you expect to become a Hindu?" Akbar was satisfied and agreed with Birabal of not becoming a Hindu and together left to the palace .

The idea is everyone can participate in serving the Lord, and become pure, but to become Guru one has to follow the scriptural standard that only the sincere Brahmana can become Guru.

Devotee--I am already initiated by a non-Brahmana born Guru, what is my position?

Swamiji--According to one's fortune a Spiritual Master is received by a seeker. If one is fortunate he or she will wait for a perfect master to come to initiate. If some one cannot become Guru, then where is the question of your being initiated?

Devotee--Srla Prabhupada wrote in a letter authorizing some of his disciples to initiate disciples and also spoke about this in some of his lectures.

Swamiji--Srla Prabhupada wrote a letter to Hansaduta on December 12th 1968 saying that everyone should read his books, they are not only meant for outsiders. He encouraged his disciples just as a father does by saying, eat your vegetables and you will become big and strong like me. He was simply motivating his disciples by telling them they could have titles like `Bhaktivedanta' and allowing them to initiate disciples by 1975. Such titles must come from your superiors, but none of this happened. Srla Prabhupada did only what the scriptures allow him to do. He may have said many things to motivate his disciples to fulfill his mission to spread Lord Krsna's name to every town and village, but he did only what was authorized by the scriptures. Nowhere will we find any written or verifiable proof that Srla Prabhupada gave any highly respected titles or made anyone a Guru within his lifetime. Why didn't Srla Prabhupada give any respectable titles like `Bhaktivedanta', or make any Gurus in 1975 as he said he would? The truth is none of the leading people were scripturally authorized to accept any of these positions.

Devotee--Some say that you are just a Hindu preacher.

Swamiji--If they call me a Hindu, that it is a complement as it is another name of Sanatana Dharma. This Santana Dharma was named as the Hindu religion by the Persians when they invaded India. At least I am speaking the exact Vedic system without changing anything. I should be encouraged to continue. If the Vedic system of Sanatana Dharma is led by a converted devotee then chaos will arise in due course. Lord Krsna says, "It is BETTER TO DISCHARGE ONE'S PRESCRIBED DUTY IMPERFECTLY THAN TO PREFORM ANOTHER'S DUTY PERFECTLY."

Devotee--Why did you take Sanyasa from a western Guru?

Swamiji-- (Swamiji laughs) No, I only made it look as if I took Sanyasa from a western Guru. They may have been present, but I took Sanyasa initiation from my Guru at his Samadhi (tomb) in Vrindaban. Many of the great Vrajavasi devotees were present. Thank you. Jai Sri Radhe.

Thus ends the fourth chapter of the
GURU NIRNAYA DIPIKA.
Hari Om Tat Sat

References

We are following the same path as the famous devotee Srila Rupa Goswami. We understand his referencing the Brahma Yamala, that any statement or action that is not sanctioned by the age-old scriptures is a disturbance to society. Even according to the logic given in the Vedanta Sutra, "Sastrayonitvat, every act must be sanctioned by the ancient scriptures, " helps to illustrate the importance of following the scriptures word for word. We have similarly quoted the scriptures and Vedic authorities to establish the age-old scriptural Guru system. Due to Internet system the Sanskrit verses have been removed, if readers are interested to read the complete book with Sanskrit verses can write the Author for a copy of the book.

We are given this human birth mainly to obtain liberation. It is because Indian philosophy is the oldest and the purest it shows the path to liberation very clearly, but it must be learned after accepting and following a qualified Spiritual Master. The Guru must be born in the pure dynasty, perfectly learned in the scriptures, and must be in an unbroken chain of disciplic succession. Indian religion must be learned from an Indian. If any Indian breaks this law of spiritual life and accepts some other person for a Guru, and worships him, he is certainly hurting his nation, religion, and going against the age-old Vedic scriptural laws. Therefore a sincere seeker must very carefully practice his religious duties in this age of Kali.]

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