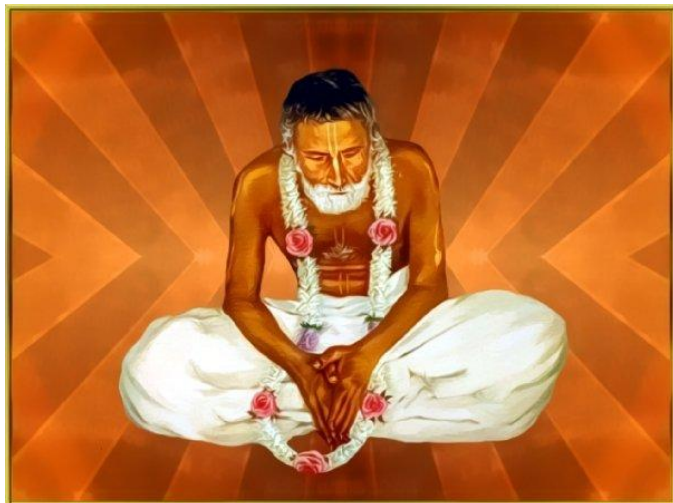


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1. SRILA GAUR KISHOR DAS BABAJI MAHARAJA



namo gaura-kisoraya saksad vairagya-murtaye
vipralambha-rasambhode padambujaya te namah

Srila Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja is our param Gurudeva. Srila Prabhupada's spiritual master is Srila Bhaktisidhanta Saraswati Thakur and Srila Bhaktisidhanta Saraswati Thakur's spiritual master is Srila Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja. Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja has been described in his pranam mantra saksad vairagya murtaye, renunciation, detachment. His renunciation was beyond anyone's imagination. He did not have any place to stay and never had any possessions whatsoever. Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja used to live in Navadvip, prior to that he was in Vrindavan. He came to live in Navadvip to live near the place of Caitanya Mahaprabhu's pastimes and he used to spend his time on the bank of the Ganges. He used to roam around like a madman and usually he would just lie down on the bank of the Ganges and take rest at night. Only when it used to rain Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja used to go under half-turned boats on the Ganges river. In the monsoon time when it rains the boats are turned upside down, they tilted so that the rain does not accumulate on the boat so Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja just used to go under the boat and protect himself from the rains.

He didn't have any possessions; he didn't even have a japa mala to chant. He used to take a piece of cloth and make knots in that

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cloth and that's how he used to count and that was his japa mala. For cloth also what he used to wear? On the bank of the Ganges people used to bring dead bodies to cremate and generally before they cremate the body, they bath the body in the Ganges and throw away the old cloth and put on a new cloth then put the body on a funeral pyre. The discarded cloth from the dead body Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja whenever he needed some cloth used to pick it up and use that. He never used to cook himself whatever he got he used to just eat. He was the personification and embodiment of renunciation. Completely renounced. Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja was born in East Bengal which is now Bangladesh in the district of Orissa. He was a grain merchant in his household life, he was not very educated.

Apparently he was an illiterate person but it is quite noticeable that Srila Bhaktisidhanta Sarasvati Thakur who was the greatest scholar of his time took initiation from Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja who was apparently illiterate. Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja did not give initiation to anyone, the only disciple he had was Srila Bhaktisidhanta Sarasvati Thakur.

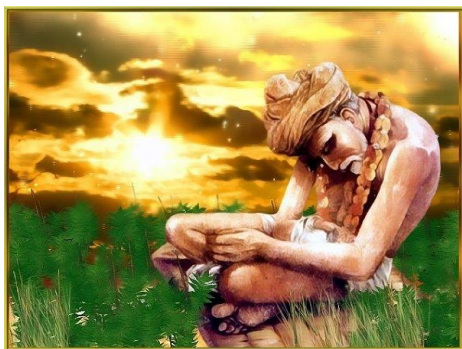
Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja was in his household life in his early days as a grain merchant and he was married but when his wife left her body, Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja left home and considered that Krishna very mercifully has taken away his attachment. When his wife died, he left home and travelled to Vrindavan and he used to live in Vrindavan but then becoming attracted to Caitanya Mahaprabhu's pastimes moved to Navadwip. Most of the residents in Vrindavan in those days were from Gaur mandala bhumi, Bengal. Mahaprabhu's followers became very attracted to Vrindavan especially when the Goswamis from Vrindavan went there. The first ones to go there were Lokanath Goswami and Bhugarbha Goswami went there even before Caitanya Mahaprabhu took sanyas, about 7 or 8 years before he took sanyas. Mahaprabhu went to Bangladesh, East Bengal and there he met Lokanath Goswami and Bhugarbha Goswami and they enquired from Caitanya Mahaprabhu what is human life meant for what is the purpose of human life. Obviously not just eating, sleeping, mating and defending, human life must have a higher cause, so what is that goal? Then Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu instructed them about Krishna Consciousness.

They were the first ones to go then many others followed. Vrindavan was a forest and became the place of pilgrimage and many people started to go there. Vrindavan in those days are not the way it appears today. It's a big town with a lot of trading going on because of ISKCON, Vrindavan has become a big marketplace but those days it was just a forest. Those who became attracted to Caitanya Mahaprabhu they used to go to Vrindavan.

Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja went to Vrindavan, he stayed there for quite some time then he came to Navadwip to live there. At that time Bhaktivinod Thakur used to live there and Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja became very close to Bhaktivinod Thakur. These were 2 very different personalities. Bhaktivinod Thakur was a very big government officer, deputy Magistrate in the British Government very learned and scholarly and powerful and influential personality and Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja was just a simple devotee, babaji in renounced order but they became very close friends and the basis of their friendship actually was Krishna Consciousness, Krishna Bhakti. Bhaktivinod Thakur recognized Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja as a great devotee and Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja also recognized Bhaktivinod Thakur as a great devotee so they naturally became attracted to each other.

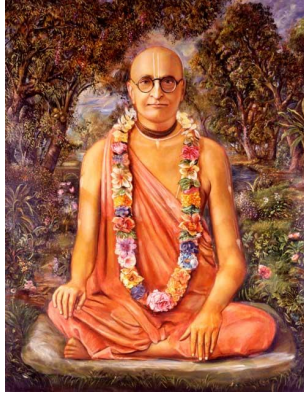


Another personality who also became very attracted to Bhaktivinod Thakur at the time was Srila Jaganath das babaji Maharaja another babaji, another renunciate who also lived in Vrindavan for many years and he was quite old and gave to Navadwip to be near the places of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's pastimes. Bhaktivinod Thakur became very attached to Jaganath das babaji Maharaja, he received lots of instructions from him therefore we consider that Jaganath das babaji Maharaja is the spiritual master of Bhaktivinod Thakur. Bhaktivinod Thakur did not take initiation from Jaganath das babaji Maharaja but is his siksa guru. Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja took siksa from Bhaktivinod Thakur, therefore our line is Bhaktivinod Thakur is Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja's spiritual master but this link is not through initiation its through siksa.



When Srila Bhaktisidhanta Sarasvati Thakur wanted to take initiation Bhaktivinod Thakur advised him to take initiation from Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja. Srila Bhaktisidhanta Sarasvati Thakur went to Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja who was like an avadhuta no external consciousness. When Srila Bhaktisidhanta Sarasvati Thakur approached Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja for initiation, he laughed and said, "Giving initiation to you, a big scholar and I am an illiterate fool, how can I give you initiation, you must be joking." But Bhaktisidhanta Sarasvati Thakur insisted you have to give me initiation, I am surrendering myself to you please deliver me. Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja being insisted upon said "okay fine, give me some time, I will ask Krishna, let's see what He says" After a few days Bhaktisidhanta Sarasvati Thakur came and asked him about initiation and Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja said he forgot to ask Krishna. In this way he kept procrastinating and Bhaktisidhanta Sarasvati Thakur just told him, "Please save me, you are the follower of the biggest deceiver, Krishna, please do not deceive me but bless me by offering me Krishna Consciousness." Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja still refused to give initiation. Bhaktisidhanta Sarasvati Thakur told him that he will give up his body what is the use of living if you cannot get Krishna Consciousness. Finally Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja gave him initiation and Srila Bhaktisidhanta Sarasvati Thakur was the only disciple of Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja. There was also another great Vaishnava Vamsi das babaji Maharaja, some say he was also initiated by Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja but there is no evidence of this. He came close to Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja but he was not a disciple. Gaur

Kishor Babaji Maharaja did not want to give initiation to anyone only person who forced him was Bhaktisidhanta Sarasvati Thakur. Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja was very straight forward.



Once a big King came and invited Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja to come to his palace. Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja said, "We have a nice relationship why spoil it because if I come to your house I will also want opulence and our relationship will be ruined." The King was insisting he wanted his mercy. Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja told him if you want my mercy come stay here with me and both of us will stay together and chant the Holy Name. the King could not accept this offer and left.

Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja when he became old some people forced him to stay in a Dharamsala because he could not see, he became blind. Some well wishers insisted but when he was staying there many people wanted his association and mercy, finally Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja decided to move into the toilet so people would not come and disturb him. The toilets those days were not like today, just a make shift structure and no sanitation and he was saying there. Later on he was saying in Bhaktivinod Thakur's house, in one corner, a small little hut, he stayed there just to be near Bhaktivinod Thakur, that place is still there and a temple is built there.

In Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja's previous ashrama he was Vamsi das and he was a grain merchant, left home after his wife died and went Vrindavan, he accepted renunciation order from Jaganath das babaji Maharaja's disciple, Bhagavat das babaji Maharaja, he used to spend his time by Madhukar and sleep under the trees. He lived in Vrindavan for 30 years and by being instructed by Radha Krishna he came to Navadwip. He started to live in Navadwip considering Navadwip as non-different from Vrindavan. He used to spend his time on the bank of the Ganges mostly chanting and dancing like a madman and sometime he used to just faint in ecstasy. Sometimes he used to wear a kaupin and sometimes he did not wear anything no concern for the body. He used to go to Godrume to Bhaktivinod Thakur's house and listen to Srimad Bhagavatam from Bhaktisidhanta Sarasvati Thakur.

There's a nice anecdote, once Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja decided to celebrate Sanatana's Goswami's disappearance day and they said we need to collect funds and Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja said no for beggars like us to celebrate is to fast and chant the Holy Name.

This is a very wonderful instruction, once a well-known gentleman Narendra Kumar Shen came to Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja asked him about the siddha pranali, siddha pranali is the way to achieve perfection in Krishna Consciousness. Some people think that there is some siddha pranali one receives from the Guru the siddha pranali of one's spiritual identity and relationship with Krishna and so forth, in Vrindavan it is quite prevalent. The Guru says you are such and such manjari, associate, your age is 14 years, colour of your sari is purple and this is your seva. Prabhupada was very critical about that.

Bhaktisidhanta Sarasvati Thakur went to Vrindavan to smash these so called babajis who practice called siddha pranali. The self-realized spiritual master can give the spiritual identity of the disciple when he is considerably advanced and becomes free from all material attachments but not for neophytes. They can't even follow the 4 regulative principles, they smoke biri and ganja and the Guru says you are such and such associate of Srimati Radharani, this is all nonsense. This person came to Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja and asked him about siddha pranali and Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja said, "The Supreme Personality of Godhead cannot be perceived by imagination." They imagine I am such and such manjari. It happened with ISKCON devotees, once in Vrindavan somebody found his roommate moving in a very strange way so he asked him what happened to you, he said he is practicing peacock movements because some babaji told him his spiritual identity is a peacock. This is what goes on they imagine. Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja pointed out straight away that the Supreme Personality of Godhead cannot be perceived by imagination but through the pure chanting of the Holy Name of the Lord the Supreme Personality of Godhead will become present through the sound vibration that is the real siddha. At the time the practitioner also recognizes his spiritual identity. When one sees the Supreme Personality of Godhead then he can see his spiritual identity. An example in that respect when the sun comes up then with the light of the sun we see ourselves similarly, when we develop our Krishna Consciousness then in the light of our Krishna Consciousness we see Krishna and ourselves in our relationship with Krishna, that's the real siddhi.

Srila Prabhupada had a godbrother Srila Krishna das babaji Maharaja, a very exceptional personality, a great devotee, Prabhupada was very fond of him, they were very close to each other. One day babaji Maharaja was asking him about siddha pranali and he said yes our siddha pranali is:

trnad api sunicena
taror api sahisnuna
amanina manadena
kirtaniyah sada harih

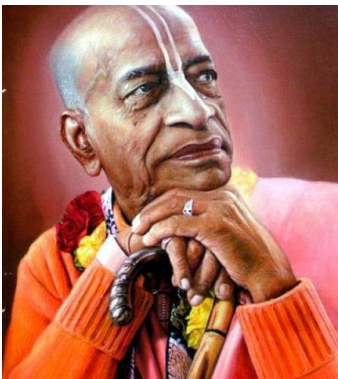
the process to achieve spiritual perfection. When you become more humble than a blade of grass and more tolerant than a tree desiring no respect for ourselves but offering all respect to other.

Once a Bengali gentleman came he was actually Prabhupada's disciple. He came to Srila Prabhupada at some point he asked Prabhupada what is my siddha Swarup, my spiritual identity and Srila Prabhupada became so furious, he said, Your rascal, your spiritual identity, he was saying it in Bengali again and again. When Prabhupada used to chastise the whole room would shake what to speak of the person who was getting the blasting from Srila Prabhupada. The finally Prabhupada told him don't worry about your siddha swarup, when you become qualified, I will personally come and reveal your siddha swarup, your spiritual identity first you become qualified. That was Prabhupada's solution. Prabhupada had such sensitivity I noticed, in Vrindavan the babjis many devotees are simple hearted they say what Prabhupada gave is not the real thing, they say the real thing and people get misled and they leave, it happens even now many people get misdirected by these unscrupulous people and they leave. We have to recognize that Srila Prabhupada gave us the perfect process for achieving our spiritual perfection. Not only did Srila Prabhupada give the perfect process but Srila Prabhupada created the perfect atmosphere to reach our spiritual goal, there is no need to go out of ISKCON for anything, everything can be achieved and everything will be achieved in this movement if one remains in ISKCON and sincerely practices the process of Krishna Consciousness according to Srila Prabhupada's instructions. When one leaves ISKCON what happens? One ends up falling down, first we have to become qualified. Qualification is, the first consideration is following the 4 regulative principles no meat eating, no intoxication, no illicit sex, no gambling. For a practitioner most difficult is to control

sex desire, when one is alone he is so vulnerable to fall down but when one is in association of devotees he is protected. Yes in Krishna consciousness there are 4 ashrams. Prabhupada said in ISKCON everyone is a brahmacari not only brahmacari is brahmacari even householders are brahmacari and association only for procreation. If you not in association of devotees it becomes very difficult, the Kali-yuga atmosphere is so contaminated. Prabhupada has given everything, the perfect situation. If someone thinks he has to go elsewhere because Prabhupada didn't give everything, he is simply living in a fool's paradise and eventually he will lose his spiritual life. We have seen that time and time and time again. We can also recognize that what Srila Prabhupada is, is actually a continuation of Caitanya Mahaprabhu's plan. Mahaprabhu has his plan how to inundate the whole world with Krishna Consciousness. We can after Mahaprabhu's disappearance His teachings got lost and His Holy Dham got lost then Bhaktivinod Thakur came and revived the teachings of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Bhaktivinod Thakur is the starting point of the revival of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's movement now the question may arise why was His teachings lost? Mahaprabhu allowed it to be like that. Mahaprabhu's teachings disappeared and from the field of ignorance Bhaktivinod Thakur came and revived the tree of Caitanya Mahaprabhu and then came Srila Bhaktisidhanta Sarasvati Thakur to further His mission and in between is Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja. Bhaktivinod Thakur started the revival to revive Krishna Consciousness and make it spread all over the world there is going to be a need for all kinds of involvements. Krishna Consciousness is not going to spread just like that. If these Acharayas sat under a tree on the bank of the Ganges Krishna Consciousness movement won't spread, therefore there is a need for a massive operation engaging everything. Bhaktisidhanta Sarasvati Thakur's concept of sankirtan is engaging everything is spreading Krishna Consciousness. When something is engaged in service of Krishna it is spiritual not material.



2. SRILA PRABHUPADA APPRECIATION



Once a Bengali gentleman came he was actually Prabhupada's disciple. He came to Srila Prabhupada at some point he asked Prabhupada what is my siddha Swarup, my spiritual identity and

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3. GURU MAHARAJA'S INSTRUCTIONS



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Compiled and edited by Hemavati Radhika das

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