

How Can We Recognize A Real Guru In The Preceptorial Line?

A real Guru appearing in the bona fide Preceptorial Line or 'Amnaya Dhara' or 'Guru Parampara' is not a human being. He is not a denizen of this world. He descends from Golok, the Transcendental Realm. He is the 'Prakash-Bigraha' or Manifestive Aspect of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna. He is the Second Self or Facsimile of Sri Krishna. So Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami says:

**Guru Krishnarup Han Shastrer Pramane,
Gururupe Krishna Kripa Karen Bhaktagane.**

(According to scriptures, Guru is a form of Krishna. Krishna reveals His grace to devotees as the Guru.)

[Srila Chaitanya Charitamrita: 1. 1. 45]

Krishna said to Uddhaba in Srimad Bhagabatam (11.17.27):

**Acharyam Mam Bijaniyat Nabamanyeta Karhichit,
Na Martyabuddhya asuyeta sarbadeba-mayo Guruh.**

(Know that I myself appear as the Guru. Don't disregard him by considering him a human being. In fact, all the gods reside in the person of the Preceptor.)

Srila Bishwanath Chakravarty says:

**“Sakshad Haritwena Samasta-shastrai-ruktastatha Bhabyata Eba Sadbhiih,
Kintu Prabhorjah Priya Eba Tasya Vande Guroh Sricharanarabrindam.”**

(All the scriptures declare that Guru is identical with the Lord Himself. The saints also regard him in this way. But this actually means that he is the Supreme Servitor—The Dearest One of the Supreme Lord.)

[Sri Gurbashtakam, Verse No. 7]

In *Sri Bhakti Sandarbha* (216), Srila Jiva Goswami says:

“Shuddha bhaktah Sri Guroh....Bhagabata saha Avedadristam Tatpriyatamatwena eba manyante”.

(Pure devotees regard Sri Guru as identical with the Lord, as Sri Guru is the Lord's Dearest One.)

The word 'Guru' in Sanskrit means heavy--weighty. A Guru is thus Divine Power personified. So he is called 'Bala-deva Tattva'. 'Bala' here means divine power or strength. A Guru is to be distinguished from a Vaishnava or devotee or preacher or speaker or writer. There are 'ananta koti' or infinite crores of Vaishnavas of various categories. We glorify them by saying, 'Anantakoti Vaishnavbrinda ki jay.' (All glory to innumerable Vaishnavas). Stars are innumerable in the sky, but the sun is one. Though the sun is not visible at the same time in all places of the globe, the sun remains ever singular. So, in the firmament of unalloyed devotion, the Preceptor-Sun is one. Om Vishnupad Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur clearly writes in the Gaudiya (Vol 9, Issue 47, Page 774) – “The preceptor is the most beloved one of the Supreme Lord. None else in this world is so dear to God. The Preceptor is One. There cannot be plurality of Preceptors.”

The Preceptor-Sun is one. Who is He? He is no other than Lord Nityananda. A real Guru in the Preceptorial Line is identical with Lord Nityananda. He remains ever-concealed. Here we will refer to Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat, Middle Part, Chap III. When Lord Gouranga asked Sri Srivas Pandit and Sri Haridas Thakur to find out Lord Nityananda, they searched every nook and corner of Navadwip but could not trace Him out. When they came back after a whole day's wanderings, Goursundar smiled and directly took them to Nandan Acharya's house where Lord Nityananda was staying secretly. This episode proves the fact that even Great Vaishnavas will not be able to recognize Nityananda or 'Guru Tattva' (the Ontology of the Preceptor) unless and until Sri Goursundar Himself takes the initiative and kindly reveals Nityananda, Whom He wants to keep ever-concealed as the most precious secret treasure of His heart. Srila Vrindavan Das Thakur writes—

**“Bara guRha Nityananda ei Avatare,
Chaitanya dekhay jare, se dekhite pare.”**

[Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat, Middle Part, 3/171]

(Sri Nityananda is an extremely secret jewel. Only that fortunate person whom Sri Chaitanya graciously shows Sri Nityananda, will be able to see Him.)

So if a sincere seeker of Truth gives up all 'Aroha Pantha' or artificial intellectual or self-dependent processes or procedures of mundane scholarship, reasoning or debate or so-called meditation and Yoga practices and if he or she secretly and sincerely weeps at the Lotus-feet of Lord Goursundar to reveal the Real Guru, the Gracious Lord will surely reveal the Truth in his or her heart in the 'Abaroha Pantha' (the Path of the Descent of Divine Grace).

Sometimes, we get confused by spectacular demonstrations of world-famous preachers. If someone claims that his Guru told him to preach the teachings of Lord Chaitanaya in the English language and build his own life as an idea preacher, we must cautiously examine whether his Gurudeva gave him order to act as the next Preceptor or Guru. To be a preacher and to be a Guru are not the same thing. Even for becoming a preacher, one must be a Nirag Bakta (a speaker without any desire for name, fame, disciples, temples, money, men etc.) The preacher is a humble bearer of his Guru's message. Allegiance to the Preceptorial Line is his first duty. He himself never acts as Guru. He never accepts the title of his own Guru.

Everyone knows the fact that if someone does not owe allegiance to the Successor to his Guru or the Next Preceptor, he is devotionally derailed. To disrespect Srila Acharyadeva (Srila Ananta Vasudeva Paravidyabhusan Prabhu or Srila Bhakti Prasad Puri Goswami Thakur) who was unanimously accepted and revered as the Successor to Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur means to disrespect all the Gurus in the Preceptorial Line of Succession. Because all the previous Gurus remain present in the Divine Body of the Present Preceptor. Censure of the Preceptor is the most heinous offence in the world of devotion. To consider the accredited Guru as a fallen person is the worst offence in the Vaishnava world, because the Guru descends from Goloka to act as the Redeemer of the fallen. Despite muddy water, the Ganges remains a sacred river – a Deliverer of sinners.

The Guru is Nitya Siddha or Eternally Perfect. None but an eternal associate of Sri Radharani can act as a Jagat Guru in the Bhaktivinode Line of Rupanuga Bhakti (Highest Yoga of Devotion following Sri Rupa Goswami). Every word, every action, every glance, every gesture of such a Guru is transcendental. Every whim, every wish of such a Guru yields eternal bliss to the Divine Senses of Sri Krishna, because Sri Krishna Himself, the Supreme Enjoyer, enjoys through the Divine Senses of His Second Self, the Preceptor. Srila Vrindaban Das Thakur has written in his Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat, Last Part. 6/29:

**“Paramarthe Krishnachandra Tahan Sharire,
Nischay janiha bipra, sarbada bihare.”**

Sri Chaitanya said this to the simple-hearted Brahmin who had some doubts regarding Nityananda’s peculiar behaviour. The meaning of this couplet is – “ O Brahmin, Know it as a Spiritual Truth that Lord Krishna always resides and enjoys in the Body of Sri Nityananda.”

The Supreme Lord Sri Gouranga who was a staunch moralist said in Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat (Last Part 6/26)—

**“Suna bipra, Maha-adhikari jeba hay,
Taba tan dosha-guna kicchu na janmay.”**

(O Brahmin, listen to the secret of secrets. Whoever is a great devotional master, attains a level where neither any virtue nor any vice can grow.)

Srimad Bhagabatam (11/20/36) boldly declares—

“Na majyekanta-bhaktanam guna-doshodbhaba gunah.”

(My sincere and pure devotees are beyond virtue and vices born of lawful and unlawful deeds.)

Regarding the transcendental pastimes of Lord Nityananda, Srila Vrindavan Das Thakur warned the whole world by citing the following comment of Lord Chaitanya—

**“Grihniyad jabanipanim bished ba shoundikalayam,
Tathapi Brahmano bandyam Nityananda-padambujam.”**

(Even if Lord Nityananda marries a non-Hindu woman or enters a wine-shop, His Lotus Feet are the Objects of veneration by Brahma, the Creator of this world.”

In the annotation of this verse, Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur has observed in his famous Gaudiya Bhasya of Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat (Sri Gaudiya Math edition, page 1039) – “Lord Nityananda and Sri Sri Guru-Vaishnavas, identical with Nityananda, are so venerable to all that even if they are seen to perform some very abominable deed by our external vision, deluded by Maya, their supremacy and universal respectability remain eternally intact. It is a serious offence to consider them sinful by judging their apparent behaviour with our mundane vision.”

Sri Gauranga also says in Sri Chaitanya Bhagabat, Last Part 6/35—

**“Garhito karye jadi Maha-adhikari,
Nindan ki day, tanre hasileyi mari.”**

(Even if some abominable deed is done by a Great Devotee, we should never denounce him. We shall perish, even if we just laugh at him.”

Sri Jatisekhar Prabhu, the scholarly disciple of Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur and the ex-editor of the Paramartha writes—“A person may possess many qualities of head and heart. But if he has the slightest envy towards Srila Acharyadeva, he should never be accepted as the Guru.”

Such a man spreads the poison of Guru-ninda (censure of the Preceptor) which is the worst offence. Such a preacher is not capable of distributing Harinama. What he gives is Namaparadha (offenceful utterance of the letters of the Holy Name). He cannot even give Namabhas (semblance of the Holy Name). Namaparadh yields man, money, buildings, physical and mental enjoyment. Namabhas gives salvation. But Suddha Naam or Pure Chanting of the Holy Name gives Prema or Divine Love which is the ocean of transcendental beauty, bliss, harmony and peace. Only a real Guru in the Preceptorial Line of Succession can give Suddha Naam.