

Appearance of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur

Today we are going to discuss about a person Bhagavata HDG Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur. Today is his divine appearance day that's why we have selected a special verse to discuss about. This is the last sloka out of the four slokas that is offering the pranam mantra to Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur. This verse is actually, this sloka is very important because this sloka is indicating the mission of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur just as the second sloka of Srila Prabhupada's pranam mantra is indicating the mission of Srila Prabhupada.

namas te sarasvate deve gaura-vani-pracarine

nirvisesa-sunyavadi-pascatyā-desā-tarīne

To remove the impersonalism & voidism, nirvisesavada & sunyavad, pascatyā desa tarīne, to remove this from the western world that is Prabhupada's mission and Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur mission has been described here:

namas te gaura-vani-sri-murtaye dina-tarīne

rupanuga-viruddhāpasiddhanta-dhvanta-harīne

So let's recite this verse:

**** Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Pranati (verse 4) ****

namas te gaura-vani-sri-murtaye dina-tarīne

rupanuga-viruddhāpasiddhanta-dhvanta-harīne

Namas te, namaste indicates I offer my obeisances, unto gaura-vani sri-murtaye, gaura-vani, sri-murtaye, sri murti means the personification, the divine form, he is the divine personified form of Gaura Vani, personified teachings of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and he is dina-tarīne, he is the deliverer of the fallen souls, and rupanuga-viruddhā-āpasiddhanta-dhvanta-harīne. Dhvanta, the word dhvanta is darkness and harīne means remover. He removed the darkness that was caused by rupanuga-viruddhā-

apasiddhanta, the apasiddhanta, the unscrupulous teachings, apasiddhanta, the unscrupulous teaching, that are contrary to Srila Rupa Goswami's conclusions, rupanuga-viruddha, viruddha, opposed to, contrary to, this apasiddhanta-dhvanta harine, the darkness that was caused by this apasiddhanta he removed that darkness. So that is Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur's mission, that's why he came.

Srila Prabhupada in one of his poems that he was expressing his lamentation about the condition of the preaching mission that Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur established, he in the second stanza, he actually mentioned that, just as Advaita Acarya Prabhu brought Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu similarly in response to Srila Bhaktivinod Thakur's prayers you have incarnated. Just as Advaita Acarya brought Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Srila Bhaktivinod Thakur brought Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur.

Bhaktivinod Thakur plays a very very significant role in Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's sankirtan movement. We notice that history actually records or describes that soon after Caitanya Mahaprabhu, soon means about a couple of hundred years after Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's disappearance, His teachings were lost by this apasiddhanta-dhvanta, apasampradaya. Apasampradyas they were claiming that they were Caitanya Mahaprabhu's followers but actually they were not following Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's teachings rather they were introducing their teachings, their misconstrued, unscrupulous teachings in the name of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was famous at that time and taking advantage of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's name these people actually started to introduce all kinds of concocted ideas and they are known as apasampradaya and they classify in 13 principle categories

Aula

Baula

Neda

Daravesa

Sani

Sahajiya

Sakhibheki

Jatagosani

Gauranga-nagari

Kartabhaja

(not mentioned Smarta, Ativadi, Cudadhari)

In this way there are 13 apasampradya. The teachings of the apasampradaya actually eclipsed Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's teachings and as a result of that darkness was created. Mahaprabhu's teachings and Mahaprabhu's dhama both disappeared and Srila Bhaktivinod Thakur actually came to revive Mahaprabhu's teaching and retrieve Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's Dhama. After Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's disappearance there was a big flood and as a result of that flood Navadwip disappeared. Actually we have to understand that Navadwip appeared with Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and when Mahaprabhu left, the Dhama also left.

sri-krsna-caitanya prabhu jive doya kori

Swa-parsada swiya dhama saha avatari (Saranagati)

Caitanya Mahaprabhu appeared avatari with His associates, parsada, and swiya Dhama, with His Dhama, with His transcendental abode. So when He left, His Dhama also left.

But it is Bhaktivinod Thakur who actually rediscovered the Dhama otherwise people will have a misconception, some unscrupulous people established some places and started to advertise that those were the places of Mahaprabhu's pastimes, on the other side of the Ganges, but it was Bhaktivinod Thakur who actually pointed out that, no this is where the actual place of Mahaprabhu's appearance is. Mayapur is not there, Mayapur is on this side. And as you know he got a transcendental vision from his house on the other side of the River Jalangi. He saw this part become manifest, brilliant light where there were many many beautiful temples, beautiful houses and devotees from all over the world gathered and chanting the holy name.

But when he came in the morning, next morning he found that there was a Muslim village, and there was nothing, but there was a very peculiar sight, that there was a neem tree and around the neem tree there was a forest of Tulasi. Generally Tulasi doesn't grow anywhere. Tulasi doesn't grow without proper cultivation; especially Tulasi doesn't grow in an unholy place. So that's how he actually considered that this must be the place of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhus appearance and then he reconfirmed his discovery with Srila Jagannath Das Babaji, the most exalted vaisnava of the time.

Vaisnava-sarvabhaumah, sarvabhaumah means the sovereign monarch of the Vaisnava kingdom. He was 140 years of age. He couldn't walk, he couldn't even sit straight, he used to be carried in a basket. One of his disciples used to carry him, whenever he had to go somewhere in the basket, he used to sit and he used to carry. But that 140 year old Vaisnava, who couldn't even stand up, when he came to this place he jumped out of his basket and started to dance in ecstasy. Jumping 6 feet high saying that this is the place of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's appearance, this is the birthplace of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, "ei to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhur janma sthana!" and that's why Jagannath Das Babaji's prayers was gauravirbhava-bhumes tvam, nirdesta saj-jana-priyah, the personality who indicated the birth place of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

So this is how Bhaktivinod actually discovered Mahaprabhu's place and pastimes. He revived Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's teachings. The condition was so critical at that time that Bhaktivinod Thakur couldn't find a single Caitanya Caritamrta in the whole of Bengal. Can you imagine the condition? How pathetic the condition was that not a single volume of Caitanya Caritamrta was available. He heard about Caitanya Caritamrta and he was searching for Caitanya Caritamrta but couldn't find one. Then eventually he found one in Orissa. So that shows what was the condition of Gaudiya

Vaisnavism, what was the condition of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's teachings at that time.

Then Bhaktivinod Thakur started to broadcast the teachings of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu based on Sri Caitanya Caritamrta. He himself wrote a commentary, Amrta-pravaha-bhasya, 'The Commentary that Flows with Nectar' and then he started to print books. Reprinting, or rather printing books on Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu written by previous acaryas and he himself started to write. That is very interesting to note that Bhaktivinod Thakur did not write only in Bengali and Sanskrit, he started to write in English also. Obviously he was not writing in English to preach to the Englishmen of that time, because the Englishmen they were ruling over India, they were extremely arrogant. According to them the Indians were a bunch of barbarics, they did not have any respect for their culture what to speak of accepting their culture.

But although he was a very high ranking government official at that time, a very senior deputy magistrate, had a very close contact with the ruling English gentry of that time, Bhaktivinod Thakur was not writing for them, he actually had the foresight to see that a time will come when Krsna Consciousness will spread all over the world and through English this teachings of Caitanya Mahaprabhu will spread. His writing was so elegant, you can see from his writing what a brilliant personality he was. There is one poetry, Saragrahi Vaisnava, where in 22 stanzas he gave the entire philosophy of Srimad Bhagavatam, the entire teachings of the Srimad Bhagavatam. Just in 22 verses, 22 stanzas, describes what is the condition of the living entity in the material world. He starts off:

Alas for those who spend their days
In festive mirth and joy.
The dazzling, deadly, liquid forms
Their hearts fore'er employ (Saragrahi Vaisnava)

Condition of the living entity, he is feeling pity for them, alas for those who spend their days in festive mirth and joy and what is the condition, dazzling, deadly, liquid forms, the illusory energy of the Lord, their hearts fore'er employ. The condition is like a bunch of drunkards;

The shining bottles charm their eyes
And draw their heart's embrace;
The slaves of wine can never rise
From what we call disgrace. (Saragrahi Vaisnava)

The brilliance of his writing is not only the theme that he is presenting but the form in which he is actually presenting is so brilliant. I mean what a wonderful structure of meter and rhyme and he maintains that throughout the poetry. In just 22 verses, just to consider 3 of them we see the beautiful way of his presentation:

The flesh is not our own, alas
The mortal frame a chain
The soul confined for former wrongs
Will try to rise again (Saragrahi Vaisnava)

Forget the past that sleeps
And never future dream at all

Live with time that are with thee
and progress each and all (Saragrahi Vaisnava)

O Saragrahi Vaishnava soul
thou art an angel fair;
lead, lead me on to Vrindaban
and spirit's power declare (Saragrahi Vaisnava)

There rests my soul from matter free
upon my Lover's arms
eternal peace and spirits love
are all my chanting charms (Saragrahi Vaisnava)

So in this way he takes us to the ultimate goal. And I have noticed that those who did not have anything to do with Krsna Consciousness when they hear about this, when they heard about this they were so wonderfully impressed.

So this is the genius of Bhaktivinod Thakur.

So he saw the need to spread Krsna Consciousness all over the world and for that he needed somebody to assist him and he prayed to Lord Jagannath. He was in Jagannath Puri at that time, he was the magistrate and he prayed to Lord Jagannath to send an able assistant to help him in his mission and as a result of that Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur arrived. He considered him to be the mercy of Lord Jagannath, he considered him to be the prasad of Lord Jagannath. Now Lord Jagannath's prasad actually goes to Bimala Devi, the internal potency of the Lord and Bimala Devi distributes

the prasad so that is why he named him Bimala Prasad, not just Jagannath's Prasad, Bimala Prasad.

On this particular tithi in 1874, on 6th February, he appeared in Jagannath Puri, in the afternoon. One very interesting thing was his umbilical cord was wrapped around his torso just like a brahman thread, it

is an unusual thing. Then when an astrologer, the custom in India after a child is born an astrologer is called to make a calculation and write his horoscope, and this astrologer, mentioned that he had seen many many charts before, he had made many charts of many great personalities but he had never come across such a brilliant, and he predicted that this personality will spread the glory of

vedic culture all over the world. He was the fourth son of Srila Bhaktivinod Thakur. Bhaktivinod Thakur was a pure devotee himself. Brought his children up in a very wonderful way, gave them a very wonderful Krsna Conscious upbringing. Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur naturally had a very very special upbringing from his illustrious father. Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati displayed some amazing characteristics, whatever he heard once he would remember and he had a tremendous attachment to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

One very interesting anecdote is, when he was 6 months, Jagannath Ratha Yatra was taking place. Bhaktivinod Thakur's house was right on the street, very wide street that goes from Jagannath temple to the Gundica Temple, where the Ratha Yatra takes place. When they were pulling the chariot Jagannath's chariot came in front of Bhaktivinod Thakur's house and stopped there. They tried to move the chariot in so many ways, for three days the chariot stood there, no one could just move it. Elephants were brought, all kinds of efforts were made but nothing could move Lord Jagannath's chariot.

But then Bhaktivinod Thakur's wife took advantage of the situation and took her son, a little 6 month old boy to the feet of Lord Jagannath. As she placed the baby at the feet of Lord Jagannath, Jagannath's garland fell, as if Jagannath was just waiting to offer His blessings to the baby and after that the chariot started to move.

When Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur was just 2 years or 3 years old, as the mango season started, a basket of mangoes was brought to the house. This little boy just took a mango he was about 3 or 4 yrs old and Bhaktivinod Thakur just mildly chastised him that, "Without offering to the Lord you accepted the fruit, you took the fruit?"

And it left such a deep scar in his heart that he took a vow to not eat a mango and he kept that vow throughout his life. He did not eat mango throughout his whole life.

When he was seven years old Bhaktivinod Thakur was building a house in north Calcutta in a place called Ram Bagan, there when he was digging the foundation he found a Kurma sila and Narayan sila depicting Kurma Dev. Bhaktivinod Thakur offered that sila to Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur. Later on he gave him Nrsimha mantra and Maha Mantra when he was about 12 or 13 years. He finished his school at the

age of 18 and entered into college, called Sanskrit College but soon after that he dropped out. He gave up his studies, although he was one of the most brilliant students, he gave up his studies.

His point was that if I have a lot of education then people will force me to become materialistically engaged and get involved in household life and in order to protect himself from that calamity he dropped out, gave up his education. For some years he worked in the estate of, in the kingdom of Tripura. He was involved in writing the Royal family's history. There he wrote their history. The king was very fond of him actually, very fond of him. He actually assigned the responsibility of training his children, he wanted him to train them up, so he was their teacher. The future king was actually trained up by him. In a way we can see that family, the Royal family of Tripura is very special and they have a very close connection with Caitanya Mahaprabhu and his teachings.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur must have played a very important role. The king was so fond of him that when Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati resigned, the king actually granted him a stipend for him, a pension, life long pension. Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati accepted it for a few months but then he gave it up, why should he take money from them? Then he became so concerned about his spiritual life he asked Bhaktivinod Thakur, who shall he take initiation from, and Bhaktivinod Thakur guided him to Srila Gaura Kishore das babaji. It was quite a contrast in a way.

Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur was the greatest scholar of his time and Gaura Kishore das babaji Maharaja was apparently illiterate. So when Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur approached him Gaura Kishore das babaji Maharaja flatly refused, "I don't want to accept you." He did not have disciples. Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur was his only disciple, he didn't have any disciples. So when he refused Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur kept on insisting- "Please give me initiation."

Then he said, OK, I'll ask Caitanya Mahaprabhu." After a few days he went and asked him, "So did you ask Lord Caitanya?"

He said, "I forgot."

In this way a few times it just went on and then finally Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati told him, "If you don't give initiation then this life doesn't have any significance, so what's the point in maintaining it."

So this is how Gaura Kishore das babaji realised that this person when he says he will give up his life, he will do it, so that's why he was compelled to give him initiation. He gave him a beautiful name Sri Varsabhanavi-devi-dayita dasa, Varsabhanavi-devi, the daughter of King Vrshabhanu, I'm sorry Varsabhanavi-devi-dayita, dayita means lover, who is the lover of the daughter of King Vrshabhanu, Krsna.

sri varsabhanavi-devi-dayitaya krpabdhaye

krsna-sambandha-vijnana-dayine prabhava namah

So soon after getting initiated he decided to prepare himself for embarking on this preaching mission of spreading Krsna Consciousness all over the world. So in order to prepare he came to Mayapur. He took a vow of chanting 1 billion, which would mean chanting 300,000 names or 192 rounds a day for 10 years and he did that. After that he embarked on his preaching mission. In the mean time Srila Bhaktivinod Thakur left this planet in 1916 and soon after that Gaura Kishore das babaji Maharaja also left. He was extremely heartbroken, they were his two main shelters and now he has become bereft of their shelter.

Then in 1918 he took sannyasa. This was also another unusual thing, like those days Gaudiya Vaisnavas did not accept sannyasa order in this way. Tridandi sannyasi. Their sannyasa was paramahansa stage that was established by Srila Sanatan Goswami, wearing white, that is also just one piece of cloth was torn into two and one half was wrapped around his loin and the other half wrapped around his torso. So that was the dress.

Actually it happened when Sanatan Goswami met Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in Benares, Kashi. He looked like a Muslim, a Muslim mendicant, fakir, because he had a long beard and his dress also was somewhat like that. So that's why when Mahaprabhu told Tapan Misra that "There is a Vaisnava outside, please call him." Tapan Misra went back and told "I couldn't find any vaisnava." So

then Mahaprabhu asked, "Was there somebody there?" "Yes there is a fakir". "Call him please."

So he was called in and Mahaprabhu embraced him. Sanatan Goswami told, "Please don't touch me, I am so dirty, so unclean." Mahaprabhu said, "I touch you to make myself purified." So then Mahaprabhu told him to get civilised, so get cleaned up sort of, so that's why he went to Ganga, shaved up. Tapan Misra gave him a new set of cloth to wear but he said, "No give me an old piece of dhoti." So Tapan Misra gave him an old dhoti and he torn that dhoti into half, with one half he was wearing a loin cloth around his loin and so that became the dress of the Goswamis of Vrndavan, babaji dress.

But Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur set a revolutionary standard. His consideration was that, "All kinds of undesirable activities, unclean activities are going on wearing that dress. Therefore in order to establish the honour and glory of the dress, I will take sannyasa according to varnasrama standard, varnasrama system. Because this is the paramahansa stage, wearing white, those who are situated in the transcendental platform it is their dress. Remaining below them wearing this varnasrama sannyasa order I will place their lotus feet on my head and establish their glory."

That is also another aspect of viruddha apasiddhanta-dhvanta-harine. He came to destroy all kinds of unscrupulous activities that were going on against Caitanya Mahaprabhu's teachings. And he took sannyasa also, there was no one to give him sannyasa so he took sannyasa from a picture of Srila Gaura Kishore das babaji Maharaja and he established the sannyasa order in his mission later on.

Then he set up his first establishment in Calcutta, in No. 1 Ultadanga Road. By Krsna's mercy we got that piece of, we bought that place it belongs to us, that house. That is the place in 1922 Srila Prabhupada met him. Srila Prabhupada was so impressed, although initially he did not want to even go to see him. Prabhupada, from the very first meeting Prabhupada became so impressed by him that he offered himself. Prabhupada had a very very wonderful situation at that time, he was a manager of a pharmaceutical company, he was a householder, married, had responsibility of maintaining

his family, he also had a son, but he gave up his job in order to fulfil the mission of this great personality that he recognised from the very first meeting. And in this way the line continues, Bhaktivinod Thakur to Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur to His Divine Grace A C Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada.

It is very unfortunate that soon after Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur's disappearance, Gaudiya Math, his mission, which was extremely effective, extremely prominent, attracting all kinds of intelligent people, very very well known personalities into his mood but the mission started to collapse, soon after his disappearance. Eventually it was completely lost.

Although in some temples some activities, some spiritual activities are going on, people are, the devotees are maintaining their spiritual life but the mission that Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur came to establish that is lost. Prabhupada himself actually mentioned it, became asara, they became useless, devoid of any substance. Even when Prabhupada went to America and got the possibility of starting a temple he invited them, "Come let us work together, you all lead the movement, you all lead the mission, I'll simply become one of your workers one of your servants, but come let's work

together."

But when no one responded then finally Prabhupada decided to move along alone. Then the young boys and girls from America came to support him and we can see this is how Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur's line is continuing. This is actually the line of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur, ISKCON is the real line of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur, Bhaktivinod Thakur and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Well I'll stop now. Although there is so much to say but I will request, there are two poems written by Srila Prabhupada as early as in 1930. One is called Viraha Astaka and Vaisisyastaka they have been translated by Dasarath Suta Prabhu in English and you will see Prabhupada's lamentation and Prabhupada's frustration at seeing the condition of Gaudiya Math. He was urging them 'please come and lets get together and revive our Spiritual Master's mission, let us spread Krsna Consciousness all around the world'.

But no one came. But Mahaprabhu had a different plan, ISKCON had to appear the way it did. Prabhupada had to take this movement to America and start it there and then bring it back to India and spread it all over.

All glories to His Divine Grace Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur ki jai!

Jagat Guru Srila Prabhupada ki jai!

Gaura Premanande Hari Hari Bol!

For video of the lecture, please go to mayapurtvarchives.com

For Audio:

http://audio.iskcondesiretree.info/index.php?q=f&f=%2F06_-_More%2F01_-_ISKCO

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