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EMAGAZINE FOR EVERY EKADASI (UTTHANA EKADASI)

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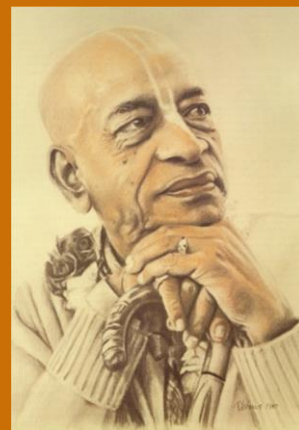
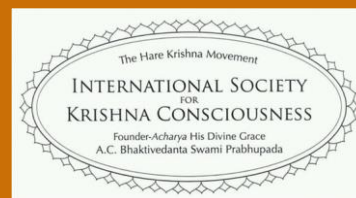
1. SRILA GAUR KISHOR BABAJI MAHARAJA IS OUR PARAM GURUDEVA

*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 Navadwip, prior to that he was in Vrindavan. He came to live in Navadwip 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.

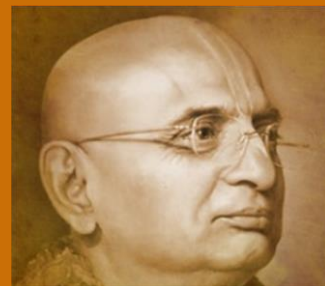
He did not have any possessions; he did not even have a japa mala to chant. He used to take a piece of cloth and make knots in that cloth and that is how he used to count and that was his japa mala. For cloth also what he used to wear? On the bank of the Ganges people used to bring dead bodies to cremate 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



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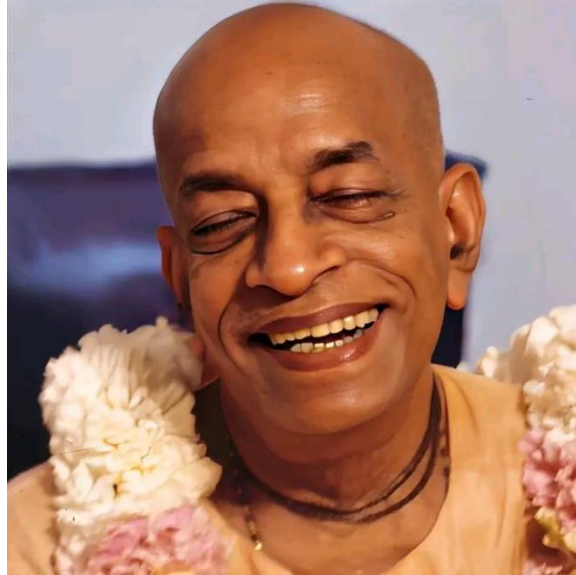
early days as a grain merchant and he was married but when his wife left her body, Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja left home and considered that Krishna very mercifully has taken away his attachment. When his wife died, he left home and travelled to Vrindavan and he used to live in Vrindavan but then becoming attracted to Caitanya Mahaprabhu's pastimes moved to Navadvip. 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 is 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 Navadvip 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 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. 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.

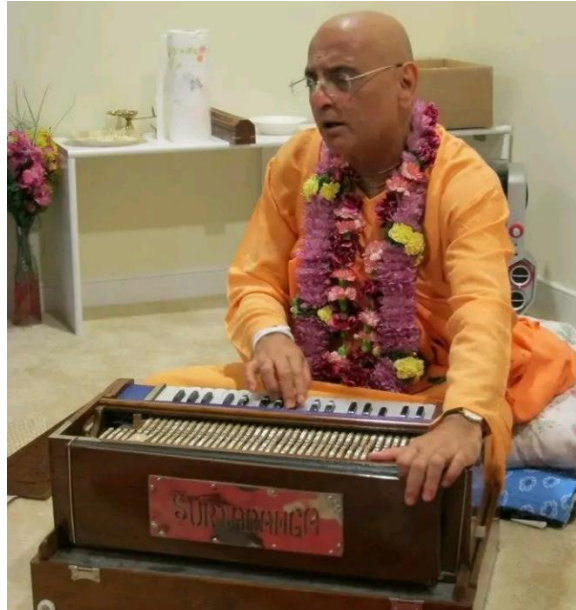
There is a nice anecdote, once Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja decided to celebrate Sanatana's Goswami's disappearance day and they said we need to collect funds and Gaur Kishor Babaji Maharaja said no for beggars like us to celebrate is to fast and chant the Holy Name.

2. SRILA PRABHUPADA APPRECIATION



We must 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.

3. GURU MAHARAJA'S INSTRUCTIONS



Prabhupada has given everything, the perfect situation. If someone thinks he must go elsewhere because Prabhupada did not 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 a continuation of Caitanya Mahaprabhu's plan.

(The content of this E-magazine was based on a lecture given by His Holiness Bhakti Charu Swami in ISKCON Ujjain on 12 November 2005)

(Compilation & editing by Hemavati Radhika dasi)